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TITLE

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF SCHOOL-GOVERNING BODIES WITH REFERENCE TO THE KUYASA SECONDARY SCHOOL, KING WILLIAM'S TOWN DISTRICT.

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In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master's Degree in Public Administration and Management in the Faculty of Arts at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

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DECLARATION

I declare that AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES WITH REFERENCE TO THE KUYASA SECONDARY SCHOOL, KING WILLIAM'S TOWN DISTRICT is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....
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.....
Date

DEDICATION

This treatise is dedicated to:

My father, mother, brothers and sisters for giving me the solid foundation for my education.

My wife, Mandisa Radoni for her understanding and sacrifices in giving me space to pursue my studies.

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SUMMARY

The introduction of school governing bodies provided communities with an opportunity to play a significant role in the organisation and governance of their schools. This involvement of significant stakeholders is purported to oversee that schools offer education of high quality to the learners. However, school governance is a legal responsibility, which requires the skills, knowledge and expertise to ensure that SGB members will be able to fulfil their concomitant legal duties.

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of the SGBs role in school governance in Kuyasa Secondary School, King Williams Town District. The findings revealed that the SGBs knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and the type of training they receive have a marked effect on their functionality. There is also a need to recruit SGB members with a particular level of education, knowledge, understanding and expertise to minimise the chances of failure.

KEY WORDS

- Governance
- School governance
- School Governing Bodies
- Governance Responsibility
- Functions of SGB members
- Election criteria for SGB members
- SGB capacity
- Additional functions of SGB members
- Co-operative governance
- Schools Act
- Education Policy

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CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in developing future generations and maintaining higher standards of living. The new constitution of South Africa ushered in a new educational dispensation, part of which is a new system of education, governance, and in particular, public school governance (Beckman and Visser, 1999: 152). This has resulted in the formation of the school-governing bodies (SGBs) that have been created to take charge of the governance of schools.

The South African School Act 84 of 1996 (s16 (1)) indicates that the governance of a public school is vested in its governing body. The governing body stands in a position of trust (*fidei commisum*) towards the school: this simply means that a relationship of trust should exist between the school and the governing body. The governing body always acts on behalf of the school (and in the name of the school) with the best interests of the school at heart (Davies, 1999:60).

The school governing body is obliged to perform its duties effectively and efficiently for the benefit of the school community. The new system of education governance is manifestly captured in the preamble of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, which states that : The country requires a new national system for schools, which will redress past injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for development for all our people's talents and capabilities, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibilities for organisation, governance and the funding of schools in partnership with the State.

The school governing bodies are the pivot of the new, democratic models of organisation, governance and funding of schools (The teacher, June 1998:4). However, it is uncertain whether the governing bodies have the necessary capacity to handle their increased responsibilities. Creese (1995:1), for example, cautions that these increased responsibilities mean that the way in which the governors carry out their duties now can have a significant impact on the management of the schools.

If school governing bodies are expected to play a pivotal role in improving conditions that are conducive for education of progressively higher quality for all learners, they will be expected to possess certain skills, knowledge and the expertise among school governing body members, as suggested by the prevalence of many dysfunctional schools. Governing bodies should be assisted in developing their capacity; this will enable them to purposefully assume their roles and responsibilities in the governance of education.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

As the one of the employees of the Department of Education, the researcher has worked closely with members of the school-governing body in Kuyasa Secondary School, King William's Town of the Eastern Cape. During interaction with members of the governing body, the researcher realised that parent governors often experience problems, such as a lack of understanding and knowledge of their roles, responsibilities and liabilities, lack of the necessary capacity to fulfil their duties, inadequate or no basic education grounding, mismanagement of finances, lack of confidence to deal with the challenges in education and to enter into partnerships with other stakeholders, limited or no training and preparation for their responsibilities, lack of the ability to monitor the procedures required for all aspects of the functioning of the school, and grandparents who are not the biological parents of the learners.

These observations may have a negative impact on the performance of the school, because in many schools in this district governing bodies are not functioning as required by the law.

In many instances governing body members struggle to fulfil their responsibilities with limited success. This is compounded by their inadequate basic literacy level. This has grave implications for their functioning and adverse effects on the performance of the school in general. Moreover, governing bodies are expected to promote the best interests of the school and to ensure that learners receive the best education possible (Department of Education, 1997:6).

Governing bodies are expected to play a pivotal role in creating conditions that are conducive for education of progressively higher quality for all learners and in the process to lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities (South African Schools Act, 1996:2), but this has not been easy. One of the challenges is the lack of preparation for new governors before they start their work.

Mahoney (in van Wyk and Lemmer 2002:139) warns that the responsibilities of governing bodies are complex, so that they cannot be expected to discharge them effectively without some training that goes beyond the normal process of "picking the job by doing it". Therefore, the issue of the role of governing bodies should not be compromised for the sake of representation if schools are not creating and nurturing a supportive place for learning and teaching.

This research is aimed at investigating the role of School Governing Bodies in the education systems and aims to create potentially capable school governors and to explore possible ways of running the school to be able to purposefully assume their legal responsibilities towards creating a vibrant teaching and learning environment in the Kuyasa S.S.S. in the King William's Town District.

1.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES.

School Governing Bodies make decisions on behalf of the school and see to it that the school is administered properly and that all stakeholders share in the decisions of that body (Department of Education, 1997: 6).

The School Governing Body is the legal body responsible for the government of overall school's policy (including language policy and a code of conduct), the vision and mission of the school, the financial management and fundraising, as well as making recommendations concerning appointments to the school. The governing body is formed in such way that all structures can co-operate and be closely involved in important decisions about the school (Department of Education, 1999:8).

Unlike the old school committee, which comprised a few parents and the principal, a School Governing Body consists of the learners (in the case of secondary schools), educators and non-educator staff, the schools manager, as well as parents that must always be in the majority. This implies that SGBs are democratic in nature and allow parents and other stakeholders to play an important part in the affairs of the school.

School Governing Bodies are given functions according to their experience and capacity. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, section 20, outlines the compulsory functions or tasks that all SGBs have to perform; while Section 21 lists all functions that governing bodies feel they have the necessary capacity and experience to perform and can apply in order to be given these functions to perform. These functions are known as allocated or section 21 functions and a school that attains these functions is known as a section 21 or self-managing school.

All schools in South Africa must, amongst other functions, adopt a constitution and a code of conduct, develop a mission statement, determine times of the school day;

administer and control the school's property; and recommend the appointment of educators to the provincial department (Department of Education, 1996, 10-11).

As mentioned above, those School Governing Bodies that feel they have the necessary capacity and skills may apply to the Head of the Provincial Education Department to be allocated extra functions listed in section 21 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. In addition, Members of the Executive Council may, by notice in the provincial Gazette, determine that some governing bodies be allocated one or more section 21 functions without making an application.

This may be done on condition that a Member of the Executive council is satisfied that the governing bodies concerned have the necessary capacity to perform such functions effectively and that it is a reasonable and equitable basis for doing so (Department of Education , 1996:12). The section 21 functions are: maintaining and improving the school's property, determining the extra curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options, paying for the services of the school and purchasing textbooks, educational material and equipment.

This research focuses on the awarding of certain of these functions to public schools in rural areas, despite the numerous problems that many SGBs continue to experience in these areas. Conradie (2002:125) maintains that these functions are not really governance functions in the proper sense of the word, but mainly financial management responsibilities that lighten the State's financial commitments towards the schools.

It is therefore questionable whether the School Governing Bodies in these areas will be able to carry these extra functions because the illiteracy level of the parents is high and the parents' governance capacity is not sufficiently equipped for their expected governance functions (Heystek, 2004: 10).

1.4 PROBLEMS PERTAINING TO THE FUNCTIONING OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The precise role of the schools' governing bodies' has developed into a serious challenge for most schools within the King William's Town district and the entire Eastern Cape Province. This has sparked questions on the ability and authority of school governing bodies to assume their legal responsibility and to successfully implement the education policies in creating the desired teaching and learning environment. Governing bodies in the King William's Town district are grappling with a lack of knowledge and skills in education. These inadequacies impact on the general functioning of the schools.

Although the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (s20 (1) (a-m) clearly lists the compulsory functions of the school-governing bodies since most governing bodies of schools appear uncertain about their roles and responsibilities. It is on this basis that this research seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the manifestations of the School Governing Body's lack of capacity to fulfil their role in the organisation and management in the King William's Town district of the Kuyasa S.S.S.?
- What challenges are faced by managers of schools whose SGBs lack the knowledge of their roles in school governance in the King William's Town district?
- Which development strategies can be employed to capacitate the role of the School Governing Body in Kuyasa S.S.S., King William's Town District?
- What effect do the current School Governing Body election criteria have on the functionality of School Governing Bodies within the King William's Town district?
- How is education policy implementation affected by the SGBs' lack of capacity to fulfil their role?

In answering the above questions, this research seeks to review, inter alia, the election criteria for school governing body members and to explore possible ways of capacitating members in regard to their legal responsibilities. This would ensure that governing body members assume their duties with confidence and authority.

The idea that parental components of an SGB be in the majority and that the SGB be chaired by a parent could be problematic in rural areas because of the high rate of adult illiteracy and the fact that the majority of the parents who are expected to take on governing responsibilities have to be thoroughly prepared for this role (Department of Education, 2002:42). Seven years after the introduction of SGBs many rural schools remain in disorder and there is little to suggest that SGBs are contributing in any degree to the improvement of these schools.

Many schools continue to operate without school policies, constitutions, clear visions and missions; their financial situations are in tatters. In a study conducted to review school governance in South African schools (Department of Education, 2003: 76), one of the respondents concurs with this viewpoint:

A parent should not be a chairperson or a treasurer. Most SGBs fail because their chairperson is an illiterate parent. A chairperson of any committee or organisation should have a thorough knowledge of the committee or the organisation. Currently, 99% of the rural schools do not have constitutions, vision and mission statements or development plans. There are no codes of conduct for learners, budgets and financial control systems. How can an illiterate chairperson take a lead in any of these?

Educated and professional people are needed to help the principal in the running of the school. In many rural schools meetings are held to report to parents about development, progress and the projects being implemented in the schools. Mathonsi (2004: 20) argues that while the new policy requires that governors and managers work in democratic and participatory ways to build relationships to ensure efficient

and effective delivery of educational goals, the translation of these policies into practice remains a mammoth challenge because “poor communities tend to lack access, resources, information or the organisational skills to appropriately influence decisions on education or other social services “.

Many schools in disadvantaged socio-economic areas depend on the management styles of their school managers and the commitment of the educators to improve the quality of education since governors fail to navigate their way through the complex laws and regulations that define the field of governance (Department of Education, 2003:7).

Netshitahame (1999:94) asserts that despite national government’s efforts to shift responsibility to the level of the local school, many schools lack mission statements and policies regarding safety at school. Schools don’t have safety rules and lack constant rule-enforcement procedures and safety committees (Netshitahame , 1999:94). Although the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 stipulates that the SGB shall decide upon matters such as school policy, school administration and school’s finance, there is strong evidence that this is not the case. Decisions continue to be “steam-rolled“ by principals who want to satisfy their own wishes (The Star, 28 July 1999: 8).

The review committee on school governance also discovered that principals are often reluctant to relinquish or even share their power and authority (Department of Education, 2003:92).

Beckmann and Blom (2004:1) argue that many principals, bent on running schools autocratically, utilize some of the following strategies to deny other stakeholders the opportunity of participating meaningfully in the affairs of the school:

- Creating an impression of consolidation, while restraining,
- Debate on key contentious issues; and
- Setting up restricted channels for participating in school activities.

Although schools have been allocated section 21 powers, it remains to be seen how this can assist democracy and equality in schools. Karlsson (2002:332) states that a small percentage of schools have parents' representatives who were found to be fully active in governing body meetings and decision-making processes. Despite being in the majority, parents were relying on the principal and educators for leadership and guidance in decision-making (Karlsson , 2002:332).It is important to note that the active parents were mainly those from advantaged communities; hence the assertions by Motala and Pampallis (2004:143) that decentralisation does not necessarily lead to greater popular participation in any decision-making issues.

This is supported by Enslin and Dieltens (2002:19) who state that participation on its own does not guarantee that disadvantaged communities can effectively change their conditions or recognise their blockage to policy formulation. Sayed (2002:36) stresses that it is only when all learners experience improvement and quality of schooling regarding this process that one can argue that the policy of decentralisation has significantly affected social transformation.

Enslin and Dieltens (2002:19) further emphasise that without capacity and resources a community may be stuck in a circle of making demands without effectively being able to change any of the policies to their advantage. This can result in privileging those SGB members who are eloquent in expressing any discussion of policy and thereby further sidelining disadvantaged communities.

The institutional legacies of a school combined with the socio-economic status of the school communities impact greatly on the SGBs ability to contribute anything to education processes and decision-making (McLennan, 2000:10).

Since the establishment of SGBs one of the critical problems confronting the Provincial Departments of Education has been the role of SGBs, especially those from the previously marginalised and disadvantaged communities, as many of these

do not have the requisite skills and experience to exercise their new powers and they may also have difficulty in fulfilling their basic functions or qualifying for additional functions (Motala and Pampallis, 2001:153).

This is exacerbated by the fact that there are numerous problems in terms of training, short notice being given before training, cancellation of activities at the eleventh hour, some activities starting later than the actual time started and non-attendance by some training co-ordinators. In addition many parents who are members of SGBs are usually at work when training is given.

While the allocation of Section 21 status to a school is seen as empowering and entrenching democratic values, there are obvious risks involved in the process. Karlson (2002:333) argues that by devolving such functions to the governing body, the State may unintentionally be contributing to the perpetuation of inequalities. In the school environment disadvantaged groups tend to underparticipate, while individuals who are comparatively better off participate more, and so are able to more effectively protect their interests (Parry and Moyser, 1994).

This view is supported by Riddell (in De Clerq, 2002:87), who states that in most developing countries the managerial benefits rarely materialise because the local levels lack the capacity, resources and system to manage these functions and realise the efficiency gains; hence the allocation of section 21 status might not really benefit schools in disadvantaged rural communities.

Rather, this results in the stratification of schools into those that have sufficient resources and those that do not, and instead produce a competitive system of education resulting in the marginalization of disadvantaged communities (Sayed, 2001:28).

Motala and Pampallis (2001: 172) maintain that although the Department of Education appears to encourage community participation in governance, little

practical support is forthcoming for major national programmes of society, such as National Association of School-Governing Bodies, which could assist significantly in empowering the roles of SGBs.

1.4.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The apparent problem in Kuyasa Secondary School is that School Governing Body members do not know their roles and responsibilities resulting in the ineffective running of the school environment. One does not know whether the problem is at the Provincial level or District level. The training and continuous attendance of workshops of SGBs will promote effective performance of their functions to enable them to assume additional allocated functions as the schools are expected to manage their institution, funds and budget for better and quality education or curriculum delivery, which is a core function and responsibility of any educational institution.

According to South African Schools Act of 1996, Section 19 the members of the school governing body should be capacitated to run the school efficiently. Contrary to this fact members of the SGBs, the school manager and the school committees are not well trained to their roles and responsibilities.

1.5 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of the research are to:

- Investigate the role of SGBs in the King William's Town District, Kuyasa S S.S.S
- Highlight the plight of school-governing bodies in the King William's Town District, Kuyasa S.S.S.
- Highlight the effects of the role of SGBs on the governance of education in schools.
- Suggest possible ways of capacitating governing body members.

- Suggest alternative ways of electing governing body members who have the potential to cope with increased responsibilities.
- Suggest ways of redressing the negative effects of schools' governing bodies' roles to improve on the positive ones.
- Highlight the plight of governing bodies in formulating and implementing educational policies.

1.6 APPROACH AND METHODS

The research will be qualitative in nature and interpretive by design, within the ethnographic tradition of research. It also needs to be noted that this research will not in essence be concerned with generalisation to a wider population, but with describing and attempting to explain the phenomenon of the role of School Governing Bodies and their impact (or lack thereof) on the successful implementation of educational policy.

1.7 THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The research will make use of a qualitative approach for data collection and analysis. Straus and Corbin (1990: 17) define qualitative research as any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or by any other means of quantification. It can refer to research about personal lives, stories, behaviour, but also about organisational functioning, social movement or international relationships.

McMillan & Schumacher (1993: 390) state that qualitative research is basically naturalistic inquiry, which takes place in the real-world setting and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. The phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally, in that it has no predetermined course established by and for the research. Most qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.

Qualitative research collects data by interacting with selected persons.

Members of the School Governing Body and the principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School have been selected as the sample for purposes of this study as they are the role-players responsible for the efficient functioning and management of the school. According to McMillan & Schmacher, (1993: 372), qualitative inquiry means going into the field – into the real world of programmes, organisations, neighbourhoods, street corners - and getting close enough to the people and circumstances to capture what is happening. This enhances the description and understanding of both externally observable behaviour and internal states, such as worldviews, opinions, values, attitudes and symbols (Patton, 2002:48).

The above synopsis forms the basis for the justification of the qualitative approach for this study as the researcher will be visiting Kuyasa Secondary School to conduct interviews with members of School Governing Body and the Principal in order to gather as much relevant information as possible as to the role they play in the management and governing of the school and whether they experience any challenges or difficulties in the execution of their duties and mandate.

Strauss and Corbin (1990:19) further assert that qualitative approach can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is known. This is what the researcher intends to establish in understanding the challenges faced by the School Governing Body of the Kuyasa Secondary School and the effect this has on the implementation of education policy and possible ways of improving the roles of SGBs in general.

The qualitative research approach has various data collection strategies, such as interviews, observation, diaries, photographs, official documents and newspaper articles (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982:73). For purposes of this study two structured interview schedules with applicable questions will be employed to gather information from the participants. Individual personal interviews will be undertaken with

members of the Kuyasa Secondary School Governing Body and the School Principal.

1.7.1 INTERVIEWS

As stated, interviews will be conducted with the principal and members of the SGB of the Kuyasa Secondary School as they form the sample for purposes of this research. The interviews will entail open responses to questions in order to obtain data from the participants about how they conceive and give meaning to their world and how they explain the events in their environment (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:423).

The open-ended responses permit one to understand the world, as seen by the respondents. The purpose of gathering information from open-ended questions is to enable researchers to understand and capture the points of views of the people (Patton 2002:21). This will enable the researcher to elicit more knowledge, perceptions and understanding from the participant on the implementation of educational policies and the subsequent functioning of the school.

Qualitative interviews may take several forms: the informal conversation interviews, the interview guide approach, standardized open-ended interviews (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 426). For this study the interview guide approach will be employed as a data collection technique, during which the researcher will select the aspects of the topic of discussion in advance and also decide on the sequence and wording of the questions for the interview. The rationale for the choice of the interview is the freedom to explore, probe and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate the research topic (Patton 1990: 283). The flexibility of the interview guide approach helps to bring out the affective and emotion-laden aspects of people's responses and to determine the personal significance of their attitudes.

Not only does it permit the subjects' definition of the interviewing situation to receive full and detailed expression, it should also elicit the personal and social context of beliefs and feelings. This type of interview achieves its purpose to the extent that the subjects' responses are spontaneous rather than forced, are highly specific and concrete rather than diffuse and general, and are self-revealing and personal rather than superficial (Kidder 1981:187).

According to De Vos (2001:299), in-depth interviews with individuals are defined as one or more face-to-face interactions between an interviewer and an interviewee. Thus, an in-depth interview will be conducted with the principal of Kuyasa Secondary School as a key role-player who has specialised knowledge to share on the functioning and capacity of school-governing bodies. The principal has been selected because he has specific knowledge on the day-to-day activities of a School Governing Body and is required to work in very close interaction with the selected SGB for purposes of this study. De Vos (2001:300) asserts that the advantage of in-depth interviews is that reality can be reconstructed from the world of the interview, which enables the researcher to obtain an "insider-view" of the social phenomenon, as well as to explore other avenues of research emerging from the interview. Thus, the rich data which will be collected from the principal through this method is important in understanding the capacity (or lack thereof) of members of the SGB of the Kuyasa Secondary School s' and how this affects the governance and management of the school.

1.7.2 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Bless et al (2006:119-120) the main aim of structured interviews is to determine the frequency of various answers and to establish relationships between answers to different questions. This is achieved by comparing responses of the participants who form sample groups. For purpose of this study, the interviews will be recorded and prior permission will be obtained from the participants for the use of a tape recorder. The researcher will transcribe the collected data and will do a

content analysis of the transcriptions. As proposed by Babbie (1998:45) the researcher will look for common themes and trends from the collected data. Should any respondent feel that they are uncomfortable with the use of tape recorder, the researcher will take down extensive notes and will do content analysis of such notes. To further safeguard the integrity of collected data the researcher plans to work under the guidance of qualified statistician to ensure that the analysis of the collected data is done correctly.

1.8 SAMPLE

For purposes of this study the sample group will include all 12 members of the School Governing Body (SGB) of the Kuyasa Secondary School and the School Principal. The sample is justified on the grounds that the number of persons serving on the SGB is prescribed in terms of legislation and each has an important role to play in terms of the governing process of Kuyasa Secondary School.

The principal has been selected on the grounds that he plays a major role in the running and management of the school and is required to work in close relation with his SGB, which forms the basis for purposes of this research. The principal will be able to provide additional information on the role of the selected SGB.

1.9 DELIMITATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Calitz and Beckman (1994:7) define delimitation as the continuous narrowing and precise definition of the field of study so that the field becomes specific through the process of particularisation. This research will focus on the activities, or lack thereof, of the School Governing Body of the Kuyasa Secondary School in the King William's Town district of the Eastern Cape Province. This secondary school has been purposefully chosen as an information-rich case.

Patton (2002:116) asserts that the logic and power of purposeful sampling is derived from the emphasis on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of interest. This leads to the selection of information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information on such cases is found in those from which one learns a great deal on the issues that are of central importance to, and will illuminate, the questions being studied.

The intention of the study is not to generalise the findings to all school-governing bodies, but to establish sufficient features that are necessary to enhance the functionality of such school-governing bodies. It will also shed light on ways of empowering SGB members, as this problem may also be prevalent in other regions in South Africa.

The most striking limitation to the generalisation of the study resides in the areas of time, accessibility, convenience, lack of trust, fear, and intimidation of SGB members by school principals and to some extent higher authorities. The limitations of the study can be briefly stated as follows:

- The confinement of the study to one school, namely Kuyasa Secondary School in the King Williams Town district of the Eastern Cape.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher will observe all protocols prescribed by the Faculty of Arts of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to maintain and enhance the ethics credibility of the research. In this regard all participants will be informed of their right to anonymity, the right to participate on a voluntary basis and the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences. Participants will also be requested to sign an informed consent form prior to any interviews taking place.

1.11 LITERATURE REVIEW

A thorough study and analysis of the literature found in professional journals , reports, scholarly books and monographs, government documents, dissertations, periodicals, newspaper articles, school policies and SGB training manuals will provide a broad and through understanding of the role of a school-governing body as a factor in the implementation of education policies to ensure effective functioning of a school.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993;112) argue that if the literature study is carefully conducted and well presented it will assist in a better understanding of the selected problem and help place the results of a study in its historical perspective. Without a literature study it would be difficult to build a body of acceptable knowledge on any educational topic.

The literature review will help the researcher to gain a deeper and broader insight into the significance of a well-informed role of a governing body in the successful performance of the school and the impact which the lack of information and capacity of such a governing body might have on the governance and management of the school.

It will also help to shed some light on the possible ways of empowering the school-governing bodies on their roles and responsibilities as they relate to school governance.

Knowledge from relevant literature will be used in setting and clarifying the significance of the problem. It will also reveal possible ways of empowering school-governing bodies on their roles and responsibilities in regard to school governance.

1.12 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.12.1 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

School governance as regards the governing body's functions means determination of the policy and rules of the school that is to be organised and controlled. It includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school (Potgieter, Visser, van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch, 1997:11).

1.12.2 SCHOOL-GOVERNING BODY

The term "School-Governing Body" is used uniformly to describe an elected body that is entrusted with the responsibility and authority to formulate and adopt school policies within the national and provincial spheres that will provide a vision and agenda for education to function in terms of the South African Schools Act of 1996.

Governing bodies are representative of the main stakeholders, and as such should have:

- (1) Membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school that comprises:
 - a) Elected members,
 - b) The principal of the school, in his or her official capacity, and
 - c) Co-opted members (RSA1996: S (23) (1) (A-C).
- (2) Elected members of the governing body comprise members of each of the following:
 - a) Parents of learners at the school,
 - b) Educators at the school,
 - c) Members of staff at the school who are not educators,
 - d) Learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school (RSA 1996: s (23) (2) (a-d)).

According to the South African Schools Act (1996: 1) a parent is defined as:

- (a) the parent or guardian of a learner,
- (b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner, or
- (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a parent referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) that relate to a learner's education at school (RSA1996;S(1)(XIV)(a-c).

1.12.3 EDUCATION POLICY

Education policy refers to the implicit or explicit specification of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognized problem or matter of concern, and directed toward the accomplishment of some intended or desired set of goals. It also can be thought of as a position or stance developed in response to a problem or issue of conflict, and directed towards a particular object (Harman, 1989: 13).

According to Potgieter et al (1997:20) education policies come in the form of legislation, rules, directives and circulars issued by the Department of Education and those formulated by the school itself, such as :

- (a) The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, which deals amongst others with the best interests of the child. This is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. This means that the governing body must at all times uphold the interests of the learner in whatever they do or decide;
- (b) Fundamental human rights. These provide protection for every person's fundamental human rights. Therefore, the governing body in dealing with learners, parents, educators and all others involved in school education must always respect these rights.
- (c) The National Education Policy, Act 27 of 1996

This makes it possible to enforce national policy and any other related issues of education.

- (d) The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 sets out the rights and duties of employees including educators and non-educators of staff at schools. The Act regulates unions and the right to strike, bargaining procedures in the workplace and participation of employees in decision-making; and it also deals with other related matters.
- (e) The Educators' Employment Act 138 of 1994 which deals with subjects such as: the appointment and promotion of educators (and their terms and conditions of employment), the transfer and secondment of educators, the availability of educators, discharge and resignation of educators, misconduct and various other procedures.
- (f) The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, which deals with, amongst other issues, the establishment of the school-governing bodies, their roles and responsibilities, the control and management of the school , and the management of all funding.
- (g) Provincial Education Act and Regulation. Each province has its own Education Act that will regulate education in and under its jurisdiction.

1.12.4 CAPACITY

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary explains capacity as “mental power” or “legal competence” to perform a given task. This explanation translates into the talent, skill and ability to effectively and efficiently perform one’s duties (Allen: 1991: 20).

1.13 SEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter gives an introduction to the problem, a description of the problem and the problem formulation. It also explains the rationale for the research and describes its aims, limitations and the research methodology. Definitions of the main concepts are also given in this chapter .

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

This explores the functionality of the school-governing bodies, with special reference to their roles and their legal responsibilities. It will also explore the manifestations of the SGB's lack of knowledge in the role of school governance, which will inform their capacity-building needs. Again, it will examine the current election criteria of parent governors and their effect on the functionality of the school-governing bodies.

In essence, this chapter will constitute a review of the literature on the challenges of the SGBs and their precise roles in school governance and management. In this chapter the expected roles and functions of School Governing Bodies will be discussed with the aim of determining the skills, knowledge and expertise that the SGBs need in order to fulfil their responsibilities.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter will provide a description of the particular research design for this study. A detailed explanation of the methodology to be used will be given.

CHAPTER 4: THE FINDINGS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION IN THIS EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This chapter will give the results and interpretation of the empirical research.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will provide a summary of the research results. On the basis of analyzed and interpreted data, conclusions and recommendation will be made.

In this chapter the limitations of the study will be pointed out and acknowledged.

1.14 SUMMARY

This introductory section delineates the problem by clearly outlining the problem to be investigated, and presenting the rationale and ensuing aims of the research. The purpose of this study is to determine whether SGBs have the abilities, skills and knowledge of their roles to manage and govern their schools.

This section also provides an exposition of the research design (which is qualitative). It also highlights the research methods, for instance interviews (individual in-depth), documentary analysis and questionnaires. This study will be conducted in a secondary school. The information obtained from the school departmental officials and representatives of SGBs will also be interrogated; documents pertaining to the role of SGBs in schools will be analyzed and questionnaires will be administered to principals of schools in the circuit.

This section gives a concise demarcation and the limitations of the study, which include, amongst others, a lack of trust and possibly fear. It also provides us with the sequence and content of the chapters, as well as definitions of the concepts that will be used in the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

INTRODUCTION

The South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) ushered in a new approach to school governance in South African schools. Most significant was the democratic governance of schools through the involvement of stakeholders (Xaba , 2004:316). This was a move welcomed by the government, since it enabled communities to not only become involved in the education of their children, but also to have an influence in the organisation and governance of their schools.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:126) maintain that the main thrust of the South African Schools Act, 1996, is that the state has inadequate financial and organisational capacity to do everything that is needed for schools. All the stakeholders: parents, educators, learners and local community members should also be actively involved in the organisation, governance and funding of their schools.

This idea stems from the strong belief that schools are run well when governed by local people, since the people are well placed when it comes to identifying the problems and needs of their schools, provided they are prepared to accept the responsibilities of their governance. The preparation of these stakeholders to assume the governance and responsibilities of their schools remains a challenge to both the Department of Education as the controlling body and the schools themselves.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:129) warn that in order to perform their duties and carry out their responsibilities in an efficient way, School Governing Bodies should have the necessary capacity to do so.

School governance is a legal responsibility which requires particular skills, knowledge and expertise to ensure that members will be able to fulfil the concomitant legal duties and accept their accountability. Besides this, the functionality of the schools depends on the level of knowledge, the skills and the expertise of the School Governing Bodies.

These are by their nature critical structures for the delivery of effective teaching and learning in schools. The various members therefore need to perform their functions and act out their roles in a way that promotes the best interests of the child in the school. Mestry (2004:128) reports that prior to the South African Schools Act's promulgation, every principal was considered to be an accounting officer and was accountable to the Head of the Department of Education.

Heads of educational institutions sat with massive sets of directives on how to do everything from writing a receipt to opening a bank account. The problem that now arises is that the moment the school has elected a School Governing Body (SGB), certain responsibilities devolve upon the School Governing Body as a body, despite the fact that the authorities have not yet formulated a clear set of directives for School Governing Bodies.

This research seeks to determine the impact of this lack of directives, knowledge and skills on the governance, organisation and management of schools.

The investigation in this regard becomes even more critical when one considers the fact that school governance is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled to ensure that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the legislation.

This implies that the School Governing Body, in promoting the best interests of the school and particularly those of its learners, is responsible for developing a strategy for ensuring the provision of quality education to the learners and the proper

implementation thereof. The general purpose of the governing body is to perform its functions effectively and in terms of the South African Schools Act of 1996, on behalf of the school and for the benefit of the community.

A governing body is therefore placed in a position of trust by the government to effect proper learning (Nkosana, 2003:9, and Xaba, 2004:314).

On the basis of the above, it is important that governing body members should have the necessary skills and knowledge in order to perform their roles and responsibilities according to the community's expectations. However, the lack of capacity on the side of School Governing Body members, particularly in rural schools, is posing serious challenges to the governance and management of schools.

The following discussion seeks to investigate this phenomenon, its manifestation and impact on the functionality of schools. The adoption of the South African Schools' Act 84 of 1996 resulted in the introduction of democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in South African schools.

These bodies were given far more responsibility than the school committees, which had governed schools since before the dawn of democracy in 1994. As statutory bodies, these governing bodies now ensure the participation of parents, educators and other staff members, principals, learners and co-opted members of public schools in South Africa (Beckman and Bloom, 2000:1).

According to the South African Schools Act, 1996, section 16(1), the governance of every school is vested in its governing body and the principal of the school has the formal legal authority for the overall management of the school (RSA, 1996:9).

The school management team (SMT) is also held co-responsible for the professional management of the school; this includes the daily activities of the

school (Heystek, 2003:4). Sallis (1995:66) maintains that the school governing body is not supposed to be involved in any of the professional management activities, such as decisions about learning material, which teaching method or class assessment approach should be used, even when the SGB is paying the salary of a staff member. This should be done by the School Management Team (SMT), which consists of the principal, the deputy principal, and the heads of department (education specialists) or senior teachers in schools where there may be only one or two heads of department.

It is, however, important to note that the School's Act requires School Governing Body members in Section 21 schools to play an important role in curriculum issues, although it is not actually made explicit just how they should do this.

2.1 COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

In accordance with the South African Schools Act, (RSA, 1996:13), the membership of School Governing Bodies is made up of the elected members, the principal and co-opted members. The elected members of School Governing Bodies comprise of individuals from each of the following categories: parents of learners in the school, educators at the school, members of the staff at the school, who are not necessarily educators and learners in the eighth grade or higher.

Parents are in the majority on these School Governing Bodies and there should be one parent more than the total of all other members combined. According to the Department of Education (2002:20), the number of parents, educators, non-educating members who sit on governing body will depend on the size of the school enrolment and whether it is a primary, a secondary or a comprehensive school.

A primary school of between 160 and 719 pupils has six parent members, two educator members, and one non-teaching member, whereas a secondary school with more than 629 learners will have ten parent members, three educators

members, two non-teaching members and three learner members (Department of Education , 2002:20).In the absence of non-teaching members, the number of parent governors must be reduced by one.

The small number of educators is, according to Deem, Brehoney and Heath (in Van Wyk:2004:49) problematic for educators, as they have frequently to rely on the SGB as a whole (and not their own educator representatives) to meet their needs, as educators are often reluctant to engage in direct confrontation with school principals at School Governing Bodies' meetings. This small number means that their right to have a say in the affairs of the school is curtailed.

The entrenchment of the position of the parent is indicative of the importance attached to their input in the affairs of the school (Visser, 1996:631).School Governing Bodies are allowed to co-opt members from the community if they feel the person can make a meaningful contribution to their functioning. Wragg and Partington (1990:67) stress that co-opted members should bring a dimension to the governing body which other members cannot readily give. However, such members do not have voting rights on the School Governing Body.

Governors normally serve for three years, except learner Representative Council (LRC) Members who serve for one year, unless re-elected. And provided they are still at school during these three years, if for whatever reason any member ceases to qualify as a governor, he/she automatically ceases to be a member of the governing body (Department of Education, 2003:78).

The principal reason for members losing their status is that they cease to be members when their children leave the school (Department of Education, 2003:78). Office bearers serve for only a year, unless they are re-elected. The establishment of School Governing Bodies with the inclusion of parents, educators and learners (in secondary schools) clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to democracy. This is supported by Gultig, Ndlovu and Bertram (1999:25) who stress

that this will help involve people in making decisions that affect their lives, and this therefore assists in the spreading of democracy. De Clerq (2002:87) adds that local institutions thereby develop greater motivation, commitment and involvement.

Education is to be relevant to the local needs and conditions. School governing bodies were instituted with the aim of entrenching democracy and instituting representative governance. It is strongly believed that this will enhance the effectiveness of schools and therefore improve the quality of education (Department of Education, 1996:22). Davies (1999:101) states that representation of these stakeholders on the governing body of the schools (SGB) is a positive move in the effort to achieve the aims of democratisation, which includes participation.

This participation in education is formed to achieve better education for all learners. The philosophy of giving significant power to parents in decision-making reinforces the concept that decisions about managing are best taken by those people closest to the users of the service (Green, 1993:220). By involving more people in school governance, the government hopes to boost democracy and ensure equity in schools (Dieltens and Enslin, 2002:40).

2.2 IMPORTANT ASPECTS PERTAINING TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

From the principles of transformation and the restructuring of the education system has now emerged the need for a new structure of school organisation. This system is aimed at creating conducive conditions for developing a coherent, integrated, flexible national education system, advancing the equitable use of public resources, improving the quality of education across the education system, and establishing the democratic governance, while catering for school-based decision-making within the borders of provincial guidelines.

The new structure was brought about through a well-managed process of negotiated change, based on the understanding that each public school should embody a

partnership between provincial education and the local community (South African Schools Act, 1996:10).

School Governing Bodies are statutory bodies, which are established to take charge of the governance of public schools. Looyen (2000:49) postulates that educational reform should be aligned to bring parents back into the ambit of educational governance, because participatory parental involvement is designed to unlock traditionally centralised, bureaucratic structures that have in the past ignored policy and decision-makers who often were unable to share the aspirations of school communities.

Parents, throughout the world, seek to be liberated and call for greater involvement in school governance to ensure, amongst other things, that schools provide a service that is relevant to the community's needs.

In becoming members of a School Governing Body, community members are given a chance to influence the school's activities, according to their needs and aspirations. Bullivant (1988:12) reports that being a governor is a voluntary task undertaken to serve the school and the community; it is an opportunity to help young people to benefit fully from their education, so that in the future they too may wish to make their own contribution to the community.

According to Looyen (2000:19), the process embarked on by the Department of Education to consciously mobilise society to participate in educational reform is critical in ensuring that schools come to mirror the needs, desires, aspirations, hopes and expectations of the community.

In realising these goals, communities have mobilised, interacted and clustered skills to enhance and contribute to the wellbeing of schools, with a view to eliciting the desired outcomes. The process embarked upon by the Department of Education will enhance democracy and accountability among all stakeholders in schools. This, in

turn, will create the necessary conditions for quality education in schools. Thus, there was a need to establish a body which would be acceptable to all the stakeholders and would be able to adequately serve their needs and aspirations.

2.2.1 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The huge disparities among South African schools required a new structure of school organisation and system of governance, which would be workable, as well as transformative (South African Schools Act, 1996:10). This new system of governance is underpinned by the principles and values of democracy, and makes allowance for participatory decision-making.

According to Looyen (2000:67), school principals had in the past controlled South African schools with little or no teacher-parent participation. The principal's leadership style and frame of reference were the main drivers of the school's ethos, culture and impetus. Teachers, parents and students contributed very little to policy and decision-making, as their role was for the most part merely supportive in nature.

As could be expected this system from the past has met with strong opposition and criticism from the school community and the general public.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:124) report that, in most cases, the black communities rejected the governance structure that the government instituted, as this offered them little say in the running of their schools. By 1976, parents in urban areas had started to establish their own representative communities, precisely because they felt that the school committees and boards were not representing them adequately.

The alienation of the communities from the education system created dissatisfaction and tension between the schools and their communities. However, this has changed since the promulgation of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, which made the introduction of SGBs in all schools mandatory. While parents in these country have,

for many years, been voluntarily involved in school-based activities, their role as entrenched in the South African Schools Act, has since become more pronounced. Not only are they accountable to those who have entrusted them with the task of school governance, but they also need to master those skills needed in dealing with issues such as control, finances, personnel, school policy, curriculum, discipline, religious rights and natural justice (Van Wyk and Lemmer, 2002:141).

The South African Schools Act, 1996, gives all the stakeholders a chance and an equal opportunity to participate in the affairs of schools, and also a new right together with those responsibilities incurred as regards the quality of education offered by the school. As a result, the Act has assisted in driving the democratisation and transformation of education governance.

Marishane (1999:33) argues that since the state has no financial and organisational muscle to do everything for schools, all the other stakeholders, namely parents, educators, learners and local community members need to be actively involved in the organisation, governance and funding of their schools.

The idea stems from the strong belief that schools run well when they are governed by local people, since these people are well placed when it comes to identifying the problems and needs of their schools, provided they are prepared to accept the responsibilities for their governance tasks.

The envisaged partnership between the community and the state in the running of the school is critical in determining the level of resources of the school, and subsequently the quality of education offered to the learners.

Marishane (1993:05) also noted that the potential advantage of community participation is that the school may benefit from a wide range of expert knowledge, which may exist in the community in areas such as law, accountability and civics. However, in the rural areas the availability of these skills remains to be seen. The

participation of community members with expert types of knowledge is the only guaranteed way to infuse new social energy into institutions and structures of the education and training system, dispelling thereby the chronic alienation of large sectors of society from the education process, and reducing the power of government administration to intervene where it should not (Van Wyk and Lemmer, 2002:125).

According to Bruce-Reeds (in Marishane, 1999:54), school governance has three dimensions:

- Sovereign governance - which places full public accountability for the work of the school as a whole on all the interested parties, rendered in various forms, including the representation of the annual report to parents;
- Judicial governance - which places the accountability for meeting all the legal requirements to which the school is subject, including the laws relating to finance, employment, the curriculum and health safety; and
- Performance governance - which entails the accountability for carrying out the activities of the school through which the vision of the school and the provision of services to the pupils are put into practice.

These dimensions of governance entail specific and legal obligations, which require particular knowledge, skills and expertise to be employed. However, it remains to be seen whether the governing bodies charged with these obligations will succeed in fulfilling their duties.

The other rationale for the establishment of School Governing Bodies is to assist in driving the government's decentralisation process. According to Brown (in Marishane, 1999:16), decentralisation means that the decision-making authority devolves from central office to the school. The reason behind such a move is to

widen the scope of accountability to the public, by giving responsibilities to those in close contact with the school.

In this way, the aspirations and needs of the community will be served, provided those elected to dispatch these responsibilities receive the necessary training to do their jobs adequately.

Although the establishment of governing bodies is a move welcomed by the government, there is the challenge of school governors, particularly those in the rural areas, being able to carry out their legal responsibilities adequately.

2.2.2 MEMBERSHIP OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The School Governing Body mirrors the stakeholder community of the school, whose representation is underpinned by the principles of equality. Marishane (1999:48) postulates that as regards the democratic principles of equality and collaborative governance, the Governing Body of an ordinary public school is composed of democratically elected members, as follows:

- The principal of the school.
- Educators at the school.
- Members of staff at the school who are not educators.
- Learners attending the eighth grade and higher.
- Co-opted members of the community served by the school ;and
- The co-opted owner or representative owner of the property on which the school is situated

The co-opted members are drawn into the School Governing Body because of the expert knowledge and skills which are needed to assist the governing body in carrying out its functions. However, this provision is usually underutilised,

particularly in schools in the rural areas. One possible reason for this is that people with expert knowledge and skills do not want to associate or be seen associating with members of the School Governing Body, who are perceived as being “amateurs”.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:125) argue that while the transformation of education in the South African context involves changing education for the better, the democratisation of education encompasses the idea of partnership in which stakeholders – such as parents, learners, educators and members drawn the school community – not only play an active role in school activities and function, but also jointly constitute a body that represents stakeholders and takes decisions on behalf of the school.

Members of the School Governing Body should obligate the school to serve the best interests of the learners. Thus, Moate (1996:30) advises that the structure of governing bodies should be such that it creates an environment designed to ensure that all learners have an opportunity to achieve their potential. It is on this basis only that all learners will have an opportunity to achieve their potential.

The election process of school governing bodies should have a way of emphasising the need for particular skills from candidates that are elected to serve in the School Governing Body. Again, Moate (1999:26) argues that the composition and characteristics of a governing body determine its nature and scope of influence, and also impact its effectiveness and efficiency. Thus the competence of the School Governing Body depends entirely on its composition.

A substantial combined pool of skills and knowledge is critical for the effective functioning School Governing Bodies. Therefore, members of the School Governing Body should not only be people who care enough about schooling and what goes on in their own school to want to be involved and make a difference, they should also

possess the necessary skills to fulfil their obligations (Department of Education, 1997:9).

Thus, the recruitment and election processes should be informed and guided by the governance needs of the school. Section 23 (9) of the South African Schools Act (1996:18) stipulates that the number of parent members must be one more than the combined total of the other members of a governing body who have voting rights.

To some extent this creates a problem in the governance of the school, particularly in the rural areas where most of the parent communities are either illiterate or semi-literate. This means that more than half of the governing body members will either be illiterate or semi-literate, which will create problems for the reading, understanding and implementation of policies.

The inability to implement education policies, which seek to deal with the inherent inequalities in education, will create serious problems in the organisation, management and governance of the schools. This will, in turn, lead to the phenomenon of dysfunctional schools. This problem can be resolved by the nature of the election criteria that are employed during the election of School Governing Body members.

2.2.3 ELECTION CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The election of School Governing Body members is predominantly based on the nomination and seconding of candidates who are prepared to stand for election. There is no specific prescribed recruitment process that is employed to “woo” people with the necessary skills for the governance responsibilities.

The election process for the School Governing Body has the following steps (Department of Education, 2003:11):

- Compilation of a voters' roll.
- Nomination of candidates.
- Election, and
- Post-election processes.

The procedure for the nomination and election of parents, learners, educators and non-educator members of staff onto the School Governing Body is the same. All nominators, seconders and candidates for the School Governing Body should be people who are listed on the school register as learners' parents, educators or non-educator staff members at the school. All eligible persons who wish to be school governors have to be nominated and then seconded.

The electoral officer has to decide on a date, time and venue for a meeting where the different sectors of the school community, which will constitute the School Governing Body, will nominate their candidates. The rules for the nomination of parents are as follows (Department of Education, 2003:12):

- A parent may only be nominated (or seconded) by another parent of an officially enrolled learner at the school.
- The nominating parent must not be employed at the school, nor be an electoral officer at the school.
- The nominated parent must be of sound mind.

The following is the procedure for the nomination of a parent to serve on the School Governing Body (Department of Education, 2003: 12):

- A parent can be nominated by the proposer handing a completed nomination form, which is available from the principal's office, to the electoral officer no earlier than eight days before and not less than 24 hours before the scheduled nomination meeting.
- Alternatively, they can also be nominated at the nomination meeting.

- The nomination of each parent nominated at the meeting needs to be seconded by another parent, after which the nomination form has to be completed and handed to the electoral officer within the prescribed time during the meeting.
- every nominated candidate will have the opportunity to state:
 - their name.
 - names and grades of their children in the school.
 - occupation and experience or skills, and
 - their vision for the school.
- When nomination has closed no further nominations are to be allowed.

At the end of the nomination process the ultimate procedure to come up with the actual parental School Governing Body members is as follows:

- If the total number of valid nominations is less than the required number of parent governors, the electoral officer will dissolve the nomination meeting and arrange for another nomination meeting within 14 days. If, at the second meeting, there are still insufficient nominations, those who have been nominated will be considered as being elected, provided they meet the required number.
- If all the nominations that are accepted by the electoral officer at a nomination meeting of parents are equal in number to the parent members required for the governing body, the electoral officer must declare that all the nominated candidates are duly elected.
- If the number of nominations accepted by the electoral officer at a nomination meeting of parents is greater than the number required for the governing body, then the electoral officer must organise an election process.
- The election is by way of a secret ballot; this requires voters to make a cross against the names of the nominated candidates they wish to elect (Department of Education, 2003:11).

Although the School Governing Body election procedure is underpinned by democratic principles, the nomination and second processes are nevertheless often limiting to the skills composition of School Governing Bodies. The parent community, particularly in the rural areas, is often inclined to nominate those parents who are easily accessible, while ignoring the skills need for effective school governance.

Thus, their choice of School Governing Body members is often based on the person's availability, rather than on the possession of any particular knowledge or skills.

The system that is employed to elect members of a School Governing Body does not emphasise or stipulate the need for particular skills, knowledge or literacy levels. As a result, parents elected to the School Governing Bodies, particularly in the rural areas, do not necessarily have the minimum basic literacy level required to understand the jargon and practice used in the world of education. Thus, many would rely heavily on personal values and intuition when electing parents.

Section 23(9) of the South African Schools Act (1996:18) states that the number of parent members must be one more than the combined total of all the other members on the Governing Body who have voting rights. This creates a problem in the governance of schools in rural areas, where most members of the parent community are either illiterate or semi-literate (Moate, 1996:102).

In such a case, it usually means that more than half of the governing body members will be either illiterate or no more than semi-literate.

As a result, chances are that parents serving on the SGB would experience problems with reading, understanding and implementing the policies and legal

directives from the Department of Education. This would obviously impact negatively on the functions of such School Governing Bodies.

Mabusa and Themane (2002:114) note that, although in general, School Governing Bodies are duly constituted in accordance with policy stipulations, grandparents often represent parents in School Governing Bodies in the rural areas, since these areas are more readily available for services. This is due to the fact that most parents work far away from their homes. However, representation by a grandparent can be problematic because their views may not necessarily be identical with those of the parents.

Besides, grandparents may have little or no knowledge about the new trends in the education system. As a result, serious problems regarding the implementation of education policies, which seek to deal with the inherent inequalities in education and organisation, management and governance of a school lead to dysfunctional schools.

Creese (1995:2) indicates that in some parts of the teaching profession there is a tendency to resent the involvement of governing bodies in matters of school policy, as they are perceived as being “amateurs”. Besides, some teachers see the role of governing bodies as largely peripheral to the real work of the school because of their often-limited knowledge and skills(Creese,1995:3).

Thus, it is critical that the criteria used to elect the parent governors should be reviewed to allow for the election of members who will have some working knowledge and understanding of education policies in practices, and are thus able to speak with authority on educational matters. This will earn them the respect and co-operation of members of the school community.

2.3 THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The School Governing Body has vested powers to ensure the effective and efficient governance of the school. As such, the job of the governing body is to promote the best interests of the school to ensure that the learners at the school receive the best education possible. School Governing Bodies should also help the school principal to organise and manage the school activities in an effective and efficient way (Department of Education 1997:7).

According to Potgieter et al. (1997:31), the powers, functions and duties of governing bodies can be grouped according to a list of managerial duties that have to be carried out by all governing bodies, and a list of tasks may be given to certain governing bodies that have ability to fulfil these tasks. These are called the allocated functions of an SGB.

These allocated functions of SGBs are discussed in section 20 of the South African Schools Act (1996:12), which stipulates that subject to this Act, the Governing Body of a public school must:

- (a) Promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all the learners at the school;
- (b) Adopt a constitution;
- (c) Develop the mission statement of the school;
- (d) Adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- (e) Support the principal, education and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions;
- (f) Determine times in the school's day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school;
- (g) Administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;

- (h) Encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school;
- (i) Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Employment of Educators Act 1998 (Act No 76 of 1998) and the Labour relation Act 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- (j) Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non-educator staff at the school, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994) and the Labour Relations Act of 1995 (Act No 66 of 1995);
- (k) At the request of the Head of Department, allow the reasonable use, under fair conditions determined by the Head of Department, of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school itself;
- (l) Discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act; and
- (m) Discharge other functions consistent with this Act, as determined by the minister by notice in the government Gazette.

Although the above functions are imperative for the effective governance of the school, the functions discussed below are related to the above functions, and seem to have critical implications on the capacity of the School Governing Bodies as regards school governance.

2.3.1. DETERMINING THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Curriculum is the range of learning opportunities which a school provides for its learners; that is, everything that is taught learn. The curriculum includes the formal lessons in the classroom, laboratory and gymnasium or on the sports field. It also includes homework, possible examination choices, good manners, school uniforms, and equal opportunities for all pupils.

It also includes all those activities arranged by the schools, which take place outside the normal school hours, such as matches against teams from other

schools and school trips and visits. The so-called “hidden curriculum” refers specifically to the set of attitudes and values which pupils acquire, often subconsciously through being members of the school.

This “hidden curriculum” depends heavily on the ethos of the school and human relations, racial equality and awareness, health and career education, and political and religious education, as offered in the school (Creese, 1995:48 and Bullivant, 1988:64).

The curriculum forms the core business of the school. Thus, its selection and management determine the level of functionality of the school. Moate (1996:41) considers the instructional programme to constitute the heart of the school and states that the SGB should therefore objectively monitor the outcomes of the instructional programmes by means of the periodic evaluation of the curriculum. It should take action if the outcomes do not meet the established needs, because it has an ongoing responsibility to ensure that standards and quality are continually maintained.

It should, according to the mentioned author, develop an accountability system that reflects the priorities and also the agreed-upon measurable benchmarks as far as the curriculum is concerned.

The nature of the responsibilities pertaining to curriculum issues demands that the School Governing Bodies should have specific and particular knowledge, skills and understanding of the needs of the community, legislation and the policies governing the structuring of curricula, as well as the educator’s training capabilities in managing the envisaged curriculum.

Although the school governors do not choose the textbooks or set the examinations, they should certainly keep an eye on the way in which the curriculum is put across

to the pupils and the results that are produced. For example, in secondary schools they should monitor and have answers to the following questions:

- How the homework timetable is planned;
 - How many hours of homework a week are children of different ages expected to complete?
 - Is the homework ever marked?
 - To what extent is the curriculum affected by the availability of teachers who are able to teach it?
 - Is the curriculum affected at all by the presence of large numbers of children from ethnic minority backgrounds?
 - How is the curriculum affected by local employment?
 - To what extent do the requirements of higher education affect the curriculum?
- (Bullivant, 1988:65).

School Governing Body members need to be well informed and capacitated to tackle the challenges involved in planning, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the curricula. Sallis (1995:61) asserts that the basics of human reproduction are now available for all age-groups as part of the national curriculum in science, and other aspects of sex are also common knowledge.

Education and emotional matters, social, moral and health issues are all now the legal responsibility of governors. In secondary schools governors are required to ensure that this additional sex education is provided; they need to approve the contents and inform parents about it, and it must by law include information on HIV and AIDS.

This applies to South African schools. Teaching must be within a framework of morality and family values. Therefore, the knowledge, skills and information pool of the SGB members are all critical issues in the successful choice, organisation,

management and implementation of the curriculum to satisfy the needs and expectations of the community that is served by the school.

However, if the School Governing Bodies lack the capacity to handle this critical responsibility, the school is more likely to underperform or even become dysfunctional.

2.3.2 MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE

The level of discipline maintained within the school underpins the functionality and performance of the school. As a result, sections 8 (1) and 20 (1) (d) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (1996:7&12) require School Governing Bodies to adopt a code of conduct for learners after due consultation with learners, parents and teachers of the school. The primary aim of the code of conduct is to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment that is dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

A code of conduct based on human rights principles contains rules, religious principles, sanctions and disciplinary procedures (Squelch ,2001:141).

However, the School Governing Body has to maintain a good balance between maintaining discipline in the school and observing and protecting the constitutional rights of individual learners, to avoid having their decisions and actions regarding discipline declared unconstitutional. All decisions and investigations made by the school governing body should be in line with the values, spirit and objectives of the Bill of Rights.

Squelch (2001:142) argues that for a School Governing Body to develop a school code of conduct and meaningful policies on disciplinary matters, they need to possess the knowledge and skills on how to write policy, as well as a fairly extensive

knowledge of the law. This is a serious challenge to the vast majority of School Governing Bodies, particularly in the rural areas, as they do not seem to have either the capacity to develop policy or the resources to engage the necessary expertise.

Hence, many schools would not have proper policies and procedures in place, which could create serious disciplinary problems for the school. In spite of the School Governing Bodies' lack of the necessary capacity to develop disciplinary policies, they still have to play a role in ensuring that a culture of teaching and learning prevails in their schools. This can be achieved by, among other ways, fulfilling their task relating to the discipline of learners and educators. Whether they will succeed, however, remains to be seen.

Squelch (2001:141) warns that the failure or omission by School Governing Bodies to adopt a code of conduct may in law render the public school, through its governing body, delictually liable for any damage or loss that may arise from such a failure or omission. This emphasises the importance of the School Governing Bodies' capacity in discharging their responsibilities.

Although each Governing Body may have its own ideas about what type of behaviour is to be accepted in their school and according to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:134), the following aspects should be included:

- School rules. These are standards of behaviour that set out what may and what not be done. Rules must be fair, reasonable and realistic.
- Sanctions. Learners should know what is expected of them, but also what action will be taken if they disobey any of the school rules.
- Disciplinary Proceedings. Some disciplinary cases need to be investigated and specific procedures followed before any action can be taken against a learner who is charged with an offence. These procedure or steps should also be included in the code of conduct.

These aspects and their correct implementation will determine the legal validity of the school's code of conduct, which will then form a subordinate legislation for the school governance and its administration.

Again, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:130) argue that the Governing Body exercises its powers in areas affecting the grievances, disputes and the dismissal of educators. Therefore, according to them, the school governors need to be familiar with the legislation and government notices affecting learners, personnel and labour relations.

Thus, it is reasonable for school governors to have specific knowledge and understanding of the laws and legislation relating to education, and to avoid making wrong decisions which might expose them to litigation.

2.3.3 DETERMINING SCHOOL POLICIES

School policies set the tone for the standards which have to be achieved by schools. As such, Carver (in Walters and Richardson 1997:29) defines an effective policy as, "A statement of values or an ethos which generates or underlines a course of action in an institution."

This means that the Governing Body should clearly state what it wants concerning matters such as school dress, behaviour and discipline in the school, curriculum matters, staff development, educational visits and excursions, meeting special education needs or any other matter which the Governing Body considers to be important.

To address the above calls would require a clear understanding of the school situation and the legislation which governs the education system, because the spirit

and purpose of all the policies should express the vision and objectives of the school and be in line with educational legislation. Thus, the school governing bodies are responsible for determining the school policies and procedures necessary for the smooth and effective running of the school.

School Governing Bodies should also ensure that such policies are clear, consistent and reasonable for their implementation and compliance by the school community (Squelch 2001:140 and Lemmer, 2002:130).

However, Walters and Richardson (1997:28) argue that there are many policies, which the school must make by means of laws, that it is commonplace in most schools to “make sure we have them”. This is usually, “in case someone from the Department of Education asks to see them.” They should therefore be readily available. Some of these policies are very important in directing the school’s ethos, but they are often, according to these authors, drawn up with minimal or no input from the School Governing Bodies.

Thus, it seems that many School Governing Bodies have busied themselves approving policies that are usually drawn up by the head teacher on such matters as health and safety, special educational needs, admission, sex education, pupil discipline, charging and the remission of fees, as well as the letting of the premises.

This may sometimes be done without making any financial contribution, thereby revealing the weakness of the School Governing Bodies, particularly in the rural areas, to deal diligently with policies on various school matters.

The School Governing Bodies’ responsibilities are not limited to the establishment of various policies, but they should monitor and evaluate their implementation. Walter and Richardson (1997:30) assert that it is the main purpose of the Governing Body to make and review policy statements, and to check on how well these policies are working.

Moate (1996:37) reports that when it comes to school governance policy obligations School Governing Bodies should not only set broad policies, but they should also build a chain of accountability within the school community itself. However, Walter and Richardson (1997:53), argue that at present it seems as if many governing bodies are unclear about what they should monitor and how to go about evaluating the success of the policy statement.

It is also crucial for the School Governing Bodies to have a clear understanding of the school situation which will inform the type of policies to be formulated and the monitoring tools to be put in place. This will assist in focusing their efforts and energy on ensuring that there is effective and efficient implementation of all policy statements.

However, with the limited knowledge and understanding, which most School Governing Bodies seem to have, it will be difficult to realise this critical responsibility in practice.

2.3.4 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The financial environment in the school has a direct impact on the functionality of the school. As a result a School Governing Body has an important role to play in overseeing the financial management of the school fees and any other money which may be paid into the school's account. This role includes planning, reviewing, controlling and approving the school budget in accordance with the school's needs.

School Governing Bodies must also ensure that the budget complies with the department's guidelines and regulations (Van Wyk and Lemmer 2002:132), and of course, it must also comply with the prescriptions laid down in the following section of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (1996:24-7) which states:

36. A governing body of a public school must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school.

37. (1) The Governing Body of a public school must establish a school fund and administer it in accordance with directions issued by the Head of Department.

(2) Subject and subsection: All money received by a public school, including school fees and voluntary contributions must be paid into the school fund.

(3) The Governing Body of a public school must open and maintain a bank account.

(4) Money and other goods donated or bequeathed to or received in trust by a public school must be applied in accordance with the conditions of such donations, bequest or trust.

(5) All assets acquired by a public school on or after the commencement of this Act are the property of the school.

(6) The school funds, all proceeds thereof, and any other assets of the public school must be used only for:

(a) Educational purposes, at or in connection with the school;

(b) Educational purposes, at or in connection with other public schools, by agreement with such other public schools and with the consent of the head of Department;

(c) The performance and the function of the Governing Body; or

(d) Any other educational purpose agreed upon between the Governing Body and the Head of Department.

38. (1) A Governing Body of a public school must prepare a budget each year, according to the guidelines determined by the Member of the Executive Council, which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year.

(2) Before a budget referred to in subsection (1) is approved by the Governing Body, it must be presented to a general meeting of parents convened on at least

30 days' notice, for consideration and approval by a majority of the parents present and voting.

39. (1) Subject to this Act, school fees may be determined and charged at a public school only if a resolution to do so has been adopted by a majority of the parents attending the meeting referred to in section 38 (2).

(2) A resolution contemplated in subsection (1) must provide for:

(a) The amount of fees to be charged; and

(b) Equitable criteria and procedures for the total, partial or conditional exemption of those who are unable to pay school fees.

The Governing Body must implement a resolution adopted at the meeting contemplated in section (1).

(4) The Minister, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers and Minister of Finances, makes regulation regarding the equitable criteria and procedures referred to in subsection (2)(b).

40. (1) A parent is liable to pay the school fees determined in terms of section 39 unless or to the extent that he or she has been exempted from payment of school fees.

(3) In deciding on an appeal referred to in subsection (2), the Head of Department must follow due process which safeguards the interests of the parent and the Governing Body.

41. The Governing Body of a public school may by process of law enforce the payment of school fees by parents who are liable to pay in terms of section 40.

42. The Governing Body of a public school must:

(a) Keep records of all funds received and spent by the public school and of its assets, liabilities and financial transactions; and

(b) As soon as practicable, but not later than three months after the end of each financial year, draw up annual financial statements in accordance with the guidelines determined by the members of the Executive Council.

43. (1) the Governing Body of the public school must appoint a person registered as an accountant and auditor in terms of the Public Accountants and Auditors act, 1991 (Act no, 80 of 1991), to audit the records and financial statements referred to in section 42.

(2) If the audit referred to subsection (1) is not reasonably practicable, the Governing Body of the school must appoint a person to examine and report all the records and financial statements referred to in section 42, who:

(a) Is qualified to perform the duties of an accountant officer in terms of section 60 of the close corporation Act, 1984 (Act no. 69 of 1984); or

(b) Is approved by the member of the Executive Council for this purpose.

(3) No person who has a financial interest in the affairs of the public school may be appointed under this section.

(4) If the Member of the Executive Council deems it necessary, he or she may request the Auditor-General to undertake an audit of the records and financial statements of a public school.

(5) A Governing Body must submit to the Head of Department, within six months after the end of each financial year, a copy of the annual financial statements, audited or examined in terms of this section.

(6) At the request of an interested person, the Governing Body must make up the record referred to in section 42, and the audited or examined financial statements referred to in this section, available for inspection.

Moate (1996:45) cautions that a systematic control of school funds is important, as all the instruction practices must be carried out within the school's financial framework. Besides the school's vision is successfully driven by its financial strength.

The failure of, or the omission by, the School Governing Body to set up stringent financial management and control systems would inevitably result in serious misappropriation and/or mismanagement of school funds, which in turn would have a negative impact on the general functioning of the school.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:135) report that since financial matters are so complex that many governors find them difficult to understand, Governing Bodies generally organise subcommittees, which together with co-opted committee members having a sound knowledge of financial and budgeting, are to be actively involved in the school's financial matters.

However, in rural areas and deprived communities this has always proved to be difficult to achieve, because those with expert knowledge do not want to be seen associating with people who are "seen to be amateurish" in their approach. As a result, parents' governors rely heavily on the principal to take the lead in fulfilling their financial responsibilities.

In most instances, many principals use this opportunity to usurp power from the SGB and to start directing school governance according to their own volition and to their personal satisfaction. Thus many principals have been dismissed for the misappropriation of school funds, a situation which would not have prevailed if the SGB had had the necessary knowledge and ability to manage and control the school's funds themselves.

Certain schools did not submit their audited financial statements for the 2005 financial year. As a result, their allocations from the Department of Education could

not be transferred. Thus, learners are punished because of the negligence or incompetence of their principals and other SGB members (City Press, July 23, 2006).

This undesirable situation demonstrates a lack of understanding of the financial management's responsibilities which then impact negatively on the functioning of the schools. A School Governing Body with a sound knowledge of financial management would have a financial programme which identifies the time for budgeting, presenting the budget for approval, presenting the audited financial statement to the parents, as well as the prescriptions for reviewing the budget and/or financial position of the school at any specified time.

A sound knowledge of financial management is imperative in administering the complex budget of the school. Intuitive knowledge of financial management of most rural parent governors is insufficient for handling the complex financial responsibilities which nearly always have legal implications and consequences also.

2.4 FUNCTIONALITY OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The School Governing Body is a crucial stakeholder in the education system and therefore has a fundamental impact on the quality of education received by the learners. Their functionality or the lack thereof has a marked influence on the effectiveness of the school. Moate (1996:15) asserts that School Governing Bodies play an important role in the survival of the school. They are the centre of schooling in general as they determine the vision, tone and ethos of the school. For the school to achieve excellence, the participation of the Governing Body is very important. Thus, there is a need to place a special emphasis, during the recruitment and election of school governors, on particular skills, knowledge and expertise, which will be needed in their governance function.

This should be followed by proper and adequate training in their roles and responsibilities, so that the chances of failure can be reduced.

The School Governing Body has a primary obligation to shape and influence what is offered to children in schools and to ensure that each child is able to achieve his/her full potential in the education system. Thus the nature and quality of governance will determine the success of community empowerment from the school activities (Walter and Richardson, 1997:18).

2.4.1 SGBs AS A PART OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE

In South Africa, education is organised at national, provincial and local phases. These spheres of government are distinctive, but also interdependent and interrelated. These bodies make laws, regulations and rules on education, and continue to work together according to principles set out in the 1996 Constitution.

The School Governing Body has, through the process of decentralisation, become part of this system of governance with vested power (Potgieter et al., 1997:18).

Co-operative governance is the bedrock of education governance and should provide the ways and means of achieving democratic, participative, transparent and accountable school governance (Davies 1999:9). Thus the school governing body should know and understand its position, functions and powers in order to make critical contributions within the education system.

Potgieter et al. (1997:19) argues that the following constitution principles for co-operative government are applicable to all school governance and to the members of the School Governing Body:

- The activities of the School Governing Body should preserve the peace, harmony and stability of the school.
- They should secure the welfare of all stakeholders in education.

- They should provide effective, transparent and accountable governance for the school.
- Encouraging friendly relationships.
- Helping and supporting one another.
- Informing one another of, and consulting one another on matters of common interest
- Co-ordination of their actions.
- Keeping to agreed procedures; and
- Avoiding legal action against one another.

It is therefore fundamental, that members of a School Governing Body should understand their collective and individual roles within their sphere of co-operative governance. Under the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996), the government in each public school must assume joint responsibility with the provincial education authorities for the provision and control of education (Nkosana, 2003:26).

According to Looyen (2000:32), co-operative governance can only be fruitful when there is a closer understanding of the roles, responsibilities and functions of governors. These concepts have to be clearly defined and understood. It is for this reason that the training of governors forms a cornerstone in affirming and empowering governors to execute their functions with the view to increasing school effectiveness and efficiency based on the principles of democracy.

The possession of various social and personal skills does not guarantee School Governing Body members success in school governance. In this regard Looyen (2000:33) warns that co-operative governance, being a fairly new way of doing school business, requires a paradigm shift, necessitating training before it can be properly implemented.

If governors are to take their new roles, duties and responsibilities seriously, they need to acknowledge that irrespective of their skills, they need training to integrate

their skills with the requirements and systematic operations of the school. The entire School Governing Body comprising parents, teachers and learners, needs to have a knowledgeable understanding of co-operative governance and the parameters of their power to enable them to determine the ethos, and also to direct and control the activities of the school.

Walter and Richardson (1997:27) warn that when directing the school towards meeting community needs, the governing body, as corporate body of trustees, is in a position of leadership. However, a leadership governing body is lacking since the governing body is not capable of helping the school staff to do their job or to keep up with everything that is happening in the school, such as scrutinising the reports, statistics and regulations.

According to Walter and Richardson(1997:28) there is no leadership in simply approving what someone else has decided. As leaders, governors need to be in at the beginning, making decisions about the school's direction, ethos and expressing community values on these issues, then assuring themselves and the real owners in regard to the school's performance.

Heystek (2004:38) is of the opinion that the limited training of the main role-players in the management of schools, coupled with uncertainty regarding their functions and duties, sometimes makes it difficult for principals and parents governors to work together harmoniously. Although many principals have long years of experience, the participative and democratic management approach is also new for most of them, with the result that not even their experience can prepare them for this changed situation.

This poses a serious challenge on the functioning of the School Governing Bodies because principals are supposed to guide and even train the governing body members in regard to their roles and responsibilities.

In response to this challenge, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:140) advise that school principals need intensive training regarding a more participative style of management that would embrace the values of co-operative governance. Likewise, principals need to develop a more participatory style of management that would allow staff and parents to play a meaningful role in decision-making.

In most cases the government is not providing such training. The principal is a central figure in both the effective and efficient functioning of the school and the School Governing Body, thus principals should be the most knowledgeable persons regarding all the aspects of school governance and Governing Body's functions.

Furthermore, Coombe and Godden (1996:74) postulate that methods that can be developed to lead to greater collaboration among governors and other stakeholders may include:

- Developing guidelines to ensure better candidates as officers of parents associations, and clearer accountability of head teachers with regard to the utilization of financial contributions.
- Promoting mechanisms for developing collaboration in tasks, such as writing community profiles, surveying community needs, setting goals and priorities, mobilizing and managing resources, selecting and monitoring teachers, setting timetables and calendars, developing curricula, assisting in teaching and tutoring , helping to guarantee pupil enrolment and continuation, and monitoring school performance and the achievement goals.

The creation of a School Governing Bodies' awareness of their roles and mandates in cooperative governance is critical in helping them to discharge their responsibilities within their spheres of governance and also in understanding how and when to allow other stakeholders to become involved in the schools without causing confusion.

2.4.2 SGB's LACK OF CAPACITY AND CHALLENGES RESULTING FROM IT

The introduction of School Governing Bodies in schools is meant to improve the quality of education offered by the individual schools. They came into the schools with a legal mandate to oversee the quality performance of the schools, to ensure good governance and create a safe, secure and conducive environment within the school for effective teaching and learning to occur.

However, the level of skills, knowledge and understanding they bring along is sometimes posing serious challenges in the way they are supposed to discharge their responsibilities. As a result, Coombe and Godden (1996:24) warn that while in principle there is a commitment in South Africa to involve “the community” in decision-making about local schools, the constraints in making this principle a reality may include:

- Perception of a lack of power among school staff, and among parents and others in community;
- Confusion over the varying roles of governing bodies in different categories of schools;
- Rurality and illiteracy of a large proportion and unrealistic educational requirements for membership of school bodies; and
- The perception of the heavy burden of responsibility for matters among a populace that is already overworked and underpaid.

These constraints may lead to jostling for power and fighting over territory between the school governors and the school managers, which might cause a serious decline in the performance and development of the school. Thus, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:140) maintain that although the establishment of democratically elected governing bodies has changed the political structure of schools and the nature of decision-making has also been compounded by the School Governing Bodies who often refer authority back to the principal, thus preserving the status quo. This

seems to be what is happening in many schools, particularly where the difference between management (the task of the principal) and governance (the task of the School Governing Body) has not been adequately debated.

Educators feel that School Governing Body members lack confidence in what they are doing and are also not sure about their duties. Some educators in a School Governing Body have reported that other school governors often feel “inferior” in their presence because they think they are being undermined. This clearly implies that educators are also not sure of the role of the School Governing Body, and in particular educators in the SGB, as they perceive the SGB to be (Xaba , 2004:313).

This perception of “them and us” hinders the good working relationship, which is supposed to prevail among the school governors, where SGB educator members because of their knowledge and expertise, should help the parent members in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities.

Thody (1994:82) asserts that school governors need knowledge-based skills to cope with the changes in culture and to improve the quality of their decision-making. However lack of expertise means that many school governors cannot participate fully in the decision-making process. This reduces them to the role of sectors, while other people are carrying out what they are supposed to be doing, with the result that they are forced to rubber-stamp and adopt other people’s decisions and activities.

As a result, most Governing Bodies are being manipulated by the school principals, educators and influential members of the community into doing things within the school in accordance with each of their individual wishes.

Marishane (1991:91) indicates that the governing body exercises its power in areas affecting discipline, grievances, appraisal, promotion, recruitment, selection, and the appointment and dismissal of educators. In the process of exercising the power,

consideration has to be given to the legal requirements pertaining to the handling of the personnel issue by the governing body. This necessitates that the governing body should be familiar with the legislation and government notices affecting personnel and labour relations.

However the school governors sometimes possess limited knowledge when dealing with matters related to the management of staff and learners at a school. This makes it easier for other people to successfully challenge their decisions, and even to leave them vulnerable for manipulation into propagating other people's motives to the detriment of the school as a whole.

Marishane (1999:88) also reports that School Governing Bodies are regarded as guardians of efficiency and effectiveness in that they have to exercise surveillance and oversee all the activities of the school. These include establishing whether the objectives and goals of the school are being pursued, whether policy is being implemented and whether resources being allocated to the school are effectively utilised.

In monitoring these activities, the SGB needs to be in possession of information on such matters as finances, performance and discipline in order for it to exercise proper control and be able to report back to its respective constituencies.

Heystek (2004:310) argues that in a school where School Governing Body members have limited skills, knowledge or experience and even lower levels of literacy, they may find it difficult or impossible to assume responsibility for drafting and managing the budget. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:137) concur that the burden of establishing, exempting and retrieving fees is particularly difficult in schools, leading then to serious crises that can hamper the effective functioning of the schools.

The level of skills, knowledge and understanding of the School Governing Bodies has a marked influence on both the authority of the school governors and the

effective functioning of the school. Thus, the recruitment and election process of members of the school governing body should be guided by this vital need.

As mentioned below, the capacity of School Governing Bodies or the lack thereof, has a marked effect on the effective functioning of the schools. Moreover, the School Governing Body determines the tone and ethos of the school. As Moate (1996:41) pointed out, effective governance is imperative to the improving of schooling and teaching. However, the election criteria of Governing Body members and their subsequent training leaves most governing body members inadequately prepared for their legal responsibilities.

Mabusa and Themane (2002:112) are of the opinion that although School Governing Bodies are required to be involved in making important decisions that will have an impact on the quality of education, this has not been easy. One of the challenges has been the lack of preparation for new governors before they start with their work.

This finds expression in the following problems: governors tending to be unfamiliar with procedures, failing to understand the specialist language used, lacking the knowledge needed to make a contribution, lacking knowledge of the appropriate legislation, feeling inhibited by the presence of colleagues who seem to possess more knowledge, and perceiving their role as simply "rubber-stamping" what others have already decided on.

These manifestations would obviously have a negative impact on the policy making and implementation processes, the control and the monitoring of all the aspects of the functioning of the school.

Beckman and Visser (1999:158) asserts that the following manifestations of a lack of capacity among governing body member may impact on the quality of the performance of Governing Bodies and on their capacity in building needs:

- Different home languages and varying degrees of proficiency in the use of the languages used by schools. These issues will impact negatively on the understanding, formulation and implementation of any school's policies.
- Various degrees of literacy ranging from illiterate to barely functionally literate. This adversely affects the understanding of the jargon, practices and legislation contributing to and guiding the education system.
- Various levels of experience regarding participation in statutory SGBs, ranging from no experience at all to some experience in non-statutory school-council associations, such as the pre-1994 PTSA (Parent-teacher-student association). Levels of experience will inform and influence the decision-making process regarding school activities and decision-making.

The School Governing Bodies' actions and decisions on crucial school issues like curriculum, financial management and discipline, as well as property management are mostly characterised by uncertainty and a lack of confidence. These issues then weaken their authority and power in other areas of school governance too.

Sometimes school governors know what they want to say regarding crucial school issues, but because they are unable to say it, they end up feeling totally negated (Walters and Richardson 1999:13). As a result, they withdraw their contributions and participation from school governance, which prompts them to even refrain from attending School Governing Body meetings.

This can be a serious challenge in most rural schools where very few School Governing Body members remain active for the full term of their office.

Thody (1994:28) reports that parent governors hesitate to argue with professionals for fear of repercussions which might affect their children. Parent governors therefore renounce their legal responsibility to control, monitor and direct the proper implementation of school policies, despite the fact that the job of the SGBs is to

promote the best interests of the school and to ensure that the learners at the school receive the best education possible without 'fear or favour' (Department of Education, 1997:7).

SGB members have to set, improve and develop the rules, direction and policies by which the school must operate (Potgieter et al., 1997:11). Thus, governing body members will be acting within their legal powers when advocating the best interests of both the school and the learners.

Mestry (2004:127-8) reports that some principals use the information obtained from delegated tasks to usurp power and authority from the SGB by using information to pursue their own objectives at the expense of those of the school. The principal finds him/herself in a position of wielding power when the members of the SGB are either illiterate or have little knowledge regarding school finances.

It does therefore not come as a surprise that some principals end up taking advantage of the lack of capacity of SGB members to act fraudulently. Reports abound of principals who have been dismissed from schools because of the misappropriation of school funds and the misuse of school property. Nevertheless, principals are supposed to account to the School Governing Body on all financial and property matters, which are not specifically entrusted to them by statute (Mestry, 2004:128).

The discussed manifestation reveals the gaps and shortfalls with regard to knowledge, skills, understanding and the ability of School Governing Bodies that retard the execution of their statutory functions. These manifestations of School Governing Bodies clearly show a lack of capacity that should be used to determine the training needs and capacity-building programme for the School Governing Bodies.

2.4.3 THE IMPLICATIONS OF CURRENT ELECTION CRITERIA ON THE FUNCTIONALITY OF SGBs.

A School Governing Body is a statutory body of people who are elected to govern a school. These people are placed in a position of trust and they are obliged to promote the best interests of the school and to ensure that the learners at the school receive the best education possible.

They are entrusted to help the principal to organise and manage the school's activities in an effective way (Potgieter et al., 1997:23; DoE, 1997:7).

Section 23(9) of the South African Schools Act (1996:18) stipulates that the number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of the number of a governing body who have voting rights. This is done to ensure the representation of the needs and aspirations of the community being served by the school, and to get more parents to become involved in the activities of the school.

However, this numerical representation of parent members is a serious challenge within certain communities. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:137) state that the biggest problem which beset parents in the previously disadvantaged community of South Africa was the high level of literacy. An estimated 37% of the population in the country is still functionally illiterate.

This would obviously impact on the role parents are expected to play in decision-making. Parents who are illiterate (or semi-illiterate) are not ready to serve on School Governing Bodies. It would also affect the relationship between the school, its educators and the community. With the current election criteria which place no emphasis on any particular skills, knowledge, abilities and expertise, many of the governing bodies could be functionally illiterate.

The competence and literacy levels of parent members of an SGB have a marked influence on the functionality of both the School Governing Bodies and the school in general.

Xaba (2004:315) states that educator governors are in most instances not interested in the work of the School Governing Bodies and even resented what they saw, as they perceived the School Governing Bodies as consisting of parents only. Furthermore, a significant number of educator governors (48%) are skeptical about the involvement of the School Governing Bodies in decision-making processes, on matters affecting the school and were also reluctant to work closely with the parent governors.

If educators who are supposed to bring professional knowledge and understanding into the SGB are either uncertain of their role or resent the involvement of such a body in school activities, this would leave the functionally illiterate parent members battling with little success to carry out their legal responsibilities.

Goleman (1996:160) argues that whenever people come together to collaborate, whether it be in an executive planning meeting, or as a team working towards a shared product, there should be a very real sense of the existence of a group intelligence, the sum total of the talent and skills of all involved, since this will make a group productive and successful.

But with the parent governors being functionally illiterate and the educator-governors resenting their involvement in the School Governing Bodies, the School Governing Body would only perform poorly as a group, and this would militate against promoting the best interests of the school.

Moate (1996:93) writes that principals do not receive adequate management training although they are expected to give advice to the School Governing Bodies. They are to facilitate, support and assist the SGB in the execution its statutory functions, even

though principals are often too busy to attend to the training of School Governing Body members concerning their roles and responsibilities.

For School Governing Bodies to be fully functional they must, according to Moate (1996:98), consist of members who possess at least a fairly adequate working knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and also possess certain necessary skills and abilities for their legal functions.

The recruitment process for the school governors should focus on addressing the critical issue of the quality of representation within the School Governing Bodies. The envisaged quality of representation should be characterised by certain minimum levels of ability, skills, expertise, knowledge and understanding of the legal responsibilities that have to be discharged. These will in turn positively influence the effective and efficient organisation and management of the school.

Coombe and Godden (1996:27) advise that the capacity of the School Governing Bodies to do their statutory duties depends on the quality of the individual who are elected into school governance, taking into account not their skills, but their attitudes and perceptions, their ability to interact, their mindset and commitment to social activism, and their creativity, imagination and capacity for taking the initiative. This would at least give an assurance of the functionality of the School Governing Bodies.

Currently there is no mechanism for either the dismissal of governors by parents who are dissatisfied or the monitoring by the Department of Education of the functionality of the School Governing Bodies.

2.4 .4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SGB TRAINING AND ITS ASSESSMENT

The recruitment and election of School Governing Body members, as set out in the Provincial Gazette of the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2003:11) does not stipulate or emphasise any particular skills and/or knowledge level. As a result, there is no assurance for the election of suitably skilled and knowledgeable people onto the School Governing Bodies. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the rural areas where most governing body members seem unfamiliar with, and uncertain about their statutory roles and responsibilities. Thus, Coombe and Godden (1996:21) warn that international experience has demonstrated that effective School Governing Bodies do not happen by chance; instead they must be nurtured and sustained, and specific actions must be taken to make them work as they were intended to do.

The knowledge and skills base of school governors and the relevancy to school governance cannot be left to schools that are expected to offer the best education possible to the learners. Thus, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:139) assert that the responsibility for School Governing Bodies is so important and complex that they cannot be left in the process of picking up the job by simply doing it.

The intuitive knowledge and experience of most members of the School Governing Bodies, particularly in the rural areas, are proving to be inadequate for the complex statutory responsibilities of the Governing Body. Thus, people with specific knowledge and skills should be elected onto the School Governing Bodies and the relevant training to the elected members should complement this.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:138) argue that training is the cornerstone of affirming governors in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. This, according to them, is particularly relevant when governing bodies are composed of a cross section of people with different ideologies, expectations and levels of schooling.

Since such training will harmonise the various skills, expertise and knowledge of the individual governors.

In general, governors need to be fully legally empowered, and to be given access to any information they require, so that they can assess what is going on. They need to know they are in charge within a recognised framework of School Governing Bodies' participation. Special strategies to empower the marginalised and disempowered may need to aim at training and reorienting rural villagers in the aspects of legal school governance (Coombe and Godden, 1996:25).

Mestry (2004:129) indicates that section 19 of the South African Schools Act (1996: 80) stipulates that the Head of the Department of education should provide introductory training for newly elected School Governing Bodies to enable them to perform their functions. They should also, according to section 19 of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), be provided with continuous training to promote the effective performance of their functions or enable them to assume additional functions.

Xaba (2004:316) asserts that capacity building has to be done in a way that addresses School Governing Body members' real gaps in functional knowledge and expertise, as well as the needs of governance of schools in a rapidly changing educational milieu. This will ensure that School Governing Body members are kept abreast, not only of the new developments in education, but also of the new challenges that are there.

School Governing Body members need ready access to knowledge that is reliable. This is often in the hands of school principals and the Department of Education who need to ensure that the relevant information is collected and disseminated, so that people are kept up to date with developments and issues, and are in a better position to make informed decisions.

In practice this does not always happen. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:139) state that the distribution rate of policy documents to teaching staff and members of Governing Bodies is only 19%, whereas the distribution rate to schools is as high as 47%. Overall, only one out of five documents reaches its intended target. In addition, most policy documents and directives from the Department of Education are very difficult to understand and School Governing Body members are seldom given assistance in the interpretation of these official documents.

With this stalling of important education and governance documents in the principal's office, it becomes difficult to rely solely on the principals to train SGB members in their roles and responsibilities. Thus, a dependable alternative has to be looked into. Moreover, there is already a concern, as mentioned by Heystek (2004:311), that the Department of Education does not make any provision for training, other than the limited initial training soon after the election of the School Governing Bodies. Coombe and Godden (1996:22) point out that it clearly takes time to build the professional capacity of a Governing Body, so that members are able to sustain or challenge practice, and influence policy matters.

This is particularly so where local governance is contemplated in areas which previously had been marginalised and underprivileged.

The training of School Governing Body members is crucial in ensuring that they have the necessary capacity, full knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities and that they will be able to set their own goals, targets, and timeframes and also be able to allocate functions to each other. This will assist in informing their programme for the year.

Well-trained School Governing Bodies will be able to monitor their progress and the participation of individual members in school governance. Besides that, they will also be able to check the quality and prioritise the needs of the school to ensure that there is quality teaching and learning taking place in the school. They will also be

able to demand and interrogate the report from the principal on the actual progress of the teaching and learning activities.

In this way the quality and standards necessary to realize the vision and mission of the school will not only be maintained, but they will also be improved. The problem with the dysfunctionality of most rural schools is that this necessary capacity of the School Governing Body is minimal or else entirely lacking.

To improve the functionality of the rural schools the department of education has to seriously address the problem of lack of capacity for School Governing Bodies.

It is not only training which is important in the functioning of the School Governing Bodies , but constant monitoring and control is also crucial to ensure that the intended functions are fulfilled. Marishane (1999:64) argues that in order to ensure that School Governing Bodies perform their duties as expected they need also to be appraised or inspected from time to time.

This is critical because of the vast amount of accountability, which the School Governing Body carries on behalf of the school, the community and the government through the Department of Education.

Marishane (1999:64) states that there are four main areas on which the School Governing Bodies can be appraised and inspected:

- The quality of education provided to the learners,
- The quality of standards achieved by the school,
- The efficient management of the school's financial arrangements, and
- The spiritual, moral and cultural development of its pupils.

This will give an assurance to the Department that the School Governing Body is able to account for the powers and authority that have been delegated to it.

Furthermore, it will have sufficient ground to deal with incapable governors. It is expected of the School Governing Body to advocate the best interests of the child at school.

Thus, Holt and Murphy (in Looyen, 2000:35) maintain that the appropriate training of governors in contemporary education should ensure that children should not be exposed to a "second class" schooling system just because the individuals responsible for administering their schools are inadequately prepared to perform their duties.

It is important for the Department to invest time and resources in the capacity-building activities of the School Governing Bodies to ensure that they are well prepared to accept and successfully discharge their delegated powers in the governance of schools. This will make School Governing Body members valuable role players in the education system.

CONCLUSION

The participation of most School Governing Bodies in school activities in rural areas is negated by their lack of capacity and their inadequate level of knowledge. After being elected, they cannot see themselves playing an active and meaningful role in the decision-making process because they are overwhelmed by their school situation.

They then have to interact and function in collaboration with the head of the institution, who is regarded as being the most "superior and professional." In the school, while they are functionally illiterate, their inadequacy then becomes an inhibitory factor in their full and proper participation.

The initial training which governors receive after they have been elected is not assisting the plight of the School Governing Bodies. Besides, it is not only School Governing Bodies who are affected by this limited training; the schools are also hampered in their organisation, management and governance activities.

This will have an adverse affect on the education and life of the learners because of the lack of knowledge and skills. Therefore, the election criteria need to be reviewed in order to address the skills needs of the Governing Bodies, which would then ensure the effective functioning of the school.

This research seeks to establish ways of improving the recruitment and election requirements for sufficiently functional School Governing Bodies and to suggest a capacity-building programme and a way of dealing with the needs of School Governing Bodies in order to improve both the functioning of the School Governing Body and the quality of education offered by the schools.

School Governing Bodies in South Africa have a statutory responsibility for many critical functions within their schools (Van Wyk, 2004:54). The State's intention of turning all schools into section 21 schools (self-managing schools) will only be realised if School Governing Bodies are able to execute their functions in a "morally responsible way". This is important in ensuring school effectiveness and the continuing improvement that is needed (Davies, 1999:111).

The shift to section 21 schools "requires governors, principals and educators to develop a wide range of skills and capacity to deal with the complex issues and tasks they are expected to fulfil" (Van Wyk, 2004:54).

It is for this reason that schools have to apply to the Heads of Department in order to be granted section 21 functions, because of the fact that School Governing Bodies have different abilities. The Heads of Department can redefine or even withdraw

these functions, based on the performance of School Governing Bodies in their allocated functions. However, there must be reasonable grounds for doing this.

Although section 21 schools are not independent, they are more responsible for their own affairs, as the School Governing Body carries considerably more responsibility for the success of the school. As a result, much time is spent at governors' meetings discussing issues like finance and the School Governing Body component usually includes people that are highly skilled.

Hence, the emphasis that is placed on capacity building. It is only when capacity building is done on an on-going basis that School Governing Bodies will function optionally in terms of the South African School's Act (84 of 1996) and other legislation and policies governing education.

CHAPTER 3:RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of the research design for this study. It also gives a detailed explanation of the research approach and the data-collection methods employed.

This study is aimed at answering the following questions:

- What are the manifestations of SGBs lack of capacity in the organisation and management of schools, as in the Kuyasa Secondary School of King Williams Town District?
- What challenges are faced by managers of school SGBs' lack of capacity in school governance within King Williams Town District?
- Which development strategies can be employed to capacitate the SGBs in Kuyasa Secondary School, King Williams Town District?
- What effect do the current SGB's election criteria have on the functioning of the SGBs within King Williams Town District?
- How is education policy implementation affected by SGBs' lack of capacity?

The study focuses on the school principal and members of School Governing Body of the Kuyasa Secondary School to investigate how they are experiencing the manifestations and effects of SGBs' lack of capacity in their schools. Interviews were conducted, recorded and transcribed.

The researcher visited school, attended SGB meetings to observe how meetings are conducted, what is discussed in meetings, how people behave in the meetings, and also attend workshops conducted by the circuit manager to observe how they are conducted, what topics are discussed, the nature and level of SGB members'

participation, the type of questions which are asked and the quality of the workshop itself. The researcher took field notes that formed part of the findings.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Flick, Von Kardorff and Steinke (2004:146), the research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer the questions he or she has posed. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:31) further stipulate that a research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer any questions the researcher might have.

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution or implementation of the research (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:29) . Schumacher and McMillan (1993:31) further maintain that the purpose of a research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible for research questions.

A research design is an important aspect of an investigation because it shows the individuals that will be studied, as well as when, where and under which conditions they will be studied. Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 29) emphasise that the research design should provide a plan that specifies how the research is going to be executed in such a way that it answers the research questions clearly.

3.2 THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH

This research will make use of a qualitative approach for data collection and analysis. Straus and Corbin (1990: 17) define qualitative research as any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or by any other means of quantification. It can also refer to research on personal lives,

stories, behaviour, but also research on organisational functioning, social movement or international relationships.

McMillan & Schumacher (1993: 390) state that qualitative research is basically a naturalistic inquiry, which takes place in the real-world setting and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. The phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally, in that it has no predetermined course established by and for the research.

Most qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Qualitative research collects data by interacting with selected persons.

Members of the School Governing Body and the principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School have been selected as the sample for the purposes of this study, as they are the role-players responsible for the efficient functioning and management of the school. According to McMillan and Schumacher, (1993: 372), qualitative inquiry means going into the field – into the real world of programmes, organisations, neighbourhoods, street corners - and getting close enough to the people and circumstances to capture what is happening.

This enhances the description and understanding of both externally observable behavior and internal states, such as worldviews, opinions, values, attitudes and symbols (Patton, 2002:48).

The above synopsis forms the basis for the justification of the qualitative approach for this study as the researcher visited Kuyasa Secondary School to conduct interviews with members of the School Governing Body and the Principal in order to gather as much relevant information as possible on the roles they play in the management and governing of the school and whether they have experienced any

challenges or difficulties in the execution of their duties and mandate.

Strauss and Corbin (1990:19) further assert that the qualitative approach can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is known. This is what the researcher intends to establish in understanding the challenges faced by the School Governing Body of the Kuyasa Secondary School and the effect these have on the implementation of educational policy and possible ways of improving the roles of SGBs in general.

The qualitative research approach has various data-collection strategies, such as interviews, observation, diaries, photographs, official documents and newspaper articles (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982:73). For the purposes of this study two structured interview schedules with applicable questions were employed to gather information from the participants. Individual personal interviews were also undertaken with members of the Kuyasa Secondary School Governing Body and the School Principal.

3.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003:4), the following are the essential features of qualitative research:

1. Naturalistic – Qualitative research has actual settings as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument of data collection. Qualitative researchers feel that action can best be understood when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs. Thus context is critical in deepening and broadening the meaning of words, attitudes, as well as the behaviour and actions of the people being studied.

Hence for this study the researcher visited the school for interviews. This was intended to enhance the understanding and analysis of educational issues, as they unfold in a natural and uninterrupted way. The qualitative researchers believe that divorcing the acts, words or gesture from their context is to lose sight of their significance.

Thus the SGBs' lack of capacity can only be expressed within the school context, which is their normal field of operation.

Descriptive Data - Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected take the form of words or pictures rather than of numbers. The written results of the researcher contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentations. The data includes interview transcripts, field notes, photographs , video-tapes, personal documents, memos, and other official records.

The researcher took field notes during his observations and recorded all the interviews for transcribing and analysis at a later stage. This was done with the permission of the respondents.

2. **Concerns with process -** Qualitative researches are concerned with processes rather than simply with outcomes or products. They are mainly concerned with how people negotiate meaning; apply certain terms and the natural history of the activities or events under study. In this regard, the researcher is concerned with how the school community perceives and interprets the SGB's lack of capacity and its impact on the functionality of the school.

3. **Inductive-Qualitative** researchers tend to analyse their data inductively. They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses

they held before commencing the study; rather, their abstractions are built as the particulars are gathered and grouped together. The researcher used the data that had been collected to clarify and answer questions in the research project.

4. Meaning - "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. Researchers who use this approach are interested in how different people make sense of their lives. In other words, qualitative researchers are concerned with what is called the participants' perspective. Similarly, the researcher was interested in how different members of the school community conceptualise the impact of SGBs' lack of capacity within their school.

The various characteristics of the qualitative researcher approach underpin the necessity for the current research, leading to a better understanding of the impact of SGBs' lack of capacity in school governance and the subsequent effect on the functionality of the school in general.

The two kinds of data-collection strategies employed in this research are: (1) In-depth open-ended interviews, and (2) written documents. The data from the interviews consist of direct quotations from participants about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. Document analysis in qualitative inquiry yields excerpts, quotations or entire passages from organizational, clinical or programme records, memoranda and correspondence, official public reports, personal diaries, and open-ended written responses to questionnaires and surveys (Best and Kahn, 1993:184).

The interactive nature of qualitative makes it relevant for the study because the researcher wished to spend some time in the actual relevant educational setting (the school) conducting interview and collective documents for analysis. The aim of the

researcher is not primarily to generalise the findings of the Kuyasa Secondary School. Instead the researcher sought to explain and understand the experiences and perspectives of the research participants regarding the impact and manifestations of SGBs' lack of capacity in their natural settings, that is to say in the school.

3.3 ETHICS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:397) advise qualitative researchers of the need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of the nature of their research topics, face-to-face interaction, data collection, an emergent design, and reciprocity with participants. Criteria for a research design involve not only the selection of information-rich informants and efficient research strategies, but also an adherence to research ethics.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003:43) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000:138), the two issues that dominate the traditional official guidelines of ethics in research with human subjects are informed consent and the protection of subjects from harm.

Therefore, the following issues need to be born in mind:

1. Subjects enter a research project voluntarily, understanding the nature of study and the danger and obligations that are involved. Their agreement must be based on full and open information.
2. Subjects must not be exposed to risks that are greater than any gains they might derive.

Bogdan and Biklen suggest the following useful guidelines for qualitative researchers in their attempts to support an ethical approach to fieldworks:

1. Research sites where informants may feel coerced to participate in the research should be avoided. For instance, principals should avoid studying teachers and/or SGBs in their schools, as part of their research, unless they can guarantee that the teachers or SGBs co-operation is authentic. Since this is almost impossible to do, it is best to avoid the appearance of coercion.
2. The informant's privacy should be honoured. The privacy of the respondents should under no circumstance be violated. If one is to study a topic in which the informants might not want to engage with the researcher, one should find a way to recruit subjects who accept the opportunity and also choose to participate in the study. The researcher sought permission to conduct his research from the Kuyasa Secondary School before embarking on the research project.
3. There is a difference between the time which the informants are prepared to commit to the research during participant observation in public places (where people are spending the time they would normally spend there), and during the interviews. Participants can be helped in giving their informed consent, particularly for interviews, as the participant's time is important. A special concession is needed for interviews.
4. Unless otherwise agreed to, the subject's identity should be protected so that the information collected does not embarrass or in any other way harm them. The informant's identity and or the schools were not revealed during reporting. The principle of anonymity will be strictly adhered to.
5. Subjects should be treated with respect and their co-operation sought for the research. The researcher informed all of the subjects of his research interest in order to secure their permission to proceed with the investigation.

6. In negotiating permission to do a study, researchers should make it clear to those with whom they negotiate what the terms of the agreement are, and they should abide by that contract. If the researchers agree to do something in return for permission granted, they should follow through and do it. It is unethical to violate the terms of the agreement; besides this might result in informants losing trust and confidence in the researcher.
7. Researchers should tell the truth when writing up and reporting their findings. The most important trademark of researchers is their devotion to report what the data actually reveals. Fabricating or distorting data is the ultimate sin of a scientist. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:138) point out that ensuring that data are accurate is a cardinal principle in social science, because fabrication and contrivances are both non-scientific and unethical.

3.4. DATA-COLLECTION METHODS

The research will be qualitative in nature and interpretive by design, within the ethnographic tradition of research. It also needs to be noted that this research will not in essence be concerned with the generalisation to a wider population, but with describing and attempting to explain the phenomenon of the role of School Governing Bodies and their impact (or lack thereof) on the successful implementation of educational policy.

The researcher has chosen a data-collection method appropriate to the qualitative research approach in this study. According to Atkinson et al. (2003:15), qualitative research is a highly variegated domain. The method that could be employed for qualitative data collection includes participant interviews, as well as the collection and analysis of spoken discourse.

For this study the researcher used interviews and analysis of the documents in order to collect data. These data-collection methods allow for direct engagement in the participants' social world. This is appropriate for focusing the researcher's attention on the interaction between a thought pattern and any action, to show how people are embedded in larger social and cultural contexts, and how, in turn, they actively participate in shaping the world they inhabit (May, 2002:203).

Flick (1998:230) concurs that triangulation refers to the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives when dealing with a phenomenon. Furthermore, Esterberg (2002:176) argues that if the researcher has access to interview data, observation data, and historical documents, his/her analysis is likely to be much sounder than if he/she relies on only one source of evidence.

3.4.1 INTERVIEWS

As stated, interviews were conducted with the Principal and members of the SGB of the Kuyasa Secondary School since they form the sample for the purposes of this research. The interviews entailed open responses to questions in order to obtain data from the participants about how they perceive and give meaning to their world and how they explain the events in their environment (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:423).

The open-ended responses permit one to understand the world, as seen by the respondents. The purpose of gathering information from open-ended questions is to enable researchers to understand and capture the points of views of the people (Patton, 2002:21). This enabled the researcher to elicit more knowledge, perceptions and understanding from the participants on the implementation of educational policies and the subsequent functioning of the school.

Qualitative interviews may take several forms: the informal conversation interviews, the interview-guide approach, as well as standardized open-ended interviews (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 426). For this study the interview-guide approach was employed as a data-collection technique, during which the researcher selected the aspects of the topic of discussion in advance and also decided on the sequence and wording of the questions for the interview.

The rationale for the choice of the interview is the freedom to explore, probe and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate the research topic (Patton, 1990: 283). The flexibility of the interview-guide approach helps to bring out the affective and emotion-laden aspects of people's responses and to determine the personal significance of their attitudes.

Not only does it permit the subjects' definition of the interviewing situation to receive full and detailed expression, it should also elicit the personal and social context of beliefs and feelings. This type of interview achieves its purpose to the extent that the subjects' responses are spontaneous rather than forced, are highly specific and concrete rather than diffuse and general, and are self-revealing and personal rather than superficial (Kidder, 1981:187).

According to De Vos (2001:299), in-depth interviews with individuals are defined as one or more face-to-face interactions between an interviewer and an interviewee. Thus, an in-depth interview was conducted with the Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School as a key role-player who has specialised knowledge to share on the functioning and capacity of School-Governing Bodies.

The Principal has been selected because he has specific knowledge on the day-to-day activities of a School Governing Body and is required to work in very close interaction with the selected SGB for purposes of this study.

De Vos (2001:300) asserts that the advantage of in-depth interviews is that reality can be reconstructed from the world of the interview, which enables the researcher to obtain an “insider-view” of the social phenomenon, as well as to explore other avenues of research emerging from the interview.

Thus, the rich data which was collected from the Principal through this method are important in understanding the capacity (or lack thereof) of members of the SGB of the Kuyasa Secondary School, and how this affects the governance and management of the school.

According to Janesick (in Esterberg, 2002:83), an interview is a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning on any particular topic. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:645) concur that the most common form of interviewing involves individual one-on-one and face-to-face verbal exchange, but interviewing can also take the form of face-to-face group interchange, mailed or self-administered questionnaires, as well as telephone surveys. It can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School. According to Esterberg (2002:87), semi-structured interviews (sometimes called in-depth interviews) are much less rigid than structured interviews in their data- collection process. In semi-structured interviews the goal is to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words openly.

Semi-structured interviews thus allow for much better exchange between the interviewer and the interviewee. These interviews enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth exposition of the impact of the SGB’s lack of capacity on the governance and functionality of the school, which also influences the way the school is being managed.

May (2002:205) warns that a successful interview study depends on the prior construction of a theoretically informed and user-friendly interview schedule (or questionnaire), because the researcher needs to know what kind of information to gather. Equally important, is the fact that those who have offered to give their time and share the intimate details of their lives also have the right to expect clear, understandable and supporting guidance throughout a process that can be confusing and unsettling.

One of the first phases of an interview study, therefore, involves the development and pre-testing of a theoretically informed and effective interview schedule. The researcher developed an interview schedule, which was for the individual interviewees to facilitate and focus the data-gathering exercise. In constructing the interview schedule the researcher kept in mind the views of May (2002:206) who argues that people experience their lives not as a set of factors or variables, but rather as the unfolding of a series of events, perceptions and feelings over time.

Chronologically ordered questions thus provided a structure for recounting a coherent narrative and for remembering potentially important, but easily overlooked events and experiences.

The participant's perception and experience of the SGB's capacity is imperative in understanding the training needs of the SGBs, the challenges faced by the Principal of the school and the impact these have on the functionality of the school. Lastly, Bogdan and Biklen (1992:1996) point out that in qualitative research interviews may be used in two ways; they may be a dominant strategy for data collection, or they may be employed in conjunction with the participant, document analysis or other techniques.

In all of these situations the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insight on how the subject interprets some sector of the world they live in.

In this study individual interviews were used for document analysis. This interview method has ensured a rich data-collection exercise, which greatly facilitated the analysis and the writing of the report.

3.4.1.1 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

According to Devos (2002:297), the literature on the technique of face-to-face interviewing treats the interview as a pipeline for extracting and transmitting the information from the interviewee to the interviewer. In this way, face-to-face interviews help to understand the closed world of the individual, the families, organisations, institutions and communities.

The researcher employed one-on-one interview method with the Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School to gain knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the SGB's functionality within the Kuyasa Secondary School. The interviewees will be chosen because of their continuous observational information and knowledge of the SGB's level of capacity in carrying the legal responsibilities in the school.

Furthermore, De Vos (2000:299) points out that in-depth interviewing with individuals could be defined as one or more face-to-face interactions between an interviewer and an interviewee, where the purpose is to understand the interviewee's life experiences or situations as expressed in his/her own words. Thus the school Principal is in a better position to explain the impact of SGBs' lack of capacity on the functionality of the school and the performance of the learners in that school.

May (2002:209) argues that a well-constructed in-depth interview goes well beyond the more structured survey to explore a range of theoretically important dimensions, including pre-existent beliefs and outlooks, events and situations that trigger or prevent actions in the social context in which choices are made, as well as the social and psychological consequences of contextually embedded choices, and long-term interpretations that people develop as their lives proceed.

The position of the Principal has the advantage of providing a different perspective on the functionality of the SGB. The responses of the Principal will assist in gaining more insight into the capacity and skill needs of the SGBs.

Holstein and Gubruin (in De Vos 2000:298) point out that the interviewer, as well as the interviewee, are actively involved in a meaning-making process, and are thus constructors of knowledge and not merely conveyers and receivers of it . The information gained from the one-on-one interviews will be critical in answering and making recommendations on improving the functionality of SGBs within the King William's Town district.

3.4.1.1.1 INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

According to De Vos (2001:299), in-depth interviews with individuals are defined as one or more face-to-face interactions between an interviewer and an interviewee. Thus, as previously stated in-depth interview was conducted with the Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School. This individual is considered as a key role-player who has specialised knowledge to share on the functioning and capacity of School Governing Bodies. The Principal was selected because he has specific knowledge on the day-to-day activities of a School Governing Body and is required to work in very close interaction with the selected SGB for the purposes of this study.

De Vos (2001:300) asserts that the advantage of in-depth interviews is that reality can be reconstructed from the world of the interviewee, which enables the researcher to obtain an “insider-view” of the social phenomenon, as well as to

explore other avenues of research emerging from the interview. Thus, the rich data which was collected from the Principal through this method is important in understanding the capacity (or lack thereof) of members of the SGB of the Kuyasa Secondary School, and how this affects the governance and management of the school as a whole.

The interview with the Principal was done to provide insights into the role that parents play in governing a school, the support and training that members of the SGBs receive, and also the challenges and successes that are experienced in working with the SGBs' parents/members at the school. Waghid (2000:25) states that the use of these of interviews and participant observation complement each other, as neither of these research approaches is without its contradictions and weaknesses.

3.4.1.2 PREPARING THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

The main method of data collection in this study was through interviewing, though preparations were made in advance in order for the study to be successful. The questions were semi-structured in order to allow the researcher to "access the participants' " perspectives and understanding of "their world" because of the flexibility of this method (Merriam, 1998:74).

Merriam (1998:76) also stresses that the way in which questions are worded in an interview is a crucial consideration in extracting the type of information desired; hence the questions needed to be translated into the mother tongue of the participants who do not understand English well enough to allow them to respond with confidence and understanding.

The translation was done for those SGB parents in Kuyasa Secondary School who don't understand English.

The questions are written out for the researcher engaged in “peer debriefing”, in order to disclose any blind spots and to highlight any questions (Flick, 1998:232). The researcher verified the questions with the experts in order to check for bias in the procedures, the clarity of the questions and where necessary to re-phrase, in order to make the questions more easily understandable.

3.4.1.3 FORMAT AND CONTENT OF QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

The questions were divided into two sections. The questions were structured as follows:

Section A: Interview schedule for members of the School Governing Body (SGB)

This section contained demographic information about the interviewees. The purpose of this was to check whether this information had any bearing on the SGBs performing of its functions. It also gives an overview of the SGB’s perceptions, views and understanding of its role and responsibilities as an SGB in a school. It also investigated how the SGB felt about their new powers.

Section B: Interview Schedule for the School Principal

This section provided an overview of the Principal’s perception of the SGB, how they work and align themselves in regard to the roles and responsibilities of SGBs.

3.5 SAMPLE.

For the purposes of this study the sample group consisted of all 12 members of the School Governing Body (SGB) of the Kuyasa Secondary School together with the School Principal. The sample is justified on the grounds that the number of persons

serving on the SGB is prescribed in terms of legislation and each has an important role to play in terms of the governing process of Kuyasa Secondary School.

The Principal has been selected and included on the grounds that he plays a major role in the running and management of the school and is required to work in close relation with his SGB, which forms a basis for the purposes of this research. The Principal will be able to provide additional information on the role of the selected SGB.

3.6 SCHOOL SITE VISITS

The researcher visited the Kuyasa Secondary School to inform them about the research, and to seek permission and co-operation from the school to conduct the study. The researcher briefly outlined the following details during the visit:

- The aim of the research;
- The research subject ;
- The duration of the research; and
- The benefit to the school in being engaged in the research.

The researcher used this opportunity to acquaint the participants with the research topic before the interviews, to arrange suitable dates for the interviews, as well as to ensure them of their anonymity and confidentiality.

3.7 DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

In addition to interviews, selected documents were analysed because they provide an internal view of the organisation and clarify the collective educational meaning

that may be underlying the current practices and issues (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:43).

According to Best and Kahn (1993:191-2), the following purposes are served through documentary analysis:

1. To describe prevailing practices or conditions - that is how the SGB carries out its governance responsibilities;
2. To discover the relative importance of, or interest in, certain topics or problems – that is to clarify the actual capacity of SGBs in doing their prescribed duties;
3. To discover the level of difficulty of presentation in textbooks or in other publications – to discover the SGB level of knowledge and understanding in educational policies that govern their functioning;
4. To evaluate any bias, prejudice, or propaganda in textbook presentation – to evaluate SGB levels of policy implementation;
5. To analyze the type of errors in students' work – to analyze the impact of SGB capacity on the governance of the schools.

Document analysis further clarifies the salient aspects of SGB functioning – the way they influence the curriculum, handle finances, maintain the discipline and the safety of learners and drive the vision of the school – and the impact these issues would have on the general performance of the school.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:428), data management is the operation needed for a systematic, coherent process of data collection, storage, and retrieval. These operations are aimed at ensuring: (a) high-quality, accessible data; (b) documentation of just what analysis has been carried out; and (c) retention of data and the associated analysis after the study is complete.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:430) argue that how data is stored and retrieved constitutes the heart of data management, since without a clear working scheme, data can easily be "miscoded, mislabelled, mislinked and mislaid". This will cause

serious problems during data analysis and interpretation, resulting in a loss of valuable time and even compromising the quality of the subsequent report.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992:175) concur that during data management researchers physically sort the research material into piles, folders, or computer files to be able to read and retrieve data as they figure out what there is to learn and what they will write. These techniques of mechanically working with data are invaluable because they give direction to the post- fieldwork effort, thus making manageable a potentially confusing time. Such a clear working scheme is critical for quality and in-depth data analysis leading to informed findings and insightful reports and recommendations.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992:153) and McMillan and Schumacher (1993:480) write that one has to bear in mind that data analysis is also the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that the researcher has accumulated to increase his\her own understanding of them to enable him\her to present what he\she has to discovered to others.

Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them down into manageable units, selecting , categorizing, comparing, and synthesising them, searching for patterns, interpreting them to provide an explanation of the single phenomenon of interest, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding on what to report to others.

The researcher also found the data analysis process quite challenging because of the vast amount of data collected through the interviews and observations. Again the fact that most of data analysis was done at the end of the data-collection process compounded the challenges for data analysis.

Some of these challenges were experienced in the following areas:

- Sorting and filing research material;
- Identifying themes and categories amongst the massive amount of data; and
- Reducing the data into manageable units and categories.

To eventually present a topical, comprehensive and scientific product the researcher followed the following steps in data analysis, as described by De Vos (2001:343-344):

1. Each transcribed interview was read carefully.
2. One interview transcript is chosen, read carefully while writing thoughts that come up in the margin.
3. Interviews were read carefully in order to make sense of what they are trying to convey.
4. Data was compared to establish themes, trends and patterns.
5. Emerging themes, patterns and trends were identified and written down.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the research methodology and the research design followed in gathering information from the study. In this study individual interviews were employed to gather information from SGB members and educators; in-depth individual interviews were also held with the Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School.

The subsequent chapter will deal with the findings and interpretations of the empirical research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the aims of this research are to:

- ❖ Highlight the plight of the school governing body's apparent lack of any role in school governance in Kuyasa Secondary School , King Williams Town District ;
- ❖ Highlight the effect that this lack has on the governance of education in schools;
- ❖ Suggest possible ways of capacitating school governing body members;
- ❖ Suggest alternative ways of electing school governing body members who have the potential to cope with their increased responsibilities;
- ❖ Suggest ways of redressing the negative implications of the school-governing bodies in schools and ways to improve on the positive ones;
- ❖ Highlighting the plight of school governing bodies in formulating and implementing educational policies.

In this chapter these aims find expression, mainly in the analysis of the interviews which were conducted by means of relevant questions geared towards achieving the above-mentioned aims.

Schools are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant. In order to do this, SGBs, in this instance in the Kuyasa Secondary School, must take an active role in the affairs of their schools and understand their new duties and responsibilities. Van Wyk (2004:50) points out that the government recognises that many SGBs, particularly in the rural and less-advantaged urban areas do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their new powers and many have difficulty in fulfilling their functions.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

As mentioned in the previous chapter, qualitative research metrology was used to collect the data for this study since the aim is to highlight the plight of SGBs who lack the capacity to carry out their duties and the challenges faced by school managers of the Kuyasa Secondary School. The primary instrument used to collect data was the individual interview. This instrument was selected because the researcher wanted to obtain the participants' views on their perceptions of the level of the SGBs' capacity.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Each of the thirteen interviews conducted lasted approximately 90 to 120 minutes and they were recorded by writing down responses. Structured interviews were used in determining the frequency of various answers and establishing the relationships between the answers to different questions.

4.3 SETTING FOR THE INTERVIEW

As mentioned in Chapter 3, interviews were the main source of data collection. The SGB members were interviewed in the Kuyasa Secondary School after their Principal had given permission. All the interviews were conducted in English. The interviews with parent SGB members were held mostly in their homes. In other cases the interviews were held in Xhosa, as this is the language in which they are comfortable.

The parents were very difficult to locate for the interviews and the researcher had to exercise a lot of patience; and eventually resorted to interviewing respondents late in the evening. The Principal was interviewed in his office.

4.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are organised under the following heading: the SGB's knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities in the Kuyasa Secondary School, the challenges of SGB training, the SGBs' training needs and the recruitment of ideal SGB members for school governance.

4.4.1 The SGBs' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN SCHOOL

The power, function and duties of school governing bodies are grouped according to the list of managerial duties that should be carried out by all governing bodies (Section 21 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996) and a list of the tasks that may be given to governing bodies that have the ability or means to fulfil these tasks. These functions have to be carried out diligently to ensure proper school governance.

4.4.1.1 LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF SGB FUNCTIONS

As a body with vested powers, the SGB has certain functions in ensuring effective and efficient governance of the school. Knowledge and understanding of these responsibilities are critical in the successful functioning of the SGBs. Of the 12 functions of all governing bodies stated in the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996 section 20 [a-l]; see also section 2.2.4.), the SGBs could mention only 5; the Principal could mention 7.

This does not only suggest that SGB members have a limited knowledge of their functions in school governance, but that in the immediate department the officials who are supposed to assist them most probably also possess only a superficial knowledge of the functions of these governing bodies. This limited knowledge and/or

understanding of the governing bodies will not only hamper the functioning of a SGB, but will also render the training and guidance of SGB members by their immediate officials virtually impossible.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary school (Interview Schedule B: Answer no 2) pointed out that: “SGBs don’t know their legal responsibilities”. Because the level of understanding of their roles and school responsibilities is so low, it has a negative effect on their functioning within the school.

The Principal is not only juridically expected to assist the SGB in performing its functions, but they are also looked upon by the SGB as being knowledgeable persons who are able to offer them guidance and advice.

The SGB’s knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities is a fundamental prerequisite for their effectiveness in school governance. The immediate departmental officers should also be knowledgeable on functions and duties to be performed by SGB members.

4.4.1.2 SGBs’ LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR LEGAL DUTIES IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

In terms of section 16 of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body. There seems to be ongoing complaint of the ineffectiveness of the SGB of Kuyasa Secondary School due to the limited knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer no. 3) complained that:”No required skills are available. For example, they do not have financial management (making a budget); they are still lacking skills and knowledge,

and as result they still need to be trained and workshopped to broaden their knowledge”.

The ineffectiveness of the SGB compromises the best interests of the school, which they are supposed to promote and support; and they can even fail to ensure the provision of quality education for all learners in a school [RSA 1996, s20 (2) (a)]. This results in the widespread phenomenon of dysfunctional schools in most areas across the country.

The capacity of SGBs requires serious attention and a general improvement, in order to offer education of high quality to all learners. It is also imperative for SGBs’ to be inspected or appraised from time to time to ensure that they perform their duties as expected. This will give an assurance to the Department of Education that SGBs’ are able to account for the responsibilities and authority that have been delegated to them.

Furthermore, the Department of Education will have sufficient grounds to deal with incapable governors, especially where they have failed to perform their functions. Although this decision has never been taken by the Department of Education, it is time that it should be considered, particularly after a continuous capacity-building exercise has failed. This may be necessary in order to minimise the prevalence of dysfunctional SGBs.

4.4.1.3 SGBs’ LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:137), the main problem which besets parents in South Africa is the high level of illiteracy. This is illustrated with the Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Level of Education). This would obviously impact negatively on the Department of Education’s capacity-building programmes for the

SGBs which were required to be provided by the Department. However, it is still failing to do so.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B : Answer no 5) reported that: "No regular capacity-building programmes undertaken; there is no assessment , evaluation, monitoring and performance of their duties, only induction workshop done , once in three years, for two hours only".

The fact that there are educated parent members serving on the SGB is a matter of chance because there is no purposive predetermined criterion in place to have skilled and educated persons elected onto SGBs. Even the recruitment process does not have any intentional guidelines to draw people with the necessary expertise to this vital structure for school governance. It is also problematic for highly educated persons who are elected onto SGBs to work with the less-educated SGB members because these groups will be operating at different levels of knowledge and understanding.

This might also cause unnecessary conflict and misunderstanding among SGB members who might either feel intimidated or dominated by the well-educated members. On the other hand, the highly educated members might feel out of place and unchallenged by the lack of basic knowledge and understanding displayed by the less-educated SGB members. Thus, even the educated members who are elected onto a SGB, comprising mainly people with little or no knowledge of their function, may also be problematic.

This lack of knowledge of their functions will hamper their effectiveness in school governance. In the rural areas, teachers seem to dominate the SGBs, despite the parents in accordance with the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996 [RSA 1996, s23 (9)]), having the majority voice. Parents appear to defer to the teachers because of the teacher's position of status. Parents in the rural areas seem to feel

that they have little chance of participating in SGBs, and in many instances are either silent or else they have withdrawn altogether from SGB activities.

There is therefore, a need for predetermined intentional criteria for the recruitment and election of SGB members with a certain required level of education, skills and knowledge. The SGB members cannot be expected to be fully functional in the system, and procedures for electing them do not make predetermined provision for their effectiveness in school governance. Besides a better education level for SGBs will facilitate their successful training and subsequent successful implementation of the information that has been gained during workshops.

A certain level of education, particularly for the parent SGB members, is imperative for training sessions on SGB functions to be successful, and for them to succeed in performing their duties. The SGBs' level of education, which in this study proved to be inadequate, has a marked influence on the effective performance of their duties and an understanding of their status when taking any action or making any decision within the school. This concurs with certain answers of the parents when asked about what level of capacity does your SGB currently have in carrying out its responsibilities? Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer no 4) stated: "I don't know".

4.4.1.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SGB TRAINING

The training of SGB members is intended to promote and boost the effective performance of their functions and to enable them to take up additional responsibilities (Potgieter et al.1997:30). Although the Head of Department of Training is supposed to provide ongoing training to SGBs, there is a general concern that the department is not providing adequate training for these SGB members. The inadequate training provided to SGBs, which became evident in this study, leaves them ill-equipped to tackle the challenges of their position.

In this regard the Parent Component of the Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 5) remarked: “only one induction workshop in three years, for only two hours was conducted and is inadequate”.

The amount of SGB training offered should be proportional to the literacy level of the recipients in order to ensure maximum success and their subsequent effectiveness in school governance. Besides, the officials who are legally responsible for SGB training should have a good understanding of their roles and also have the capacity to fulfil these tasks.

4.4.2 THE CHALLENGES OF SGB TRAINING

It is essential that the election of members of SGB’s should be followed by proper and adequate training on their roles and responsibilities in order to reduce the chances of failure, because an SGB has the primary obligation to shape and influence what is offered to children in schools and to ensure that each child is able to achieve his/her full potential in the education system.

However in most instances, SGB training workshops are riddled with many challenges which compromise their quality and effectiveness. Certain of these challenges will be discussed below.

4.4.2.1 THE TIME ALLOCATED FOR SGB TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 5) stated: “only one induction workshop in three years for only two hours was undertaken”. It takes time to build the professional capacity of SGB’s and to enable members to sustain the challenges of practical education and to influence policy matters. However, this maxim seems not to be enjoying its rightful priority when training workshops are conducted. The department officials who are charged with the training of SGBs seem to be

concerned with completing their quota of work rather than with the quality of the outcome.

Rushing the induction workshop (Parent Component, Interview Schedule A, Answer no. 5) for the sake of finishing compromises the quality of the information that has been transmitted, which, in turn, militates against the objectives of the workshop. The result would obviously be the negation of the implementation process and the SGB functionality because the SGB members leave the workshop with a limited knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities.

Training is the cornerstone needed in confirming people in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, SGB members should be provided with consistent and adequate training to empower them to confidently and authoritatively discharge their complex responsibilities within the school.

4.4.2.2 THE ROLE OF SGB TRAINING WORKSHOPS

School Governing Bodies need to be fully empowered and given ready access to any information they require so that they can function competitively within their sphere of education governance. Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Section A, Answer No 2) maintained that when asked about how effective his SGB in his school his response was: "Not effective because it is dependant on the Principal's orders". They need to confidently know that they are in charge within a recognised framework of SGB participation. However, SGB members seem to continue to experience barriers towards accessing critical information for discharging their fundamental responsibilities.

Language and illiteracy remain the commonest barriers for most of the SGB members to access their much-needed information to ensure their effectiveness in school governance, particularly in the rural areas. The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 10) remarked that "to say the

requirements qualify as an SGB member is to have a child in school, and this is not enough”.

These barriers should be addressed by the recruitment and electing processes which should embrace clear guidelines towards attracting skilful and knowledgeable people onto governing bodies. It is essential that information regarding school governance should be made clearly accessible to SGB members to improve their knowledge and skills in governance functions.

4. 4.2.3 THE COMPETENCY LEVEL OF FACILITATORS

The establishment of the school governing bodies was based on the premise that the government cannot do everything for schools. Therefore, the school governing body has, through the process of decentralization, become part of the co-operative governance system with vested powers. The training of SGBs as a legal requirement, should thus receive top priority from the Department of Education. The Department of Education should ensure that SGB training workshops are adequately informed and sufficiently empowered to promote effective school governance.

The facilitators for SGB workshops are supposed to be authorities in school governance, in order to eliminate the frustrations and uncertainties experienced by many SGB members in their governance functions. Moreover, there is an outcry that appropriate training is crucial to contemporary education, as children cannot be exposed to a second-class schooling system, simply because individuals responsible for administering and managing their schools are inadequately prepared to perform their duties.

If the SGB training process and programmes, particularly in rural areas, are not improved, learners in rural schools will in all probability continue to be exposed to the plight of dysfunctional schools.

There seems to be an inability in the Department of Education to successfully undertake its legal responsibilities to train SGBs to promote and boost the effective performance of their functions and to develop their capacity to take on an adaptive function.

4.4.2.4 THE QUALITY OF SGB TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The Department of Education has a legal obligation to invest time and resources in the capacity-building programmes of the SGB to ensure that they are well prepared to accept and successfully discharge their delegated power in school governance. As to whether the SGBs will develop into valuable role players in the education system depends on, inter alia, the quality of the training they receive.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 5) responded that: “No capacity-building programmes; there is no assessment, evaluation monitoring and performance of their duties, only one induction workshop, once in three years, only two hours”. The SGBs training workshop seems to have missed the target, because the majority of the people who are supposed to be benefiting from such workshops seem to grapple with the presentations.

As a result, SGB members become passive recipients of information with no guarantee of their understanding of it.

The inability of workshops to dispel the frustrations of SGB members results in inadequate knowledge and functions, leading in turn to poor performance of the school in general. Besides this, the Department of Education does seem to be having a definite mechanism in place to render additional support to SGBs after these initial workshops. In most cases SGB members continue to struggle on their own, with minimal success, in school governance.

It is not only training which is important in ensuring that SGBs are effective in school governance. Constant monitoring and control are also crucial in guaranteeing that the intended functions are being efficiently carried out. In order to ensure that SGBs perform their duties as expected, they need to be appraised or inspected from time to time. This information can also be used to not only devise appropriate corrective measures on the inadequate performance of the SGBs, but can also be used to prepare more appropriate training programmes for the future.

These training workshops and follow-up monitoring mechanisms should depict the department's accountability for the SGBs' capacity-building responsibility, which is intended to promote and boost the effective performance of the governance function.

4.4.3 THE CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL MANAGERS IN SCHOOLS WHERE SGBs LACK CAPACITY IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 10) responded the major challenge facing his SGB?": was: "Policy Formulation , School Policy, HIV&AIDS Policy, Learner-Teacher Support Material". The school thrives very well if both the professional functions of the school management, the governance function and the running of the school are co-operating. This might result in unnecessary conflict and should help and support the Principal, educators and other staff members at the school to perform their professional functions.

On the one hand, Principals, educators and other staff members at the school need also to perform their professional functions. On the other hand, Principals are also required to give all the necessary assistance to the governing bodies in performing their functions (Potgieter et al. 1997:13).

However, there are certain challenges which hamper the realisation of this mutual support and assistance by both the SGBs and the school managers, as will be suggested in the following discussion.

4.4.3.1 THE STRAIN OF INEFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE ON PRINCIPALS

The main purpose of school governance, as a function of the SGBs, is to set the tone and ethos that will drive the vision and mission of the school. Therefore, the SGB has a significant function in assisting the school principal to organise and manage the school activities in an effective and efficient way.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 9) remarked that when asked whether his SGB members were fully aware of what is expected of them in the execution of their duties: “The Principal tells them of their duties and responsibilities”. The management of the school has become a daunting task to the Principal whose SGB lacks the necessary capacity to dispatch their functions properly. The Principal might have good ideas and intentions to develop and improve the school and its performance, but if he/she does not receive the necessary support from the SGB then all the good intentions will never be realised.

The running of the school, in some instances, virtually hinges on the Principal’s personal agenda.

The SGB’s lack of capacity in their governance function compromises the best interests of the school. As a result, the learner will be exposed to “second class” schooling which is against the spirit and intent of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) in redressing the past inequalities and providing education of progressively higher quality for all the learners in the country.

The SGB has the supreme function of promoting the best performance of the school which will ensure that learners receive the best education possible.

Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 7) remarked when asked how best these challenges could be addressed, replied: "Through the seriousness of the Department of Education". The governing body, as a corporate body of trustees, is in a position of leadership. They should keep up with everything that is happening in the school and also take major decisions about the general performance of the school. The governing body will be failing in its leadership if it simply rubberstamps what other people have decided.

As a leader, the SGB needs to take the initiative and make decisions about the direction of the school and its ethos. They should assure themselves and other stakeholders of the school about the real performance of the school. In so doing, they will be promoting the best interests of the school as trustee members.

4.4.3.2 THE LEVEL OF MOTIVATION OF SGB MEMBERS IN FULFILLING THEIR FUNCTIONS

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 10) remarked when asked: "if there is anything else that you might like to add concerning role of your SGB?": "Yes, If the Department of Education could pay SGB members small salaries because history has taught me that SGB members don't last when other opportunities develop; they have to pay for transport and food".

Being an SGB member is supposed to be a voluntary task undertaken to serve a school and community in making an opportunity to help young people to benefit fully from their education. Members of a governing body are supposed to be people who care enough about schooling, most of what goes on in their school, to want to be involved and make a difference.

However, most SGB members seem to be unaware that being involved in school governance requires hard work and sacrifices of precious time (Department of Education, 1997:9).

To most of the SGB members, particularly those in the rural areas, being involved in SGB activities soon becomes a tedious chore. As a result, their levels of commitment and participation wane with time to a point where they are waiting to be dropped by the wayside.

Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 6) remarked when asked: “What are the greatest challenges that are encountered by the SGBs regarding their functions?” : replied “Irregular or non-attendance of SGB meetings by some governing body members and their resignation without notification”. The tendency of some SGB member to “resign willy-nilly” militates against the best interests of the school which they are supposed to promote and to protect.

Besides that, it betrays the parent communities’ trust in the person and it compromises the collective that should characterise the operation of the SGB.

The irregular and/or non-attendance of SGB meetings by certain governing body members suggests that the discussions taking place during such meetings are not representative of the views and opinions of the official SGB, as they seldom form a quorum. The fact that the Kuyasa Secondary School Principal continues to work with a “skeleton” SGB suggests that the departmental guidelines are not being observed. These guidelines stipulate that a school governor can be stopped from serving or can be removed from office for:

- Missing more than three meetings in a row, without giving a reasonable explanation;
- Not fulfilling the rules requested to stand as a member;

- Acting in a way that is “prejudicial” to the interests of the school (Department of Education, 1997:13).

The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) directs that if the number of parents at any stage is not more than the combined total of other members with voting rights, the governing body must temporarily co-opt parents with voting rights (RSA 1996, s 23(10)). However, these directives seem to be more applicable in communities where the education of the children is valued. In most rural areas, parents focus on other challenges because of the high rate of unemployment and poverty.

Most parents want to engage themselves in activities that will at least earn them a livelihood.

The Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 10) remarked that if the Department of Education could pay SGB members a small salary, because history has taught that SGB members don't last; when other opportunities develop, these at least help to pay for transport and food. The idea that the SGB members should be remunerated seems to create a serious challenge for the Principal to secure a full complement of parent members in the SGB. On the other hand, the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) states that: “No member of the governing body may be remunerated in any way for performing his/her duties” (RSA 1996 s27 (2)). However, the education of the learners should not be left to chance; there should be a way of sustaining full parental involvement in SGB activities. If possible the legislation should be reviewed to accommodate a possible reward in the form of a sitting allowance.

4.4.3 THE DEMAND FOR THE PRINCIPAL TO TRAIN SGB MEMBERS

Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 4) remarked when asked: “What level of capacity does your SGB currently have in carrying out its

responsibilities?” responded that, “Not much impact on the school environment”. The Principals, as the immediate departmental officials, are best placed to observe and measure the quality of the SGB’s performance of its functions. Through his/her interaction and meeting with the SGB he/she can identify the training needs.

Although the Principal is legally expected to render all the necessary assistance to the governing body in performing their functions, the following are some of the challenges that hamper the Principal from fulfilling this function:

- Restraining workload, both managerial and teaching responsibilities;
- Limited expertise, both knowledge and skills regarding SGB matters; and
- Limited time, always busy.

The Principal of Kuyasa Secondary School is indeed looked upon by the SGB members to play a leading role in the governance activities of the school.

The inability of the Principal to assist in training the SGB members is compounded by the fact that they are already overloaded with their material responsibilities, and in most instances, they are presented with a SGB that lacks the capacity to do their duties, resulting in the Principal taking over the governance responsibilities as well. Thus, instead of training the SGBs, the Principal just gives the orders on what should be done (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 2 and 3).

The Principal’s limited role in SGB training was also evident in the SGB members’ hesitance in answering the question on the role of the Principal in their training exercise. The Principal’s training role is limited by the fact that they already have a lot of work to do as a subject teacher, as administrators and the manager of the school.

Although the Principal is expected to assist in the capacity building of the SGB, their involvement is limited by their workload and their limited skills as trainers. Thus, the Department of Education remains accountable for capacitating SGB members.

4.4.4 THE SGBs LACK OF CAPACITY ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B: Answer No 6) remarked when asked: “What do you consider to be the major challenge facing your SGB?”: “Policy Formulation”. As a juristic body, the school should perform all its functions through its governing body which has legally binding decision-making powers concerning the school (Potgieter et al. 1997:12). Thus, it is expected of the SGB to make decisions that are informed by all the relevant pieces of legislation and which are in line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (Act 108 of 1996).

Consequently, the SGB members are expected to have a sound knowledge and understanding of the educational policies which impact negatively on the performance of their legal functions. In certain instances, the SGB’s decisions and actions are in violation of the code of good practice. The contribution of most SGB members in performing their legal functions is limited by their lack of understanding of an inability to interpret the educational policies accurately.

The Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 is a legal measure to ensure proper accountability and control for public institutions like the school. If the SGB members are “lost” with regard to the interpretation of the PFMA, the maintenance of proper control and the management of school funds indeed become a problem. As a result, there have been numerous reports of the misappropriation of school funds, particularly by some school Principals.

The Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 provides legal guidelines on the control and management of public funds to prevent fruitless and wasteful

expenditure. Yet, the SGB members continue to demonstrate a lack of understanding of the due processes that have to be followed during disciplinary hearings.

The limited understanding of legal documents, such as inter alia the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997, Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) make it difficult for the SGB members to take disciplinary action against errant teachers or to recommend the dismissal of a particular teacher. As a result, there are schools which continue to struggle with underperformance and poorly disciplined teachers. This results in the generally poor performance of learners. The SGB of such a school is failing to protect and promote the interests of both the school and its learners.

It has to be borne in mind that the maintenance of a school has serious legal connotations and implications which require a shrewd person to avoid any unnecessary litigation. The SGB's lack of capacity to implement educational policies would necessarily impact negatively on many aspects of the functioning of the school. For instance, if an SGB does not understand the curricular needs of the school, it cannot recommend a particular teacher for appointment into a post in the school.

If they then make a recommendation, it would neither have a proper basis, nor would it meet the legal standards. Such an ill-informed recommendation would give rise to a wrongly placed teacher, thereby leading to underperformance amongst the learners.

Although the education system is based on various policies to ensure quality service delivery, the successful implementation of these policies depends to a great extent on the capacity of the SGB as functionaries of the State.

4.4.5 THE SGB's TRAINING NEEDS

Parent Component (Interview Schedule A: Answer No 4) remarked when asked about what level of capacity does your SGB currently have in carrying out its responsibilities: responded: "I don't know". The responsibilities for SGBs are so important and complex that they cannot be expected to discharge them effectively without training going beyond the normal process of picking up the job by doing it. Besides, training is the cornerstone of affirming governors in the execution of their roles and responsibilities.

Although the main purpose of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) and other related educational legislation is intended to increase the democratic control and quality performance of schools. This will not be achieved unless serious interventions are made in the capacitating ability of the SGBs. Therefore, serious training, which should include the basic fundamental aspect of governance, needs to be done as follows:

- Financial management and fundraising;
- Policy formulation implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Maintaining discipline, safety and security in the school;
- Increasing the awareness of the different laws pertaining to school governance;
- Forming partnerships with the school management;
- Determining the school curriculum; and
- Conducting and managing SGB meetings.

Increased capacity in the above aspects of governance will boost the confidence and authority of the SGB members in their functions. As a result, they will speak with vigour to the school community to robustly discharge their delegated functions in school governance. This will minimise the prevalence of underperforming schools,

particularly in the rural areas, as the best interests of the school and its learners would be promoted by properly capacitated SGB members.

4.4.6 RECRUITING IDEAL SGB MEMBERS FOR SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Unlike other civil services, which have specific academic and/or vocational qualification requirements, the governance function has none. Instead, it depends on a collection of specific skills incumbent on other civil duties. Therefore, a balance of these collective skills is required in constituting the SGB in a school in order to ensure and promote the effective performance of governance functions.

The Principal of a school is better placed to know the ideal skill composition of the prospective SGB members. In support of this assertion, the Principal of the Kuyasa Secondary School (Interview Schedule B : Answer No 10) suggested that: “among the requirement to qualify as an SGB member a parent should have a particular level of education. This will help SGB members in governing the school and also in guiding the learning. The SGB members should be confident of themselves and also have knowledge of educational issues. To simply say: “The requirement [to qualify as an SGB member] is just to have a child in the school, is not enough”.

In recruiting potentially ideal SGB members, careful consideration should be given to, amongst other things, the educational level, knowledge and understanding of educational issues, fundamental knowledge of financial management and reporting, understanding and acceptance of the legal implications of being an SGB member and any other essential skill that might promote the effective performance of governance functions.

The SGB members are supposed to perform critical functions which determine the quality of the general performance of the school. As people with vested power to promote and protect the best interests of the school, they should espouse certain essential fundamental skills and knowledge.

The government, through the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), aims to create and manage a new national school system which will ensure that the quality of education of all learners is improved. For example, there should be better facilities, well-trained teachers, and better methods of teaching and better school conditions (Potgieter et al. 1997:6). However this does not necessarily ensure that the people who will be elected to discharge this vital responsibility will have the necessary skills to match the challenges in school governance.

It was not enough of the government, through the Department of Education, to have procedures in place, to merely make people available for the governance task. Ensuring high quality education is a key priority for the government; meticulous care should therefore be given to the quality of the skills, knowledge and understanding of the people who are to be charged with the crucial responsibility of promoting and protecting the best interests of the school.

Educators' Voice (2008:25) writes that the number of underperforming schools, particularly in the rural areas, suggests that the best interests of the school and its learners are not taken good care of. In such cases it seems that SGBs are unable to read and analyse the situation in their school correctly and to put proper mechanisms in place that will really protect and promote the best interests of the school and its learners.

SGB candidates should be people who understand the dynamics of the school, curriculum planning and its implementation, financial management and resource provisioning, and the need to restore and maintain discipline and order in the school. These will need to be people who will really and consciously have the welfare of the school and the learners at heart. Above all, they should have the skills and knowledge to drive the vision of the school.

It is imperative for the Department of Education to factor in the election requirements for SGB members, particularly for the parents' component; a certain level of skills and/or education profiling in terms of the portfolios which underpin SGB functioning is essential. This would in all probability improve success in school governance in particular and good performance of the school learners in general.

Interview Schedule (B)

Interview Schedule for School Principal

The researcher will introduce himself to the school principal and explain the relevance of the study. Time will be allowed for the school principal to ask any question on clarity or protocol to be followed. A request will be made for the consent form to be signed and the principal will be informed that he may withdraw from the interview at any time and that his participation is voluntary. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as the participant could be identified on the grounds of his designation. This will be explained to the principal before the interview commences.

The following questions will be asked:

1. Briefly explain the working relationship that you have, as a principal, with your School Governing Body (SGB).

Answer: Very conducive working relations with SGB by honouring meetings, keen to know more about governance in school, supporting to see school in normal condition.

2. Have you experienced any difficulties with your SGB? If yes, could you please explain further?

Answer: Not at this present moment. Only challenges are for them to agree to be nominated to SGBs although that person is committed to other things, resulting to that person not to honour meetings, not doing his/her duties normally. SGBs don't know their legal responsibilities. Because the level of understanding of their roles and school responsibility is so low, it has a very negative effect on their functioning within the school.

3. Do you feel that your SGB members have the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties properly? If yes, why? If no, why?

Answer: No required skills available e.g. financial management they do not have (making a budget), still lacking skills and knowledge as result they still need to be trained and workshopped to broaden their knowledge. When we elect them {SGBs} we don't look at the level of their education, the requirement is just having a child at Kuyasa Secondary School irrespective of the education level of the parent.

4. In your opinion do you feel that your SGB is supporting you adequately? If yes, why? If no, why?

Answer: Yes always assist and support in everything. Challenge, there are things that are beyond the SGB for example human resources.

5. Do you think that SGBs generally receive adequate capacity building programs from the provincial and district offices of education? If yes, why? If no, why?

Answer: No capacity building programs, there is no assessment, evaluation and monitoring and performance of their duties, only induction workshop done, once in 3 years, 2 hours. I think the Department of education is not doing enough, because that is their sole responsibility .The school management, educators and principal cannot educate SGB member on how to go about regarding their responsibilities but now the department of Education is not doing enough.

6. What do you consider to be the major challenges facing your SGB?

Answer: Policy formulation e.g. School Policy; Learner Teacher Support Material; H.I.V &AIDS Policy'. They have to be assisted by the educators.

7. What are the strengths of your SGB?

Answers: We have been successful in calling parent meeting, able to convince parents to pay school fees, school uniform.

8. Does your SGB interact well with community members who might have a vested interest in the Kuyasa Secondary School? If yes, why? If no, why?

Answer: Yes, through Policy Forum, Social Development, Welfare, Health and Political Organisation.

9. Are your SGB members fully aware of what is expected of them in the execution of their duties?

Answer: Yes, they are fully aware of what they are supposed to be doing, gone through induction workshop for only two hours in three years by District .The Principal telling them of their roles and responsibilities.

10. Is there anything else that you might like to add concerning the role of your SGB?

Answer: Yes, if Department of Education could pay SGB members small Salary because history taught me that the SGB members don't last when other opportunities develop, they (SGBs) pay for transport and food. This can encouraged the SGB members to be fully active. Discipline of leaners and parents themselves are ill-discipline that causes problems to the functioning of SGB. Among the requirement to qualify as an SGB member a parent should have a particular level of education this will help SGB members in governing the school and also in guiding the learning . The SGB members should be confident of themselves and also have knowledge of educational issues. To just say the requirement to qualify as an SGB member is just to have a child in school, is not enough.

Thank you for your time and co-operation in taking part in this interview.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the findings of the empirical survey were discussed. The SGBs' main challenge is a lack of understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This was discussed as an issue characterized by a limited knowledge of their functions, a lack of knowledge on school governance, the SGB's level of literacy which hampers the understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as the inadequacy of the training programmes.

The main challenges of SGB training were discussed as emanating from the limited time allocated for SGB training workshops. This compromises the envisaged output of the language barrier which renders information inaccessible and the training sessions to be less successful.

The main challenges faced by the school manager of Kuyasa Secondary School, are that the SGB lacks capacity in school governance; and seen as the failure by the

SGB to set the tone and ethos that would drive the school's vision and mission. The perception is often held by some SGB members that school governance seems to be a tedious task. This can lead to SGB members having a half-hearted commitment to governance activities, and the Principals' workload. This makes it impossible for them to render quality assistance to the SGB member in terms of any proper training.

In the light of the above, meticulous care should be given to the quality of skills, knowledge and understanding of governance issues when appointing potential facilitators for a SGB training workshop. Furthermore, the training programmes should address the specific training needs of the SGB members; and the recruitment and the election processes should be structured in such a way that they will attract potentially ideal SGB members.

The following salient aspects on SGB capacity development for effective school governance were identified:

- Improvement of the knowledge and understanding of the legal governance functions, which will enhance effective and efficient performance of the SGB tasks;
- Continued support and appraisal of the SGB members, which will ensure ongoing development of the required skills and expertise in school governance; and
- The provision of quality training programmes, which will improve the capacity and the levels of functionality of SGB members in school governance.

Mathonsi (2004:20) states that the philosophy underpinning the South African School s Act is that schools should become self-managed and self-reliant. However, this can only be achieved if SGBs work in democratic and participatory ways to build relationships and ensure the effective delivery of the educational goals. It is only when SGBs know their roles and functions that they will be able to translate policy into practice and become self-reliant and self-managed. Principals and educators

should create an enabling environment and persuade and motivate influential parents to become school governors.

Chapter Five provides the conclusion and proposes certain recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: Summaries, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The challenges of school governing bodies lack of capacity have raised questions on their ability and authority to assume their legal responsibilities and to successfully implement the education policies in creating the desired teaching and learning environment. Furthermore, the School Governing Body for the Kuyasa Secondary School, King Williams Town District is grappling with a lack of knowledge and skills in education governance, which impact on the general function of the school. This gave rise to the following questions which were answered by this research:

- What are the manifestations of an apparent lack of capacity in the organisation and management of the Kuyasa Secondary School in King Williams Town District?
- What challenges are faced by the school managers of schools where SGBs lack capacity in school governance in the King Williams Town District?
- Which developmental strategies can be employed to capacitate the SGBs in King Williams Town District?
- What effect can the current SGB election criteria have on the functionality of SGBs within King Williams Town District?
- How is education policy implementation affected by SGBs' lack of capacity?

These questions on SGBs' ability, authority, knowledge, understanding and skills, emanating from the challenges of lack of capacity to carry out their legal function, led to the aims of the research which also forms the basis for this study.

In answering these questions and achieving the aims of this study, the second to the fourth chapters have focused on: the literature study which explored the functionality of the school governing bodies, paying particular attention to their legal functions;

research design, which has provided a description of the research design and the explanation for the research approach and the data-collection methods employed; and the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the results which have provided the findings and interpretation of the empirical research on the capacity of SGB members in discharging their legal duties.

The current chapter seeks to present the conclusion to the entire study. In addition, the chapter will also present the recommendations for improving SGB capacity in school governance. The current chapter seeks to present the conclusions to the entire study. In addition, the chapter will also present the recommendations for improving SGB roles and responsibilities in school governance.

5.1 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Salient facts pertaining to chapters 2 to 4 are provided below.

5.1.1 CHAPTER TWO: THE LITERATURE REVIEW ON SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The legislation on the establishment of school governing bodies professes a collective involvement of all stakeholders in the education of their children. Nonetheless, particular skills, knowledge and expertise are required fulfilling the concomitant legal responsibilities, and promoting and protecting the best interests of the school.

Membership and election procedures for SGB members were discussed. The legal governance roles and responsibilities were also highlighted. Furthermore, some of the SGB functions that seem to have critical implications for the capacity of the school governance bodies towards school governance were expatiated on in order to draw emphasis to the significant influence of the SGBs on the effectiveness of the

school. These functions were: (1) determining the school curriculum; (2) maintaining discipline; (3) determining school policies; and (4) financial management.

As part of co-operative governance, SGB members have vested powers in education governance. However, SGB members still need training to improve and integrate their skills with the requirements and systematic operation of both the school and the Department of Education in general.

The level of skills, knowledge and understanding of some of the SGB members in school governance, sometimes poses a challenge in the manner in which they are intended to discharge their legal responsibilities. This has an adverse effect on their confidence and also weakens their authority and power in school governance.

The current SGB election criteria, which seem to emphasise numerical representation more than particular skills, knowledge, ability and expertise pose a serious challenge in communities where most people are functionally illiterate, as they reside mostly in rural areas. Proper training and monitoring are fundamental issues in the effective functioning of SGB members because they are guardians and custodians of the best interests of the school and its learners. Furthermore, training is the cornerstone for affirming governors in the execution of their roles and responsibilities, and to harmonise the various skills, expertise and knowledge of the individual governing body members.

5.1.2 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The qualitative approach was used because it seeks to describe life-worlds from the point of view of the people who participated in the research project. Its descriptive and exploratory nature made it more suitable for this study. The interactive nature of qualitative research makes it more relevant for this study. The SGB and Principal of the school of Kuyasa Secondary were chosen to participate in this study. The data collection methods used included interviews and the analysis of training manual.

Ethics in qualitative research were outlined, and limitations of the study were also identified.

5.1.3 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The analysed data revealed that SGB members and their immediate department officials have limited knowledge of the SGB rules and responsibilities, with the result that school governance is adversely affected. The level of literacy of SGB members has a marked effect on the level of success in their capacity building programmes and they seem appear not to be according to recognised guidelines to recruit educated and/or skilful person into SGBs.

The data also revealed that there are several challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the successful implementation of SGB training programmes. These are:

- The time allocated to SGB training workshops.
- The language of SGB training workshops.
- The competency levels of the facilitators; and
- The quality of SGB training manuals.

Furthermore, the successful management of the school has to be complemented by the active involvement of capable and visionary SGB members. The implementation of the educational policies within the school requires expertise and knowledgeable SGB members.

5.2 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

The findings of the study revealed that the principal, as well as the SGB members themselves are concerned about the effect of SGB members' lack of capacity on the governance and management of the Kuyasa Secondary School in King Williams

Town District. The data has also revealed that there is a need to provide purposeful guidelines on the recruitment and election of knowledgeable and skilful SGB members and that this should be supplemented by a vigorous training programme to harmonise the various skills, expertise and knowledge of the individual SGB members for the effective governance of the school.

Furthermore, the analysis and interpretation of the data provide answers to the following major questions posed in this study:

- The manifestation of SGBs lack of capacity in the organisation and management of the school are highlighted as a lack of preparation of new school governing bodies members before they assume their duties, which is expressed in the following problems :
 - the SGBs' limited knowledge of their functions;
 - the adverse effect of the SGBs' lack of knowledge of their legal functions in school governance; and
 - the impact of SGBs' level of education on their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- The challenges faced by school managers where SGBs lack capacity in school governance matters. These challenges were expressed as :
 - the strain of ineffective school governance on principals;
 - the low level of motivation of SGB members in fulfilling their functions; and
 - the extra demand to train SGB members.
- The developmental strategies which should be employed to capacitate the SGBs are detailed in recommendations for ensuring effective SGBs.
- The current election criteria which emphasise numerical representation rather than particular skills, knowledge and expertise hamper the functionality of the

SGB members in school governance. Thus, in recruiting and electing SGB members careful consideration should be given to amongst others:

- the educational level of the candidates;
- knowledge and understanding of educational issues;
- fundamental knowledge of financial management, reporting ;and
- understanding and acceptance of the legal implications of being an SGB member.

- The effect of SGBs capacity on the implementation of education policies was discussed as:
 - the need and importance to have sound knowledge and understanding of the relevant education policies and legislation to improve the performance of SGB functions and;
 - the correct interpretation and implementation of the guidelines provided by the Public Finance Management Act of 2000 on the control and management of the public fund to prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure, and
 - the basic understanding of legal documents such as the Basic Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997), Employment of Educators Act (Act 76 of 1998) , Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) : to enable SGB members to maintain discipline and a sense of purpose in the school.

5.2.1 THE SGBs' LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The SGBs' lack of understanding of their roles and responsibilities became evident from the following:

- Most SGB members and their immediate department official seem to have superficial knowledge of the functions of governing bodies.

- The SGBs' lack of knowledge and understanding of their legal roles and responsibilities seem to perpetuate the widespread phenomenon of dysfunctional schools.
- Some SGB members have never been to school, which frustrate any efforts to train them and the subsequent demand to implement the information received during the training sessions.

School governance is a statutory function which has to be performed by well-informed and versatile people. The school community will be able to tackle and overcome most of their challenges if they are led by well capacitated SGB members. This will bring about a generally satisfactory performance of the school and better academic progress of the learners as the SGBs would maintain purposeful monitoring of the outcomes of the institutional programmes, thus ensuring that standards and the quality of learning and teaching are continually maintained.

The SGBs will also be in a better position to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process. This will be made possible by the establishment of accountability and responsibility within the school community through the formulation and successful implementation of appropriate and well-informed policies.

Furthermore, the SGBs' systematic control of the school funds will create the necessary impetus for the successful execution of the instructional practices and the school vision.

5.2.2 THE CHALLENGES OF SGB TRAINING ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- Inadequate time has been allocated for SGB training.
- The language used in training manuals is not understood by the majority of the SGB members. This results in information being inaccessible to them.
- The Department of Education does not seem to have any particular follow-up monitoring mechanism after the initial SGB training workshops.

Responsible SGB members with capacity, knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities will be able to set their own goals, targets, and timeframes and to allocate to each other particular functions and /or responsibilities. This will assist in forming their programme for the year. Thus, they should be able to monitor their own progress and the participation of individual members in school governance activities. Besides this, they will be able to check, quantify and prioritise the needs of the school to ensure that there is quality teaching and learning in the school. They will also be able to demand and interrogate the report from the principal on the actual progress of teaching and learning activities. In this way the quality and standards needed to realise the vision and mission of the school will not only be maintained but they will also be improved.

5.2.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL MANAGERS WHERE SGBs LACK CAPACITY IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The challenges faced by school managers where SGB members lack capacity are manifested as follows:

- Principals grapple with both the management and governance functions with limited success.
- SGB members seem to simply endorse what other people have decided with no input of their own.

- Principals are faced with irregular and /or non-attendance of meetings by some SGB members, resulting in meetings not forming a quorum for proper and legal decision-making on school activities.
- Principals seem not to be ready to assume their training role of SGB members.

The Principal as the immediate department official is best placed to see and measure the quality of SGBs' performance of their legal functions, and to identify their training needs. Thus, together with the circuit managers they should co-own the training responsibility, the monitoring and the mentoring of the SGB members. This will assist them in tackling the challenges with which they are faced as a result of SGB members' lack of knowledge of their legal functions.

5.2.4 THE PREREQUISITES FOR RECRUITING SGB MEMBERS

The skills pool of the parent community is a key factor in constituting potentially effective school governing bodies. Thus, in recruiting SGB members, careful consideration should be given to:

- Particular education and skills levels,
- Knowledge and understanding of educational issues,
- Fundamental knowledge of financial management and reporting;
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal implications of being an SGB member, and
- Any other essential skill that might promote the effective performance of governance functions.

5.3 LIMITATIONS

The aim of the study was not to generalise the findings to other schools; hence the research was limited to the Kuyasa Secondary School. However, the study could serve as an impetus for further research. The main aim was to highlight the challenge of SGBs' lack of roles and responsibilities in school governance.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

School Governing Bodies need to have the necessary capacity in order to perform their duties and carry out their responsibility in an effective and efficient way. The following recommendations should assist in ensuring effective SGBs:

5.4.1 Increased training efforts to build capacity of SGB members on governance aspects, including financial management, discipline, school safety, awareness of the different laws that pertain to school governance, including labour laws.

5.4.2 Make Adult Basic Education available and accessible to SGB members who are illiterate or semi-illiterate to improve their educational level.

5.4.3 Establish and capacitate Circuit Governance Teams consisting of principals to assist in training and monitoring.

5.4.4 Include a certain educational level as one of the criteria for becoming an SGB member.

- 5.4.5 Reward SGB members in the form of a sitting allowance, in addition to the subsistence allowance, in order to retain the services of the parent members in SGB activities.
- 5.4.6 Provide continued appraisal, and mentoring programmes for SGB members to ensure their accountability for the delegated powers and authority.
- 5.4.7 The character of the SGB is usually determined by the principal's leadership style. If the Principal is democratic, the SGB also reveals these traits. Principals must be made to realise that the time for undemocratic methods of governance and management is long gone and they should value and appreciate the inputs from all stakeholders at the school. This is supported by Creese and Early (1999:12) who state that principals and potential principals need to be trained to appreciate the value that effective governing bodies add to their school.
- 5.4.8 The Department of Education should institute a physical investigation of the school (audit of the readiness of a school to acquire section 21 functions) before it approves its section 21 status. They should avoid relying on the audited financial statement because an audit does not guarantee that the school's financial records are perfect or that its expenditure on activities was appropriate in terms of its own policies (DoE, 2002:181).
- 5.4.9 The Department of Education should find a way of assisting, as well as empowering organisations, such as the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) and the Federation of the Association of School Governing Bodies (FEDSAS). The involvement of SGBs in these organisations could go a long way in education and conscientising their members about their functions, rights and

responsibilities. These organizations should be encouraged to organise conventions where members can meet to deal with common educational issues, and to share problems and successes (Hagerty, 1998:70).

5.4.10 The department should also utilise the many education management specialists who graduate from universities each year, as some of them may do a better job than departmental officials as they have expertise and knowledge. These specialists should be encouraged to open consultancies to assist in training.

5.4.11 Training should include many SGB members and not only one or two. As a consequence of this, the treasurer this year might not be the treasurer next year; hence the importance of all SGB members attending all the training sessions.

5.4.12 Where possible, schools should encourage parents who are enlightened (educated) to stand for election. This would make these members feel appreciated and they might therefore volunteer to serve the school with distinction.

5.4.13 Other ways of conscientising and empowering SGBs in regard to their duties and responsibilities is through publications written in languages that the majority of SGB members can understand and through talk shows in the media.

5.4.14 An award ceremony for SGBs should be held, as is done for teachers' awards. However, unlike teachers' awards, which are mainly prevalent at National level, these should start either at circuit or regional level, in other words, SGBs should be appraised and given certificates for their services.

5.4.15 SGBs, like board members in some organisations, are compensated for attending SGB meetings and other SGB activities. The compensation might not be in a monetary form, but could be in the form of exemptions from paying school hostel fees or other expenses for their children. This could attract worthy candidates to stand for SGB elections.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study, like many others before it, has found that the majority of parents are not involved in intra and extra-curricular issues nor does it suggest how they might become involved. It is therefore recommended that further research be done on how parents in rural areas can become more involved in curricular matters, because the quality of education in these areas can only be improved if they start to take an interest in the learning of their children. It would also be interesting to see what the findings would be if the same study were conducted with a larger sample making use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

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