

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN
SECTION TWENTY-ONE RURAL SCHOOLS.

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Makhayingi Mandrew Nyambi declare that

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
IN SECTION TWENTY-ONE RURAL SCHOOLS**

is my own work. It has never been submitted for a degree or examination before in this, or any other university. Sources in this study have been fully indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed:

..... day of

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The Almighty God for taking care of me and sustaining my health to the realisation of this dream.

SUMMARY

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (SGBs) IN

SECTION TWENTY-ONE RURAL SCHOOLS

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The awarding of section twenty-one status to schools is seen as part of the democratisation of education in South Africa. The aim of this study is to determine the impact that the allocation of section-twenty one powers has on the functioning of School Governing Bodies in rural section 21 schools.

A case study involving three schools; a moving school, stationary school and a promenading school was conducted. The SGB members in these schools were interviewed to elicit information and get their viewpoints. Non-participatory observation was also conducted to add on the information gathered from the respondents. Other stakeholders involved in education were also interviewed, for instance the Chairperson of the National Association of School Governing Bodies and the Section 21 co-ordinator.

It has emerged from the findings of the study that many SGBs are not coping with the allocated functions thrust upon them because of lack of skills and involvement. This results in the bulk of the SGB duties being performed by the principal or educators.

KEY WORDS

A section twenty school

Section 21 Co-ordinator

A section twenty-one school

Section twenty-one powers

School Governing Body

School Committee

School Management

Skills

School Governance

Allocated functions

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (SGBs) IN SECTION
TWENTY ONE (21) RURAL SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 1

1. CONTEXTUALISATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1. 1 INTRODUCTION

The scrapping of School Committees and their replacement by the democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs) was hailed as a significant milestone in improving school governance and the general management of schools. This was also perceived as an important step towards the improvement of the quality of the culture of learning and teaching as well as the start of transparency and accountability to the people who had elected them. The old apartheid School Committee system was characterised by undemocratic practices, racism and inequality and it was gender insensitive (The Educators Voice, March 1999: 16). These were instituted in order to entrench apartheid education, which required each racial group to have a virtually separate education system (Dekker and Van Schalkwyk, 1995: 456). The education system was highly authoritative and hierarchical. Parents and the community had little or no influence on what happened in the schools (Department of Education [DoE]: 1997: 7). As a result of this many schools experienced poor management, inadequate funding, ineffective teaching and therefore poor learning. The following excerpt from the article on School Management Teams (DoE, 2000: 1) puts the situation more clearly:

The apartheid school system was characterised by inequality: racially, regionally and in terms of gender. It was structured so that control came from the top. The principal had to manage the school on his or her own, although the Department of Education made the managerial decisions. A principal was seen to be successful if s/he was a good administrator.

Many school committees as mentioned in the extract were autocratic as power was concentrated in a few members and these few people together with the principal usually took decisions pertaining to the school for the whole community. School committees did not advocate stakeholder participation and were dominated by school principals reporting directly to the government bureaucracy (and sometimes the politicians) responsible for education (Mabasa and Themane, 2002: 112). Davidoff and Lazarus (1997: 9) stress that principals held enormous powers but were still bound by the authority of the department of education. Teachers controlled students but were controlled by higher authorities in terms of what they were allowed or not allowed to teach.

1.2 THE FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

School Governing Bodies (SGBs) make decisions on behalf of the school and see to it that the school is administered properly and all stakeholders share in the decisions of that body (DoE, 1997: 6). The SGB is the legal body responsible for the development of overall school policy (including language policy and a code of conduct), the vision and the mission of the school, financial management and fundraising, as well as making recommendations about appointments at the school. The governing body is formed in such a way that all structures can co-operate and be closely involved in important decisions about the school (DoE, 1999:8). Unlike the old school committee, which comprised a few parents and the principal, the SGB consists of learners (in the case of secondary schools) educators, non-educator staff, the school 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.

SGBs are given functions according to their experience and capacity. The South African School's Act. 84 of 1996, Section 20 outlines the compulsory functions or tasks that all SGBs have to perform and Section 21 lists all functions that governing bodies that feel they have the capacity and experience to perform them can apply in order to be given these functions. 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 as well as recommend the appointment of educators to the provincial department (DoE, 1996: 10-11)

As mentioned in the above paragraph SGBs that feel they have the necessary capacity and skills may apply to the Head of Department to be allocated extra functions listed in section 21 of the School's Act. In addition, the Member 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 the Member of the Executive council is satisfied that the governing bodies concerned have the capacity to perform such functions effectively and that there is a reasonable and equitable basis for doing so (DoE, 1996: 12)). The Section 21 functions are: maintaining and improving the school's property, determining the extra curriculum of the school and choice of subject options, paying for services to the school and purchasing text books, educational material and equipment.

This research focuses on the awarding of some 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 SGBs in these areas will be able to carry these extra functions because the illiteracy level of the parents is high and the parental governors are not well equipped for their expected governance functions (Heystek, 2004: 10). This research therefore investigates how SGBs in schools in Bushbuckridge (which is a rural area), which have been allocated section 21 functions, experience their new functions.

1.3 PROBLEMS PERTAINING TO THE FUNCTIONING OF SGBs

The idea that the parental component of the SGB be in the majority and that the SGB be chaired by a parent could be problematic in rural areas because of high rates of adult illiteracy and the fact that the majority of the parents who are expected to take on governing responsibilities have not been thoroughly prepared for this (DoE, 2000:42). Seven years after the introduction of SGBs many rural schools remain in great disorder and there is little to suggest that SGBs are contributing immensely to the improvement of the schools. Many schools continue to operate without school policies, constitutions, clear visions and missions and their financial situation is in tatters. In a study conducted to review school governance in South African schools (DoE, 2003: 76) one of the respondents concurs with this viewpoint:

A parent should not be a chairperson or treasurer. Most SGBs fail because their chairpersons are illiterate parents. A chairperson of any committee or organisation should have a thorough knowledge of the committee or the organisation. At the moment, 99% of the rural schools do not have constitutions, vision and mission statements, development plans, codes of conduct for learners, budgets, financial control systems, and etc. How can a rural standard two chairperson take a lead in any of these? Educated people are needed to help the principal in the professional running of the school.

In many rural schools no meetings are held to report to parents about the developments, progress and projects being implemented at 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 and ensure efficient and effective delivery of educational goals, translation of the policy into practice remains a mammoth challenge because “poor communities tend to lack access, resources, information or organisational

skills to appropriately influence decision about 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 as governors fail to navigate their way through the complex laws and regulations that define the field of governance (DoE, 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. Her study also revealed that schools do not have safety rules and lack constant rule enforcement procedures and safety committees (Netshitahame, 1999: 94). Although the South African Schools' Act, 84.1996 stipulates that the SGB shall decide upon matters such as the school's policy, school administration and school finance, there is strong evidence that this is not the case. Decisions continue to be "steamrolled" by principals who want to satisfy" their whims and wishes “(The Star, 28 July 1999: 8). The Review committee on school governance also found out that principals are often reluctant to relinquish or even share their power and authority (DoE, 2003: 92). According to Beckmann and Blom (2000:1) many principals bent on running schools autocratically utilise some of the following strategies to deny other stakeholders the opportunity of participating meaningfully in the affairs of the school:

- Creating the impression of consultation while retaining power;
- Restricting debate on key contentious issues;
- and setting up restricted channels of participation;

The former Minister of Education Prof. Kader Asmal warned that the new system of governance, administration and finance had not overhauled the unequal educational conditions imposed by apartheid (The Star, July 1999: 8). Many principals continue to deprive parents and other stakeholders of essential information, which they need in order to participate fully in the activities of the school, and they do not like their decisions to be criticised or challenged. In fact many factors suggest that many SGBs are unable to perform the functions, which they have been elected to perform. It is against this

background that a research on the impact of the allocation of section 21 powers to schools is undertaken.

Although schools have been allocated section 21 powers, it remains to be seen how much this can assist in entrenching democracy and equity in schools. In a study conducted by Karlsson (2002: 332), only half of the sampled schools had parent representatives who were found to be fully active in governing body meetings and decision making. Despite being in the majority, parents were reticent, 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 from advantaged communities hence the assertion by Motala and Pampallis (2001: 143) that decentralisation does not necessarily lead to greater popular participation in decision making. 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 the blockages to policy formulation. Sayed (2002: 36) stresses that it is only when all learners experience improvements in the quality of schooling through this process that one can argue that the policy of decentralisation has effected significant societal transformation. Enslin and Dieltens (2002: 19) further emphasise that without capacity and resources these communities may be stuck in a cycle of making demands without effectively being able to change the policy to their advantage. This can result in privileging those SGBs eloquent in expressing the discourse of policy and further sidelining disadvantaged communities. The institutional legacies of schools combined with the socio-economic status of the school communities impact greatly on the SGBs' ability to contribute to education processes and decision-making (McLennan, 2000: 10).

Since the establishment of SGBs, one of the critical problems confronting provincial departments of education has been the capacity building of SGBs especially those from the previously marginalised and disadvantaged communities as many of these do not yet have the requisite skills and experience to exercise their new powers and may 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 notices given before training, cancellation of activities at the eleventh hour, some activities starting later than the actual time stated and non-attendance by some training co-ordinators (Mpumalanga Circular; Systems and Planning 31 March, 2004). In addition many parents who are members of SGBs are usually at work when training is given. For example the Mpumalanga financial workshops that were conducted to capacitate treasurers and chairpersons of SGBs in 2003 were held during the week. As a result many SGB members who were in desperate need of financial skills could not attend. It is for these reasons that parental members of SGBs still rely heavily on principals to make important decisions. Without the necessary skills to participate actively and fully in governance, these structures cannot claim to be democratic (Motala and Pampallis, 2001:169).

While the allocation of Section 21 status to schools is seen as empowering and entrenching democratic values, there are obvious risks involved in the process. Karlsson (2002: 333) argues that by devolving such functions to the governing body, the state may unintentionally be contributing to a perpetuation of inequalities in the school environment because disadvantaged groups tend to under-participate while individuals who are comparatively better-off participate more and are so able to better protect their interests (Parry and Moyser, 1994). This is supported by Riddell (De Clerq, 2002: 87) who states that in most developing countries the managerial and financial benefits rarely materialise because the local levels lack the capacity, resources and systems to manage these functions and realise these efficiency gains hence the allocation of section 21 status might not really benefit schools in disadvantaged rural communities. Rather it results in the stratification of schools into those that have sufficient resources and those that do not, and produces a competitive and unequal system of education resulting in the marginalisation of disadvantaged communities (Sida, 2001: 28). Motala and Pampallis (2001: 172) maintain that although the department appears to encourage community participation in governance, little practical support is forthcoming for major national organs of society like the National Association of School Governing Bodies, which could assist a great deal in empowering and capacitating SGBs.

The Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education (2000: 2) maintains that awarding a school section 21 functions is more than a paper transfer of additional functions to a school. It represents instead the recognition of the ability of the school to take charge of its own operations. This means that when a school is awarded Section 21 functions it is a vote of confidence by the department in a school's ability to control its own destiny. It is therefore worrying that although the department is aware that many SGBs particularly those in poorer schools are in need of capacity building it still allocates them more powers. The research will therefore investigate the impact of the allocation of the new powers and the perceptions of stakeholders about their new status in schools in the Bushbuckridge region in Lipompo province.

1. 4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The dawning of democracy in South Africa has seen a proliferation of legislation specifying the participation of various stakeholders in school governance (Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen, 1997: 67). Heystek and Paquette (Van Wyk, 2004: 49) stress that this proliferation presents schools with an enormous task because in South Africa, neither parents nor educators have had much experience of participatory decision making since, in the past, principals were generally considered to be the only people with the required knowledge and authority to make decisions. Although participatory decision-making has been in place for years in developed countries there is little information about challenges with respect to participation of stakeholders in school governance in South Africa (Mabasa and Themane: 2002: 113). This therefore calls for a study to investigate the capacity, functioning and the inadequacies of such governance in order to improve it.

The allocation of Section 21 status to schools is a fairly recent idea by the Department of Education intended to devolve more authority and economical responsibility to the local level. However, this has serious financial and educational implications for the department as SGBs have to manage large sums of money deposited into schools' accounts and to perform many other important functions that require expertise. It is for these reasons that the feasibility and implications of the allocation of these powers to SGBs be investigated

thoroughly. That the research entails an in depth study of SGBs in the execution of their Section 21 functions is essential because schools are being encouraged to become self-managed and self-reliant while there appears to be a general lack of skills amongst the parent component of the SGB (DoE, 2000: 2). The realisation of this long-term aim of the Department of Education is dependent on the effectiveness and efficiency of SGBs hence the need for a study that will reveal the strengths and weaknesses in order to capacitate them or change the policy.

Furthermore, this research might be used to inform the provincial, regional and district management on the purpose of planning in-service training for SGBs which will ultimately improve the quality of educational attainment by the learners and also build the capacity of parents. It will provide valuable information for both education practitioners and researchers and assist them in their exploration of appropriate ways to minimise resistance to participation and to encourage principals to eradicate autocratic practices and invite parents and other stakeholders to increase their contributions in the arena of decision making. On a personal level, this research will develop the capacity of the researcher and other school managers in their dealings with parents and other stakeholders such as teachers and learners.

Martz (1992: 13) stresses that the most important factor in a school's culture is its principal and if a good principal believes that a parent can be an asset to the school s/he could go out of her/his way to recruit the parent to participate actively in the affairs of the school. Many other researchers (Creese and Earley, 1999; and Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen, 1998; Yancey, 2000) have also reiterated the crucial role, which principals must play in promoting other stakeholders' participation in decision-making at the school. However, Mchunu (Ndlhovu, 2000: 52) argues that whatever changes have occurred in education remain spurious, peripheral and cosmetic. This is supported by Mathonsi (2004: 20) who states:

while the new education policy requires that governors
and managers work in democratic and participatory ways

to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery of educational goals, translation of policy into practice in a way which enables the educators and learners to realise a relevant quality education remains a mammoth challenge and the nerve centres of the challenge is incapacity and attitude.

It is against this background that research on effective governance in disadvantaged communities is undertaken. This research will examine ways in which SGBs respond to the allocation of Section 21 status to schools, i.e. whether their modus operandi and attitude changed after their schools were allocated some section 21 powers and also whether they were able to carry out the functions associated with their new status. This research puts the participation of parents in the education of their children in perspective and context and can make a meaningful contribution in the management of their participation at schools in South Africa and other disadvantaged areas.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The South African government remains committed to a long term goal in the schooling system wherein all schools become responsible for managing the non- personnel funds received from the state (DoE, 1993: 20). This implies that SGBs should have the capacity not only to manage the finances well but also to translate these financial resources into physical resources that will be most cost effectively promote quality education. This is supported by Lazarus and Davidoff (1997: 106) who stress that members of the school community need to be equipped to analyse budgets and financial statements and where appropriate to manage finances. In many rural schools this might remain a dream as “poor communities tend to lack access to resources, information or organisational skills to appropriately influence decisions about education or other social services” (Mathonsi, 2004: 20). Many governors in rural (disadvantaged areas) have limited skills because of their low literacy level and a “negative attitude towards school activities” (Heystek and Louw, 1999:21). This is not unique to South Africa as Creese and Early (1992: 2) stress

that a growing body of research shows that schools in disadvantaged and deprived locations are less able to recruit governors or to find governors with the necessary skills and expertise that schools require. “Many people elected to become SGB members lack confidence either to put themselves forward ...or once appointed found it difficult to contribute fully to the work of the governing body” (Creese and Early.1992: 25).

In South Africa the various stakeholders such as principals, parents and learners have in the past been exposed to authoritarian modes of management and as a result of this, they have a daunting task of converting participative management into reality (Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen, 1997). This is exacerbated by the fact that “the majority of SGBs have not received the necessary support to enable them to function in a way that would make them agents of service delivery” (Mathonsi, 2004: 20). Masemola (1997:2) puts this clearly into perspective as she says:

parents are inadequately or totally uninvolved in school management. The school has to go it alone without the parents' input in the education of their children and this has been the case for too long.

Moreover, Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:120) stress that it is particularly important at this point in the history of South Africa when schools are being given more financial autonomy, to build the capacity of the school to manage its own resources. However, Davies (1999:106) warns that it is only when members of the governing body have a clear conception of their functions that they will be able to perform their tasks in a morally responsible and accountable manner and will be able to improve their skills. Beckman and Visser (in Davies, 1999:104) maintain that SGB members must be conversant with the legal implications of having been elected to represent these stakeholders. This implies therefore that for SGBs to influence the course of events at schools they need expertise, as it is a source of power (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992: 34). Without the capacity to guide the school with wisdom, insight and particular skills and

understanding for example, financial management, the purpose of governance would be lost (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: 165).

Although Heystek (1999:111) found that the governing body is the only activity in which parents are taking part to a satisfying extent, the participation of parents and their contributions to governance and management in black rural schools as outlined in the above paragraph remains a topical issue. Guskey and Peterson (1996:12) warn that school governing bodies work under very demanding conditions that make it impossible for them to develop expertise in the most current ideas and research on student learning. This is exacerbated by the fact that in black rural schools the illiteracy level of the parents is high with the result that the parent governors are not well equipped for their expected governance functions (Heystek, 2003: 10).

The recent action by the Ministers of Education of awarding some section 21 powers to SGBs in some provinces such as Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga (Sunday Times, 21 September 2003: 19 and Mpumalanga Circular, 08 October 2003) has raised concerns amongst many people in regard to the ability of many of these SGBs to perform allocated functions such as paying for services to the school and determining the extra curricular activities of the school and choice of subject options according to provincial curriculum policy. The KwaZulu -Natal Department of Education has been cautious in granting Section 21 status to its schools fearing mismanagement of funds because of insufficient training (Sunday Times, 21 September 2003: 19). This research will therefore investigate the capacity and ability of School Governing Bodies in Bushbuckridge to carry out their expected Section 21 functions. The main question therefore is: How do SGBs in rural areas experience their new Section 21 functions? To investigate the problem more effectively it will be further broken down into the following questions:

- To what extent do SGBs in rural areas accept their section 21 functions?
- How does their new status influence their activities?
- How does their new status influence their attitude towards the school and their functioning?

1.6 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to:

- investigate whether SGBs in rural public schools are prepared to accept responsibilities associated with Section 21 status?
- investigate how SGBs in rural public schools feel about their new Section 21 powers.
- determine the impact that the awarding of section 21 powers to SGBs had in terms of their attitude and the way they now execute their tasks and activities.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.7.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research approach for this study is qualitative and evaluative in nature. The researcher will try to interact with the participants in a natural and unobtrusive way to avoid influencing the results negatively. The researcher has chosen this method because it is concerned with understanding behaviour from the research subjects' point of view and from the subjects' frame of reference" (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993: 373). The researcher will employ the following data collection strategies in his research: focus group interviews, individual in-depth interviews as well as non- participant observation. The utilisation of the various techniques of data collection is justified on the basis of their suitability and relevance to the nature and purpose of the research. These methods will allow the researcher to interact with the respondents and to communicate with them to justify his probing of the problem. The research will involve a case study of three schools: i.e. a moving school, a promenading school and a stuck school. The justification of the methodology and the definitions of the various types of schools will be explained in detail in Chapter 3.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through focus group interviews and in depth-individual interviews as well as non-participant observations will be analysed according to Mouton (2000:108) and Glesne (1999: 130) who agree that data has to be broken up into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships in order to make sense of it.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Leedy (1996: 128) describes ethics as simple considerations of fairness, honesty, openness of intent, disclosure of methods, the ends for which the research is executed, a respect for the integrity of the individual, the obligation of the researcher to guarantee unequivocally individual privacy and an informed willingness on the part of the subject to participate voluntarily in the research activity. For Jones (1991:76), ethics is simply a set of moral principles that are legally and morally acceptable to the larger community. In other words ethics are those fundamental practices and principles, values, behavioural expectations, rules and conduct which the members of a society respect.

Therefore, since this is a topical issue which might result in some respondents not giving information for fear of reprisals by, for instance, school managers, it is imperative for the researcher to explain explicitly to the respondents the importance of the investigation and also to inform them clearly and frankly of the type of information that is going to be asked. They should be given sufficient time to decide whether they will participate, without any major inducement (Kumar, 1999: 193). The researcher will maintain the confidentiality of the respondents by keeping them anonymous.

1.10 DELIMITATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

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. The focus of this study is to investigate whether SGBs in

rural areas have the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge to contribute effectively to the governance and management of Section 21 schools. This study will be conducted in Bushbuckridge, which is predominantly rural and black. In order to supplement the information from the three schools, a departmental official (Section 21 co-ordinator) and a member of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGBs) will be interviewed. This research is driven mainly by the fact that some Provincial Education Departments have given all or some schools Section 21 powers, despite the difficulties that many schools in disadvantaged communities have in recruiting governors with the necessary skills and expertise to assist school managers in running schools more effectively.

The most striking limitations to the generalisability of the study reside in the spheres of time, accessibility, convenience, lack of trust, fear, intimidation of SGB members by school managers and to some extent higher authorities. Although the researcher has planned to spend prolonged periods of time in the field, this might not be possible due to time constraints and cost implications. The fact that this is a case study of three individual schools is a limiting factor of itself because if this was a fully- fledged project a much broader area and population would have been included in this investigation. The limitations of the study can be briefly stated as follows:

- The confinement of the study to one region, namely Bushbuckridge out of a possible ten in the whole of Limpopo Province.
- A further confinement of the study to three individual schools in the region containing more than a hundred schools.
- The involvement of the researcher in the phenomenon being studied can increase the possibility of human error, subjectivity and bias (Clark, Riley, Wilkie and Wood, 1998 and MacMillan and Schumacher, 1993).

The choice of including the inputs and perceptions of other stakeholders such as principals, departmental officials and representatives of SGB organisations in the

study will provide the reader with a rich description of the contributions (or lack of) by SGBs in Section 21 schools.

1.11 EXPOSITION OF THE CHAPTERS

The exposition of this research study is as follows:

CHAPTER ONE

This is an orientation chapter in which the introduction, the rationale and the problem statement are spelt out. The chapter also outlines the aims and objectives of the research, the methodology to be undertaken as well as the limitations and the demarcation of the study. A clarification of the main concepts is also given in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter will look at the difference between section 20 and section 21 schools and the implications of this for school management and governance. 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 SGBs need in order for their schools to attain section 21 status.

CHAPTER THREE

This chapter will highlight the methods of collecting and analysing data.

CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter will present the findings, analysis and interpretation of the data.

CHAPTER FIVE

This will be the final chapter of the investigation. It will present the recommendations on the basis of the research findings in Chapter four. The conclusion of the research will also be presented in this chapter.

1.12 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts will be clarified, as they will be used throughout the study:

1.12. 1 A Section 20 school

A section 20 school is a school in which the SGB has not been granted section 21 powers. The school procures goods according to existing departmental arrangements because the money is not deposited into the schools account (DoE, 1998:18).

1.12. 2 A Section 21 school

This refers to a school wherein the School Governing Body has been allocated extra functions such as controlling its own finances, maintaining and improving their school property and buildings as well as paying for services rendered to the school (DoE, 2002: 7). The school has the powers to procure its own goods because the money is deposited in the school's account.

1.12. 3 School Governing Body

This refers to a body consisting of parents, principal, educator representatives and learner representatives (in secondary schools) that determines the policy and rules by which a school is organised and controlled (DoE, 2002: 8). This body ensures that

such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school.

1.12. 4 School Management.

Van der Westhuizen (1991: 55) describes school management as a specific type of work in education which comprises those regulative tasks or actions executed by a person or body in a position of authority in a specific field or area of regulation, so as to allow formative education to take place.

1.12.5 School Governance

Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1996: 11) define school governance is an act of determining the policy and rules by which a school is organised and controlled. This includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school.

1.12. 6 Moving school

A moving school is a school, which keeps abreast of developments and everything is under review (Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram, 1999: 55-56 and Creese and Early, 1999: 129). Gray (Lucen, 2001: 34) adds that such a school always looks for ways in which it can improve itself and promotes learning.

1.12. 7 Stuck school

A stuck school is a school wherein the “conditions are poor and teaching is an isolated activity (Creese and Early, 1999: 29 and Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram, 1999: 55). Creese and Early (1999: 29) state that there is a sense of mediocrity, powerlessness and low expectations; and external conditions are blamed for the situation.

1.12. 8 Promenading school

Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999:56) define a promenading school as a traditional school, which often seems to live on its past achievements and is reluctant to change.

1.13 SUMMARY

This introductory chapter outlines the problem by outlining the problem to be investigated, and presents the rationale and ensuing aims of the research. The purpose of this study is to determine whether SGBs in rural places have the ability, skills and knowledge to manage and govern section 21 schools.

This chapter provides an exposition of the research design (which is qualitative). It also highlights the research methods, for instance interviews (individual in- depth), documentary analysis as well as questionnaires. This study will be conducted in two schools, a primary and a secondary school. To augment the information obtained from the two schools, departmental officials and representatives of SGBs will also be interviewed, documents pertaining to the allocation of Section 21 status to schools will be analysed and questionnaires will be administered to principals of various schools in the circuit.

Lastly the chapter gives a concise demarcation and limitations of the study, which include amongst others time constraints, lack of trust and possible fear. It also provides us with the sequence and content of the chapters as well as a clarification of concepts that will be used in the study.

CHAPTER 2

2. THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

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 before the dawn of democracy in 1994. As statutory bodies, these governing bodies ensure the participation of parents, educators and other staff members, principals, learners and co-opted members of public schools in South Africa (Beckmann and Blom, 2000: 1). According to the South African Schools' Act, section 16 (1), the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and the principal of the school has formal legal authority in terms of the management of the school (RSA, 1996: 9). The school management team (SMT) is responsible for the professional management of the school, which are the daily activities of the school (Heystek, 2003: 4). Heystek (2003) and Sallis (1995) maintain that the school governing body is not supposed to be involved in professional management activities such as decisions about learning material, which teaching method or class assessment should be used even if the SGB could be paying the salary of the 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 Schools' Act requires SGB members in Section 21 schools to play an important role in curriculum issues although it is not made explicit how they should do this.

2.2 COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

In accordance with the South African Schools' Act, (RSA, 1996: 13) the membership of the SGB is made up of elected members, the principal and co-opted members. Elected

members of the SGB comprise individuals from each of the following categories: parents of learners of the school, educators at the school, members of staff at the school who are not educators and learners in the eighth grade or higher. Parents are in the majority on the SGB and there should be one parent more than the total of all other members combined. The number of parent, educator, non-educator and learner members who sit on a governing body depends upon the size of the school enrolment and whether it is a primary, secondary or comprehensive school (Mpumalanga Department of Education, 2002: 20). A primary school of between 160 and 719 pupils has six parent members, two educator members, one non-teaching member whereas a secondary school with more than 629 learners will have ten parent members, three educator members two non-teaching members and three learner members (MDoE, 2002: 20). In the absence of a non-teaching staff member the number of parent governors is 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 SGB 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 parents is indicative of the importance attached to their input in the affairs of the school (Visser, 1999: 631).

SGBs are allowed to co-opt members from the community if they feel the person can make a good 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 a 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 s/he automatically ceases to be a member of the governing body (DoE, 2003: 78). The primary reason for members losing their status is

that they cease to be members when their children leave the school (DoE, 2003: 78). Office bearers serve for only a year unless re-elected.

The establishment of SGBs with the inclusion of parents, educators and learners (in secondary schools) clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to democracy. This is supported by Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999: 25) who stress that this will help involve people in making decisions that affect their lives and therefore has a role in spreading democracy. De Clercq (2002: 87) adds that local institutions develop greater motivation, commitment and involvement when in control and this control is important if education is to be relevant to local needs and conditions. School governing bodies were instituted with the aim of entrenching democracy and instituting representative governance, which, it is strongly believed will enhance the effectiveness of schools and therefore improve the quality of education (DoE, 1996: 22). Davies (1999: 101) states that representation of these stakeholders on the governing body of the school (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 powers to parents in decision-making "gives primacy to the concept that decisions about managing are best taken by those people closest to the users of the service"(Green, 1993: 22). By involving more people in school governance the government hopes that this will boost democracy and ensure equity amongst schools (Dielens and Enslin, 2002: 4).

2.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

The SGB functions as a unit, although individual members have individual responsibilities and it is allowed to set up committees in order to fulfil its tasks effectively. SGBs are given functions according to their experience, knowledge and capacity. The South African Schools' Act of 1996, section 20 outlines a range of functions that the governing bodies of all public schools must undertake. Section 21 lists functions that may be allocated to a school if its SGB demonstrates the competence to

perform such functions effectively. This implies that there are two categories of schools: section 20 and section 21 schools.

2.4 WHAT IS A SECTION 20 SCHOOL?

A section 20 school is a school that performs the functions listed in Section 20 of the South African Schools' Act 84. of 1996 only. According to the Department of Education (1998:28), these schools do not have approval to procure their own goods and services according to existing departmental arrangements. These schools must be informed of their paper budget so as to prepare them to understand the actual costs of running the school (DoE, 1998: 28).

2.4.1 FUNCTIONS OF SGBs IN SECTION 20 SCHOOLS

This contribution is not intended to discuss in great detail all functions of SGBs in Section 20 schools as the main focus of the research is on SGBs in section 21 schools. Because of this only those functions, which according to the researcher have a genuine bearing on the study, will be discussed.

Subject to the South African Schools' Act 84 of 1996, section 20, all governing bodies in South Africa must perform the following functions:

2.4.1.1 PROMOTE THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE SCHOOL AND ENSURE ITS DEVELOPMENT

The School Governing Body should try to use its knowledge, skills and expertise to improve the quality of education for learners at the school. Every member of the SGB must be prepared to play his/her part actively and all should reach an understanding of what it means to be a good member of a school governing body (DoE, 1997: 10). This is endorsed by Davies (1999: 105) and Visser and Beckmann (1999: 153-154) who state

that the SGB members should put the interests of the school above their own personal, political, religious and language interests.

2.4.1.2 ADOPTING A CONSTITUTION, MISSION STATEMENT AND A CODE OF CONDUCT.

In order to transform and bring order to any institution it is imperative for such an institution to have a properly formulated constitution, which governs it. This is very important, particularly when taking into cognisance the fact that South Africa has a long history of apartheid and many other forms of discrimination such as sexism, racism, tribalism etc. The constitution should be based upon the norms and values inherent in the South African constitution, the SASA. 84 of 1996, and any applicable law in the province in which the governing body functions. This implies that SGB members should know and understand the legal implications of having to represent stakeholders that have democratically elected them into office and should be familiar with the contents of legislation such as the National Education Policy Act. 27. of 1996 and the SASA. 84 of 1996. This poses a serious problem for SGBs in many rural schools where the literacy levels and the knowledge and skills of many parental governors are low (Heystek, 2003; Karlsson, 2002; Motala and Pampallis, 2002;).

Furthermore, the SGB is expected to develop and adopt a mission statement with a vision that directs the activities of the school. The values, mission statements, outcomes and visions must be clear, concise and inspirational. Schwahn and Spady (1998: 45) stress that the vision and the mission statement must direct the attitudes, thinking, paradigms and actions and must also discriminate between what is good and what is not okay. The structure, policies, procedures and practices of the organisation should totally support the vision of the school. The vision should be regularly reviewed and re-evaluated as the foundation upon which all decisions are based (Guskey and Peterson, 1996: 12).

The SGB must also adopt a code of conduct. This, according to the South African School's Act 84 of 1996, section 8, is aimed at creating a disciplined and purposeful

school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process. Visser (in Davies: 1999: 108) emphasises that the code of conduct teaches learners self-control, obedience, how to accept responsibility and to strive to achieve exemplary conduct. In other words, the code of conduct is aimed at creating conditions conducive to a peaceful environment at school, as this will in turn improve the quality of education. Visser (1997:630) emphasises that the code of conduct should make provision for parents to be informed timeously of all relevant facts and to be given a reasonable opportunity to be present at the proceedings of their children's hearings. The involvement of parents in developing a code of conduct is very important in light of the fact that "research shows that many parents and communities still believe in corporal punishment as a means of dealing with misconduct (Mabeba and Prinsloo, 2001; Van Wyk, 2004).

2.4.1. 3 SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPAL, EDUCATORS AND OTHER STAFF OF THE SCHOOL IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL FUNCTIONS.

An important aspect in the provision of quality education is the enlistment of all stakeholders in the organisation of the school. Peterson and Deal (1998: 28) stress that school leaders, principals, teachers and parents are the key to eliminating toxic culture and building a positive one. The support of the SGB in improving the performance of schools cannot be over- emphasised as several researchers have reiterated the role parental involvement and support of parents plays in improving student achievement (Cohn and Crossmiller, 1987: 87).

The introduction of SASA.84 of 1996, which outlawed corporal punishment makes the involvement of the SGB in education essential because the discipline of the child depends on the clearly defined rules and regulations that parents, educators and learners (in the case of secondary schools) agree on. The SGB should encourage parents to be active participants in all school activities as this builds relationships and helps break down barriers, develops consensus and promotes a sense of unity in the school (Cohn and Rossmiller, 1987: 382). In its role of encouragement, the SGB should respect and

acknowledge the status and function of its partners who share the responsibility for governance of the school (Davies, 1999: 106). Guskey and Peterson (1998:13) stress that schools must make sure that meetings and training sessions are scheduled at times that are convenient to parents and should value their involvement.

Although the SASA. 84 of 1996 states that the SGB should support the principal, educators and other staff in the performance of their professional functions, research has shown that there is little support of educators by SGBs (Van Wyk, 2004: 51). This is caused by, among others, a lack of or inadequate expertise within the field of education. Guskey and Peterson (1996: 12) contend that some governing bodies avoid, ignore or neglect issues related to teaching and learning.

2.4.1.4 ALLOWING THE REASONABLE USE OF THE FACILITIES OF THE SCHOOL FOR COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING PURPOSES.

The SGB should also allow the reasonable use of the facilities of the school for community, social and school fundraising purposes, subject to such reasonable and equitable conditions as the governing body may determine, which may include the charging of a fee or tariff which accrues to the school. The use of the school's property in fundraising activities is important, as many parents in disadvantaged communities are unable to pay school fees. The few funds raised through this can be used to alleviate some of the needs of the school. However, Karlsson (2002: 334) warns that this has the unintended effect of widening the gap between schools serving middle-class learners and those serving township and rural schools, as the SGBs of the former have greater access to school fee income and are thus able to use the extra funds to, for instance, hire extra educators. Most of the schools serving middle class communities have better facilities such as sports facilities, halls (which are in demand from church groups and other groupings) that they use to accumulate more funds from people who hire these facilities. Meanwhile schools in disadvantaged communities do not usually have these facilities and are therefore unable to generate a lot of money through leasing these facilities.

2. 4.1.5 CONTROLLING AND CARING FOR THE SCHOOL'S MONEY AND PROPERTY

One of the major functions of the SGB is to take care of, control and protect the school's assets (money and property) in a careful and morally responsible manner (Davies, 1999:110). In addition, the South African Schools' Act. 84 of 1996 compels the SGB to "take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school". As the state has to build and maintain public schools, pay educators and buy most of the teaching materials, funds are usually insufficient, hence SASA's recommendation for SGBs to charge school fees (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch, 1997: 37). Van Wyk (2004: 52) stresses that the SGB must oversee the financial management of the school and other money, which may be paid into the school's account. The SGB must be morally accountable to the school for all its financial undertakings and transactions. Heystek (2004:7) argues that for parents (as SGB members) to perform the expected policy and financial functions, they must have the ability to read and understand the legislation and policies in order to implement them. Moreover, many educators as opposed to principals feel that many parents, especially in disadvantaged communities, do not have the competence to handle financial matters (Van Wyk, 2004: 53). This is supported by Heystek (2004:7) who stresses that the high rate of illiteracy or semi-illiteracy of parental governors on the SGB might create difficulties in the implementation of school-based management.

2.4.1.6 OTHER FUNCTIONS OF SGBS IN SECTION 20 SCHOOLS

According to the South African Schools' Act 84 of 1996, SGBs should also recommend to the Head of Department, the appointment of educators at the school subject to the Educator's Employment Act, 1994 and the Labour Relations Act (RSA, 1996). The SGB should also determine the times of the school, draw up and amend a development plan, which promotes the best interests of the school through the provision of quality education

for all learners. The governing body must encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to help by offering their services voluntarily. The governing body may also determine the language policy of the school subject to the constitution, this Act and any applicable law, and establish services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, nutritional and transport programmes and anything else, which furthers the objectives of this Act. The governing body may, after a fair hearing suspend a learner from attending school for a week or pending a decision as to whether the learner is to be expelled from the school by the Head of Department (RSA, 1996: 6). A governing body is a juristic person with legal capacity to perform its functions and it stands in a position of trust towards the school (RSA, 19996: 9).

2.5. DISADVANTAGES OF BEING A SECTION 20 SCHOOL

As mentioned earlier, in the case of section 20 schools, the state's allocation is not paid over to the school. The Department sends a paper budget to the school for consideration. Bischoff and Mestry (2003: 23) stress that the school has to spend the allocated amount as follows:

- Learner support material plus education material and equipment plus curricular needs: 60%
- Maintenance of and repairs to buildings: 12%
- Payments of services (municipal): 12%

Bischoff and Mestry (2003: 23) identified the following as disadvantages of section 20 schools:

- Schools are unable to negotiate discounts, better prices and efficient suppliers. They must only deal with suppliers contracted to the Department.
- Districts do not have the capacity to process the requisitions in time for the commencement of classes because there are usually approximately 150 schools in

each district and all problems that schools experience must be attended to by district officials.

- Suppliers cannot process all requisitions on time, with the result that schools lose out on the allocations because there is no “roll over” of the budget. This means that if the school does not spend a certain portion of the state’s allocation in that financial year it loses that allocation. This is confirmed in the report on the Review of Financing, Resourcing and Costs of Education in Public Schools (DoE, 2003: 147) where it is noted that section 20 schools (mainly the poor schools) were not receiving their rollovers from the previous financial year. The Review also found that running balances for schools were not available and this paralysed attempts by schools to conserve resources as well as to secure procurements (DoE, 2003: 147).
- Sometimes goods are not delivered in time and services are not rendered when required.

Although being a section 20 school has many disadvantages, if the cost of the service provided is far more than the amount allocated by the state, then the state will have to pay for these services.

2.6 WHAT IS A SECTION 21 SCHOOL?

As mentioned earlier the SASA. 84 of 1996, names two categories of public schools: section 20 and section 21 schools. A section 21 school therefore refers to a school that has been allocated the responsibility of carrying out the further functions listed in section 21 of the SASA. 84 of 1996. The SGB of a section 21 school perform more functions than the SGB of a section 20 school as the former are allocated more functions because of their proven capability, knowledge and expertise. In these schools there is a significant and consistent decentralisation to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992: 54). The section 21 functions are conditional on the SGB having the “capacity to perform such functions effectively”

(DoE, 1996:16). The allocation of these extra powers and responsibilities makes these schools self-reliant, hence they are also known as self-managing schools (DoE, 2002:10).

Although section 21 schools are not independent schools, they are more responsible for their own affairs as the SGB carries considerably more responsibility for the success of the school. “Much time is spent at governors meetings in discussing finance and the governing body includes people highly skilled in such matters” (Sallis, 1995:47).

2.6.1 WHAT ARE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SGB IN SECTION 21 SCHOOLS?

An SGB that demonstrates the capacity, knowledge and expertise to perform the compulsory (mandatory) section 20 functions may be allocated certain functions over and above these functions. The allocated functions are: maintaining and improving the school’s property and buildings, determining the extra-curricular activities of the school and the choice of subject options, purchasing textbooks, educational materials or equipment as well as paying for the services to the school. The awarding of section 21 functions to schools is more than a paper transfer of additional functions to a school. (DoE, 2003: 2). It is recognition of the ability of the school’s stakeholders to take charge of the operation of the school. It is a vote of confidence in a school’s ability to control its own destiny (DoE, 2003: 2).

2.6.1.1 MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE SCHOOL’S PROPERTY AND BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS THAT ARE OCCUPIED BY THE SCHOOL INCLUDING HOSTELS IF APPLICABLE.

SGBs in section 21 schools are expected to maintain and improve the school’s property, buildings and grounds. This means that plans to maintain and improve the school should be developed according to provincial department specifications and local council specifications and the expenditure on these improvements should keep within the budget. (DoE, 2002:17). In addition, the SGB should try where possible to utilise local human

and material resources. The school must also have a clear policy with guidelines on the use of facilities at the school.

While it is easy for SGBs serving middle-class schools to practice this because of the expertise, and skills of their members and also their school's financial position, SGBs “in poor working-class communities where poverty levels in families qualify them for special grants from government” are unable to make developments and improvements on their property and buildings (Karlsson, 2002: 334). This is reiterated by Motala and Pampallis (2002: 153) who state that many School Governing Bodies in the rural areas and in less advantaged urban areas, do not yet have the requisite skills and experience to exercise their new power and may have problems fulfilling their basic functions or qualifying for additional functions. This is exacerbated by the fact that the educated elite is migrating from rural undeveloped areas to towns and urban areas where living conditions are better. In many instances even if these people are co-opted into the SGBs in case they still reside in these areas, they rarely attend the meetings because of their busy schedules.

2.6.1.2 DETERMINING THE EXTRA-MURAL CURRICULUM OF THE SCHOOL AND THE CHOICE OF SUBJECT OPTIONS IN TERMS OF THE PROVINCIAL CURRICULUM POLICY.

The SGB of a section 21 school is also required to determine the extra-mural curriculum and choice of subject options according to the provincial curriculum policy. For this to occur there must be a functional curriculum committee familiar with current curriculum development and also applicable legislation and documentation, that guides the extra-curriculum program of the school. (DoE, 2003: 4). A school that applies for this function needs to demonstrate that extra curricular activities and extra subjects are well managed and enhance the school's educational programme. For instance, there must be a proper timetable and adequate safety measures and funds for these extra curricular activities. SGBs in section 21 schools should demonstrate a great knowledge and competence of the following skills: administrative, financial, consultative, human resource and legal skills. This is very important considering that the SGB is a “juristic person” who is legally

responsible for the decision it makes based upon the functions and powers devolved (Sayed and Carrim, 1997: 94).

Sayed and Carrim (1997: 94) argue that it is unclear whether governing bodies are ready to take on such responsibilities, because although they have more knowledge of local conditions, the parent component of the SGB often knows little about larger issues that are just as important in determining an appropriate course of action (Van Wyk, 2004:51). Many SGBs in South Africa and abroad lack the expertise within the field of education and therefore cannot play a meaningful role in curriculum issues (RSA, 1996, section 20). Wragg and Partington (1990: 32) stress that governors tend to leave curriculum matters to the principal and his staff and where governors attempted to involve themselves more with what is taught have sometimes met with resentment from teachers.

2.6.1.3 PURCHASING TEXTBOOKS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS OR EQUIPMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

School Governing Bodies that are on the section 21 list may deal directly with suppliers and contractors for the relevant budgeted items in accordance with standard procurement procedures (DoE, 1998: 28). One of the extra functions that an SGB has is to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school. For this to occur the school should establish a learning support material committee consisting of relevant staff members as well as SGB representatives (DoE, 2002:18). The duty of this committee is to develop guidelines for the selection, distribution and retrieval of learner support material and also to ensure that the set guidelines are adhered to. The school must also keep a stock register where all the support material for the school are recorded and maintained. It is important for the SGB to know and understand the procurement procedures when acquiring new material, for instance, tendering procedures. The school should keep documents as evidence of correct dealing with suppliers and contractors and of how materials and services were used so as to submit these for audit purposes to the provincial department of education as part of the finance report. This is done by the finance committee, which consists of both educators and parents.

School Governing Bodies “work under very demanding conditions that make it impossible for them to develop expertise in the most current ideas and research on student learning” (Guskey, et al, 1996:12). This means that SGBs get constrained in issues with less influence in educational provision. As a result the parent members in the Learner Support Material committee might find it difficult to understand their role in as the decision to select learner support material has traditionally been made by educators in a particular learning area. The decision to include parents on such a committee is symbolic of the government’s intention to change the situation wherein parents were completely excluded, however, many teachers are defensive about intrusion into what used to be called their ‘secret garden’ (Sallis, 1995:50).

2.6.1.4 PAYING FOR SERVICES RENDERED TO THE SCHOOL.

A section 21 school, unlike a section 20 school, has to pay for services rendered, for instance electricity, telephone accounts from its own funds. The school should establish a finance committee made up of members who have adequate skills in budgeting and accounting procedures. This committee should outline duties and the procedures to be followed in spending the money, for instance signing procedures, handling of petty cash, school fee exemptions, etc. The finance committee monitors the monthly income and expenditure to ensure that services that are budgeted for are paid for. The finance committee must use proper accounting procedures to record and file all financial transactions e.g. receipts and invoices (DoE, 2002: 18). The finance policy should also contain rules and regulations about the use of equipment and facilities.

This is one of the most critical and challenging functions of the SGB as the correct handling of the school’s finances result in the community gaining confidence and trust in the SGB. A school does not gain Section 21 status until it can carry out this function effectively (DoE, 2002: 5). This usually encourages parents to participate in the activities of the school. The SGB must therefore be “transparent and they must keep adequate financial records and draw up a financial statement each year” (Davies, 1999: 111). The

financial statement must be audited by a suitably qualified independent auditor and must be sent to the Head of Department within six months after the end of the year.

Many people have reservations about SGBs in disadvantaged areas performing their functions effectively. Heystek (2003) and Van Wyk (2004) cite illiteracy, lack of skills, knowledge and understanding about legislation and policies pertaining to finances as factors that may result in these SGBs failing to handle finances in an effective way. Davies (1999: 106) contends that members of the governing body will only be able to perform their task in an morally responsible and accountable manner when they have a clear conception of their functions. This is supported by Beckmann and Visser (1999: 160) who state that without proper capacity building regarding legal elements, it is possible that problems will occur which could be of such magnitude that they may defeat the whole purpose of public school governing bodies as democratic mechanisms of localised government. The lack of or insufficient capacity building on SGBs by some provincial departments of education regarding financial matters exacerbates this situation. This is supported by the survey conducted by Education for All 2000, Assessment (DoE, 2000: 45) where it was established that “not all SGBs “had undergone training” at the time the survey was conducted. A circular distributed by the Ehlanzeni Regional Office (Circular, Systems and Planning, 31 March 2004) also gives credence to this as the Mpumalanga Department of Education makes an apology for the inconvenience caused by, amongst, others “short notices given before an activity, cancellation of activities at the eleventh hour, some activities starting later than the actual time stated and also the non-attendance by some training co-ordinators”.

As highlighted in the circular, workshops for capacity building are conducted, at a time when the parent component of the SGB is at work or committed. This is caused by the fact that there is no clear programme to indicate when and where the workshops are to be held. As a result, employers do not have sufficient time to make the necessary adjustments to their programmes to release these people for training.

2.7 ADVANTAGES OF BEING A SECTION 21 SCHOOL.

Section 21 schools enjoy far more financial freedom than non-section 21 schools (Bischoff and Mestry: 2003: 77). The onus is on the school to exercise fiscal discipline on finances. Unlike section 20 schools, section 21 schools' state's allocation is paid directly into their bank accounts. Although section 21 schools are required to spend the money in the same way as section 20 schools, they can apply or notify the Department of Education if they need to alter the provided Guideline Budget Allocation. The Department requires schools to spend 28% of the allocated money on municipal services. However, the majority of schools in the rural areas do not have a need for this and as a result this money is usually moved to another budget post, which is relevant to the school.

Bischoff and Mestry (2003: 26) maintain that being a section 21 school is advantageous because:

- Schools can negotiate the best prices, discounts and delivery dates for learning support materials from suppliers.
- The state's allocation that has not been utilised in that financial year can be used in the next financial year because, unlike section 20 schools where the money is in the state's account, the allocation in section 21 schools is not lost since the money is in the school's bank account.
- The principal can save money by commissioning out some of the smaller maintenance jobs or the learners on a voluntary basis whilst supplying the tools and material needed.

Although being a section 21 school seems to have a lot of advantages, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) rejects the policy of establishing section 21 schools as it argues that it amounts to privatisation in education which the union vehemently abhors (The Educator's Voice, 2004: 12). This is seen by many as a strategy to abrogate financial and political responsibility for education provision (Mathonsi, 2004: 20). These people further argue that section 21 schools, as part of the decentralisation of

education governance to the local level, “tends to shift financial responsibility of the state to communities under the guise of education ownership despite financial hardships which many a household experiences everyday” (Mathonsi, 2004: 20).

2.8 PROCEDURES OF AWARDING SECTION 21 FUNCTIONS

As mentioned earlier, SGBs that feel they have the necessary capacity and ability to perform the above-mentioned functions apply to the Head of Department to be granted the powers to carry out the functions. Section 21. (2) of the South African Schools’ Act empowers the Head of Department (HoD) to either approve or disapprove the applications of these functions. If the Head of Department, after carefully examining the School Governing Body feels that it does not have the capacity to perform these functions, or can perform only some of them, he or she can refuse such an application or approve it only conditionally. However, the Head of Department must give reasons for such a refusal in writing to the SGB concerned.

Moreover section 21 (6) states that the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine that some governing bodies may exercise one or more functions, without having to apply to the Head of Department if:

- he/she is satisfied that the governing bodies concerned have the capacity to perform such functions effectively and
- there is a reasonable and equitable basis for doing so.

2.9 WITHDRAWAL OF SECTION 21 FUNCTIONS FROM GOVERNING BODY

The Head of Department may, on reasonable grounds, withdraw functions from a governing body. Such grounds would include for instance abuse of school funds. In order to do so the Head of Department must:

- inform the governing body of his/her intention to do so and the reasons thereof.

- grant the governing body a reasonable opportunity (30 days) to make representations to him/ her relating to such intentions.
- give due consideration to any such representations received.

In urgent cases, the Head of Department may withdraw a function of a governing body without first contacting the governing body. However the Head of Department must:

- furnish the governing body with reasons for his/her actions;
- give the governing body a reasonable opportunity to make representations relating to such actions; and
- duly consider any such representations received.

The Head of Department may for suitable reasons, reverse or suspend his or her action to withdraw the functions of a particular school.

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Head of Department in terms of this section may appeal against the decision to the Member of the Executive.

Mosana (2001: 34) argues that the withdrawal of functions shows beyond doubt that the HoD has more power than the SGB because if s/he feels that the governing body is not accountable enough to some of the duties, s/he can simply withdraw these functions. Although the HoD has power, these powers are curtailed by the conditions that need to be adhered to in the exercising of these powers, as they are not absolute. The HoD must follow certain conditions when exercising these powers and this reveals the general democratic principles within South African society.

2.10 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SGBs IN SECTION 21 FUNCTIONS.

The allocation of Section 21 status to a school depends on the capacity of its SGB to perform these extra functions. It is for this reason that the capacity building programme is of considerable practical relevance (Visser, 1997: 635). Furthermore Van Wyk (2004: 53)

adds that the competence of the members of the School Governing Body is directly related to the amount of training they receive. The provincial departments of education have a responsibility to provide capacity building to the SGBs in a province.

While SGBs in the former state-aided schools are better equipped with skills and knowledge, “many governing bodies particularly in poorer schools are in need of the capacity building programmes that the SASA requires the provincial education departments to provide” (Motala and Pampallis, 2001: 172). Beckmann (1999: 158) warns that the capacity building programme should be holistic and integrated in terms of time and content and should not be provided on an adhoc basis, as seems to be the case presently. Beckmann (1999: 158) suggests that a programme for capacity building should cover the following:

- Aspects of the constitution, which impact directly, or indirectly on the functioning of governing bodies and those whose achievement could in turn impact on the SGBs in a school setting.
- Aspects of the Schools’ Act, in particular those sections which provide directly for particular facets of the functioning of governing bodies. These include mandatory, allocated and optional functions.
- Various policies and regulations, for example those regarding norms and standards for language policy.
- Administrative law aspects that inform the implementation of certain functions.
- Certain province- specific provisions or policies.

In order for the training to be successful Beckmann (1999: 159) suggests that:

- Assessment procedures be built into programmes. This is supported by Van Wyk (2004: 53) who states that follow-ups should be implemented to evaluate their performance.
- Governors should identify their training needs themselves.

- Capacity building programmes should be based on recurrent short, medium and longer terms.
- The success of all programmes should be assessed and be refined regularly.
- The diversity of schools and governors should be recognised in order to eliminate the need to force people to make use of inappropriate training.
- Accredited service providers or special sections of the provincial department should provide programmes.

2.11 SUMMARY

School Governing Bodies in South Africa have a statutory responsibility for many critical functions within 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 SGBs are able to execute their functions in a morally responsible way" and this is important in ensuring school effectiveness and continuing improvement (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 Head of Department in order to be granted section 21 functions because SGBs have different abilities. The HoD can withdraw these functions based on the performance of SGBs on their allocated functions. However there must be reasonable grounds for doing so.

Although section 21 schools are not independent schools, they are more responsible for their own affairs as the SGB carry considerable more responsibility for the success of the school. As a result much time is spent at governors meetings discussing issues like finance and the SGB component usually include people that are highly skilled, hence the emphasis on capacity building. It is only when capacity building is done on an on – going basis that SGBs will function optimally and in terms of the South African School's Act. 84 of 1996 and other legislation and policies governing education.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999: 29). It is a plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993: 3). Schumacher and McMillan (1993: 31) further pronounce 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, 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.

In the previous chapter, the theoretical basis of the role of SGBs in section 20 and 21 schools was laid and through the research design, data were gathered on how SGBs feel about their new status (section 21 powers) and whether they are able to perform the particular functions associated with this. The research focused on what Stake (Blanche and Durrheim, 1999: 370) calls the collective case approach as it involved a study of three types of schools, each with its specific and generic properties, i.e. a stuck school, promenading school as well as a moving school.

3.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

As mentioned earlier in chapter one, the research approach for this study was qualitative and it involved a case study of three schools i.e. a stuck school, promenading school and moving school. The qualitative approach is a multi-perspective approach to social

interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that the subject attaches to it or representing people, actions and events in social life (Mouton, 2001, Neuman, 1994). The ultimate goal according to Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990:445), is to portray a complex pattern of what is studied in detail so that one who has not experienced it can understand it. The researcher felt that a qualitative approach would best meet the aim of discovering and understanding the role that parents play in the governance and management of section 21 schools. The researcher also believed that a qualitative research approach was the method best suited to investigate the problems and experiences that SGB members come across when executing their duties because it is a method that allows the researcher to observe the participants within the context of their own world.

The qualitative approach however has the following limitations:

- It can be time-consuming and demanding as the data obtained through it is voluminous (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993: 14)
- It is more expensive because of travelling costs and the need for a tape recorder.
- There are chances of human bias and error because the researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon being studied (Bailey, 1996: 176; Clark et al. 1998: 101; McMillan and Schumacher, 1993: 15).

Despite the above limitations the researcher felt a need to use this method because it is concerned with understanding behaviour from the research subjects' frame of reference (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:373). Flick (1998: 13) asserts that qualitative research is oriented towards analysing concrete cases in their temporal and local particularity, starting from people's expressions and activities. The fact that this is a case study provides a detailed description and analysis of processes or themes voiced by participants in a particular situation (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993: 377). In this way data are gathered directly from individuals in their natural environment in order to study their interactions, attitudes and their characteristics (Leedy, 1993:123). This according to

Mouton (1996: 45) promotes self-understanding and increases insight into human existence.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION

The manner in which data are collected is a crucial aspect of the research study as it determines its success or failure. As mentioned earlier, the study involved a case study of the performance, feelings and perceptions of SGB members in three types of schools, i.e. a stuck school, promenading and a moving school. Smith (1978) in Merriam (1998: 19) points out that case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, programme, event group, intervention or community. Merriam (1998: 20) indicates that case studies are ambiguous, particularistic, descriptive and heuristic because they allow the researcher to adapt to unforeseen events and change direction in the pursuit of a rich description of the particular situation, event, program or phenomenon under study. The researcher therefore employed a combination of focus group and individual in-depth interviewing as well as non-participant observation as no single source of information could be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective (Merriam: 1998:37). This also assisted in validating and cross checking the findings in the case study.

3.3.1 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Focus group interviews were conducted with the various participants such as SGB parent members and the educator component of the SGB. The interviews for the various groupings were held separately and the questions were semi-structured. These interviews helped to identify trends, perceptions and opinions that these people had in terms of how the SGB felt about their newly acquired status and the impact that this has had on how they executed their tasks as well as their readiness in performing responsibilities associated with section 21 status. The focus group interviews allowed “the participants to express their concerns within a context that is useful to their scientific community “ and

this helped them to provide information that was fuller and richer than the one that the researcher would get from an individual source (Lederman, 1990: 3).

Since the aim of the research was to investigate the relationship between the education policies on the involvement of parents and what was taking place at schools, the focus group interview method was best suited for this as it allowed the researcher to uncover “data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group” (Morgan cited in Flick, 1998: 122). The focus group was suited for interviewing SGB members and educators because it makes participants feel more comfortable and secure in the company of people who share similar opinions, views and behaviour than in the company of an individual interviewer. McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 432) assert that this kind of interviewing creates a social environment in which group members are stimulated by the perceptions and the ideas of each other and this increases the quality and richness of data through a more efficient strategy than one-on-one interviewing. This is made possible because in this interview, there is open conversation and participants can comment or ask questions on issues raised by other participants. Flick (1998: 116) emphasises that groups are advantageous because corrections by the group concerning views that are not correct, not socially shared or extreme are available as means for validating statements and views.

3.3.2 INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The study utilised semi-structured in-depth individual interviews with principals of the schools under investigation, Section 21 co-ordinator as well as a member of the National Associations of School Governing Bodies (NASGB). The interviews with the principals were done to provide insights into the role that parents play in governing section 21 schools, the support and training that members of the SGB received, and challenges and successes that are experienced in working with the SGB parent members at the school. This interview was also done to establish plans that the schools had in terms of developing the capability of the parent component of the SGB. The departmental official (Section 21 co-ordinator) was interviewed to provide details on the process of approving

or granting schools section 21 status, the training that SGBs receive, the budget thereof and how they are supported to ensure that they perform the functions they are elected to carry out. Interviews with the members of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) were conducted in order to gain a wide range or diversity of opinions, understandings and interpretations of the role of parents in section 21 schools. This was done to establish plans which the association has put in place “to encourage committed involvement in public school governance” and to “build school governing bodies into effective organs of society” that promote participatory democracy in the development and transformation of public education (Constitution of National Association of School Governing Bodies, 2001:3- 4).

Interviewing was valuable to this study because it is flexible and adaptable and therefore it enabled the researcher to probe cases where greater clarity was needed. Interviews were also essential in this study because non-verbal as well as verbal behaviour could be noted, and the interviewer has an opportunity to motivate the respondent (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993: 250). Since the aim of the research was to investigate the relationship between the education policies on the involvement of parents in governing section 21 schools and what was really taking place at these schools, the interview was a suitable method because it allowed the researcher to ask questions to uncover reasons that might not be revealed in paper and pencil, tests or surveys (Morgan, 1993: 47). The interview items comprised both open-ended and closed-ended questions because they “... put the respondents at ease” Merriam (1998:9). Bailey (1996: 181) adds that this promotes a complete sharing of views and equal interplay between researcher and respondent. The use of different modes of interviews could yield fresh insights, new information and ideas (Merriam, 1998: 75).

The interviews were recorded as the interviewees granted permission for it. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim and the resulting texts analysed. Extensive field notes were taken to act as a contingency plan in the event of something going wrong with the tape recorder or the cassette. Where necessary, for instance when interviewing parents, questions were translated into their mother tongue. The questions were firstly

verified with experts to check for bias in the procedures, clarity of the questions and where necessary to re-phrase in order to make the questions clearer.

The main method for data gathering was the interviews. Merriam (1998:39) warns that the exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality under investigation. In this case the use of interviews and participant observation complemented each other as neither of these research approaches is without its contradictions and weaknesses (Waghid, 2000:25).

3.3.2.1 PREPARING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Since the main method of data collection in this study was interviewing, thorough preparations were made in order for the study to be successful. The questions were semi-structured as this allowed the researcher to “access participants’ perspectives and understandings of the world” because of its flexibility (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 questions were translated into the mother tongue for participants who did not understand English to allow them to respond with confidence and understanding. The translation was done for the SGB parents in the stuck school and the promenading school as parents in the moving school were able to express themselves in English.

After questions were written the researcher engaged in “peer debriefing” in order to disclose the blind spots and verify the questions (Flick, 1998: 232). As stated in 3.3.2 above the researcher also verified the questions with experts in order to check for bias in the procedures, clarity of the questions and where necessary to re-phrase in order to make the questions easier to understand.

3.3 2.2 FORMAT AND CONTENT OF QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS.

The questions were divided into five sections (see Annexure A). The questions were structured as follows:

SECTION A:

This section contained demographic information about the interviewees. The purpose of this was to check whether this information had a bearing on the SGB performing its functions.

SECTION B:

This section gave an overview of the SGBs' perceptions, views and understanding of its roles and responsibilities as an SGB in a section 21 school. It also investigated how the SGB felt about their new powers and how the acquisition of section 21 powers influenced their modus operandi.

SECTION C:

This section required the interviewees to provide information about their capability in terms of carrying out section 21 functions. These questions provide a guideline for capacity building of SGBs in section 21 schools, as interviewees had to demonstrate how they fulfil these functions in their respective schools. As mentioned earlier the questions were open-ended in order to elicit fresh insights and new information (Merriam, 1998: 75).

SECTION D

These questions were meant to gauge the support that the Education Department provides to SGBs in section 21 schools to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities with ease.

SECTION E

The questions in section E were intended to elicit the views, perceptions and opinions of organisations representing SGBs about schools acquiring section 21 powers.

3.3.3 NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

The researcher conducted direct observations of the schools under investigation as this “allow the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as participants do” McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 256). In this method the researcher sees, hears and records these observations rather than relying on subjects’ self-report responses to questions or statements. The researcher focused on the following: school furniture, physical environment of the school, state of the buildings, improvements and anything that is associated with functions of SGBs in section 21 schools.

3.4 SAMPLE

The participants in the interview process were supposed to be three parent members (i.e. the Chairperson, treasurer and any other parent SGB member), two educator representatives, as well as the principal who is an ex-officio member of the SGB. However after the first interview that was held with the parents the researcher realised that he needed to have at least one SGB member in each grouping who was in the previous SGB as some of the questions needed members with experience in the SGB, for instance questions based on how the SGB decided to apply for section 21 status and the processes involved in acquiring the status. The researcher was fortunate in the case of

educators as they were in the vicinity of the school and they did not have a problem in providing the information needed. It was only in the stuck school where one educator felt she was not in position to join, however this did not create a problem because one of the educators had been re-elected. From thereon the researcher made it a point that each representation had a member that belonged to the previous SGB even if s/he was no longer serving in the present SGB.

Securing interviews with parents was a cumbersome exercise because although appointments were made in time, they could not stick to the schedule. The only parents who were interviewed on the same day on which the appointments were made were those from the moving school although they were interviewed at a different time from the initial scheduled time. However this occurred because of a communication breakdown between the researcher and the chairperson. The researcher had to drive three times (for about seventy km a day) in order to finally secure an interview with parents from the stuck school and this was made more difficult by the fact that the chairperson did not have a phone and the researcher had to rely on the principal and a next door neighbour in order to pass the information to the chairperson. Even after securing the interview, the researcher had to phone the principal and let one of them talk to him for them to be convinced that permission was granted for this exercise.

The treasurer of the promenading school proved very difficult to get as she was transferred to the regional office of the Department of Education the previous year in August. Appointments were made with her to be interviewed separately as it would have been impossible to get her with the others but when the researcher went there she indicated that she was not ready. She was phoned several times and the last time “she was in hospital.” As a result the researcher felt pursuing her was a futile exercise because as the English proverb says: **“you can drive a horse to the trough but you cannot force the horse to drink the water”**. Moreover the researcher felt that the information gathered from the interviewed members was good enough for the researcher to make a meaningful conclusion. The principals in all three schools were all easy to get. However in the moving school the researcher had to do the interview with the principal during the

night as he got trapped in a meeting with an NGO (FHATUWANI) that could not come on their scheduled date of appointment.

The interviews at each school were held with the chairperson, the treasurer (excluding the one from the promenading school) and any additional SGB parent member (who belonged to the previous SGB), three educator representatives (including one from the previous SGB). The interviews were held separately for each grouping for instance the parental representatives were interviewed on their own. In depth-individual interviews were held with a Section 21 co-ordinator who is a Deputy Educational Specialist: School Governance in Bushbuckridge, the principals of the three schools and the Chairperson of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) in Bushbuckridge South.

3.5 CASE STUDY

Leedy (1993: 123) describes a case study as a type of descriptive research in which data are gathered directly from individuals (individual cases) or social or community groups in their natural environment for the purpose of studying interactions, attitudes or characteristics of individual groups. Kumar (1999) and Mouton (2001) concur that a case study is a thorough or in-depth analysis of a single case or small number of cases of a certain type from which generalisations can be made. The study involved a case study of three schools. By studying only three section 21 schools; the researcher believed that these would be sufficient to draw meaningful conclusions pertaining to the attitude and feelings of the SGBs towards their newly acquired powers and functions.

Given the limited timeframe in which the study had to be concluded the researcher selected three secondary schools from the region by utilising the purposive or judgmental sampling method. According to Kumar (1999: 162) the primary consideration in purposive sampling is the judgement of the researcher as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study. Singleton, Straits and Straits (1993: 160) state that the investigator relies on his or her expert judgement in selecting units that

are representative or typical of the population. In other words the researcher chooses to interview those people who in his opinion are likely to supply him with the required information and who are willing to share it. The participants in the research study were selected from three types of schools i.e. moving, promenading or stuck school as mentioned in 1.7.1 above. This was augmented by information gathered from the departmental official and the member of the National Association of School Governing Bodies.

3.5.1 SCHOOLS IN THE CASE STUDY

The schools were selected by purposive sampling as this allows the researcher to choose cases that illustrate some feature or process in which he is interested (Silverman, 2000: 105). The researcher handpicked the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of his judgement of the typicality and the suitability of the schools to his study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 103).

As it has been pointed out in 1.7.1 above, the schools were classified into three categories i.e. moving schools, promenading school and stuck schools. In order to make a distinction between the three schools Gulting, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999:55-56) and Creese and Early (1999:129) define a moving School as a school which:

keeps abreast of developments and everything is under review. In such a school there is a blend of change and stability and maintenance. The school is relatively calm as it adapts successfully to a changing environment. Structures are adapted in line with the school's culture and tradition.

Gray (Lucen 2001: 34) concurs as he describes a moving school as a school, which improves the way it organises itself, and promotes and supports learning. For the sake of this investigation a moving school is a school which values parental involvement and

believes that parents' inputs enhance and uplift the academic achievement of learners. The SGB and the School Management Team (SMT) always strive to improve the culture of the school, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the nature and quality of learning experiences. These types of schools usually exhibit all the positive elements, such as punctuality, determination, professional dynamism among teaching staff and improvement in the general behaviour of learners, staff and parents and in the sporting as well as academic performance of learners" (DoE, 2003:5). The moving school according to Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999:56) is an ideal type of "active" school, which has achieved a healthy blend of change and stability and balanced development and maintenance.

On the other hand a stuck school is described as a school wherein "conditions are poor and teaching is an isolated activity" (Creese and Early, 1999: 29 Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram, 1999:55). In such a school a "sense of mediocrity and powerlessness pervades and low expectations and external conditions are blamed for the situation" (Creese and Early: 1999: 29). In this type of school there is minimal parental involvement as the School Management Team usually takes most decisions. Parents are rarely involved in decision making as educators have little or no confidence in them. There is complacency and a lack of individual accountability and blame is usually levelled at some members of the school community. The results in academic and sports achievements are usually dismally poor.

Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram (1999:56) define a promenading school as:

a school which often seems to be living on its past achievements which may have been impressive. It does not move fast or far, and when it does, this may be for display rather than exercise. Promenading schools are often traditional schools with stable staff that have enjoyed success in more stable times but are currently reluctant to change. They usually attract

pupils with successful learning histories, and although they score well in the league tables, their level of value added is often very low. Maintenance is all, development is regarded as being quirky.

3.5.2 CHOICE OF SCHOOLS IN THE STUDY

The schools in the study were chosen from Limpopo province in Bushbuckridge. The area was devastated by uprisings and violence after the 1994 elections as people demanded to be governed from Mpumalanga province which, is a short distance away. Bushbuckridge is rural and it is one of the most disadvantaged areas in South Africa. The illiteracy rate amongst parents is quite high especially with the migration of former refugees from Mozambique. Unemployment is also very high. For those parents who are fortunate enough to have secured employment, most of them work in nearby game reserves such as the Kruger National Park, Mhala-mhala, Singita, etc while others work in far-away places such as Gauteng. Despite working in nearby places, most of them are unable to come home on daily basis; hence children head many families in the absence of their parents who only come home on weekends or during their leave-days.

The above factors influenced the choice of the research sites and participants. However the fact that all schools in Mpumalanga where the researcher is currently based are classified as section 21 schools, as a result of the resolution passed by the MEC of Education in the year 2002 (Circular no.5 of 2003, 20 January 2003) also played a role in choosing the schools. The researcher felt that the chances of getting participants (SGBs) with rich information were quite slim because of the fact that the procedures followed in awarding section 21 status to schools in Mpumalanga did not require people to engage in a lot of discussions. In Limpopo schools have to apply in order to be granted section 21 status. Because of this the researcher thought SGBs in this province would provide valuable information because of the process involved in acquiring such status.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher used purposive sampling to select the schools in the study. Although the initial idea was to involve a departmental official in classifying the schools into the three categories. This did not materialise because the departmental official concerned could not assist, she did not have sufficient knowledge about the schools as some of them did not fall in the area where she was working. This was exacerbated by the fact that section 21 schools are sparsely distributed and in some instance there were only a few in a circuit. The initial idea was that the schools in a particular circuit would be studied however this changed with the realisation that in some circuits there was only one section 21 secondary school. Because of this the researcher decided to select the schools from the region based on the above definitions irrespective of whether the school was a secondary or a primary school. Hence the study consisted of one primary school and two secondary schools. The primary school was classified as a moving school, one secondary school as a promenading school and the other as a stuck school (See Annexure C for an in-depth description of the schools).

3.5.3 SCHOOL SITE VISITS

The researcher visited the selected schools to inform them about the research, and to seek permission and co-operation from the schools to conduct the study. The researcher briefly outlined the following during the visit:

- the aim of the research;
- the research subjects;
- the duration of the research;
- the benefits 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 assure respondents of their anonymity and confidentiality.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998:123) data analysis is a process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials accumulated to increase the understanding of them and to enable the researcher to present what has been discovered to others. Mouton (2001: 108) defines data analysis as the “breaking up of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships”. Glesne (1999: 130) asserts that data analysis involves organising what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned.

MacMillan and Schumacher (1993: 383) and Glesne (1999: 130) maintain that in qualitative research data collection and analysis are interactive processes that occur in overlapping cycles. In order to focus and shape the study as it proceeded the researcher began a tentative data analysis process while collecting the data in order to avoid playing ‘catch-up’ (Silvermann (2000:119).

The data were collected in tape recordings, listened to and transcribed. These data together with data obtained through non-participant observations were read over and over again, relevant extracts highlighted and then grouped into themes. The researcher then embarked on a more detailed and fine-grained analysis of the collected data. The data were compared, categorised, patterns and trends identified, divergent responses, possible explanations and propositions recorded. Comparisons across the categories were made in order to discover connections between themes. Ideas and facts that developed initial patterns were analysed and noted for further development and testing of final themes in subsequent data analysis.

After the data had been analysed the researcher interpreted it. This according to Mouton (2001:169) means relating one’s results and findings to existing theoretical frameworks or models, and showing whether these are supported or falsified by the new interpretation.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research methodology and the research design that was followed in gathering information for the study. The research involved a case study into three types of schools; namely a stuck school, promenading school and a moving school. In this study focus group interviews were employed to gather information from SGB members and educators, in-depth individual interviews were held with the principals, departmental official as well as members of the NASGB. Non-participant observations were also used to gather information.

CHAPTER 4

4. DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The awarding of Section 21 status to schools is part of the democratisation process, which has currently engulfed South African society. Schools are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant. In order to do this SGBs in these schools must take an active role in the affairs of the school and understand their new duties and responsibilities. Van Wyk (2004: 50) reiterates 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 may have difficulty fulfilling their functions. This investigation has attempted to answer the research question formulated in chapter one: How do SGBs in rural section 21 schools experience their new section 21 functions?

4.2 SETTING FOR THE INTERVIEWS

As mentioned in chapter 3 interviews were the main source of data collection. These were conducted in different places to accommodate schedules of the respondents. The educators were interviewed in their respective schools after their principals had given permission. All interviews were conducted in English except for two, which were held with parents of the SGB at the school identified as a stuck school and a promenading school. In their case the interviews were held in Xitsonga and Sepedi respectively, as these were the languages in which they were comfortable. The researcher had to visit the parent SGB members of the stuck school more than three times before he could locate and interview them. The interviews with parent SGBs members were held mostly in their homes. The parent governors were very difficult to locate for the interviews and the researcher had to exercise a lot of patience and eventually resorted to interviewing them late in the evening. Principals were interviewed in their offices. The section 21 co-

ordinator (departmental official) was interviewed in her office and the chairperson of the National Association of SGBs was interviewed at his home.

A tape recorder was used to record the data and no respondent had a problem with this. The educator, principals and parent SGBs were asked the same questions in the same sequence so as to reduce the interviewer's effects and bias (McMillan, 1993: 426). However this did not prevent the researcher from probing and asking for clarifications where he felt a respondent needed to expand to throw more light on the issue being investigated.

4.3 FINDINGS

4.3.1 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE OF SGB MEMBERS.

The educational background of SGB members plays an important role in determining how far an individual can participate in SGB affairs because knowledge is power and it is important that one understands one's role in the SGB. Heystek (2002: 7) argues that for parents to be able to perform the expected policy and financial functions, they must have the ability to read and understand the policies in order to implement them and the legislation. Therefore education is a fundamental aspect in the development of the "wide range of skills and capacity that one needs in order to deal with the complex issues and tasks that SGBs are expected to fulfil" (Van Wyk, 2004: 54). The researcher therefore set out to determine the educational background and the experience of the various SGB members in the schools in the sample, see (Annexure B). It is important to note that the majority of the SGB members had a minimum education of standard ten except two; one with a standard six and one who had standard seven. The view that parental governors in black rural schools are not well equipped for their expected governance functions because of the high illiteracy level (Heystek, 2002: 10) did not hold true for some of the SGB parental members as some of them had the minimum literacy skills to read and understand policies and participate actively in the affairs of the school.

It must be mentioned, however, that such schools are few in number because this was the case in the moving school as the chairperson and the treasurer were educators who besides extensive experience in SGB affairs also held positions in other organisations. Although one would say that the parent members in the stuck and promenading schools had the minimum skills required to read and maybe understand policies, the fact that the interviews with parents at the stuck and promenading schools were held in Xitsonga and Sepedi respectively instead of English, is an indication of the difficulty that the parent SGB members had in understanding documents written in English which is the language in which many policies are written. Irrespective of this, the chairperson of the stuck school seemed to know the procedures pertaining to many governance issues. The researcher observed that he kept copies of the “starter pack” at his own home to keep abreast of SGB affairs. This implies that, given a chance to govern he could do a reasonable job, because like he indicated he had completed his standard ten by correspondence (while working on the mines where he was a union representative) and he was a bricklayer by profession. It was his second term in the SGB although initially he was the deputy chairperson.

It was difficult in some cases to determine the role that the SGB parent members played in drafting school policies because policies were in place before they joined the SGB. However, information gathered from SGBs who had been part of the previous bodies and the principal confirmed what many researchers revealed about policy-making procedures where plans or drafts are worked out by the staff as well as the principal and are brought to the SGB for ratification. The principal from the moving school indicated that he sometimes did not even involve the staff in policy making because the Department of Education demanded these policies in a short space of time and therefore there was usually no time to consult on the policies. In order to avoid being charged with misconduct for failure to submit, he just decided to do it on his own and gave it to the authorities.

4.3.2 SGBs' UNDERSTANDING OF A SECTION 21 SCHOOL

In order to prepare SGB members for the challenges and duties associated with section 21 functions, the researcher believes that a series of meetings should have been held with all the stakeholders, that is, educators, parents and even learners (in the case of secondary schools), to explain what is expected of them when the school becomes a section 21 school. However, during the interviews it was clear that insufficient consultation took place in order to explain to the members what a section 21 school is and the expected roles of the members. This is expressed very clearly by an educator from the moving school who responded as follows when asked what a section 21 school meant to him: “This is coming for the first time to me; I do not know how they transferred the school to being a section 21 because we have never been told about this, we have only been told that we have been allocated R22000 but the meaning of section 21, no, we were not told.” Other educators from the same school and those from the other schools echoed the same sentiments as they added that no formal meetings were held in order to decide to apply for section 21 status. The majority of the educators did not even know how their schools acquired Section 21 status.

Parent SGB members from all sampled schools had a better understanding of what a section 21 school is than the educators. However, to many of the parents, a section 21 school meant relief from paying school fees, as they believed that a section 21 school receives more money than a section 20 school. For instance a group of parents from one of the sampled schools said that one of the advantages of being a section 21 school was that the allocation of money was more than the money they received the previous year when they were still a section 20 school. They did not realise that the change in the amount of money received could have differed because the number of children may have increased and the allocation could have been larger because of the increase in the provincial budget of the department of education the following year. However, most of the respondents could not articulate the functions that they were allocated to perform by the department. The only parent who was able to indicate the functions they were

allocated was the chairperson of the moving school who indicated that all functions were given to their school except the one of purchasing textbooks and other “educational material needing higher amounts of money”. From the information provided by principals, it seems that all schools were allocated all the other functions except buying learner support material such as textbooks.

From the above one could conclude that principals consulted only parent members when the schools decided to apply for section 21 status. This affirms what Van Wyk (2004: 51) found in her studies of the experiences of South African educators where educators were sidelined in decision-making as consultations took place mainly between the chairpersons of the various SGBs and the principals. The interviews also confirmed this, as people who seem quite knowledgeable and outspoken on the parent SGB members were the chairpersons.

4.3.3 IMPACT OF THE ACQUISITION OF SECTION 21 STATUS ON THE SGB ACTIVITIES.

As Heystek (2003: 12) correctly stated, the initial idea of the legislators in granting section 21 status to schools was to delegate more authority and economic responsibility to local school levels. According to the section 21 co-ordinator interviewed this was done in order to encourage schools to be independent and self-reliant. In her own words she said: “ We are trying to eliminate the movement that schools engage in if they are not section 21, because if they are not, they buy through the department, they will have to go and get quotations themselves, bring requisitions, come again and take an order, go and supply the order to the supplier, bring back the invoice and this is a long process but we are trying to say that schools should buy for themselves and once they are awarded these functions they are able to do this without the department as the money is deposited directly into the school’s accounts”. One would assume that the department does expect the SGB to raise additional funds as they acknowledge that 21% of the national budget cannot address the backlogs created by the previous government, hence their encouragement of schools to acquire extra funds. However the emphasis here seems to be

that schools manage and account for the allocated funds in accordance with the guidelines provided by the department in order to prove that they deserve to be accorded section 21 status.

Although being a section 21 school (the primary school has been a section 21 school for more than three years and the two secondary schools have just acquired their section 21 powers) limits the movement between the department and the school, this places a huge responsibility on the SGB in terms of its modus operandi, as what the department was supposed to do on behalf of the school is now placed on the shoulders of the SGB. The majority of the SGBs and principals agreed with this, though most of them indicated that they also had problems adhering to their constitutional responsibility, which requires them to meet once or twice per quarter. They attributed this to their busy schedule brought about by the transformation of education in South Africa. This places a huge responsibility on educators, as they have to fulfil the bulk of tasks that are supposed to be the responsibility of SGB members. This was exacerbated by the fact that not one school amongst those sampled had an annual programme, which stated exactly when they were supposed to meet. Most of them only met when there were some critical issues or crisis situations that needed solving.

Nevertheless, most of the respondents stated that the acquisition of section 21 powers has improved their work ethic and sense of commitment because if “we do not do this, the status might be withdrawn and whatever gains we have made will come to zero” remarked the principal of the promenading school. A parent from the moving school supported this when he said: “Being situated in a poverty-stricken area made us realise that we have to be committed and be transparent in our way of doing things because we rely on donors and other stakeholders for the betterment of the school. In Shangaan they say “**ku pfuxiwa leyi tipfuxaka**”, meaning that assistance is given to those who assist themselves as well, so we need to wake up if we have to improve our situation”. The chairperson of the moving school reiterated:

The acquisition of section 21 status really changed the attitude

and the functioning of the school and the SGB in particular because if you know that you are to make submissions and take your books for financial auditing, obviously you will make it a point that everything is done properly, so as such your way of working is improved in such a way that you manage your things well because you want to work in accordance with what is expected from government. So the actual functioning is improved and the attitude and work ethic should be positive if a school has to remain a section 21 school.

However, educators from two of the schools indicated that they did not see any change except the fact that they were told that money had been deposited into their account. This was complicated by the fact that educators in all three schools are rarely informed or consulted on decisions concerning SGB activities at school. Meanwhile, all principals interviewed indicated that the acquisition of section 21 status had brought a new lease of life to their SGBs as they now realise the need to meet frequently to check on the progress being made in the implementation of agreements reached in meetings on projects. All three principals agreed that section 21 functions brought SGBs closer to the schools especially if there were projects to check on.

4.3.4 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

4.3.4.1 ABILITY TO RAISE FUNDS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

One of the allocated functions of section 21 SGBs is the maintenance and improvement of the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school. In order to do this the government encourages schools to establish partnerships with other stakeholders such as private companies, as it is incapable of improving the quality of the schools' infrastructure and the general quality of education on its own (Gultig, Ndhlovu and Bertram, 1999: 13). It encourages schools to raise money privately through fundraising efforts or by charging fees, or both (Gultig, et al, 1999: 13). In order to raise money from

private funders SGBs need skills to draw up funding proposals with clear motivation for why this money is needed and how it will be used (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: 118). In addition, many funders need previously audited financial statements for the last two years and they “often insist on some kind of business plan which clearly outlines expected ‘outcomes’, which are evaluated over the period concerned” (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: 118).

Of all the sampled schools, only the moving school was able to outsource funds from private donors. The SGB in the school initially received a donation from Pfunanani Trust who built them two classrooms in the year 2000. They also applied to the National Lottery Board and were given an amount of R90 000 to erect a fence around the school. This school received a further R15 000 from the National Lottery, which they have used to improve their school playing fields, and to purchase some sporting equipment. The principal indicated that there was a committee, consisting of himself, two educators, the chairperson and the treasurer of the SGB, who drafted the proposals for funding. The researcher is of the opinion that the acquisition of funding went a long way in improving the performance of their teams because when he visited the school for observations and interviews the school had just won a soccer and netball tournament sponsored by a local businessman. The school also has a vegetable garden where they plant crops, which are sold to the community to generate extra funds. The school does not have piped water so the learners have to draw water some distance away from the school.

This was not the only school with a garden as the promenading school had a vegetable garden as well, however the difference between the two schools was that the money generated by the promenading school did not go to the school’ account. The principal of the school indicated that the money is kept in a separate account and is used to buy seeds and trees to beautify the school. However, the educators at the school seemed to be in the dark about such an account and the way the garden operated. The promenading school however, was able to initiate some projects, as there was a block of about five classrooms, under construction, and “we got the pump and tank and we are drinking

water from our own borehole,” remarked the principal. The money to do all this was paid by parents who were persuaded to increase the school fees by R60 to R180 per annum.

The principal of the stuck school indicated that the only project that the SGB had engaged in was building the girls’ toilets. In this school most of the classrooms have broken doors and windows. When asked about plans they had to remedy this situation the chairperson indicated that they had bought the doors for the classrooms. They just had to find some time to put them in; however, he indicated that they were not enough for all the classrooms.

4.3.4.2 ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

As already mentioned, a section 21 school must have the ability to raise additional funds to support the state allocation (DoE, 2002: 16). According to the respondents all three schools did make some plans for fundraising activities, however it was difficult to continue with these because of lack of support from parents. Parents usually responded negatively towards such fundraising activities as evidenced at Victory Park Combined School (Mpumalanga News, 21 October 2004: 12) where a public fund raising event to build a hall for the school could not attract more than a hundred people. This happened after parents were informed in time to attend and advertisements were put on the local newspapers.

Educators at the promenading school tried to use sporting occasions to sell fruit and other items to fundraise but they ended up stopping because of lack of profit. At the second high school the staff only fundraised once in the year 2001 through charging R1 per head at the gate on a cultural day. The principal indicated that they did raise more than a thousand rands through this. He cited the change in the SGB as the main reason for not continuing with this, as the present SGB members were less assertive and committed than the previous one.

Educators at the school, however, cited the reason for the lack of fundraising activities as a lack of vision in the leadership of the school. In his own words, the educator representative from the stuck school said: “It takes a vision from the chairperson of the SGB and principal for that (fundraising) to be done because a vision is a drive, so let me say there is no vision when it comes to the leadership”. The SGB chairperson indicated that they had also agreed to lend chairs to the community for funerals and they charged a certain amount for this but they did not see where the money went and some educators asked what happened to this money. This indicated a lack of trust between the SGB and the principal as he even warned the researcher about the SGB parent members when the researcher sought permission to interview them.

The only school, which was consistent in staging fundraising activities, was the moving school. The school fee per child at this school is R30 per annum while other primary schools in the area charge R50 per child. Each child is expected to have raised at least R11 per year in addition to the school fees. The school fee was R40 per annum and the SGB decided to change it to R30 in order to encourage even those parents who usually fail to pay to do so. This, of course was done after the acquisition of section 21 status, which as mentioned earlier is seen as a huge relief by the majority of the SGBs in terms of school fee payment. The main method employed by this school to raise funds was through encouraging the learners not to wear uniform on designated days and pay R1 for this privilege. The school also sells vegetables and this also augments the feeding scheme project that the department conducts for learners.

4.3.5 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT OF FINANCES

4.3.5.1 AVAILABILITY OF FINANCE COMMITTEE AND POLICY

One of the fundamental functions of the SGB is to control policy and finance at the school as the sustenance and maintenance of a school’s section 21 status depends on this. According to SASA 84 of 1996 (s. 49-53) and the General Notice, the SGB is responsible for the administration, planning and management of everything related to school funds,

assets and the budget of the school. Therefore the SGB must be equipped to draw up, analyse budgets and financial statements and also to manage finances correctly (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1998: 120). Most importantly, each and every school needs to have a financial committee with a financial policy “to ensure that all financial and educational functions of the school are properly performed” (DoE, 2002: 11).

Although the financial directives from the department of education emphasise the importance of a financial committee and financial policy, all three schools in the study lacked financial committees and policies. Even though one principal indicated that there was a financial committee and policy in his school, this was not established as per directives of the department (if it was ever established) as he totally disregarded these directives or stipulations. Furthermore, when educators who are supposed to form the majority within this committee (five educators) were asked whether this existed at the school, they indicated that no such committee existed and that they had never participated in the formation or discussion of any finance committee or policy at their school.

4.3.5.2 TRANSPARENCY IN THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE SCHOOL.

The South African Schools’ Act 84 of 1996 section 43 (5) requires each and every school to submit its finance books for auditing purposes and the audited financial statement must be sent to the department of education within six months. More importantly the audited financial statement must be circulated to the members of the school community for perusal so that the members can see how the school’s finances have been utilised. This is supported by Bischoff (1997:47) who articulates that the entire school team (parents of learners, learners and staff) should be shown the interpretation of financial statements and important ratios, and the significance of this in monitoring the school’s performance and results should be emphasised. Bischoff (1997:53) maintains that this should be done irrespective of whether the information is pleasant or unpleasant. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997: 120) maintain that the availability of budgets and financial statements for perusal and comment by the school community entrenches democracy, which is one of the reasons why schools are awarded section 21 status.

Of the schools in the study, only one school (moving school) of the three was able to display its audited financial statement to all the members of the school community. Only parents were shown the financial statement in a meeting at the promenading school. The educators indicated that they were usually not even told when there would be a parents' meeting hence their failure to attend. This is exacerbated by the fact that at their school most of the meetings are held when schools are closed. The educators stressed that they have raised this concern without a positive response. The educators even indicated that they were not even involved when the budget was drawn up. Only the principal and one of the deputy principals who is also the deputy chairperson of the SGB attend these meetings. The educators also said that the financial statement was presented by the principal himself and was usually written on the board and therefore even parents did not have sufficient time to interrogate the statement. Because of this the parents have now made a strong recommendation that the statement be typed and given to each parent in time.

In the stuck school the principal indicated that the financial statement was accepted by the parents at a meeting but both parent SGB members and the educators disputed this. In his own words the chairperson stated: "The principal took the books for auditing but we have never seen the audited statement because whenever we needed to see it we were told that the books are at home. Whether the books have been audited or not we are not even sure because we have not seen them". According to the educators and parents, the non-availability of the financial statement during the presentation of the budget created a problem because parents did not see how finances were utilised the previous year hence the difficulty in convincing them to accept the proposed budget for the next year.

Parker and Leithwood (Van Wyk: 2004) maintain that principals have a remarkable capacity to either derail community-based governance structures, retaining control for themselves, or to ensure the effectiveness of these structures. Scheddler (Maile. 2002:329) argues that the arrogance of power inhibits answerability and this appears to be the case in two of the three schools in the case study. Educators in one school were

denied financial information and in the other, information was withheld from both parents and educators. In both these schools the principals retain “unlimited powers” by denying both parents and educators relevant management information (Maile, 2002: 329). Maile (2002:329) emphasises that answerability is embodied in reports and follow-up discussions, and in general terms in evaluation. All these processes do not happen often in the two schools.

4.3.5.3 FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

Most, if not all, functions that SGBs in section 21 schools have to perform are related in one way or another to the financial capability of the members of the SGB in the school. For instance, paying for services rendered to the school as well as purchasing textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school to be done efficiently, the SGB needs to know how to handle finances judiciously. This implies that SGBs should comprise members that have adequate skills in budgeting and accounting procedures to handle the finances of the schools in the correct manner. Many studies however have revealed that many SGBs in disadvantaged communities often do not have the necessary skills to handle their finances in a satisfactory manner (Heystek, 2002; Karlsson, 2002; Motala and Pampallis, 2001; Van Wyk, 2004).

The parent component of the SGB in the moving school indicated that they were capable of handling the large sums of money associated with section 21 status and they had been doing this for the past years. The fact that they had been taking their books for auditing is proof enough that they are capable of handling their financial affairs with aplomb and they emphasised that the comments from the auditors also help them a great deal on which skills they have to improve on. In his words the chairperson of the SGB said: “The majority of us are educated such that we can read policies on our own and can see if things are going well or not and we can check if money is handled well and we can be accountable on such areas. This is made easy by the fact that we work as a team and the principal is transparent and helpful as well.” The principal in this school concurred with this. The only area of concern that worried the chairperson of this school was their failure

to stick to their budget in terms of monthly expenditures and variances. However, the treasurer postulated that this might have been caused by the fact that parents do not stick to the deadlines when paying school fees and the state usually put the allocated money in the school's account around October and November and by this time it was too late to use the money in the year in which it had been allocated.

Parent SGB members in the stuck school indicated that with training they could handle finances if given a chance. The only difficulty was that there was no transparency and there were often no meetings to report on monthly expenditure. A parent SGB member from the school indicated that the problem lay in the fact that their budgetary inputs were not included when the final draft is drawn. In his own words he said: "We were told to go and draw our own budget in order to see which items we can include in the budget. However at the end of the day our inputs were not taken into consideration as only the items and the budget drawn by the School Management Team was taken into consideration." It was difficult to ascertain the degree of capability of the SGB parent component in the other high school as the treasurer who doubled up as the financial officer had moved to the regional office the previous year. Several appointments were made with her to no avail. When the researcher tried to make the last two appointments "she was in hospital." However, the principal indicated that she had sufficient ability to handle the financial affairs of the school as it was now her second term as a financial officer and treasurer. It was difficult to verify this, however, as the principal would not allow the researcher access to the financial books of the school. Moreover, it would have been very difficult, as even the educators and the parents in the school did not have access to these books.

Educators in the promenading school indicated that they thought that they had the financial capability. The only problem is that "people are not used to their potential and there is lack of transparency when dealing with finances," lamented one of the educators. In this school the finance officer, who is also the treasurer, had been transferred to the regional office in August the previous year. Since her transfer the SGB was left without a treasurer and it was the principal and the grade heads (who were charged with the

collection of monies per grade) who dealt with finances at the school. Meanwhile, educators from the stuck school indicated that they were lacking in skills and that they needed to be capacitated in handling finances. They had not attended any workshop dealing with finances or even governance.

Although it was difficult to verify this it would seem that the finance officer at this school had difficulty in handling the day to day finances of the school because the principal indicated that the financial statement of the school was drawn up by the auditors from Nelspruit. Furthermore, the treasurer of the school admitted that the only part he ever played in the SGB in terms of his portfolio was at the end of the year when the school had to “force” parents who had not paid school fees to pay. During this time the principal sends them to parents that have not paid school fees during the year to demand payment or to tell them to come to school to give an explanation on their failure to pay.

4.3.6 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES.

A section 21 school is expected to determine the extra-curricular and curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options as determined by the Provincial Department of Education. In order to do this the school should have a curriculum and an extra-curricular committee. The curriculum committee should, amongst other functions, ensure that the school has the necessary resources for its subject offerings and be aware of the latest curriculum policies and developments, including provincial policies (DoE, 2002: 17). The extra-curricular committee should ensure that there is a proper timetable for extra-curricular activities and that adequate safety measures and adequate funds for these activities exist (DoE, 2002: 18). Both committees should comprise both parents and educators, and learners in the case of secondary schools.

There was no curriculum committee as prescribed by the department in any of the three sampled schools. In the two secondary schools, chief invigilators were the only persons who advised learners about the choice of subjects and the groupings that they (learners) had to make when choosing subjects to study for various careers. The parental governors

and learners were not involved in this. The SGBs in the schools were not even consulted to decide on which subjects they think should be offered. A typical example was when the School Management Team (SMT) in the stuck school decided to cancel Afrikaans as the third language of choice. It was only after realising the negative impact that this had on their grade 12 results that parents were consulted about reinstating the language to boost their results which had deteriorated dismally the previous year.

The parental governors are also excluded from the extra-curricular committees and when decisions are made on the sporting activities in which the school should partake. When the principals and educators were asked to explain the reason for this, their response was that this has traditionally been done like that. One of the educators added that the parents were not familiar with these sporting activities as they have never been to school and most of them have never played these games. However, this was disputed by one of the parents who indicated that this boils down to the issue of involvement as he played soccer himself and was even prepared to coach the school's soccer squad if requested. The problem was that at times parents were not even informed when the school team goes to play away.

None of the three schools had tangible measures to improve the involvement of parents in curriculum and extra-curricular activities as the respondents unanimously agreed that parental involvement in their schools' affairs was poor. The schools did not have clear measures of safety during sporting activities. However, all three schools usually used the afternoons especially Thursdays for sports practices and one of the schools knocked off at 16h30 on these days.

4.3.7 MEASURES TO MAINTAN AND PROTECT THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The school environment is a major factor in determining whether optimal learning and development of its staff and students occur (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: 117). It is therefore imperative that the school's resources and buildings be well managed and well maintained. Two of the sampled schools (the moving and the promenading school) are

well kept and well managed. Although it was winter when the schools were visited, the promenading school had well kept school grounds with grass and flowers. On Fridays they have a cleaning period from 13h00 and the learners sweep the grounds under the supervision of the educators. The school has hired two security guards who are paid from school fees and they also have a caretaker working in the garden, tending the flowers, planting and cutting grass when necessary. The moving school also has security guards and the environment of the school is well kept although they do not have anybody from the department to assist them.

The stuck school is dilapidated, as windows and doors are broken and the environment leaves a lot to be desired. The researcher observed that the school's electricity had been disconnected and the SGB indicated that they were unaware of this. They indicated that they had not been formally informed of this. They said that this posed a serious threat to the security of the school because, although they had hired security guards to take care of the school during the night this was a waste of time as it is not easy to catch somebody in the dark. This school also has a caretaker hired by the department of education to take care of the environment as in the case of the other secondary school.

4.3.8 TRAINING OF SGBs FOR SECTION 21 FUNCTIONS.

Van Wyk (2004:53) maintains that the competence of members of the SGB directly relates to the amount of training received. Thus, this necessitates intensive training if the skills and competencies of SGB members are to be enhanced. Some of the SGB members in the sampled schools had undergone some training but the majority of them indicated that the training did not focus on section 21 functions and real problems that schools have, for instance drafting and adoption of policies which is currently being done by principals, the SMT's and, to a lesser extent, educators. They felt strongly that they needed to go for training that would focus on the functions of section 21 schools because this was more challenging. SGB parent members in one of the schools indicated that they had only attended one workshop since they came into office, and this workshop was for induction. The chairperson of the SGB in the stuck school puts this into perspective when

he said: “We have never been to any workshop except the first one we attended when we had just been elected. We never receive invitations informing us to go to workshops. We only get to know about these workshops from SGBs of other schools who know us and become surprised at our absence.” In this school the relationship between the school and the SGB is very unhealthy and there is mistrust amongst members of the school community.

The principals emphasised the need to train all SGB members (and not two as it is currently the norm) to empower them to carry out section 21 functions meaningfully as, new office bearers are elected each year. In addition, some of the parent SGB members are not always available to attend workshops because of their work commitments. However, the principal of the moving school indicated that his SGB members do not have a serious backlog in terms of skills as the majority of them can read and interpret the legislation and policies and enact them. The Section 21 co-ordinator agreed that the SGBs did not have sufficient skills but she stressed that the department had ample time to workshop, train and monitor SGBs because there are three years allowed for training. She also stated that most of the SGB members are able to attend workshops that the department organises because the majority of them are self-employed or unemployed. She stressed that educating and empowering SGBs is a process and not an event, which can be completed in a day or a month.

This is contradictory to what the principals expressed. The difference in opinion here seems to arise from the fact that when training is arranged, the principal and the SGBs hastily arrange for representation by any member (irrespective of his/her portfolio) available to attend the workshop and this seems to mislead the department into believing that the workshop is well attended especially as usually only two members are required to attend. In most cases the workshops are arranged at short notices, as there is often no annual programme to indicate planned training. As a consequence of this employers cannot release the SGB members for training, as there are times when this happens during the week. Even if training happens over weekends, if people are not told in time they do not attend. If the most influential people or people who are intended to gain a lot

from the workshop do not attend, for instance the chairperson or treasurer, the workshop will not have much meaning especially, with the shortage of skills (reporting) displayed by many SGB members. The section 21 co-ordinator said that the Limpopo Department of Education usually holds two workshops per year, one on governance in April and the other on financial management in September. However, if an individual misses the meetings she/he has to wait until the following year. These workshops do not often happen as planned (if they ever happen at all) in the two years after elections. In Mpumalanga training is also fraught with problems because the School Governance section only becomes active after the elections when they conduct induction workshops for the new governors. After this only a few “trainings” happen.

The chairperson of the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) felt strongly that SGBs could only be equipped with the required skills if training occurred twice per quarter and not twice per year, as was currently the case. He also added that the period of SGBs term of office is very short and this in itself is a disadvantage because it does not give them sufficient time to gain the necessary experience. He cited the lack of education as a great disadvantage and he remarked: “SGBs were going to be effective if retired policemen, lawyers, doctors nurses and teachers could take that challenge to serve in the SGB but most of them are reluctant because nobody compensates them”. The fact that the department does not lend a hand to their organisation exacerbates the situation as they are in a good position to assist but there is nothing that they can do if they do not have the financial resources.

4.4 SUMMARY

The philosophy underpinning the South African Schools’ Act is that schools become self-managed and self-reliant (Mathonsi, 2004:20). However, this can only be achieved if SGBs work in democratic and participatory ways to build relationships and ensure effective delivery of 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 other educators should create an enabling environment and persuade and motivate influential parents to become school governors.

This chapter dealt with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the three schools and other respondents. The core of the chapter was to investigate whether SGBs in rural schools have the competencies, skills and ability to perform section 21 functions as stipulated in the South African School's Act 84 of 1996. It also dealt with the feelings of SGB members about their new functions, how they go about enacting these functions and how their new status impacted on their functioning. Chapter five will give the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education remains committed to granting schools section 21 status. Section 21 schools were created with the aim of achieving equity and quality amongst schools in South Africa. The Department believes that the gradual transfer of financial management responsibility to schools will give departmental officials the opportunity and responsibility of monitoring how successfully schools translate inputs into learner performance (DoE, 2003: 20). McLennan (2001: 10) warns that this is a mammoth challenge because existing institutional contexts and norms and social relations which constitute them, contain countervailing tendencies which limit the development of effective governance relationships (McLennan, 2001: 10).

The above was demonstrated through the research findings analysed and discussed in detail in chapter four. The previous Chapter made an attempt to answer the research question, which is: How do SGBs in rural areas experience their new section 21 functions? The consolidated data was analysed and interpreted against the background of the existing theoretical framework discussed in Chapter one. This chapter will provide recommendations and the conclusion of the research.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The process of granting schools section 21 functions appears to be a powerful tool of extending and increasing democratic participation in educational decision making. The acquisition of these functions seems to have had a positive impact on the functioning of SGBs, the motivating factor being the money deposited into the school's account. The research however has demonstrated that the culture of governance in the rural areas is still in its infancy and many schools in these areas are not coping with the allocated

functions thrust upon them. Most of the SGBs cannot reasonably claim that they can manage the large sums of money deposited into their schools' accounts, as many of them do not have finance policies, committees, skills and competencies and the parents are not involved in extra and intra curricular activities. Moreover all these are requirements of a school to qualify as section 21. This therefore calls for a revisit into how schools acquire section 21 status because presently there is an over-reliance on the audited financial statement, which of course can be manipulated if appointed auditors from the Department of Education do not check the financial books.

The understanding and the enacting of section 21 functions depend on the knowledge of SGB members. Many SGB members in rural section 21 schools are not really acquainted with section 21 functions and the requirements to qualify for this. Most of them cannot even differentiate between a section 20 and section 20 school. As a result of this SGBs in these areas have not performed the section 21 functions efficiently and effectively. What Karlsson (2002) calls the unintentional perpetuation of inequalities rendered by the practice of governance can only be avoided if the developmental needs of the SGBs can be taken into serious consideration. Although schools in these areas are supposed to receive a lot of money because of their high poverty index, it will not be a worthwhile exercise if the Department continues to plough in money where it is not correctly accounted for. SGBs' skills and competencies in the rural areas have to be enhanced greatly in financial management especially in fundraising as this is one aspect which encourages the stratification of schools and produce unequal system of education which results in the marginalisation of disadvantaged communities (Sida, 200: 57). Unless all governance functions are accessible and practised equally in schools, the democratisation of schooling in South Africa will remain a dream and policy rhetoric only (Karlsson. 2002: 335). The recommendations arrived at in this enquiry should be critically looked at for the benefit of both SGBs and learners, who are the main beneficiaries in the process.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made on the basis of the findings in Chapter four:

5.3.1 The character of the SGB is usually determined by the principal's leadership style.

If the principal is democratic, open and committed, 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 an effective governing body could add to their schools.

5.3.2 The department 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).

5.3.3 Although the majority of respondents highlighted that the acquisition of section 21 functions has revitalised their commitment to the SGB activities, they are not quite aware of the challenges that face them as a section 21 school. It is therefore recommended that when a school is granted section 21 status, a special workshop be organised to conscientise them about the requirements and demands involved in being a section 21 school. This can be done at school or circuit level to avoid high financial costs.

5.3.4 The Department 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 Associations of School Governing Bodies (FEDSAS). The active involvement of SGBs in these organisations could go a

long way in educating and conscientising their members about their functions, rights and responsibilities. These organisations should be encouraged to organise conventions where members can meet to deal with common education issues, and to share problems and successes (Hagerty, 1998: 70).

- 5.3.5 The department should also utilise the many education management specialists who graduate from the universities each and every year as some of them may do a better job than departmental officials as they have expertise and knowledge. These people should be encouraged to open consultancies to assist in training.
- 5.3.6 Training should include many SGB members and not one or two because elections for the executive of the SGB are held on an annual basis. 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 training sessions.
- 5.3.7 Where possible schools should encourage parents who are enlightened (educated) to stand for elections. This would make these people feel appreciated and might therefore volunteer to serve the school with distinction.
- 5.3.8 Other ways of conscientising and empowering SGBs about their duties and responsibilities is through publications written in languages that the majority of SGB members understand and through talk shows in the media.
- 5.3.9 An award ceremony for SGBs should be held as it is 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.
- 5.3.10 SGBs like board members in some organisations should be compensated for attending SGB meetings and other SGB activities. The compensation might not be in 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.

5.4 RECOMMENDATION 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 utilising both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

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ANNEXURE A

QUESTIONS FOR SGB MEMBERS

SECTION A

1.1 SGB LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Uneducated	
Standard 5 and below	
Standard 8 and below	
Standard 10 and below	
3 Year Diploma and above	

1.2 Your representation in the SGB

Parent	
Educator	
Learner	
Principal	
Years of experience in SGB activities	

1.3 Place where the school is situated.

Village	
Township	
Farm	

1.4 Number of learners in the school

Below 200	
201 - 400	
401 - 600	
601 - 800	
801 - 1000	
Above 1000	

SECTION B

1. What does being a section 21 school mean to you?
2. Which section 21 functions have you been allocated?
3. How did you acquire these functions?
4. Did the acquiring of section 21 status change your attitude/work ethic in terms of your functioning?
5. If yes, in which way did the acquisition of section 21 status change your attitude/work ethic of SGB matters?
6. Are there any advantages for the school now that it is a section 21 school?
7. If there are, what do you think are the advantages?

8. How often does you SGB meet in a quarter?
9. How did your school draw its constitution and the other policies, which your school has?
10. Did you receive training to prepare you for the performance of these extra functions?
11. Do you feel that the training was good enough?
12. If yes or no, why?

SECTION C (Questions about the performance of section 21 functions)

MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE SCHOOLS PROPERTY AND BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OCCUPIED BY THE SCHOOL

1. (a) Which projects (if any) have you initiated or undertaken on your own, with respect to maintenance or improvement of school buildings and school grounds?
(b) If you have not initiated any projects, what prevented you from doing so?
2. What are you doing to maintain and improve the school buildings?
3. What measures have you put in place to protect the school from vandalism or theft of property?
4. (a) Do you have a safety committee with a safety policy?
If yes how often do you meet?
(b) How does this committee deal with people that vandalise the school?
5. Do you allow members of the community to use the school's property?
If yes or no, why?
6. Do you charge them for the use of the facilities?
If yes or no why?
8. Which problems if any have you ever experienced pertaining to the maintaining of facilities?

DETERMINING THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND THE CHOICE OF SUBJECT OPTIONS IN TERMS OF THE PROVINCIAL POLICY.

1. Does the school have a sub committee for extra- mural activities?
2. Which extra-mural activities is your school involved in?
3. What role did parents play in deciding on the extra- mural activities?
4. Do members of the SGB and parents attend extra-mural activities of the school?
5. If no, which measures have you thought about to involve parents and SGB members?
6. If yes, what is their role during these activities?
7. Does the school have an extra mural timetable outside tuition time?
8. Who co-ordinates these extra curricula activities?
9. What measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of learners during these activities?
10. Which measures (if any) has the SGB taken to improve the infrastructure for extra-curricular activities?
11. Does the school take part in inter-school extra curricula activities?
12. If no or yes, why?

PURCHASING TEXTBOOKS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL OR EQUIPMENT FOR THE SCHOOL AND PAYING FOR SERVICES.

1. Which important educational material or equipment has the SGB bought for the school?
2. Does the school have a Learner Support Material committee and an LSM policy?
3. How does the SGB assist the school in the retrieval of books and how do they deal with lost educational material?
4. Has the SGB circulated a detailed audited Financial statement during the last twelve months?
5. If yes, how was the financial statement drawn?
6. How was the parent's reaction when you presented it?
7. Do you think that you have sufficient accounting capacity to deal with large sums of money associated with section 21 schools?
8. If no, in which area do you think you are lacking and how do you intend improving on it?
9. What procedures do you follow when buying educational material for the school?
10. How do you ensure that the school run to budget?
11. How do learners pay school fees?
12. If money is collected at school, how long does it take for the school to have it banked?
13. Who collects the money at school?
14. How does the SGB deal with parents that cannot pay school fees?
15. How does the SGB deal with parents that deliberately fail to pay school fees?
16. Does the school have a well functioning Finance Committee?
17. If yes, which SGB parent component form part of this committee?
18. Why were these members elected into the Finance Committee?
19. Who are the signatories to the account?
20. How often does the Finance Committee meet?
21. Does the school have a Finance policy?
22. If yes, how was the Finance policy drawn and adopted?
23. How much is the school fee per annum?
24. When last did you increase school fees?
25. How did the parents react to the increase?
26. Has the SGB in the past year raise additional funds?
27. For what purpose did you raise the additional funds?
28. Which plans have the SGB put in place to raise additional funds for the school this year?

SECTION D (QUESTIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIAL OR SECTION TWENTYONE CO-ORDINATOR)

1. What criteria do you use in awarding schools section 21 powers?
2. How many schools approximately have been allocated section 21 status?
3. Do you allocate them all at once or partially?
Give a reason for your answer.
4. Why are you at the moment very keen on giving schools section 21 powers?

5. What plans have the Department put in place to ensure that all schools acquire section 21 status?
6. Taking into cognisance the fact that there many studies conducted have revealed the lack of knowledge and capability on many School Governing Bodies especially the parent component, how do you expect these people to carry the more challenging additional functions associated with managing and governing section 21 schools?
7. Do you feel that the training workshops that the department conduct each year are enough to enhance the knowledge needed by SGB members to govern schools effectively?
8. If yes or no give a reason.
9. If no how do you feel the training can be improved?
10. How do you make sure that the expected members attend the workshops especially bearing into mind that many parents are at work during the day?
11. How does the Department ensure that what people learn in workshops is implemented?

SECTION E

QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF SGBs AND FEDERATIONS OF SGBs

1. Do you feel that schools are ready to take the extra functions associated with section 21 status?
If yes or no, give a reason.
2. Do you feel that the training which is done by the Provincial Departments of Education really empower your members to take up the challenge of applying for section 21 status?
If yes or no, give a reason for your answer.
3. The allocation of section 21 powers, means that SGBs will deal with much more money than when the school was a simple section 20 school. Do you feel that the majority of SGBs have the necessary skills to deal with this new challenge?
4. If yes what makes you confident that these people can do the job?
5. As an Association what are you doing to improve the knowledge base and skills of your members?
6. In your term of working with parent SGB members, do you feel that parents approach this task with the oomph, zeal and the seriousness that this deserves?
7. Do you feel that the Department gives SGBs the necessary support for them to succeed?
8. If yes, how are they doing this and if no why is this is this the case?

ANNEXURE B

TABLE 1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE TYPE OF SCHOOLS

SCHOOL TYPE	MOVING	PROMENADING	STUCK
NO. OF LEARNERS	559	1605	560
NO. OF EDUCATORS	16	47	15
NO OF SGB MEMBERS	7	14	10
NO. OF NON EDUCATOR MEMBERS	2 (Paid by the SGB) not represented in the SGB	4 (Paid by the SGB) but they are not represented in the SGB.	4 (Paid by the state) represented in the SGB.
ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE	R30-00 per annum	R180-00 per annum	R100-00 per annum
FUNDS RAISED THROUGH FUNDRAISING	R97000-00 (R90 000-00 from the Lottery)	None	None
STATE OF BUILDINGS	Buildings in good condition. School is made of face bricks	Buildings are old but seemed to be well kept. New block of classroom being erected using block bricks.	Very old buildings. Some classrooms have broken doors and windows. Paint coming off the buildings.
FENCING	Fence available and in good condition.	External fence in good condition but the internal one is in a bad state.	Available but has many holes made by learners.
AVAILABILITY OF ELECTRICITY	Available	Available	Available but disconnected
TELEPHONE & FAXES	No fax or telephone	Telephone available but no fax	No telephone or fax
AVAILABILITY OF COMPUTERS	One computer used by the principal	One used by the administration clerk	No computer
AVAILABILITY OF PHOTOCOPIER	One small photocopier	There is a duplicator and a photocopier	There is one duplicator
AVAILABILITY OF WATER FACILITIES	No water facilities	There is a borehole	Water pipe situated outside the school gate.
AVAILABILITY OF SPORTS FIELD	Only bare soccer and netball field. Poles made of iron and are in good condition.	Many open fields where learners play softball, netball and soccer.	Only bare soccer and netball field. Field not seemed to be looked after well. Old poles made of wood.
AVAILABILITY OF TOILETS AND TYPE	Pit toilets	Pit toilets and flushing toilets for educators	Pit toilets but very old

ANNEXURE C

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCES OF SGB MEMBERS

SCHOOL TYPE	CAPACITY	EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND	EXPERIENCE (TERMS SERVED IN THE SGB)
MOVING	Principal	SPTD, FDE (Educational Management) Bachelor of Education	Three Terms
	Chairperson	Senior Teachers Diploma & Bachelor of Education	Two terms (five years)
	Treasurer	Higher Diploma in Education (HDE)	Two terms (five years)
	Other	Primary Teachers Diploma	One term (two years)
PROMENADING	Principal	Bachelor of Education	Three terms
	Chairperson	Standard Six	Two terms (five years)
	Treasurer	Standard Ten & Clerical certificate	(Seven) has now left
	Other	Standard Ten	One term
STUCK	Principal	B A PAED	Three terms
	Chairperson	Standard 10 & Certificate in Architecture	Two terms (five years)
	Treasurer	Standard Seven	One term (two years)
	Other	Standard Ten	One term

ANNEXURE D

Enq: Nyambi M.M.
Tel: 013 737 6302
Cell: 083 701 3741

P.O. Box 2022
Hazyview
1242
16 August 2004

The Regional Manager
Bohlabela District Manager
Private Bag x 128
Mkhuhlu
1246

RE: STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES ON
THEIR NEW FUNCTIONS OF SECTION 21.

The above matter has reference:

I Nyambi Makhayingi Mandrew, wish to request permission to interview educators and parents in your schools in as far as the above topic is concerned.

The aim of the research is to obtain information on how SGBs are coping with their newly acquired section 21 functions. The findings of the research would enable the Department of Education and other stakeholders to identify the problems that SGBs experience on a daily basis when carrying out their section 21 functions. This could assist in the planning of capacity building to enhance their functionality.

The research is a case study, which involves three schools, and the people to be interviewed are three parents, the principal and two educators in each school.

Hoping for a favourable response.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully
Nyambi M.M