

# **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo schools**

by

**Ntshebele Ramontsha**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS**

Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

University of Pretoria

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**PRETORIA**

July 2019

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I declare that this mini-dissertation titled “**The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo schools**” which I hereby submit for the degree Masters in Education Management and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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**Ntshebele Ramontsha**

July 2019

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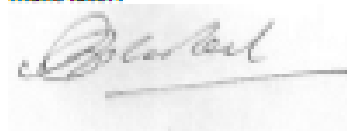
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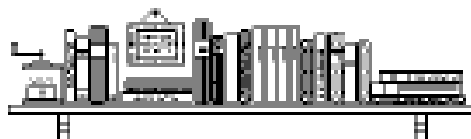
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## ABSTRACT

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This study seeks to explore the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. The significance of the study was influenced by the perception about the powers of traditional leaders. In rural schools, land on which most schools are built falls under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. However, School Governing Bodies are assigned to governance the schools and traditional leaders have been excluded in school governance by law. In this context, the South African Schools Act (SASA) provides that the recommendation of teacher appointments is the responsibility of the School Governing Body. I wanted to hear the views of the traditional leaders, School Governing Bodies, and the principals on their experiences concerning teacher appointments in rural schools.

The study was conducted with a qualitative research approach and multiple case study design in mind when data was collected. In order to determine the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments, I used an interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm was appropriate for the study due to the rich reports derived using the qualitative research approach. This helped me to understand the context in which traditional leaders purportedly influenced teacher appointments. The sample was purposively selected, and the schools were justifiably identified to suit the research purpose. This study was conducted in public rural schools and involved three secondary schools, three primary schools and three traditional royal houses.

The findings indicate that traditional leaders did not have influence on teacher appointments. In this context, teacher appointments remained the prerogative of the Provincial Head of Department. However, traditional leaders applaud the cordial relationship that exists between the schools and traditional councils.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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ANC	African National Congress
CC	Constitutional Court
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
DoE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
EEA	Employment Equity Act
ELAA	Education Law Amendment Act
ELRC	Education Labour Relation Council
HoD	Head of Department
LRA	Labour Relation Act
MMT	Ministerial Task Team
NEPA	National Policy Act
NP	National Party
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures Act
PL	Post Level
REQV	Relevant Equivalent Qualification Value
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council of Educators' Act
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASA	South African School Act
SCA	Supreme Court Appeal
SGB	School Governing Body

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## CHAPTER 1: GENERAL BACKGROUND

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

A political shift from apartheid to a democratic dispensation in South Africa has changed educational policies significantly. Msila (2012:303) affirms that policies were made to redress the inequalities in education to ensure that education strengthens democracy in society. Van Wyk (2004:49) argues that power sharing between the state and other stakeholders in close proximity to the schools can control schools better collaboratively.

Prior to 1994; school governance was controlled centrally where school committees were the prerogative of the state instead of parents of the learners. Mbokazi (2015:2) argues that under apartheid; traditional leaders were responsible for the selection of school committees. Mbokazi (2015:2) states that traditional leaders have a history of interacting with the structures that govern schools, and this could be traced from the Bantu Education era to the era of democracy in South Africa. Mbokazi (2015:2 and Phillips, 2015:311) explains that in the 1940s several 'tribal schools' were established through money raised within chiefdoms.

After 1994 a Constitution was developed. This gave birth to SASA (South African School Act) and the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995 and other policies, to regulate teacher appointments in schools. Van Wyk (2004:49) affirms that the decentralisation of power may strengthen cordial relationships between schools and communities and provide an alternative form of accountability to bureaucratic surveillance. In support of the argument, Van Wyk and Bagarette (2011:223) attest that power was decentralised from central government to schools with appointments being recommended by School Governing Bodies (SGBs) on teacher appointments and promotion.

In this study the influence of traditional leaders under the new dispensation has three aspects: they can be co-opted on to School Governing Bodies; they can campaign for those who want them to be in the SGB or they can contest for election of the SGB if

they have children in the school. Sabata (2008:1) attests to the fact that traditional leaders own the land on which the schools are built.

On the other hand; the governance of schools becomes the responsibility of SGBs. SASA section 20(1) (i) contain information about staff appointments. It provides that SGBs must recommend, to the provincial HoD; the appointment of educators in schools; subject to the Educators Employment Act NO.76 of 1998, (EEA). Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:173) affirm that SGBs exercise the roles given to them according to the decentralisation of authority to school communities.

This study focuses on the influence that traditional leaders exert on schools during teacher appointments and promotion process in rural schools. Traditionally, schools belong to the community. The traditional leaders' role is limited to giving support but not to interfere. According to the Traditional Authorities Research Group (TARG) (1999:298) the traditional leaders' role is to ensure the implementation of policy and planning. Schools are within their jurisdiction as institutions of development in their communities. There are communities who have their members contributing financially and materially and who also help to build schools' infrastructure in those communities. This practice has put severe pressure on SGBs in terms of appointing teachers to promotional posts because the idea of the "son of the soil" is rife. It may mean that incumbents are appointed without the necessary capabilities. Phillips (2015:311) asserts that traditional leaders and their representatives become more tribalistic and interested in schools. They, therefore, believe they have ownership of these schools. This means, there is interference in the appointment of teaching staff by traditional leaders.

The LRA 1995 (Act no 66 of 1995) accords teachers the right to, among others, to participate in matters that affect their working conditions, including their promotions. This participation is enabled through the engagement of trade unions in the activities of SGBs. The latter has the competence accorded to it by SASA, of overseeing the process of appointing and promoting teachers. The inclusion of teacher unions in the appointment and promotions of teachers is clearly stipulated in Chapter B of Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM, 1998:77). (Republic of South Africa; 1998). In this

policy, the unions are observers in the process of short listing, interviews and the drawing up of a preference list by SGBs.

On the other hand, George and Binza (2011:955) assert that; for traditional leaders to succeed in performing their duties; they must form strong relationships and cooperation with government at national and international level in development of rural communities. These roles of traditional leaders are not unique to South Africa, in Zimbabwe; Chigwata (2016:82) says traditional leaders are expected to promote proper standards of health and education in their respective areas. Chigwata (2016:32) argues that traditional leaders are required to communicate and assist with the development committees of rural local municipalities in all matters relating to the planning and implementation of local development programmes.

Ubink (2007:127) affirms that in Ghana, traditional leaders are viewed as being representatives of communities' needs and priorities and this can lead to genuine democratisation and development; leading to local autonomy against the globalising and modernising power of the state. While land in rural communities is under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders, schools and governance are the responsibility of governing body (Mbokazi & Bhengu; 2008:12). The influence of traditional leaders on school governance, as mentioned earlier, is limited to supporting the functionality of the school.

There is scholarly literature criticising the influence of traditional leaders in the new democratic South Africa. Sithole and Mbele (2008:5) argue that traditional leadership should be dismantled because this system is inconsistent with democracy. In this study, I argue that traditional leaders influence SGBs to consider local teachers for promotional posts. Tribalism is used to pursue this agenda.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Traditional leaders in South Africa have undisputed power over their communities in rural areas. I hold the view that traditional leaders' word is final over their subjects. Mamdani (1996:96) supports this argument by saying that people living in rural areas are the subjects of traditional leadership. Sithole and Mbele (2008:6) affirm that rural communities under traditional leadership are not true human beings because they are subjects of traditional leaders. Sithole and Mbele (2008:8) further, argue that traditional leaders are subjects of an undemocratic authority because the latter were not elected but inherited and there are systems of no accountability to the people.

Based on this argument, I hold the view that traditional leaders could interfere with school governance because of the powers bestowed upon to them by apartheid regime. The Traditional Authority Research Group (TARG) (1999:301) affirms that Traditional authorities have great power in their communities which can be utilised for the implementation of policy; provided that the other requirements for successful implementation of such a policy are present.

However, it appears that there is contestation of power to recommend teachers to posts between SGBs and traditional leaders. While the SGBs' role in school governance is to recommend teachers for appointment, the government of the African National Congress (ANC) has excluded traditional leaders from any educational legislative framework dealing with the guidelines on teacher appointments and promotion. Furthermore, some SGBs in rural schools continue to engage traditional leaders in school governance for assistance, if there are unresolved issues in their schools despite their exclusion by the legislation dealing with teacher appointments.

Considering the above, I argue that traditional leaders' participation in educational matters is based on unwritten policy which creates conflict with education authority. Mbokazi (2015:5) affirms that, despite the absence of a clear-cut legislative framework around the role of traditional leaders in school governance, traditional leaders still exert considerable power and authority over the schools within their areas of jurisdiction. George and Binza (2011:948) support this argument by stating that traditional leaders' functions are rooted in the fusion of different services provided such as the promotion



of education, including the erection and maintenance of schools and the administration of access to education finance. Ntsebeza (2003:32) further, argues that during the colonial era, traditional leaders had an undisputed amount of authority and power, and oversaw all subjects' lives within their jurisdiction.

It appears that traditional leaders are treated like ordinary people; despite the role they play in their communities. This has led two arguments; one is saying traditional leaders are irrelevant and be dismantled and others are saying they had to be retained in the new dispensation. Sithole and Mbele (2008:5) support the idea that from democratic perspective, traditional leadership as a system permits inheritance of leadership which is inconsistent with democracy while from organic perspective; traditional leadership is favoured and must be continued in the new democratic dispensation. Initially, ANC government was of the view that traditional leadership institution was inconsistent with democracy (George & Binza, 2011:949). Others hold the view that this institution is a custodian of culture and indigenous knowledge system and is therefore important for a democracy to survive (Sithole & Mbele, 2008:5). It was only later that the ANC government shifted its position by recognising the institution of traditional leaders, when the government observed the significant support for the institution in rural communities (George & Binza, 2011:949).

Although these contrasting viewpoints exist, the pressure which is on government to recognise the institution of traditional leaders and to enact appropriate legislation to regulate the institution came from the realisation of their power and undisputed following in rural communities (George & Binza, 2011:949). However, for now the recommendation of teachers for promotion will remain the responsibility of the school governing body. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:172) affirm that the other function of the governing body is to recommend to the Provincial HoD the appointment of educators at the school (section 20(i) of SASA).

On one hand, traditional leaders (Ministerial Task Team 2016:98) reported that the school community, teachers and parents push for the appointment of the local person in the rural areas which is not their terrain. This stems from interests of local teachers who want to manipulate the situation to suit them based on locality. These teachers seek approval from traditional leaders to influence the SGBs to promote tribalism. This

interference has created confusion because traditional leaders are the most respected people in rural areas. Furthermore, traditional leaders are supposed to play a neutral role to be accommodative for everybody. Traditional leaders are concerned with development of their communities in terms of infrastructure and schools; governance matters must be left in the hands of the SGBs.

The unexplored role of traditional leaders relating to teacher appointments and promotion in rural schools is researchable. I hold the view that schools in rural communities fall under the jurisdiction of traditional authorities and these schools are built on the land of traditional leaders and named after their forebears. These traditional leaders have an important role to play in staffing and other important matters.

### **1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:46) state the reasons why the researcher has developed an interest in his topic and why he believes that his topic worth to be investigated. One of the reasons is that the researcher should have interest in the study. My interest in this study stems from my personal experience as the principal since 2006 to date. One of my duties is to serve on the SGB as the representative of the HoD and a panellist at numerous schools. I also have a role as a resource person during the initial processes of selection such as the composition of the panel members, short listing, interviews and the recommendations. I have experienced improper conduct of SGBs, which is summarised as follows:

- ❖ promoting tribal politics in the school to recommend local candidates without knowing their capabilities or qualifications;
- ❖ befriending some teachers within the school and promising them promotions;
- ❖ choosing panel members who will be driven by some forces within the community to recommend candidates before the processes can even be started; and
- ❖ some candidates are invited for the interviews for the sake of formality.

The above-mentioned aspects have prompted me to pursue this study as a way of determining the extent to which traditional leaders interfere in teacher appointment

processes. According to Foncha, Abongdia and Mayase (2016: 13 and Mncube and Mafora; 2013:13) the process of recruitment must be guided by the simple standards of governing public management as enshrined in Section 195 (1) (a-i) of the RSA constitution (1998). SASA No 84 of 1996 Section 20 (8) also amplifies the same values in the RSA constitution (1996) that the recruitment process must be guided by the following important principles:

- ❖ the competency displayed by the candidate;
- ❖ equal treatment during interviews and recommendation;
- ❖ to redress the imbalances of the past created by apartheid regime; and
- ❖ the need for non discrimination and representivity.

SGBs are compelled to adhere to these principles and conduct the process of recruitment in a very transparent manner, with integrity, with high level of impartiality and without prejudice. This study affirms the view that schools are supposed to be a healthy learning and teaching space. Inappropriate recommendations and appointment in schools are counter-productive to the idea of quality education. Mckinsey (2007:16) says that the quality of a school system rests on the quality of its teachers.

Based on the above argument, I believe there are forces inside (unions) and outside (traditional leaders and community interest groups) the school environment that are disagreeing when it comes to teacher appointments. However, these political structures share the common goal which is the delivery of quality education. Hence education is a responsibility shared by all stakeholders and conflict will derail them from focusing on the matter at hand. This creates uncertainty and instability in schools; and negatively affects teaching and learning. There are extreme cases of death threats too. The aspect of power struggle between the SGBs in a position of trust, and traditional leaders is researchable.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research question is: What influence do traditional leaders have on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools?

The study seeks to address the following sub-questions:

- ❖ To what extent do traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural schools?
- ❖ How do School Governing Bodies make recommendations on teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ Which factors influence teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges facing School Governing Bodies relating to teacher appointments in selected rural schools?

#### **1.4.1. OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDY**

- ❖ To highlight the unexplored role of traditional leaders in the appointments of teachers in rural schools.
- ❖ To determine the role of School Governing Bodies in recommending teachers for their appointments.
- ❖ To establish factors that influence teacher appointments in schools.
- ❖ To understand the challenges facing School Governing Bodies regarding teacher appointments

### **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study will determine the process and the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. The study will look at different factors influencing their appointment and promotion. This study does not intend to limit the appointment process to teachers only; principals are also regarded as teachers.

### **1.6 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study attempts to strengthen debates and to provide proof of conclusions drawn from the multiple case studies, I made use of different sources of literature about the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. Chapter Two, which is aimed at the literature review, gives a snapshot of the past of schooling in the former Lebowa Bantustan under the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Considering the above, I analysed legislation dealing with teacher appointments and traditional leadership in the new dawn in South Africa. The rationale behind this analysis is my view that none of this legislation outlines the role of traditional leaders on teacher appointments; despite the power they have over rural communities. Mathosi and Sithole (2017:37) argue that traditional leaders themselves feel excluded and neglected by the democratic government in South Africa.

However, it appears that according to Mbele and Sithole (2008:6), traditional leaders have re-positioned themselves within the politics of South Africa after democracy. Furthermore, community interest groups; under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders; continue to put pressure on SGBs to consider local teachers concerning promotional posts. I hold the view that, by excluding traditional leaders from any legislative framework in South Africa is an oversight of the ruling party.

However, it appears that the researchers who were critical of the role that is supposed to be played by traditional leaders might have influenced the ruling party's position. While appreciating the participation of traditional authorities, Bank and Southall (1996: 408, 425-427) argue that traditional authorities should not be afforded an opportunity to participate in state constitutional matters. Bank and Southall (1996:408) argue that democracy in the new dawn after apartheid would be compromised if traditional authorities could participate in politics. This has been prompted by some of the traditional leaders who were collaborating with the apartheid regime. Bank and Southall (1996:409) argue that nationally and internationally, this collaboration of traditional leaders with the apartheid regime has discredited traditional leadership.

## **1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.7.1 Traditional leader**

Mthandeni (2012:1) states that a traditional leader is a person who, by virtue of his ancestry, occupies the throne or stool of leadership in the area and has been appointed to it in accordance with the customs and tradition of the community. In this context, during the night of the arrival of the first lady from another royal house the lights from the entire village have to be switched off. This first lady is the one who is

going to give birth to a traditional leader. Therefore, traditional leaders are not elected; but will have inherited the throne from their fathers and are patriarchal in nature.

### **1.7.2 Influence**

Contemporary English Dictionaries broadly define the concept of influence as when one person sways another person to his/her point of interest (Allen, 1990). The Thesaurus uses the term influence as tantamount to power,' and to manipulate. In this context, I used the word power to express influence the traditional leaders have over their subjects in the countryside on teacher appointments.

### **1.7.3 Rural schools**

The term "rural" in the South African context is defined as being areas far away from urban areas which are under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. Msila (2010:172) argues that the number of people living in rural areas is low in numbers as compared to number of people living in urban areas. I hold the view that; in terms of functions rural areas are unifunctional because they are concerned with the primary economic activities such as farming. The majority of rural communities practise subsistence farming and communal land ownership under the supervision of traditional leaders. Rural schools were built on the trust land of traditional leaders.

### **1.7.4 School governing body (SGB)**

Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:179) define SGB as the body recognised in terms of section 16 and its lawful capability to perform its purpose in terms of that Act. It performs the roles given to it in terms of the devolution of authority to the school population. Prinsloo (2016:2) affirms that the responsibility given to a governing body is not illegal power, but legal power, in terms of the Schools Act. In this context one of its functions is to propose teachers for engagement and promotion to the HoD.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

South African rural schools under the traditional leaders continue to experience conflict concerning the appointments and promotion of teachers. These conflicts have been exacerbated by the inadequate knowledge of SGBs on policies dealing with teacher appointments and community interest groups in favour of local teachers. This study seeks to investigate the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in

rural schools. Rural communities have always been caught between the power struggle between SGBs and community interest groups under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders concerning the appointment of teachers on promotional posts, principal-ship positions.

The study will have practical and theoretical importance to the Department of Education, schools and SGBs. From a policy perspective, this study seeks to contribute towards generating awareness on the separation of powers between the roles of traditional leaders, traditional councillors and SGBs that will fit into policy improvement and change. The role of traditional leaders and traditional councillors is to rule their communities and the SGBs' role is to recommend teachers for the Provincial HoD for appointment. Studies of this nature are capable of unravelling the underlining drivers behind the interests displayed by these community structures on teacher appointments and promotion.

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

All respondents are guaranteed their anonymity and all information will be safely stored in a lockable place after the study has been completed. Based on this, I informed the participants that the findings in this study would be available on request and would remain the property of University of Pretoria. This information would be saved by the University for 15 years. I wrote a letter to the Limpopo Provincial education department requesting permission to conduct my research at schools. All participants signed consent forms to be interviewed and gave permission to be recorded. Their names and those of their schools will not be made public.

## **1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was restricted to three circuits under the Sekhukhune District in Limpopo Province. Six schools were chosen comprising three primary schools and three secondary schools. Three principals of primary schools and three principals of secondary schools and three chairpersons of SGBs were interviewed. Three traditional leaders and their traditional councillors were also chosen. Protocol had to be observed with regard to the involvement of the traditional leaders. The data was

collected from these participants and the findings are therefore based on these participants. These findings can therefore not be generalised.

## **1.11 CHAPTER DIVISIONS**

### **CHAPTER 1**

Chapter 1 gives an introduction and background, the problem statement, rationale, the main research question and sub-questions, significance for the study, limitation of the study and conclusion.

### **CHAPTER 2**

This section provides the literature review relevant to the engagement of teachers in countryside schools. Furthermore, the role players on teacher engagements such as school principals, SGBs and teacher unions reviewed. The rules governing teacher appointments and tribalism were also scrutinised. The state of education during apartheid and after 1994 was also explored. The concept based-power theory was also explained in this study.

### **CHAPTER 3**

This section presents the multiple case study research design, research methodology, as well as data collection methods. Methods of data analysis and ethical considerations/guidelines remained to be explained. Purposive sampling was used based on the knowledge of the participants. Multiple research techniques such as semi-structured interviews and focus interviews were used to collect data. Aspects of trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability were explained.

### **CHAPTER 4**

This chapter presents data analysis and interpretation from the interviews. Tables were used for the biographical information of the participants to facilitate the interpretation of the data. Thematic analysis was used to interpret data. Themes presented were identified and coded.



## **CHAPTER 5**

Chapter 5 gives a general idea of the main findings coming from data collection and the literature review, recommendations based on themes, and a synthesis of findings based on the research question.

### **1.12 CONCLUSION**

This study seeks to explore the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. This study made an effort to separate the actors or role players on teacher appointments within schools and outside schools. Emphasis has been placed on the role played by each structure on teacher appointments and promotion. This chapter was mainly a highlight of the study plan; therefore, I have mentioned the introduction, problem statement, and objectives of the study, rationale, the importance of the study and the research questions as well as concepts clarification. The literature based on the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments prior to 1994 and after 1994.

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## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTS-BASED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section of the study, I put the roles of School Governing Bodies into the perspective by evaluating how they recommend rural teachers to promotional posts; and the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. In the first section of this chapter I was guided by an exposition of the legislative framework dealing with the appointment of teachers to promotional posts. This explanation helps me to assess what policy provides and what SGBs do in relation to the recommendation of teachers to promotional posts.

The second section of this chapter will look at the role players involved in teacher appointments. In this context, the role players are the principals of schools as resource persons, SGBs (School Governing Bodies), unions and the HoD (Head of Department). They play a vital role in teacher appointments as per policy.

The third section discusses the historical context of the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in the Lebowa homeland and the involvement of traditional leaders after 1994. Prior to 1994 traditional leaders were directly involved with school governance through school committees. However, after 1994 during democratic government, traditional leaders are excluded in terms of policy in matters relating to school governance.

Fourth section, I will analyse the relationship between the SGBs and traditional leaders as per policy. However, SASA provides that community members can participate in school governance through co-option or be elected by parents of the learners if they are having children in the school. There is no special provision for traditional leaders to participate in school governance other than what has been prescribed in the law. The power to appoint teachers is placed in the hands of SGBs.

## **2.2 ACTS AND POLICIES FOR TEACHER APPOINTMENTS**

This section provides legislative framework dealing with the appointment of teachers in the DoE (Department of Education). I hold the view that these Acts provide direction to the role players on how teachers could be appointed. I have chosen the following Acts to be followed when appointments were made:

### **❖ The South African Constitution, Act No.108b of 1996**

This Act, (1996:34) provides that; when appointing any educator post; established due consideration shall be subjected to the following principles of law which include but are not limited to equal treatment, non-discriminatory practices or equity and other democratic values. In this context, I adopted the view of Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:177) that Section 195(1)(i) of the Constitution has put much more emphasis on equal treatment to redress the imbalances of the past created by apartheid and ensure broadly representative of the South African people, based on ability, objectivity, fairness.

Mampane (2008:61) argues that to ensure that these founding values are not simply empty words on paper, the Bill of Rights, 'provides the rights of all people' in the country as contained in Chapter 2 of the Constitution. This Chapter provides the rights of the people. These are protected by law such as the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (Section 7(1) and (2)). Confirming this, Beckman and Prinsloo (2009:171) state that the fundamental human rights have become the core of the South African Constitution.

In light of the above, I argue that the rationale for interviews before teachers could be recommended for appointments is to ensure that teachers are given fair chances to be appointed depending on how they have responded in the interviews. Their rights to be fairly treated are protected and the State is trying to prevent unfair discrimination in the workplace.

### ❖ **The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998**

The objective of this Act is to redress the imbalances in the workplace, created by the discriminatory laws of apartheid. Mampane (2008:63) states that this intention is explicitly stated in the Preamble of the Act, which declares that those gaps that are visible within employment, occupation and income on national labour market were there due to apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices.

Section 2 of this Act, provides that equity in the workplace could be achieved by promoting equal chances and fair treatment in job opportunities. Mampane (2008:63) argues that this could be achieved through the introduction of affirmative action by the dismantling of all discriminatory laws governing employment opportunities in the workplace faced by blacks, women and people with disabilities. Together, these two intentions, if realised, could ensure equal treatment across all racial lines in the workplace.

Mampane (2008:63) pointed out the four specific objectives of this Act, as indicated in its Preamble, since they focus on:

- ❖ ensuring equal treatment as contained in the constitution and the practice of true democracy;
- ❖ dismantling of discriminatory laws in the workplace;
- ❖ promoting equal representation in the workplace and the elimination of unfair discrimination; and
- ❖ ensuring labour force diversity representative of the workers across racial line

To these purposes, section 5 of this Act categorically stipulates that employers have to put measures in place to ensure that there is equity in the workplace by scrapping discriminatory laws in any labour policy.

### ❖ **The South African School Act No.84 of 1996**

Section 20 of this Act, (1996:39) states that interviewing candidates for appointment in public schools is one of the functions allocated to the SGBs. Mampane (2008:63) pointed out that this Act was replacing previous apartheid legislation on education by means of a number of Education Laws Amendment Acts (ELAA 100 of 1997; ELAA 48 of 1999; ELAA 53 of 2000, ELAA 57 of 2001 and ELAA 50 of 2002).The Schools

Act defines the legal status of public schools in South Africa and stipulates what such schools may and may not do. In particular, it compels all public schools not only to function in accordance with what is stipulated in the Act, but also to promote the values and principles of the Constitution of South Africa, and to protect the human rights accorded to all individuals in the Bill of Rights (DoE/White Paper, 1995: 67-70). Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009; 172) and Prinsloo, (2016:1) posit that public schools were accorded section 15 status “juristic person” by SASA, with legal capacity to perform its functions. This Act provides that schools are expected to work within the parameters of SASA. This Act, gives direction on how the governing body should operate.

Based on this, SASA provides that the recommendation of teachers for appointments becomes the responsibility of SGBs and there was no provision of the law that gives traditional leaders powers to appoint teachers. However, the SGBs are expected to uphold the rule of the law in matters pertaining to their work.

#### ❖ **The draft Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill 2015**

Paragraph 1.2. of the Government Gazette No. 41179 (2017:33) of the draft propose to amend SASA No. 84 of 1996 and the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 respectively. This amendment seeks to close the gaps that exist in the current Acts that give too much power to the governing body. This power given to the governing body seems to hinder the HoDs in performing their duties. Rule 10 of the draft Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill (2015:39) wants to change section 20 of the SASA by curtailing responsibilities assigned to governing body pertaining to the recommendation of teachers for appointments. The State argues that rural schools have dysfunctional SGBs to carry out their responsibilities during the processes of short-listing and interviews.

In light of the above, I argue that community interest groups took advantage of SGBs' lack of knowledge on how interviews were conducted. Furthermore, SGBs requested principals of schools and deputy principals, as well as teachers serving on the SGBs to serve as panel members on their behalf. The reasons for the state to amend SASA were informed by the weaknesses that put the state under pressure when it comes to the implementation of equity in the workplace, or the eradication of inequalities created

by apartheid. In this context, the state is trying to implement the affirmative action in the workplace. For example, MECs for Western Cape Department of Education and Limpopo Province were taken to court to account on the appointments they had made by recommending blacks to be principals respectively by The SGBs of Ponte High School and Settlers Agricultural School. The proposed amendment seeks to reduce the powers of the SGBs to recommend only post level 1 educators and from post level 2 to post level 4 appointments of educators have to be made by the Provincial HoD. I believe that this proposed amendment could eradicate conflict between schools and community interest groups on teacher appointment in rural areas.

#### ❖ **Employment of Educators Act No.76 of 1998**

The SGBs were assigned to recommend to the provincial HoD; the appointment of teachers at schools as contained in this Act. The reasons to follow these guidelines were to see that the process of appointment of teachers would be more transparent, lawful and fair to the candidates. The unions were given observer status in the short-listing, interviewing processes and ranking of candidates in terms of preferences. Van Wyk (2005:52) holds the view that this affirms openness, fairness, justice and equity to candidates in the interviewing processes. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:177) have supported this argument by stating that Section 195(1)(i) of the Constitution provides equal treatment based on ability, objectivity, and fairness to the candidates in order to redress the inequalities created by the apartheid laws.

#### ❖ **South African Council of Educators Act of 2000**

This Act provides a clear description of a person who qualifies to be appointed as an educator within the South African education system. It is against this background that whoever is entering the system must have a SACE certificate either on permanent or temporary basis. It is applicable to all new entrants into the system. PAM (2016) pr. B.3.2.2.1, provides that for one to be regarded as a qualified teacher must have a SACE certificate. I will explain the role of union, principal and the governing body below.

## **2.3 THE ROLE PLAYERS INVOLVED IN TEACHER APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION**

### **2.3.1 The teacher unions with observers' status during the processes of interviews**

The inclusion of role players in the appointment and promotions of teachers is clearly stipulated in Chapter B of Personnel Administrative Measures (2016:88) and paragraph B.5.6.3 states that during the processes of interviews and drawing up of preference list, unions were accorded with observers' status.

However, SADTU was blamed for interference in the processes of teacher appointments. It is having undue influence on teacher appointments in South Africa. Servaas van der Berg *et al* (2016:6) argue that academics raised a concern relating to the interference at schools by SADTU, which hinder progress in education without a say by the departmental officials.

Servaas van der Berg *et al.*, (2016:6) continue to argue that the attitude of the union has created confusion in the system where accountability has been compromised. Servaas van der Berg *et al.*, (2016) raised a concern relating to nepotism linked to the appointment and promotion of teachers and school principals which seems to be the cancer ripping South Africa apart. The findings of the Ministerial Task Team (MTT) (2016:21) raised a concern on the undue influence pertaining to the appointments of principals of schools which is tantamount to corruption. In this context, due regard of the law of South Africa was ignored.

Mthiyane *et al.*, (2014:299) argue that manipulation of the recruitment processes by both the SGBs and teacher unions (mainly SADTU) has had detrimental results on schools. Incompetence among SGB members, by Mthiyane *et al* (2014:299) combined with interference by teacher unions has compromised the efficiency and integrity of the recruitment processes. In certain instances, some people have even lost their lives. The Ministerial Task Team (MTT) (2016:21) mentions improper influence of teacher appointments within schools. The report revealed that posts were sold for cash, and the level of intimidation has reached an alarming state where people are afraid to report this unbecoming behaviour to the law enforcement agencies. The

report was conducted through face to face interviews and through electronic and news paper media.

This argument was supported by Foncha *et al.*, (2016:17) in affirming that inappropriate appointments were made as a result of undue influence of SADTU on the appointment of its members without due regard of the law. City Press (24th April 2014) reported that principal-ships and deputy principal ships, posts were sold with an amount of above R30,000 in Kwazulu-Natal Province. Zengele (2013:206) argues that SADTU has violated its mandate of an observer status in taking active role during the process of interviews by taking an advantage of the lack of knowledge by members of the governing body concerning the laws governing the appointment of teachers in rural disadvantaged communities

### **2.3.2 The role of the principal during the processes of interviews and short-listing**

If there is a vacant post at the school, either promotional or non-promotional, the principal must inform the circuit manager. The staff members will then be encouraged to apply. The SGB will also be informed of the advertised post(s). They are in a good position to know the curricular needs of the school. According to ELRC (2008:3) principal may be a resource person or observer as the departmental representative. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:181) supported this argument by stating that the engagement of parents becomes the central point in the advertisement of posts, because this practice is aimed at finding and identifying suitable applicants for the occupation of the post.

However; there seems to be conflicting roles of principals, one being the panellist of other schools for short listing and interviewing while on the other hand as per policy a resource person. This happens in rural schools because of the literacy level of members of the governing body. Heystek (2011:458) argues that; despite training offered to the SGBs, reading and understanding of laws governing the appointments of teachers continue to be an obstacle and this means that the school governing bodies struggle to draft and implement policies of the department. Van Wyk (2007:136)



supported this argument by stating that lack of knowledge of SGBs impedes in carrying out their responsibilities prudently.

In light of the above, a conflict of interest is created on the part of principals because some of them are members of the teacher unions. Their impartiality will be under scrutiny as there is undue influence of SADTU on teacher appointments. The power to appoint teachers rests in the hands of SGBs. This conflict deepens confusion concerning the existing thin line of separation of power between SGBs and principal of rural schools. Van Wyk (2007:135) argues that teacher components and principals as representatives of the HoD suppress ideas of other SGBs parent components; in particular, during SGB meetings because they assume that parent components are not competent or are not educated. Xaba (2004:313) endorses the idea by saying that educator-members of SGBs see themselves as “watchdogs” whose role is that of “fighting” for educators’ issues.

### **2.3.3 The School Governing Body’s responsibilities in the recommendation of teachers for appointments and promotion**

During the processes of short-listing and interviews; SGBs’ role is to establish interview panel and invite the applicants and union about the venue, time and date for the interviews five days before the interviews could start (ELRC, 2008:6). Lastly, the SGB recommends candidates for appointment to the HoD (Head of Department). This argument was contained in section 6(3)(a) of the Employment of Educators Act, No.76 of 1998 which provides that recommendation of appointment, promotion or transfer of any nature in schools becomes the responsibility of the governing body.

Based on this provision of the Act, the power to recommend teachers for appointments and promotion was placed in the hands of the SGBs. I hold the view that it is the right time for the SGBs to exercise their power based on the legal framework giving guidelines as to how recommendations of teachers had to be handled. However, section 6(3)(b) of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998 calls for SGBs, in the execution of their functions to apply and comply with the principle of fairness, equity, redress and representivity.

Based on this subsection; as stipulated above, SGBs in the execution of their duties emphasise equal treatment of the candidates who have applied for the posts; the SGBs are expected to be fair, transparent and honest to the candidates. The notion of prejudice against teachers who are not from the local community when it comes to the appointment of principals should be eliminated; because everyone deserves fair and just treatment without undue influence. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:181) supported this argument by stating that SGBs must rank three candidates in terms of their performance from position 1,2 and 3 for appointment by the HoD and from less than three candidates, the governing body must consult with the HoD.

Van Wyk (2004) argues that this argument ensures the SGBs will appoint candidates hoped to be relevant to teach learners at their school. Mncube and Mafora (2014:109) stated that SASA emphasises the devolution of power, not just deconcentration or delegation. This involves the decentralisation of power to schools for SGBs to take decisions without asking approvals from the HoD on matters pertaining to the recommendation of teachers for appointments. Bagarette (2011:226) confirms that discretion; authority and responsibility are transferred to an individual school with the view of correcting uncaring system of government, promoting democratic transformation and giving stakeholders, especially parents, more power and control over education.

Hartell *et al.*, (2016:123) hold the view that decentralisation of power is aimed at ensuring that state must collaborate with other stakeholders because the state alone cannot manage schools and emphasis must be placed on those who are in close proximity to the schools. Based on the above statements, SGBs are being empowered to ensure that quality education is provided at schools by the appointment of quality teachers and principals. While doing their work, interference of any form from the centre, is unlawful as per policy. The department; through Section 19 of SASA; provides that members of the governing body must be trained to carry out their duties.

## **2.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES ON TEACHER APPOINTMENTS**

In this section, I analysed the relationship between the state through HoD and the school governing bodies regarding appointment of teachers. In this context, recommendation of appointment of teachers becomes the responsibility of the governing body as per policy. The relationship between these two is regulated by policy. The rationale to investigate this relationship is to ensure that there is no abuse of power. Prinsloo (2006:363) holds the view that recommendation for appointments of teachers to HoD becomes the responsibility of the governing body.

The appointments, promotions and transfers of educators are contained in chapter 3 of the Act, and section 6 sets out the powers of employers. In this context, the appointment, transfer or promotion of an educator in the service of as contained in section 6(1)(b) becomes the responsibility of the provincial HoD. Section 3(b) contains instructions with which governing bodies should comply when considering applications with a view to preparing recommendations for the employer.

Sections 6(3)(d) to (g) outline the responsibilities of the HoD in considering and dealing with the recommendations contemplated in sections 6(3)(a) to (c). Section 3(f) gives the HoD the powers to appoint any suitable candidate; subject to paragraph (c) and (d) on the list; despite the ranking of candidates by SGBs from position 1, 2, and 3. However, section 3(g)(iii) gives the HoD the powers to appoint such candidate temporarily or re-advertise the post after declining the SGB candidate; despite section 6(3)(a). Section 3(f) of EEA No.76 of 1998 provides the power to the HoD to appoint someone despite the SGB's recommendations and this may constitute a violation of the rights of both SGBs and teachers.

However, it appears that the above-mentioned power given to the HoD contradicts the powers of SGBs. In this context, the relationship between the two becomes sour. These contradictions reflect the mistrust the HoD had concerning the functions of the SGBs. Beckmann and Füssel (2013:567 and Prinsloo, 2006:364) posit that the courts do not seem to view the power as a *carte blanche* given to HoD. For instance Limpopo Province, there was a case, case no. [2003] JOL 11774 (CC) between the HoD v

School B & others. This case was about the appointment of a white man which was against equity envisaged by the MEC of education of the Province. Based on that, the MEC was disgusted by the recommendation of the SGB and appointed a female candidate instead of the recommended white candidate for the post; which angered the SGB enough to take the MEC to court. The court judgement was in favour of the SGB because the MEC should have directly protested to the governing body about his position regarding the implementation of equity at workplace.

Based on this court order against the HoD is an indication that the tendency of HoD to undermine the power given to the SGBs is unlawful. I hold the view that the relationship between the HoD and SGBs at times is not healthy. It appears that the HoD wishes to recentralise power back to his/her office without due regard for the law. It is against this background that state wishes to amend SASA to give powers to the HoD to appoint teachers who are going to occupy post level 2 to post level 4 and leave SGBs with powers to recommend only post level educators. Government Gazette No: 41178 (2017:6) states that this proposed change of SASA and EEA; is aimed at giving HoD powers to appoint competent candidates to run schools effectively and efficiently.

Furthermore, Beckmann (2009:138) reported about the similar case between Western Cape Education Department and the governing body of school A.

The case was about the recommendations rejected by the MEC of the province regarding the appointment of the principal and the deputy principal. The argument of the school governing body was that they had duly followed the procedure during the processes of short-listing and interviews. This had been prompted by the powers given to the HoD to approve or reject the school governing body recommendations at will as contained in subsection 6(3)(f). The judgement was in favour of the SGB of School A against the HoD of the province. In this context, the judge argued that the power given to the HoD is limited and as such the HoD must operate within the limit of the law.

Van der Merwe (2013:242) argues that this unfettered power given to the HoD has created tension between the HoD and the school governing body. This tension can be outlined against the background of educational change and transition since 1994. However, it seems as if the state has a concern about the shortfall in the recent laws governing the recommendations of teachers by governing body on post levels 2

to 4 because the present EEA curtails the powers of the HoD in terms of who must be appointed.

Government Gazette No: 41178 (2017:6) gives the HoD caution to whom to appoint, such appointments might be disputed by the governing body especially if they are not in line with the favoured candidate recommended by the governing body as contained in section 6 of the EEA. Furthermore, Government Gazette No: 41178 (2017:6) continues to state that the HoD has to give good reasons on his verdict to diverge from the suggestion of the governing body and the HoD will have to present explanation that could stand up to be lawful examination in the law lords.

Prinsloo (2006:363) affirms that in current years a variety of cases have occurred where the Department of Education abandoned the approval of the governing body or was unsuccessful in talking to the governing body concerned before an appointment was completed. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2006:498) regard the behaviour of the HoD “imagined power”.

Accordingly, the state was taken to court because the HoD did not appoint the candidate preferred by the SGB. Government Gazette No: 41178 (2017:6-7) affirms that the motive for this is that the appointment procedure is seen as a managerial act in terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000. This provision of that Act, the individual practising the prudence or captivating the administrative action would have to do so in terms of the values as set out in that Act. Administrative action can be taken on check if it is viewed as uncalled-for or illogical. It against this background that SGBs have taken the HoDs of provincial Education Departments to court to review the power of HoDs regarding appointments of teachers on promotional posts.

To conclude this section, it appears that there is mistrust between state through HoD and SGBs. The HoD argues that the School Governing Bodies violate the principle of equity to address the imbalances of the past. Clase *et al.*, (2007:246) see the field of tension as socially and legally very complex because it touches on the sensitive relation between the rights of the governing bodies and the need for transformation as prescribed by the state. Clase *et al.*, (2007:246) approve the governing bodies' broad

administrative powers embedded in legislation, while the powers of the boards of education, at regional, provincial and national level, are restricted to recommendation and consultation.

Furthermore, Clase *et al.*, (2007:247) query the good conviction of the education ministry. They query the state's intentions with regard to the running of schools and the function of governing bodies that provide their services voluntarily. However, Clase *et al.*, (2007:247) quote the then minister of education Asmal; as representative of the state, accusing governing bodies of not complying with the letter and spirit of the South African Constitution. In the above-mentioned cases according to the state, SGBs have violated the employment equity policy. The judgement handed down was not against the state; but against the manner in which state interferes with the legal power of SGBs enshrined in the Constitution.

## **2.5 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS ON TEACHER APPOINTMENTS IN THE FORMER LEBOWA HOMELAND (1980-1990)**

The apartheid South African government classified people according to ethnic groups. Khunou (2009:84) affirms that these homelands were formed on the foundation of the language and customs of a particular ethnic set. Khunou (2009:84) further argues that traditional leaders were used by the system to maintain the legality of the Bantustans because the idea of the homeland system was to split and regulate Africans. I view this power given to some of traditional leaders as being a bluff with the aim of extending apartheid rule in rural areas. Some traditional leaders who opposed apartheid were deposed from their positions and replaced by those who agreed to serve the regime.

Ntsebeza (2004:7) supported this argument by stating that some traditional leaders, boldly collaborated with the apartheid regime. Others were hesitant participants in the apartheid game. The ANC leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Luthuli never collaborated with the apartheid system and Luthuli was even keen to reject his chieftainship (Ntsebeza; 2004:7-8).

Based on the above argument, most of the ethnical classifications were in Lebowa, now called the Limpopo Province, located in the Northern part of South Africa. In Lebowa schooling became a challenge due to the fact that schools were few (Phillips, 2015:302). Mamdani (1996:18) supported this argument by stating that, the “bifurcated state” in South Africa was created by colonialism and apartheid. In this context, citizens are those who are living in urban areas who enjoyed the freedom to elect their leaders and have access to better schools and subjects are those who are in rural areas who are subjected to poor conditions and do not have the rights to elect their traditional leaders. Mandani (1996:18) criticised the institution of traditional leadership on the basis that they had been captured by colonialists and apartheid to extend their indirect rule over black people by dividing them into urban and rural.

I argue that the game of apartheid has created inequalities in South Africa and anarchy in rural areas where traditional leaders were pitted against their own people. Phillips (2015:303) supported this argument by stating that traditional leaders are answerable to the country rather than to the communities over which they ruled. The crack between the subjects and power was growing ever broader. The manipulation of traditional leaders by National Party government (NP) caused most people, locally and internationally to have negative attitudes towards traditional leadership. Ntsebeza (2004:2) argues that as a result, traditional leaders’ collaboration with the apartheid government was discredited, hated and feared. Furthermore, apartheid has divided schools into two: departmental schools which were sufficiently funded in urban areas; and community schools which were neglected and poorly funded with no funds at all and were located in rural areas under traditional leaders.

However, I believe that it was a blessing in disguise because traditional leaders under such degrading and difficult times, they emerged and soldiered on with the struggle to see their people being freed from apartheid; and some of them managed to form the ANC. Williams (2010:2) is of the opinion that traditional leadership can be accredited with the formation of the African National Congress, and may even claim its soul. Furthermore, Williams (2010:2) argues that despite the perception of collaborating with colonial and apartheid governments, they have struggled with the masses to fight apartheid. It is against the background that traditional leaders were organising funds from their members to build schools for the education of their children.

Upon completion of the school building, that school will be named after the forebears of traditional leaders. Phillips (2015:302) asserts that most of schools in Sekhukhune were named after the chieftainship of the time. Mbokazi (2015:2) supports this argument by stating that apartheid administration paid rebates to schools in a fund acknowledged as Rand-for-Rand. The collection of money was done at the local tribal authority not at the school. It is worth noting that this was a serious responsibility for rural communities (Phillips. 2015:302).

Accordingly, Phillips (2015:303) argues that these schools were meant to serve a range of functions for the apartheid state, including trapping black youths into low-skilled employment with an inferior education, and disciplining youths in a changing social order. In addition to this, schools offered a particular form of indirect control. It is against this background that the stigma of apartheid education in rural schools under traditional leaders is still showing its colour.

However, it appears that rural communities under traditional leadership found themselves between a hard rock and a hard place. I hold the view that, exacerbating these conditions, on one hand apartheid education did not have the means to pay salaries for under-qualified teachers or private teachers while on the other hand learners had to travel over 10 km to school to attend lessons and there was a shortage of teachers. This was a serious load for rural communities to struggle for schooling of their children.

Phillips (2015:308) argues that it would be wrong, however, to concentrate on this one feature. Other forces were at work, producing many exceptions to the rule and setting the scene for changes in the nature of the relationship between chiefs, principals and schools. After 1976, for example, there was sudden rush of urban students to rural South Africa.

This power given to traditional leaders had angered the youth. Bank and Southall (1996:419) point out that in Lebowa, Mapulaneng; which was one of the first regions to practice youth politicisation, the creation of the Brooklyn Youth Organisation in 1986 acted as a means for 'comrades' opposed to code of control and influence in the



homeland. In this region, restricted chiefs and their *dintona* (councillors) took the brunt of youth resentment as their houses were torched. They were accused of witchcraft and villages were given orders to discontinue paying levy and rents. In the Sekhukhune area, further North, a related pattern emerged after the launching of the Sekhukhune Youth Formation.

Based on the above matters, it was not easy to lead in rural areas because traditional leaders were seen as agents of apartheid rule. Philips (2015:300) affirms that by the 1980s, the school had been restricted to such a point that its day by day role was an expression of limited community battles. I, however, argue that traditional leaders were involved in an important function of building schools as strategies to crush apartheid rule during that period. Mbokazi (2015:50) affirms that in the 1940s, traditional leaders played an important role in the establishment of schools in order to provide education for tribal communities.

Furthermore, currently schools are being built in every village where learners must travel less than 5km but in the 1980s. Phillips (2015:306) indicates that while there were a number of junior primary and senior primary schools in the vicinity; even the children attending these schools regularly had to walk long distances to school every day. Phillips (2015:309) states that school management thus gathered money from parents and the society to compensate local top-achieving alumni a 'private' (unqualified) teacher's pay before they went to the training college, because the department would not pay for unqualified teachers.

I am of the opinion that the contribution made by community members to the building of schools made other members believe that they owned schools and the top positions like principal-ships posts should be reserved for local teachers. He further explains that School Committees (now called School Governing Bodies) also had more interest in the position of teachers. Phillips (2015:308) argues that traditional councillors were allowed their status on the school board to perform their duties as the 'eyes and ears of the traditional leaders and, in turn, the eyes and ears of the Lebowa government.

Based on the above argument, it appears that school committees were there at schools for their traditional leaders and the apartheid government. I believe that teacher appointments were based on their locality than on the capacity of the candidate. Attesting to that, Phillips (2015:310) posits that the community interest groups perceived teachers from outside their jurisdiction had taken 'local' jobs. Phillips (2015:310) further states that the school boards' powers and deals in the place of teachers had become more and more biased and nervous. The recent cohort of learned Mapulaneng inhabitants also wanted that school managers were from more often expected to be locals as well. In this context, localisation of teacher posts was the order of the day.

In light of the above argument, I hold the view that community interest groups were driven by tribalism and more so, the local schools were built by the community themselves under their traditional leaders. Moreover, there are some teachers who graduated from the training colleges and according to the representatives of the traditional councils, would be right moment to take over from teachers who were outside their jurisdiction.

Principals who resisted would be evicted from schools on the basis that they are not locals were threatened with death. Phillips (2015:311) affirms that an educator was found hiding behind the bush from students who, he said, were threatening to kill him. In this context, apartheid had to be blamed because it has entrenched divisions amongst black people on ethnic and tribal lines as well as rural and urban line.

The aim of apartheid was to extend the indirect rule and oppression of black people in South Africa. Division was unfortunately embedded into apartheid education to discourage black people. To conclude, I am of the opinion that during the apartheid era, traditional leaders were directly involved in school governance and parents of the learners were excluded.

## **2.6 THE INVOLVEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AFTER 1994.**

School governance was placed in the hands of SGBs. I hold the view that SASA puts SGBs in a powerful position to perform certain functions. One of those functions is to recommend teachers for appointment to the provincial HoD. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:175) affirm that the SGB of a school has to propose to the HoD the engagement of teachers at the school as contained in section 20(i) of SASA.

However, SASA is silent about the role of traditional leaders particularly after 1994 with school governance. This means that traditional leaders have been excluded in governance of schools. Sabata (2008:1, Phillips: 2015:308 and Mbokazi: 2015:3) affirm that throughout the era of apartheid traditional establishments were unswervingly concerned with schooling and they were part of school authority, operating hand in glove with school communities. This relationship was redefined in 1994 and subsequently traditional leaders were excluded from schooling. I hold this view that the role of traditional leaders does not feature legally in South African schools.

In this regard, exclusion of traditional leaders in rural schools has dislodged and isolated the majority of SGBs. For example; when SGBs call parents meetings only a few parents attend and this becomes a problem when serious issues require the majority of parents to be present at meetings. Mbokazi and Bhengu (2008:59) support this argument by stating that the traditional leadership utilise school as venues for community meetings and the school would have a slot in the programme to address the community on school matters. I assert that some school principals and SGBs when faced with this problem of non-attendance of meetings by parents have requested traditional leaders to call *kgoro* or *imbizo* for school meetings.

Sabata (2008:59) affirms that in effect, the exclusion of traditional authorities has resulted in meetings being moved out of schools into the domain of traditional authorities within imbizos. Based on the above argument, the researcher argues that despite the exclusion of traditional leaders from school governance, traditional leaders continue to be supported by their communities. However, they remain a "*potent de*

*facto force*" in local education and continue to wield authority, to borrow words from *Emerging Voices* (2005: 125).

In light of the above argument, even though traditional leaders are recognised by the constitution of South Africa their role in all government legislations has been unclear except to say that they play advisory roles in all spheres of government. It is against this background that traditional leaders' role on school governance is undefined and based on unwritten policy which has created conflict at schools. Ntsebeza (2005:26) affirms that traditional leaders' functions remained consultative, ritual and extra-constitutional. This aim is of critical significance to the South African condition. Despite recognising a position for traditional authorities, Bank and Southall (1996: 408, 425-427) robustly dispute those traditional authorities that are deprived of a responsibility in the country's constitutional matters. However, there are constructive aspects that traditional leaders are dealing with to help SGBs to offer quality education particularly subsequent to 1994.

Mbokazi and Bhengu (2008:58) point out the roles that traditional leadership acts in school authority, which comprise monitoring, supervision of the SGB activities and participating in the Safety and Security Committees. Based on this; this role; as stated earlier on the study; was based on unwritten policy. For example, if principals are not willing to consult them, how the reaction would be the reaction between the school and the traditional leaders? In this context, the principal would argue that no provision of the law forced the principal to consult traditional leaders on matters affecting the school.

The majority of schools in Limpopo rural areas are under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. It is against this background that the success of those schools depends on the working relationship between school principals and the traditional leaders. Msila and Netshitangani (2015:34) affirm that in numerous rural areas the societies might still be following the traditional authority chain of command and schools cannot ignore this piece of evidence. Schools that wish to achieve efficiency will not ignore the influence of these traditional leaders. They further argue that rural officials and school managers who have a dream of school achievement will disregard traditional authority at the back as they construct partnership in these communities.

Based on this paragraph, I hold the view that community members who will be elected to lead SGBs are the subjects of traditional leaders. These members of the SGB are ruled by traditional leaders. Whatever important decision they intend to take at their schools, traditional leaders have to be consulted. I believe that the influence of these traditional leaders on teacher appointments and promotion were influenced by their indirect consultation with SGBs.

Furthermore, when there were promotional appointments, overnight meetings were held with the local teachers at the royal house to influence the appointment of a 'son of the soil'. Under such situations, Mamdani (1996:22) uses the comparison of a 'clenched fist' to explain this deliberation of influence of traditional leaders in the rural areas. This practise in rural areas was rife to such an extent that some principals were evicted from their schools due to pressure exerted by the community interest groups pushing for the appointment of the 'son of the soil.'

Ntsebeza (2005:5) supports this argument by stating that traditional leaders were, not unpredictable, discredited, autocratic, inexplicable, despotic, and, in numerous instances, feared. I concur with the author that, due to fear some rural communities towards traditional leaders, some decisions taken were based on fear for their families to be victimised.

Furthermore, I argue that interference of traditional leaders on teacher appointments is influenced by local teachers and the dysfunctionality of SGBs in rural schools due to low educational levels. Msila (2012:305) argues that the underprivileged parents' aspirations are often unclear and these are classically restricted by the needs and wishes of the children themselves.

Furthermore, I argue that the community interest groups consisted of teachers and traditional councillors and some SGB members took an advantage of the situation and manipulate these poor SGBs. I argue that traditional leaders thought that contributions that they made give them powers to control schools remotely. They use their power as traditional leaders to disregard government policy on teacher appointments..

However, Msila (2013:196) argues that even after 1994, the country has had two education systems; the first has superior possessions in the previous white schools with improved performing learners. The second one is comprised of inadequately resourced schools, mostly in traditionally black African schools; with meagre performing learners under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. Furthermore, Msila (2013:196) states that schools in deprived and underprivileged societies are rarely as well resourced as schools in richer areas.

## **2.7 TRIBALISM IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS**

Tribalism is when teachers are being appointed to their position because they belong to the same chief in the village. In support of this, Gichuki (2014:17) there are three main theories of tribalism; the primordialist, the constructionist and the instrumentalist. The primordialist theory views ethnicity as an ascribed identity that is inherited from one's ancestors. Here ethnicity is immutable. It is fixed and cannot change as it is given to you at birth. Also, ethnicity is determined by common ancestry. The Constructionist school views ethnicity as a socially constructed notion which is thus flexible. Due to its dynamic nature it conforms to societal change and expectations. The Instrumentalist school explains ethnicity as a means to an end; an instrument to gain resources. People only become ethnically affiliated if it produces significant returns. I argue that tribalism within the context of teacher appointments, promotes corruption and nepotism.

Furthermore capable candidates are left behind due to the undue influence of tribalism in rural schools. Van Wyk (2007:163) affirms that SGBs may choose their relatives and do not consider the competence of educators in the rural schools. Moorosi (2010:554) supported this argument by applying words such as 'son of the soil' or 'local breed' exist in these instances where they yearn to make decision to move on that they want a local person whom they maintain will understand the schools better.

Karodia and Soni (2014:8) state that "cultural fissures stay put influential, chiefly in the era of financial disaster, when the wealth is scarcer than ever, joblessness beyond control, self-esteem at its least ebb tide and rivalry in terms of endurance at its uppermost. It is against this background that; where resources are scarce; conflict

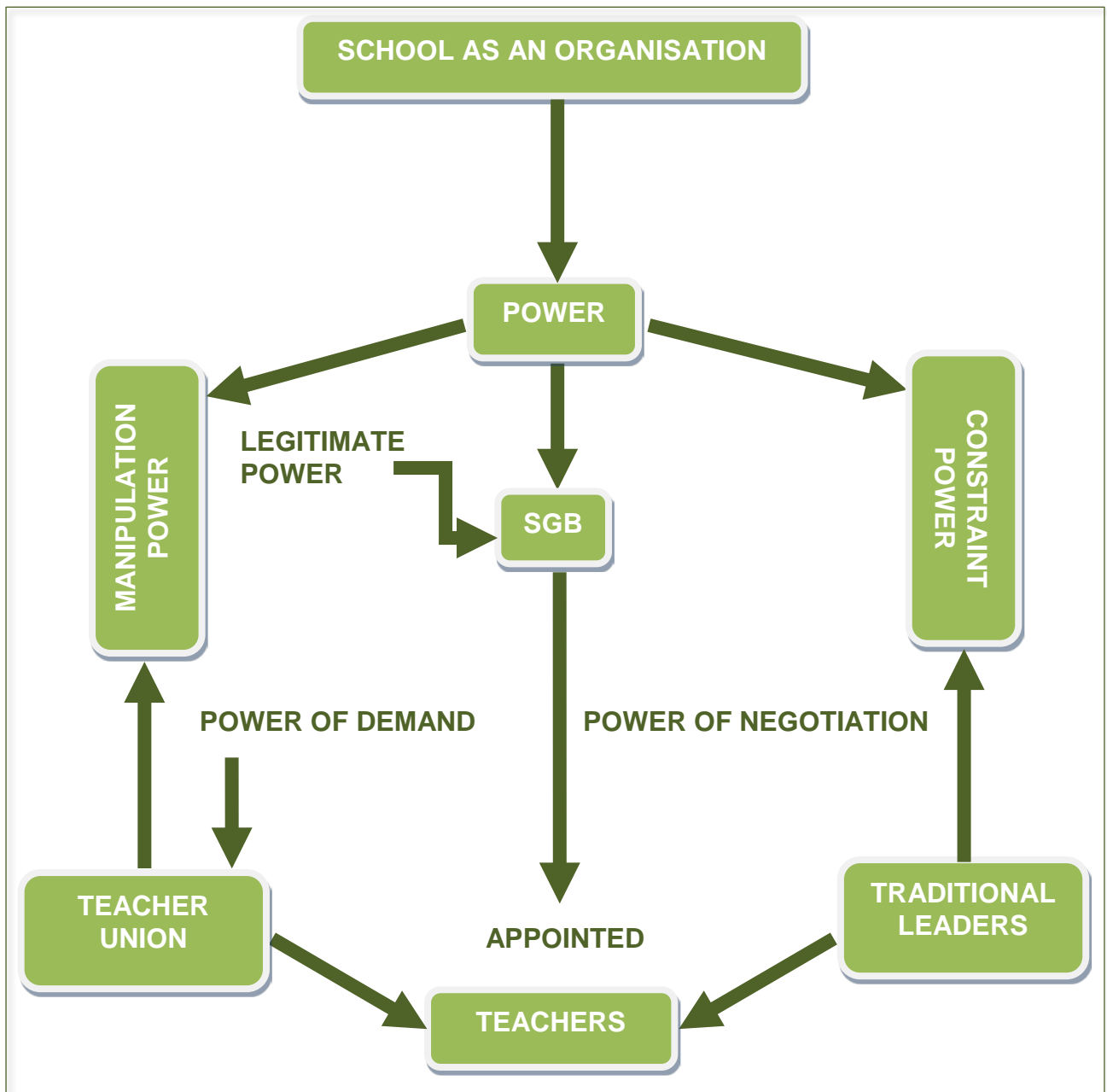
emerges. I hold the view that promotional posts in rural schools are scarce and the majority of local teachers have the qualifications to occupy promotional posts when they are available. I argue that this exercise has led many teachers to compete for few posts which are available. Some of the teachers could even influence SGBs to recommend them for promotion on the basis that they are relatives or that they belong to the same tribe in the community.

In addition, teachers who are from other villages are marginalised on promotional posts. The notion of the 'son of the soil' has led some teachers to be recommended even if they are not sufficiently qualified. The majority of them have three-year diploma. This problem of tribalism is not confined to rural schools where promotional posts are scarce; but even departments of government. Karodia and Soni (2014:9) affirm that learned South Africans landing influential positions in large companies and elsewhere must be truthful and acknowledge that, consciously or else, their engagements in the institutions that they lead have been biased in favour of individuals from same language group, same geographical origin or same tribe.

This challenge is not unique to South Africa; Adeyanju (2011:18) affirms that at hand there is a custom in Nigeria that forbids society from divulging or prosecuting a member of the tribesmen for fraudulent practises. Fraudulent tendencies are exposed and law is dishonoured, yet such folks appeal to cultural reaction to get away from, or put a stop to trial. Karodia and Soni (2014:11) concur with Adeyanju (2011) that in Rwanda's Tutsi's were massacred by the Hutu tribal group. Approximately, a million citizens were massacred and slaughtered. In Germany ethnic discrimination led to a systemic genocide in which millions of Jews and others rotted and died in concentration camps and gas chambers, simply because of their ethnicity.

Karodia and Soni (2014:10) argue that the word tribalism originates from the belief that people whom you know will accept your mistake and protect you against other ethnic groups. The authors further argue that those tribalists become your ears, eyes and mouth while you were not around. They become your yes men because you have given them employment. That is why it is difficult to separate corruption from tribalism and racism.

## 2.8 CONCEPTS BASED ON POWER THEORY (EASTON, 1953)



**Figure 2.1:** Conceptual Framework

I used the above figure to explain the concepts-based power theory by Easton, 1953. In this theory, Zeehandelaar (2012:31) states that political battle (both micro and macro) involves role players using influence to control policy results. In this context, the actors are SGBs, teacher unions and traditional leaders. SGBs and teacher unions are operating at a micro political level which is within a school; and traditional leaders operate at the macro level which means that they operate outside the school. This



study was conducted against the background of section 20 (i) and (j) of the SASA No. 84 of 1996 which promulgated the notion that parents should be engaged in the education of their children. This section of SASA places governance of school in the hands of SGBs. To perform this obligation, each school is likely to have a lawfully constituted (SGB) as part of school authority. Zeehandelaar (2012:31) affirms that; to influence the outcomes; outside and inside role players use political power strategies to leverage their resources so that the legitimate political system will be motivated to respond to their demands.

Furthermore, Zeehandelaar (2012:31) argues that the general perception of political influence is that A exercises control over B when A affects B in a way divergent to B's welfare. In this context, Zeehandelaar (2012:22) defines power as commonly signifying control of one person or setoff individuals over one another.

In this context, Zeehandelaar (2012:22) posits that political influence has three probable definitions, also called dimensions or faces. The first face is **straight power or direct authority**: Based on the above, one player makes a verdict for another, or compels another to make a resolution, using influence, force, advice, or power and it is explicit, deliberate, and clearly, exercised during the administrative when interests conflict. Achievement is quantifiable; if the player uses power fruitfully then decisions or policies protect their interests as contained in (Zeehandelaar 2012:22).

In this context SGBs have legitimate power and this makes SGBs recommend teachers to the provincial HoD. On the other hand, teacher unions use coercive power to sway the decision of the SGBs to their direction. The teacher unions use force for their members to be appointed on promotional posts. If SGBs' decision of recommending teachers on promotional posts goes against their members, SADTU declares dispute to halt the process of appointing the candidate recommended by the SGB. This exercise is tantamount to power abuse.

Zeehandelaar (2012:22) further, states that the second face of power can also be defined as **restriction or constraint**. In this second face of power, actors limit the scope of decision-making by setting the agenda of a political system and the rules for participating in that system (Zeehandelaar, 2012:22). The role players (traditional

leaders) utilise secret authority or influence to pre-determine which issues require decisions (and which do not), and who can access the decision-making arena. In this context, traditional leaders through community interest groups influence SGBs behind the scenes to recommend local teachers on promotional posts. They go all out to ensure that principals are appointed from the pool of local teachers based on locality no matter how small their competency.

It is also the manipulation of power. Contrasting the first definition, Zeehandelaar (2012:22) indicates that where power is the ability to decide, here power is the ability to prevent a decision from being completed at all. The author further states that power is still apparent, deliberate, vigorous, and exercised when interests are in conflict. However, it is exercised secretly, and deemed successful when the decision-making process effectively excludes contrasting interests.

Both of these aspects assume that power stems from apparent conflict. But there is a third definition of power contained in Zeehandelaar (2012:22) called: **manoeuvring or manipulation**. In this context, one role player can convince another to act differently to his/her own interests, or shape the interests of the opponents so that they no longer in differ. The author further explains that power is therefore the ability to alter the perceptions and preferences of the opponents so that they conform to the terms with the principal role player. In this context, traditional leaders manipulate SGBs to appoint a 'son of the soil' rather than what is contained in SASA.

In the first two faces of power, quarrel or conflict is apparent. It exists when there is a conflict between the interests of the role players. Zeehandelaar (2012:22) states that in the first face, the interests of the conquered or dominated party are assured, incorporated, and then crushed. In the second face of power, the interests of the dominated party are assured, and then barred. But in the third face of power, conflict is **latent or hidden**. Zeehandelaar (2012:22) holds the view that the factual interests of the dominated role players are barred because the dominated role players do not articulate them, are not aware of them, or think it is in their paramount interest to obey the main role player.

What influence do traditional leaders have on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools?

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

Decentralisation of power by government was aimed at empowering governing body to be active participants in the education of their children. This calls for all schools to have democratically elected SGBs. One important function of the SGBs to recommend teachers for appointment to the provincial HoD based on the legislation dealing with teacher appointments. This important role of SGB of recommendation has been contested by teacher unions, HoD and traditional leaders. The concepts-based power theory was highlighted in this study. The role players who were the principal, union members and the SGBs in teacher appointments have also been highlighted. The latter claim that schools were built on their land and they must control them. The relationship between SGBs and traditional leaders was examined and the role of traditional leaders during apartheid and after 1994 was considered.

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## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to find valid, appropriate answers for this research on the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments, a qualitative approach was found to be relevant. This study aimed at determining and describing the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural areas. This Chapter discusses the research methodology, research design, research instrument, and sampling method used

This study answered the following research questions:

- ❖ To what extent do traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural schools?
- ❖ How do School Governing Bodies make recommendations about teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ Which factors influence teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges facing School Governing Bodies concerning teacher appointments in selected rural schools?

### 3.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

This study was approached qualitatively with the aim of exploring the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. I met the participants face to face at schools and traditional houses or offices. Nieuwenhuis (2011:51) affirms that people are qualitatively studied by meeting with them and observing the participants in their normal milieu and focusing on their meanings and interpretations. Maree (2012:78-79) supports this view by stating that this research approach is based on a naturalistic approach that seeks to comprehend phenomena in the backdrop (or actual - world settings) and, in general, the researcher does not try to manipulate the phenomenon of significance. Here research was conducted in real-life situations and not in experimental situations. Pacho (2015:44) and Mohajan (2018:2) endorse this argument by stating that this research study was preferred because it tries to make

logic of people's knowledge, views, viewpoints, attitudes and deeds in a given cultural context.

### **3.3 INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM**

Okeke and van Wyk (2016:21) define a paradigm as a set of fundamental viewpoints that deals with primary values. They are of the view that interpretive research paradigm represents a worldview that defines, for its owner, the natural world, the individuals' place in it, and the range of possible interaction to that world and its parts. Ponelis (2015:538) affirms that this paradigm is characterised and needed to comprehend the world as it is from a subjective point of view and rather than the objective point of view.

This study was approached from the interpretivist point of view. Okeke and van Wyk (2016:22) are of the view that interpretivism paradigm is formed with words rather than numbers and participants met with the researcher face to face. This paradigm was chosen because I wanted to understand what the participants were thinking and feeling; and how they communicated verbally and non-verbally. This paradigm gave me an opportunity to give meaning to the phenomenon being researched and an opportunity to develop themes from the respondents. Okeke and van Wyk (2016:26) state that interpretive research is ontologically subjective.

A constructivist paradigm was chosen for this study because it assumes that pragmatism is collectively constructed and as such, there are various realities or interpretations of a sole incident (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools is seen as being a social construct that is jointly constructed both by those participating in it and by those affected by it and how this takes shape in different social contexts. Mbokazi (2015:73) states that to interpret the role of traditional leaders in school governance, it is crucial to do so in the eyes of the communities those are affected by this role. Regarding reality, the underlying belief within social constructivism is that reality is constructed through human activity, where society members invent the properties of their world together, while their knowledge is both socially and culturally constructed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:371).

### **3.4 MULTIPLE CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN**

Okeke and van Wyk (2016:165) define a research plan as containing all the issues concerned in planning and executing a research project by identifying the difficulty through to exposure and publishing the outcomes. This study used multiple case studies. I have chosen multiple case studies because of the following benefits as stated in Gustafsson (2017:13).

- ❖ The researcher has ample opportunities to explore the data within each state and across different situations. In this context, the researcher could analyse the similarities and differences between cases.
- ❖ The results emanating from multiple cases can be strong and reliable because the researcher has used more than one setting and the findings can be identified as valuable or not.
- ❖ Multiple case studies described, compared, and developed a better and an in-depth understanding of how role players view the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. Each school will be regarded as a case. Gustafsson (2017:3) affirms that in the multiple case studies, researchers are examining numerous cases to comprehend the similarities and differences between the cases.

### **3.5 RESEARCH SITE**

To achieve the study aims, I have purposively selected six schools and three traditional houses in Sekhukhune in Limpopo. From these six schools, there are three primary and another three secondary schools in rural communities under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. These sites were selected based on their location and were far away from urban areas. Three traditional houses were selected for the collection of data from traditional leaders and traditional councils at tribal offices. Those schools were under their jurisdiction. Mbokazi and Bengu (2008:59) had already studied the influence of traditional leaders on school governance and indicated some case study sites that could be chosen, because the involvement of traditional leaders in the governance of those schools was established in those sites in some fairly limited, but yet interesting ways.

### **3.6 SAMPLING**

Participants were selected using the purposive sampling strategy due to an interest in interviewing participants who were more knowledgeable about the information needed; therefore, purposive sampling was conducted with the specific function in mind. Neuman (2011:305) states that purposive sampling is a method that is appropriate in selecting cases that are likely to produce the required information.

Maree (2011:59) states that the interpretivist perspective on a qualitative study, believes that the person's brainpower is the purposive foundation or the basis of connotation. This study aims at interviewing principals, SGB chairpersons; who were engaged with the appointments of teachers. This study was prompted by external influences during the appointment of local teachers to promotional posts on the basis that they are the "sons of the soil". The decision to choose schools under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders was informed by the prior knowledge that these schools were built by the traditional leaders themselves and named after their forefathers and mothers.

These schools were characterised by the eviction of principals who are not the locals and allegations of interference during the processes of short-listing and interviews for promotional posts such as principal-ships by SGB chairpersons pushing local teachers to be appointed as principals. For the six schools selected and three traditional houses, the use of pseudonyms for anonymity was complied with.

### **3.7 THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

The researcher has selected participants from schools made up of principals, chairpersons of SGBs and traditional leaders and traditional councils from local royal houses. Section 8(2) Act 78 of 1998 of the Employment of Teachers Act provides that before the recommendation of the appropriate candidate is submitted to the Head of Provincial Department for appointment, there have to be an appointing committee that will conduct the process of short listing and interviews. The panel as provided in the Act must be made up of the school manager and the governing body members, who are in the majority, with the teacher union representatives as observers.

The number of participants in this study was:

- ❖ Six principals
- ❖ Three SGB chairpersons;
- ❖ Three traditional leaders; and
- ❖ Fourteen traditional councils.

All these participants were selected from six schools which included three primary and three secondary schools and three royal houses. All participants had given consent of their participation in this study. The SGB chairpersons were selected because they were involved with the process of short listing and interviews. Traditional leaders and traditional councils were selected because there was a perception created that they interfered with the process of teacher promotion.

Mbokazi (2015:80) states that the views from these participants were crucial and informative in order to discuss the nature of traditional leaders' role in school governance; as they both perceived and experienced it. The author assumed that all these participants who represent the main actors in the education of school children in different sites perceived the role of traditional leaders in school governance differently. The wide selection was intended to provide rich data on the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments.

### **3.8 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE**

I asked for a prior meeting with each principal of the six schools and traditional councils in their respective time, so that I could explain the purpose of the study. For me to meet the traditional councils I had to follow the protocol of seeking mediators to facilitate a meeting with the traditional leaders. It was a complex exercise because I had to follow everything they tell me. I needed to get cooperation from the principals and traditional leaders who gave me consent to address the SGB chairpersons and traditional councils respectively. I used data collection technique as discussed below:



### **3.8.1 Semi-structured interviews as data collection technique**

This data collection instrument was used for the principal, SGB chairpersons and traditional leaders. For Srivastava and Thomson (2009:4) in this data collection technique, questions are open-ended; thus not limiting of the respondents' choice of answers. The aim is to offer a situation or tone where the interviewer and interviewee can argue the topic in detail. In this context, I therefore make use of cues and prompts to assist and help the interviewee to get into the research topic area thus being able to collect more vigour or comprehensive facts (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009:4). During the interview, participants are free to articulate their views, while at the same time; the interviewer is able to focus on the research topic. The purpose of using interviews is to observe the world from the beginning to the end through the eyes of the participants.

The semi-structured interviews were relevant for this study, because the researcher ask questions on crucial issues, communicating with participants regarding the complexity of the process of short listing, interviews and appointments. The idea of using semi-structured interviews was to elicit information regarding the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments which was a controversial issue. Interviews were conducted with twenty-three participants including traditional leaders. I used elaboration probing following what the participants had said before, and asked for clarity, and this happened during the entire interview sessions. Maree (2011:88) concurs by saying that amplification investigations are intended to get the clear representation and normally engage probing the participant to tell me more about firm issues. In case where the participants answered with a yes or no, a follow-up question was asked.

### **3.8.2 Focus group interviews**

Focus group discussion can be regarded as a research method that produces information during a group interface on a theme determined by me. Mack *et al.*,(2011:51) hold the view that in focus group one or two researchers gather and quite a few participants meet as a group to argue about a certain research topic. Maree (2011:90) seems to concur by affirming that this technique is based on the theory that group interface will be fruitful in widening the variety of knowledge and releasing embarrassment that may otherwise inhibit participants from unveiling information. Maree further argues that focus group produces data rich in detail that is difficult to

achieve with other research methods. Maree (2011:90) argues that this technique, allows the participants to build on each others' information and observations and to give an in-depth view not achievable from individual interviews. Maree further states that unanticipated interpretations and new perspectives can be explored easily within this technique and can add value to the study.

In this study, focus group interviews were conducted on the traditional councils because they are the mediators of traditional leaders. Traditional councils also prefer to work in groups for the sake of consensus decision-making. Mack *et al.*, (2011:51) state that the key benefit of this technique is that it proves in a large quantity of data over a fairly short period of time. However, Mack *et al.*,(2011:51) further state that focus group interviews are also valuable for having a broad range of views on a detailed topic, as contrast to achieving group agreement.

In this study, focus group interviews were appropriate because the involvement of traditional leaders in teacher appointments was controversial. I chose the traditional councils to determine how the traditional leaders influenced the appointments of teachers. The reason behind this choice was to find different answers from different people in their groups on topics relating to teacher appointments.

### **3.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

Graue (2015:8) states that data analysis is a method of the description, classification and interconnection of phenomena with the researcher's concepts. Kawulich (2004:97) endorses this argument by defining data analysis as the process of reducing large amount of collected data to make sense of them. This study adopted the thematic data analysis method. Mbokazi (2015:90) affirms that once the data had been recorded, it was transcribed into a written format so that it could be analysed thematically. Braun and Clarke(2012:57) defined data analysis as a process for analytically identifying, organising, and offering insight into, patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset. In this context, during the interviews I identified, organised and categorised themes and patterns seemed to be common.

Data collection was not separated from data analysis in the sense that after interviews with the participants (which were recorded), I had to go and listen to the interviews several times so that I could identify new emerging themes. This means that I had to analyse data throughout the research process by listening to the voice recorder again and by transcribing the interview verbatim of each participant.

### **3.9.1 Data coding**

I used transcribed data to identify key points that arose from the participants and these key points enabled me to come up with themes. Maree (2011:106) state that themes provide direction for what the researcher must look for in the data.

The emerging themes helped me to present the data after it had been interpreted, summarised and organised. Interpretation of analysed data helped me to draw a theoretical conclusion from the text that supported the theory I had explained earlier in the study i.e. the theory of concept-based power. The different themes also enabled me to synthesise the findings into conclusions and recommendation; based on the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments.

## **3.10 ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS**

To ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research is another way of ensuring 'quality' in the process by ensuring that the findings of the study are credible and reliable. Guba and Lincoln (1985) developed with a useful model for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research and this had four criteria, namely credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. However, Wallendorf and Belk (1989) building his ideas in Guba's shoulder added the fifth concern that was not addressed, "integrity concern". Below are the reviews of how each of the four criteria was ensured in this study.

### **3.10.1 Credibility**

Credibility refers to the correctness of answers and how the researcher tries to express that a true representation of the observable fact being researched is presented (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:49-50). Anney (2014:276) concurs by defining credibility as the reassurance that can be placed in the realism of the research conclusions. The following researchers pose the following questions in their quest of establishing credibility in qualitative study. Are the qualitative conclusions authentic? Do the

findings appear truthful, capturing a holistic representation of the phenomenon under exploration? (Anney, 2014:276, Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:50 & Billups, 2014:1). In answering, the above-mentioned questions, this study had employed semi-structured interviews for school principals, SGBs and traditional leaders and focus groups for the traditional councillors, which are fitting techniques within the qualitative study and are well known research techniques in making sure credibility.

Credibility in this work can be guaranteed from end to end long-lasting commitment in the ground or study site. I have visited the research sites twice to understand the participants better. The first visit was about introducing myself to the participants, the research topic, to clarify questions relating to consent if there are any. The second visit was about data collection. Lastly, the research sites are within three circuits, which are in close proximity. Spending time at the research sites enables me to gain a better understanding of the context of the study. Shenton (2004:65) states that a researcher expands an ample thoughtful of an establishment and to create a rapport of faith among the parties. Krefting (1990:217) concurs with Shenton (2004) by stating that prolonged engagement permits the researcher to test perceptions and lets the participants become familiarised to the researcher.

Another way of ensuring credibility is through peer debriefing. In this study, the University has allocated supervisor to me. Anney (2014:276) affirms that through the research procedure a qualitative researcher is obliged to search for support from other experts keen to give academic leadership, such as members of the scholastic team, the postgraduate thesis board and the faculty of the university.

Credibility can be achieved through triangulation. Billups (2014:2) states that triangulation involves utilising various data sources to create better vigour and width of thoughtfulness. Shenton (2004:65) seems to concur by stating that triangulation might engage the utilisation of various techniques, especially examination, focus group and single interviews, which shape the main data set plans for much qualitative research. In this study I used multiple case studies where more than one research sites were visited. I have also used semi-structured interviews for principals, SGB chairpersons and traditional leaders as well as focus groups for traditional councillors as methods of data collection. The reason for triangulation in this study; is guided by

the view of Shenton (2004:66) when stating that here the person's perspectives and skills can be confirmed against others and, eventually, a rich representation of the approaches, needs or actions of those under study may be created, based on the offerings of variety of people.

Member-checking is another strategy for credibility. Member checking means that the "information and analysis are endlessly assessed as they are copied from members of different viewers and groups from which information are requested" (Anney, 2014:277). In this study, member checks are guided by Shenton (2004:66) who states that tests unfolding to the correctness of the information may take place "on the scene" in the way, and at the closing stage, of the data set interviews. I have visited the research sites twice. My first visit was about my introduction to the participants, the introduction of the research topic, to inform the participants that tape recorder was going to be used; letters of consent and the second visit was about data collection. During these meetings with the participants in the first visit I explained to them that all data collection materials would remain the property of the University of Pretoria and be available to the participants on request. The aim of member checking is to remove the researcher's prejudice when studying and reading the outcomes.

### **3.10.2 Transferability**

Anney (2014:277) states that transferability refers to the extent to which the outcomes of qualitative research can be transmitted to other perspectives with other participants. Transferability can be achieved through thick description and purposive sampling. In this study the selection of the research sites and the participants was done purposefully by the researcher. Three primary and three secondary schools from each three circuits and three traditional leaders in each circuit were selected purposefully with the aim of understanding the dynamics of the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. I have chosen multiple case studies to understand how different participants respond to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. I was looking at the thick description to enable other academics to reproduce the study with comparable situations on other situations. Shenton (2014:66) argued that, to guarantee transferability of qualitative investigation the researcher must "pull together broad" expressive data which allows assessment of this situation to other possible situations to which shift might be considered" and create

a broad narrative of the situation in order to make a finding about its appropriateness with other feasible situations. Anney (2014:277) affirms that, thick descriptions of data enable other researchers to make suitably informed judgements about the degree to which the results of the study can be moved to another similar context.

### **3.10.3 Dependability**

Kalu & Bwalya (2017:50) state that dependability refers to stability of the research findings and the researcher's attempt to account for any changing condition in the phenomenon of study, design, or methodology as appropriate. In this study, I have ensured dependability through peer examination and audit trail. I was assigned with the supervisor by the University of Pretoria, in order to ensure dependability in this work. Data collected in this study was audited by the University of Pretoria.

Anney (2014:278) concurs by stating that; in order for an assessor to perform a meticulous audit trail; the following papers should be kept for crosschecking the investigation process: unprocessed data, dialogue and study notes, papers and files collected on the ground, examination results and others. Data was collected during semi-structured interviews and focus groups interviews and was verified through a voice video recorder.

### **3.10.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability means the extent to which the outcomes of the investigation could be established or confirmed by other researchers (Anney, 2014:279). In this study, confirmability is ensured through an audit trail, reflective and triangulation. To achieve this, I had to ensure and demonstrate that the analysis and interpretations of findings clearly derived from data and this is often achieved through using the actual voices of the participants in presenting data. Mbokazi (2015:93) argues that some methods to achieve this overlap with those used in dependability and credibility above and these include audit trails and triangulation. Reflective journals are crucial in capturing on-the-spot analysis during data production, which provides an opportunity to double-check the analysis with participants, in order for the participants to confirm.

### **3.10.5 Integrity concern**

This fifth dimension was first raised by Wallendorf and Belk (1989). They disputed that the dispute opposing qualitative researchers is how one can guarantee that the data provided by the participants were not false fabrication. In view of the fact that

qualitative enquiry intently immerse into informants worldview, the informants might not be happy with information asked by the researcher or they might have disinclination with researcher, hence, they might decide to provide false information.

As a qualitative researcher the paramount plan to defeat propaganda, evasions and misrepresentation is to be doubtful with information that you feel might not be accurate. For the purposes of this study, triangulation and peer debriefing was used by me to ensure trustworthiness.

Anney (2014:8) argues that prolonged engagement helps the researcher to understand the background of the study and reduces the misrepresentation of information that might happen due to the presence of the researcher in school or place of research. Anney (2014:8) argues that the researcher enlengthens time in the field to develop trust with participants and expands understanding of participants' local creation and cultural background. This strategy was limited to doctoral students because they are entitled to stay at the research site six to eight months. Krieffing (1991:217-218) observed that "extended time period is important because as rapport increases, participants may volunteer different and often more sensitive information than they do at the beginning of a research project".

### **3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Kalu & Bwalya (2017:50) state that this study can present threats to informants so the researcher has the duty to guarantee that their interest is protected during the research procedure. Protecting the informant's interest entails sticking to the measurement moral values, which includes value for the independence of the informants, protecting informants from hurt, privacy, informed authority and voluntary partaking (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:50).

#### **3.11.1 Respect for the autonomy of the participants**

In this study, I have adhered to the above-mentioned principle by applying for ethical clearance from Ethical Committee of the University of Pretoria and asking for consent from the Department of Education Limpopo to do research at schools. As stated above, this study is guided by Mouton (2001:239) and O'Leary (2004:50) when they state "ethic is the foundation for all research".

Janse van Rensburg (2001:28) states that “research ethics refers to the moral dimensions of researching our decision, technical and otherwise about what is right and wrong while engaged in research “. To this effect, the principle of autonomy can be adhered to by providing adequate information about the research study to the participants in the participants’ information leaflet, in an understanding manner to enhance their informed consent (Munhall, 2012:232; Scott, 2013:311).

### **3.11.2 Informed consent**

The ethic committee of the University of Pretoria had given approval for the researcher to go on with the collection of data and the Limpopo Department of Education granted permission for the researcher to go to schools. I visited the research sites two times. The first visit was about to discuss letters of informed consent requesting permission from principals, SGB chairpersons, traditional leaders and traditional councillors to participate in the intended study. Informed permission correspondences were signed by the participants.

In my second visit, I introduced myself to the participants and the research topic, asking permission from the participants to participate in the study, disclosing that interviews could be video- taped or recorded and permission was sought, informing them that participation it is voluntary, confidentiality will be guaranteed, no harm and the right to privacy. Kalu & Bwalya (2017:48) affirm that it is finest tradition in any given research, but especially when dealing with true citizens, to value the participants’ right to privacy. Kalu & Bwalya (2017:49) further advise that we must consider the rightness or wrongness of our actions as qualitative researchers in relation to the people whose lives we are studying.

### **3.11.3 Confidentiality and anonymity**

To ensure privacy and secrecy, the identity of schools and participants was concealed. To this effect, schools were given fictitious names. It was also necessary to delete the names of schools on documents that were attached to the research report. Based on this, I account for transparency and responsibility for the way the research was carried out by: explicitly declaring how informed permission was required from the research participants; indicating to the person the reader how the participants’ secrecy was conserved, informing the reader for instance, whether the participants’ participation in



the research was voluntary or not, and if autonomy was theirs to pull out from the research; if they wished or chose to (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:49)

#### **3.11.4 Findings**

In this context, I informed the person who reads whether the participants were briefed about the research conclusions, and right of entry to the ultimate publication of the research, as well as a compelling and in-depth analysis of all other moral considerations (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:50). These indications provide benefits, from the readers' perception, for qualitative work to be reviewed good research. In this context, I informed the participants that the conclusions of this research would be accessible on application and would remain the property of University of Pretoria. This information would be reserved by the University approximately 15 years.

#### **3.11.5 Beneficence and Non-Maleficence and Justice**

The moral values of beneficence (do well) and non-maleficence (do not harm) are concerned with the profits and threats related with carrying out the research (Sarantakos, 2013:343). In this study the benefit was about to add value to the existing body of literature and was not funded by anybody and there was no conflict of interest. I was self-funded. The moral code of justice is concerned with the guarantee that actions in the research study are reasonable and that the informants' rights to privacy are valued (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:50). Orb *et al.*,(2000:95-96) state that the code of fairness refers to equivalent split and justice. They further state that one of the critical and unique characteristics of this principle is circumventing the abuse and mistreatment of respondents. In this study, I visited six research sites to ensure that the study was being conducted ethically. I clarified any misunderstanding with regard to ethics as stated earlier. The rationale behind my visits was to ensure adherence to the ethics in qualitative research.

### **3.12 CONCLUSION**

Qualitative study generates holistic understandings of rich, background and usually formless, non-numeric data by involving in discussion with the research participants in a natural location. This research locates itself in the interpretivist paradigm due to the investigative nature and qualitative investigation of the research plan. I visited the research sites to collect data and interviews were used and data was collected through

videotape devices. I applied purposive sampling because of the experience and knowledge possessed by the participants. The reason for me to choose this qualitative approach was based on premise that the participants were being visited at their natural setting. The participants met me personally and answered the questions verbally.

The study also has adopted the four strategies ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative study. The researcher has meticulously analysed data. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Pretoria. All ethical issues were addressed by the researcher. The next section deals with data production and analysis of data.

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# CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous section gave an exposition of the research design, explaining how data was collected and the method used in the process. In Chapter 4, the expectation is to present collected data on how processes of teacher appointments and promotions are destroyed by the influence of traditional leaders. This chapter aims at interpreting this data, analysing it and presenting it; based on its aims and research questions.

This study aimed at exploring the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. This chapter will be looking directly at the processes of appointment and promotions in terms of the departmental prescripts governing the appointment of teachers. Data collected will be interpreted by me to make sense and give meaning to its content.

## 4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In this research, six schools in the Sekhukhune district of Limpopo province participated. What follows is an outline of the participating schools' profiles. These schools are based in the rural areas, under the rule of traditional leaders and their traditional councils.

### 4.2.1 Profile of participating schools

Participating schools	Location	Type	Section	Category	Learner enrolment	No of teaching staff
School A	Jane Furse	Quintile 1	21	Secondary	622	21
School B	Jane Furse	Quintile 1	21	Primary	1230	32
School C	Ngwaabe	Quintile 1	21	Secondary	695	24
School D	Ngwaabe	Quintile 1	21	Primary	1017	28
School E	Schoonoord	Quintile 1	21	Secondary	943	41
School F	Schoonoord	Quintile 1	21	Primary	460	14

The sampled schools were selected based on their placement under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. The majority of, the schools were named after the forefathers and the foremothers of their traditional leaders. One of the criteria used in the selection of the schools is the schools' names, as the researcher believes there could have an influence in the manner in which they take part in the promotion processes. Therefore, the sampled schools may provide answers to the questions expected by me.

#### 4.2.2 Profile of school principals as participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Years of experience as a teacher	Years in current position	Qualifications
Principal A	M	43	23	8 Years	STD, BSc, and BEd Hons
Principal B	M	53	27	20 Years	PTD, BEd Hons
Principal C	M	49	23	11 Years	STD, and BA
Principal D	F	59	27	5 Years	BEd Hons
Principal E	M	46	22	1 Year	STD and BEd Hons
Principal F	M	57	28	12 Years	BAPAED and BEd Hons

The above information on principals' experiences and qualifications was required in order to present a profile of the participants in this study. Principals are resource persons during the processes of short-listing and interviews on teacher appointment and they are expected to apply the law in this regard. It is therefore important that principals have to be academically astute and should know law. The profile depicted is that they have all studied up to Bed Honours, which is an indication of good leadership competence. Leadership relates to providing direction with regard to the set goals, such as, for example, guiding the school towards excellent learner achievement. However, these goals may be difficult to achieve if the leaders themselves are inexperienced and under-qualified. The principals, therefore, play a pivotal role in assisting school governing bodies with the formation of interview panels.

### 4.2.3 Profile of school governing body members

Participants	Gender	Age	Years in current position	Qualifications
SGB of school A	F	51	6 Years	Standard 9
SGB of school B	M	45	6 Years	Standard 9
SGB of school C	M	38	3 Years	N6
SGB of school D	F	46	6 Years	Standard 2
SGB of school E	M	51	3 Years	Teachers' Diploma
SGB of school F	F	48	3 Years	Secondary Teachers' Diploma (ABET)

SGBs are responsible for recommending teachers' appointment at schools as provided by SASA Section 20. The sampled SGBs, as profiled above, have been serving as school governors for several years now, and should be knowledgeable about the appointment processes. Their experience during the processes of forming panels and recommending teachers is invaluable.

### 4.2.4 Profile of traditional leaders

Participants	Gender	Age	Years in current position	QUALIFICATIONS
Traditional leader 1	M	61	18 years	Not known
Traditional leader 2	F	73	46 years	Not known
Traditional leader 3	M	66	2 years	Primary school

The inclusion of traditional leaders; is presumably the owners of tribal land, on which the schools were built, is unavoidable. Their age, number of years as traditional leaders and experience in leading communities served as an indication of how many schools were built under their administrations and how many principals were appointed and whether appointment processes were followed. The participating schools were clustered under their administration. This is an indication that there could

be a relationship, whether positive or negative, between the traditional leaders and the schools occupying their land.

#### 4.2.5 Profile of traditional councils

Participants	Gender	Age estimated	Years in current position	Qualifications
Traditional council 1	3 Males	Between 28-49 Years	Between 3-5 Years	Dev. Studies, Journalism and B.Com.
Traditional council 2	6 Males	Between 55-77 Years	Between 7-15 years	Standard 1-Grade 12 and BEd Hons.
Traditional council 3	1 Females and 4 Males	Between 26-70 years	Between 7-25 years	Primary – Secondary School

Traditional councillors advise traditional leaders on matters of interest. I engaged the councils on this topic hoping to find how their experiences helped the traditional leaders to interpret education policies on teacher appointments. Some of the traditional councils were qualified to be teachers; while one of them is a graduate. It was expected that they would find it easy to understand the processes unfolding in education.

### 4.3 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Answers to the following research questions will be provided in this chapter:

- ❖ To what extent do traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural schools?
- ❖ How do School Governing Bodies make recommendations on teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ Which factors influence teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges facing SGBs on teacher appointments in selected rural schools?

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the extent to which traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural areas. Furthermore, all role players on teacher

appointments will be considered. The use of Thematic Analysis provides an opportunity to categorise information and interpret it meaningfully (Alhojailan, 2012:11-12). I listened repeatedly to the interview responses and transcribed them verbatim. Thereafter, the researcher paid attention to each verbatim transcript, and started analysing them meticulously, until similar ideas or topics were coded. What followed coding was the grouping of similar topics into themes. Member checking formed part of ensuring that the data was credible. Interview questions were constructed in line with the research questions in order to elicit focused answers from participants.

#### **4.4 THEMES FOR DISCUSSION**

The following themes are discussed and interpreted with the accompanying responses from data. Some excerpts from literature are used to support the arguments. These themes are presented as follows:

**THEME 1:** Contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments;

**THEME 2:** Challenges of appointing the child of the soil in schools; and

**THEME 3:** Toxic relationship between external bodies and the School Governing Bodies.

##### **4.4.1 Contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments**

###### **The School Governing Body chairpersons**

Six SGB chairpersons in this study were the first participants asked to state their understanding of the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in the schools they govern. The SGB Chairpersons' experience varied from three to six years. Some of these SGB chairpersons had been in their roles for two terms; therefore serving schools as chairpersons for six years was an indication that SGBs had served the schools diligently and had therefore been re-elected. The challenge with assuming this approach is that other parents or community members are never afforded opportunities to participate in the learning of their children. Another challenge posed by this long service is that they get used to approaching their functions inappropriately. That brings us to where this study is directed.

There are programmes designed to develop and empower SGBs with regard to school governance, as provided for in SASA Section 19. SGBs are elected every three years. The assumption that traditional leaders influenced teacher appointments was disapproved by the views of the participants. The majority of SGB participants were of the view that traditional leaders did not influence teacher appointments. However, one of them had a different vision regarding the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments and promotions. I grouped the SGB chairpersons who were of the view that traditional leaders did not influence the teacher appointments together.

Here is some of the SGB chairpersons' responses:

*If there is something happening in the school, we invite traditional leaders but they did not involve themselves on matters of teacher appointments.*

*In our school we work according to policy and the traditional leader is not involved on the basis that an applicant is either local or not local. Teacher appointments remain the responsibility of the principal and SGB not the traditional leader.*

However, one of the SGB chairpersons had a different view from the majority of participants. The chairperson had this to say in response to the same question:

*Yes...the traditional leader does have influence and he interferes in the school through the traditional council. When the principal advertised a post, a copy of an advert should be sent to the traditional house for the traditional council to check as to whether there is no one from the community who qualifies to be employed at the school. If the principal does not inform the traditional council about the advertised post, then there is a complaint from the traditional council against the school.*

In light of the above, this traditional council believed that schools within their jurisdiction were not independent administratively. However, parents who have children at that school elect school governing bodies. Any form of interference by the traditional council was in conflict with the law governing schools. I am of the view that



there are diverse views on the role of traditional leaders in schools. Some traditional leaders did not interfere on school matters while others interfered as explained above. In this study I wished to cite scholars who wrote about laws governing teacher appointments. For example: Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:172) affirm that the SGBs have to propose to the HoD the engagement of teachers at the school as contained in SASA (section 20(i)).

### **The school principals**

I have incorporated the responses of the sampled six principals to answer the very same question based on the conflicting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. The majority of principals were of the view that traditional leaders did not have influence on teacher appointments. The majority of school principals overwhelmingly shared this view. However, one of the principals held a contrasting view to that of his colleagues by stating that traditional leaders had influence on teacher appointments. The majority of principals who held the same view that traditional leaders did not have influence said the following:

*“The traditional leaders do not have any role; since the SGBs are in charge on matters of teacher appointments and if they are not capable they normally appoint a panel from different schools; and so traditional leaders never had any role in the appointments.”*

Based on these interviews held with principals one can deduce that traditional leaders were represented by school governing bodies at schools and these governing bodies had to give feedback to the traditional councils on what had transpired. Furthermore, SGBs are the subjects of the traditional leaders and are elected after every three years to serve in school governing bodies.

However, one principal from the six principals held a different view and stated that the traditional leader interferes in teacher appointments. The interview with the principal revealed that if a local teacher is not appointed the relationship between the school and the traditional leader becomes sour.

Here is what the principal said:

*Traditional leaders instruct the SGB during teacher appointments to prioritise local people and those people must be considered for appointment.*

This interview revealed a deep mistrust between the traditional leader and the school. The rationale behind this interference has deepened to such extent that those even informal jobs known as 'piece jobs' were preserved for local people who were preferred by the traditional leader. All the five principals indicated that traditional leaders came into their schools upon invitation in cases where they were having farewell functions or were dealing with unresolved disputes. I hold the view that these interviews held with principals revealed that traditional leaders were excluded by law on matters of school governance. Even in light of these circumstances, traditional leaders are aware about their exclusion by law on teacher appointments.

The above information is confirmed by Bagarette (2011:223) who said power was decentralised from the central government to schools; with decisions being taken by School Governing Bodies on teacher appointments. Surprisingly, the majority of scholars agree with the participants that traditional leaders do not have influence on teacher appointments despite the amount of power they wield in their communities. This argument was supported by the concepts-based power theory of (Easton, 1953). In this theory, the role players (traditional leaders) utilise secret authority or influence to determine which subjects need decisions (and which do not), and who can access the decision-making arena. In this context, traditional leaders through community interest groups influence SGBs behind the scene to recommend local teachers for promotional posts.

Community interest groups strive to ensure that principals are appointed from the pool of local teachers based on locality no matter what their competency is. It is also the manipulation of power. Furthermore; in manipulation of power as mentioned in concept-based power theory, one actor can persuade another to act contrary to his own interests, or shape the interests of the opposition so that they are no longer in conflict. Power is therefore the capacity to modify the observation and first choice of the opponent so that they abide by the wishes of main role player. In this context, traditional leaders manipulate SGBs to appoint 'son of the soil' against what is contained in SASA. Mbokazi (2015:5) affirms that despite the absence of a clear-cut

legislative framework around the role of traditional leaders in school governance, traditional leaders still exert considerable power and authority on the schools within their areas of jurisdiction.

### **The Traditional Councillors**

The next participants I interviewed on the same theme of the contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments were the traditional councillors. All traditional councillors interviewed in this study expressed their opinions that traditional leaders did not have influence on teacher appointments. All of them held the view that school governing bodies; are the sub-committees of their traditional councils. All school governing bodies according to data presented in this study; had to give reports to traditional councils on what had transpired at their respective schools.

As some of the traditional councillors remarked below:

*In short, we can just take it that as we have elected the SGB; we assume that the SGB is the eye of the community.*

This study found that traditional councils held the view that traditional leaders are not the employers of teachers. Teachers are recommended by SGBs; informed by legislative framework dealing with teacher appointments. I hold the view that teacher appointment is not the terrain of traditional leaders. It is quite interesting to hear that traditional councillors denounced nepotism and corruption on the part of teachers who wanted to influence their appointments at local schools.

The appointment of staff is a matter of agreement between the SGB and union representatives who operate as eyewitnesses in the interviewing procedure as contained in EEA of 1998 section 6. The same process is followed in staff promotion. Van Wyk (2005:52) affirms that the fulfilment of these role players is intended to confirm both the precision and democratisation of the interviewing procedure and to make sure that the candidates of the post are dealt with in just, fair and reasonable way.

## Traditional leaders

Traditional leaders were interviewed based on the same question asked previously on the contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments. However, permission was sought from the traditional councils before I could proceed to interview them. The majority of traditional leaders held the view that they do not interfere with the appointment of teachers except one who differed from the majority. It appeared that traditional leaders; wanted to see quality education at their schools. They have denounced any form of influence that might compromise the desired quality education.

The two traditional leaders of the three had this to say:

*The influence is not right because the school will be dysfunctional and the chosen teacher will be saying no one can say anything to me because I have been brought here by the traditional leader. They were appointed based on merits; not because they are the local people.*

In light of the above, voices from traditional leaders concurred with what the previous participants said about them. It means that they do not want to hear or see dysfunctional schools within their jurisdiction in their names. The majority of traditional leaders really want quality education and they do everything in their power to support schools to deliver as expected. Quality education starts with the quality of teachers that the school governing body recommended. I hold the view that schools under the influence of traditional leaders require support from traditional leaders. The motive behind this is very simple; traditional leaders have undisputed power to turn things in their favour. They are the most respected people in their communities.

Heystek (2010:111) affirms that choosing and employing the most competent individual for the precise position is one of the essential starting points of excellence education.

However, one traditional leader held a different view. She said:

*Yes,...I do influence that my subjects be appointed principals in the local schools. However, I also appreciate having teachers from outside my jurisdiction. I think there will be progress”.*

Based on this interview, the researcher holds the view that these traditional leaders differed in their approach as to how quality education could be delivered at their respective schools. The two traditional leaders denounced interference because they wanted quality education and they did not want to be seen interfering in teacher appointments; but they expect their school governing bodies to give full reports on what is happening in their schools. However, one traditional disagreed that; for quality education to be realised; local teachers have to be appointed principals because they know all the children and their parents. The participant hopes that there will be progress. I believe that it is quite clear that the legislative framework and capacity of the candidate were not considered during appointment, which is against the law. I believe that the principal was appointed because she is well known to the traditional leader.

Karodia and Soni (2014:9) affirm that learned South Africans occupying influential posts in big companies must be sincere and confess that, intentionally or else, their engagement in the organisations that they lead have been biased in favour of people from the similar language group, the same geographical source or similar ethnic group.

#### **4.3.2 Challenges of appointing the ‘child of the soil’ in schools**

Community interest groups included local teachers who wanted to be appointed principals at all costs without the necessary capabilities; but based on locality. Community interest groups in the research area were putting pressure on the traditional councils and SGB to appoint the ‘child of the soil’ to promotional posts. Traditional councils and school governing bodies formed part of these pressure groups because they were also representing their communities. These were the legal bodies; and any mistake in abusing their power could cripple the smooth running of schools. A child of the soil is, in the context of this study, someone who applies for promotion to a senior post because they live in that area.

In this study, these structures had established networks with some of the SGBs and community forums to demand the appointment of child of the soil in leadership positions like principals. However, some of the participants denounced this influence because they held the view that the Constitution of South Africa provides that each applicant has the right to be appointed anywhere they like and be treated equally without fear or favour. This argument is supported by section 6 of the EEA of 1998, which states that the appointment of staff is a matter of partnership between the governing body and representatives of the employee organisations who act as observers in the interviewing process.

Van Wyk (2004:52) affirms that the participation of these role players is aimed at confirming both the precision and democratisation of the interviewing procedure and making sure that the candidates for the post are accorded just, reasonable and impartial treatment. Mampane (2008:61) argues that; to ensure that these founding values are not simply empty words on paper, Part2 of the Instrument of Government, which holds the Bill of Rights, 'protects the rights of all people' in the nation, 'confirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom' [Section 7(1)] and states that the State has no choice but to 'value, defend, uphold and fulfil' these rights for all those live in the country [Section 7(2). Beckman and Prinsloo (2009:171) assert that the Statute defends the original rights of everybody in South Africa. This means that it is not wrong for local teachers to be appointed at local schools as long as they meet the requirements of the advertised posts.

There was a conflict of interest displayed by some participants who favoured the appointment of a 'child of the soil' while others desist from influencing such appointment local schools. In this context, the concepts-based power theory by (Easton, 1953) one actor makes a decision for another, or compels another to make a decision, using authority, coercion, persuasion, or force (Zeehandelaar, 2012:22).

Against this backdrop, those who were in favour of the appointment of a 'child of the soil' at local schools tried to persuade traditional leaders to exercise their coercive power to influence the outcome. However, those who did not favour the appointment of a 'child of the soil' believe teachers should be appointed without undue influence of traditional leaders and their appointments had to be based on merit. Furthermore,

schools were expected to be functional and provide quality education; with the right teachers appointed to the correct positions free from undue influence.

### **The SGB chairpersons**

Most of the SGB chairpersons interviewed were of the opinion that under their current leadership there is no pressure from any structure to recommend child of the soil. Some of their views appear below:

*The relationship between the school governance and the traditional council remained cordial.*

*Things are going well between the SGB and the traditional leader and there is no undue influence from our traditional leader.*

*We didn't come across anywhere traditional leaders interfere with the SGB by telling the SGB to employ a local person.*

Based on these responses, the participants revealed that teachers were appointed without any undue influence from any community interest groups; including traditional leaders. The rationale behind the conduct of the majority of communities to disassociate themselves from interfering with school matters was affected by the level of their education because they were aware of pieces of legislation dealing with teacher appointments. The appointment of staff is a matter of relationships among the SGB and union representatives that act as eyewitnesses in the interviewing procedure as contained in section 6 of EEA of 1998.

However, the last two participants held a different view from the majority. They argued that community interest groups were putting pressure on school governing bodies to recommend 'child of the soil' for leadership positions.

These two participants put their arguments as follows:

*The traditional council will insist that there is a local person who must be employed at the school. The 'child of the soil' must be given first priority because he has qualifications like the other candidate.*

*Only community members wanted to influence the child of the soil to be appointed in leadership position; not the traditional leaders. The community hopes that the local person will bring stability because the local person knows these children particularly at secondary school level, because these learners are problematic.*

The two pressure groups revealed two different demands to their governing bodies. The first pressure group stated that among the community there are local teachers who are ready to take over the administration of the schools. This interview revealed that these local teachers have the same qualifications as teachers from outside their area. I am of the view that the pressure group did not reveal exactly what is the underlying problem from their schools and what relief they sought from the Provincial Department of Education; except by putting pressure on their SGBs to recommend local teachers.

The second pressure group focused on the SGB to persuade the local teacher to be appointed principal because of the collapsed discipline. Teachers from outside their area did not do enough with regard to learner discipline. Based on these interviews, I believe that there was a collapse of effective teaching and learning in that area. However, community members were searching for solutions to the problems affecting their schools without knowing what the source of the problem. Phillips (2015:309) affirms that those members of the SGB strived to apply their influence; wherever they could; to employ the 'child of the soil'.

### **The school principals**

I proceeded to pose the same question to principals. Principals were interviewed as both resource persons and panel members. Participants held the view that at their schools; there was no interference of community groups; while some believed that there was interference.

Four from the six principals held the view that there was no interference and responded as follows:



*We never had any situation where a traditional leader or any person from the community was influencing the appointments. We just stood free as a school governing body or as the panel, which is appointed by the SGB.*

*Sometimes influence emerges when some of the SGB members want the son of the soil to be considered. However, we manage to sort it out because we follow policy.*

Based on the above responses, all participants displayed a healthy relationship with community structures. SGBs were given the support to govern their schools without interference. Traditional councils and traditional leaders were invited at their schools when receiving advice from traditional leaders if there were unresolved problems. Van Wyk (2004:52) affirms that it is the duty of the SGB to make proposals on the engagement and endorsement of teachers to the Department.

However, the last two members shared their experiences with me regarding teacher appointments. These two principals held a different view from the above-mentioned four principals.

The two principals of the six had this to say:

*Yes...there is huge influence particularly from the community forums especially when the son of the soil has applied; and if again there is someone who has bribed them; then they will be forced to see that person has gone through as a way of showing how that the bribery has worked.*

*Like in the case of one local school, we went there and the SGB chairperson had his own person and some members of the SGB had also another person. Now we shortlisted; and at the end of the short-listing the chairperson stood up to say...gentlemen, the person we earmarked has been excluded. Actually, we wanted Mr so and so to be shortlisted because he has been at the school for a number of years. We told him it is unfortunate”.*

Participants were influenced by the community groups during teacher appointments and promotions. The first influence was based on the ‘child of the soil’ who was

qualified to be a teacher; and members of the community had put pressure on the SGB for the appointment of such a teacher at the local school. If the principal together with the SGB worked collaboratively; there would be no problem .This suggests that some members of school governing bodies connive with pressure groups by disseminating confidential information to external bodies.

I hold the view that interviews were conducted for the sake of formality. Recommendations were made before even the process of teacher appointment had been started. One of the participants mentioned that if there is no conflict it would seem as if things are done correctly. Cracks could be seen when the SGB is divided.

Heystek (2011:458) confirms that there is, therefore, a strong probability that many of the parent members of the SGB, even with the believed preparation, do not have the required literacy proficiency to examine legislation, and draft guidelines. I agree with the idea that every interview panel members and teacher unions as observers sit under one roof where prescripts of the department were reviewed. Each party in the interview room is reminded about the policy governing teacher appointments. However, as I indicated, policy is not adhered to in particular by SGBs under the influence of pressure groups from the community.

### **The traditional councillors**

The above-mentioned interviews led me to ask traditional councillors the same question on the influence of community interest groups on the appointment of local teachers at local schools. However, all traditional councillors from three traditional councils held the view that any community member who influences the appointment of local teachers without meeting the requirements of the post in the community; undermined their integrity as traditional councillors. They denounced any form of influence in the appointment of local teachers at local schools without meeting the minimum requirements of the post.

These traditional councillors had this to say:

*So it will be very futile and unfair for you to expect to be given special treatment at a local school based on your locality, because you were also given an*

*opportunity elsewhere which is not your local area. If someone has approached the council asking for such influence, remember the person must follow the proper procedure of applying.*

Another participant added:

*“When a post is advertised there are specific requirements. When we talk of a local person; what if locally we don’t have a person who meets the criteria for that particular position; does it mean the position must fall off?”*

*“Again a candidate must qualify in other words he must meet all the requirements needed by the posts not just locality.*

One of the participants added another dimension:

*The SGB came to the traditional council to inform them that they are intending to bring a local person to be the principal of the local secondary school.*

The participants in this study revealed that teachers had visited them to request opportunities to be appointed at local schools. Furthermore, some SGBs reported their satisfaction about the appointment of a local teacher at the local secondary school to the traditional councillors. The manner in which the school governing body reported this appointment has left traditional councillors in limbo. The understanding of departmental prescripts made these young educated traditional councillors to inculcate a culture of respect for the law.

According to Foncha *et al.*, Abongdia (2016: 13) and Mncube & Mafora (2013:13) the process of recruitment must be guided by the simple standards of governing public management protected in Section 195 (1) (a-i) of the RSA constitution (1998). SASA 84 of 1996 Section 20 (8) also emphasises the same values in the RSA Instrument of Government (1996) that the recruitment process must be guided by the following important principles:

- ❖ the capability of the candidate;
- ❖ the rule of fairness;
- ❖ the need to remedy past historical discrimination; and
- ❖ the need for representivity of racial groups.

Mckinsey (2007:16) says that the quality of a school system rests on the quality of its teachers.

### **The traditional leaders**

I asked the same question to the traditional leaders. In this study I indicated that traditional leaders are owners of tribal land on which schools were built. Furthermore, schools were built by them during apartheid rule in South Africa and were named after their foremothers and forefathers.

All traditional leaders were of the view that any interference by any structure, even them; could yield negative results. They reiterated their position in the community that they are neutral people and that they try to accommodate of everyone.

Here traditional leaders responded in this way:

*The influence is not right because the school will be dysfunctional and the chosen teacher will be saying no one can say anything to me because I have been brought by the traditional leader. There was no bribery for the appointments of these local teaches.*

These views of traditional leaders were opposed to undue influence on teacher appointments. However, they reiterated that any appointments have to be based on merit. This holds the view that these pressure groups caught everyone by surprise including traditional leaders.

Mbokazi and Bhengu (2008:12) assert that while land in rural communities is controlled by traditional leaders, in schools the control and administration of property is the responsibility of governing bodies. The influence of traditional leaders on school governance as mentioned earlier is limited to supporting the functionality of the school.

### **4.3.3 Toxic relationship between external bodies and School Governing Bodies**

The School Governing Bodies were tasked to recommend teachers for appointment to the Provincial HoD. However, community interest groups put pressure on the SGBs

to recommend a 'child of the soil' for promotional posts, principal ship posts in particular. This idea has created instability at schools because the policy governing appointments of teachers has been violated.

### **The school governing body chairpersons**

I asked the question to participants in a bid to find out how they understood the relationship between external bodies and School Governing Bodies. The rationale was to find out what was happening at their schools relating to the appointment and promotion of local teachers. It was assumed that school governing bodies were put under pressure by the community interest groups to appoint local teachers (child of the soil). I have developed a keen interest in finding out whether the policy was violated or not during the processes of appointing such local teachers. Chairpersons of school governing bodies were the first to be interviewed.

Almost all the participants held the view that before a post could be filled it has to be advertised. Furthermore, all the participants revealed that all the processes of short listing and interviews have to be adhered to.

Here participants remarked:

*The processes of short-listing and interviews followed in the appointment of teachers. A person who has obtained position one in the interviews is the one who will be appointed.*

*In our school we work according to policy and the traditional leader is not involved on the basis that an applicant is either local or not local. Teacher appointments remain the responsibility of the principal and SGB not the traditional leader.*

These responses revealed that policy was adhered to when it comes to the advertisement of posts. I hold the view that gradually SGBs realised that they must work according to policy. However, one of the participants believed that traditional leaders through traditional councils put pressure on the SGB to recommend the 'child of the soil' without due regard of the law governing the appointment of teachers.

Here the participant had this to say:

*If the son of the soil is not employed, the relationship between the school and traditional council becomes sour. If the school did not employ the son of the soil there will be a conflict between the school and the traditional council.*

In light of the above, it seems as if traditional councillors put unnecessary pressure on the SGB without realising that appointments of teachers should be based on the law. It is against this background that the appointment of teachers is a result of the partnership between principals, teacher unions and SGBs. Van Wyk (2005:52) states that the participation of these parties (teacher unions and SGBs) is aimed at confirming the necessity for precision and democracy in the interviewing procedure and making sure that the candidates for the post are accorded just, reasonable and fair treatment.

### **The school principals**

I proceeded to pose the same question to school principals on their understanding of the relationship between the external bodies and SGBs.

Principals said that:

*Those who will be shortlisted and if a preferred candidate does meet the requirements; then he/she will be allowed to go and prove himself or herself in the interviews and being favoured by short-listing as a way of preventing conflict that might arise.*

*In most cases these community interest groups can interfere at school without the knowledge of traditional council; but sometimes they indirectly go to traditional council to threaten school or principal as if they are taking orders from traditional leader.*

Based on the above, it seems that, if the school did not appoint the child of the soil these community interest groups threaten the school with violence. I hold the view that this toxic relationship has created an environment of fear for the principal and SGBs

to recommend capable candidates. However, this relationship can be described as toxic, and this atmosphere is exacerbated by the SGBs themselves.

Here the participants have shared their experiences with the researcher as follows:

*Sometimes influence emerges when some of the SGB want for the son of the soil to be considered.*

*My experience is when you are called to participate in the appointments or recommendations of a candidate some schools have their preferences. and They will indicate to you that they want so and so they brief you as members of the panel. If there is unity amongst the SGB, usually there no problem, but when the SGB is divided, you get different instructions and we don't know which one to follow because if you follow this one the other group is angered by the decision. Like in the case of one local school, we went there and the SGB chairperson had his own person but some members of the SGB had also another person. Now we shortlisted, at the end of the short-listing the chairperson stood up to say...gentlemen, our person that we earmarked has been excluded.*

I hold the view that some of the SGBs abused their powers to recommend teachers for appointments. Furthermore, the SGB failed to respect the panel it had established and showed little respect for the law dealing with teacher appointments. It was clear that fairness and equal treatment were ignored and that corruption and nepotism were the order of the day. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:181) insist that the participation of parents is central in the advertising of teaching posts, and also the hunt for and interviewing of good applicants, as well as in the detection of the true individual for each post.

### **The traditional councillors**

Traditional councillors have acknowledged that some local teachers came to them and tried to influence their appointment at local schools. However, they denied any form of undue influence on teacher appointments.

One participant responded as follows:

*Let me put this very straight. We have a local gentleman who wanted to be the principal of a local school. We told him that it is impossible; the panellists will sort out the applications according to merits. This local gentleman visited us at home and tried to influence us and now he is the principal elsewhere.*

In light of the above, the researcher holds the view that some teachers are instigators of pressure groups in schools. They have been trusted by members of the community and they have abused that respect given to them. This has been made worse by the low level of education by the majority of SGBs and members of the traditional councils. However, some traditional councillors and SGBs understand the procedures relating to how teachers are appointed. In the past a SADTU tag was used by these teachers to create mayhem at schools for their enforced appointments. SADTU today is under pressure because of power abuse and some teachers have realised that their doors have been closed to be appointed in the promotional posts, and that is why they have tried to influence the SGBs and traditional councils.

Mthiyane *et al.*, (2014:299) argue that manipulation of the recruitment processes by both the SGBs and teacher unions (mainly SADTU) has had detrimental results for the schools. Incompetence among SGB members combined with interference by teacher unions; has compromised the efficiency and integrity of the recruitment processes. In certain instances, some people have even lost their lives Mthiyane *et al.*, (2014:299).

### **The traditional leaders**

I continued to hear how traditional leaders view the toxic relationship between external bodies and the SGB. The majority of these traditional leaders held the view that appointments of teachers and processes were not their terrain. They believe that SGBs were tasked to govern schools by law and traditional leaders do not fit anywhere there.

They responded as follows:



*I don't influence appointments of teachers. What would happen if the chosen teacher is not doing what is expected of him/her? Then, the principal will be saying that your chosen teacher is not cooperating.*

*I hear a rumour saying that if these local people are appointed at the local schools, it is because there is an influence of traditional leaders. No...there is no influence of traditional leaders and the appointments of these local teachers have been based on merit. There is no bribe for the appointments of these local people.*

However, one of the traditional leaders states how she had influenced the appointment of the principal in one school under her jurisdiction. The reason given was that she wanted development and she hoped that this local principal would deliver it. What would happen if the trusted principal could not deliver as expected?

Traditional leader had this to say:

*I do influence that my subjects be appointed principals in the local schools.*

I hold the view that there is a conflict of interests; particularly with regard to principal appointments. The situation was complicated by local teachers who wanted to be appointed as local school principals. The reasons given are different because some cited poor discipline at their schools and those local teachers could be the solution if they could be appointed principals; while others hold the view that they have enough teachers who could be appointed principals; on the basis that as communities they have produced their own.

Van Wyk (2007:163) affirms that SGBs might select their loved ones and do not think about the capability of educators in rural communities. Moorosi (2010:554) supports Van Wyk indicates that expressions such as 'son of the soil' or 'local breed' take precedence in these occurrences where they want to decide in time, whom they wish for.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

This study aimed to explore the influence of traditional leaders on the teacher appointments. This was done by looking carefully at the processes of appointment and promotion of teachers. The data presentation in this study was based on a series of interviews the researcher held with the participants. All themes discussed emerged from the participants' responses.

Some of the participants stressed that traditional leaders were not involved in the influence of teacher appointments. The participants highlighted that; even though traditional leaders own the tribal land on which schools were built, they denied any form of undue influence on teacher appointments. They highlighted that school governing bodies are responsible for recommending teachers for appointments to the HoD by law.

What is more interesting is that participants were of the view that local teachers and some SGBs are part of pressure groups exerting pressure on schools to appoint local teachers. The participants held the view that teachers should be appointed based on merit. They are convinced that legislative framework dealing with teacher appointments should be adhered to by all stakeholders.

# CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, data was collected by interviewing chairpersons of SGBs, principals of schools, traditional leaders and traditional councils. Traditional leaders and their councils play a significant role in the development of those people in their area of jurisdiction. Their involvement in the education and wellbeing of their communities is immense. However, they should not interfere in the professional management and governance in the schools. Teachers and school principals have been trained to perform their duties efficiently. They will communicate their need for assistance to the relevant authorities.

The qualitative data, collected through interviews, was a major technique in determining whether the research questions explained in Chapter 1 would be realised. An analysis of collected data by transcribing and interpreting participants' responses was aimed at serving the purpose of this research. The last stage was about discussing themes based on the key concepts emanating from the conceptual framework. This chapter will present a synopsis of the results, and suggestions and the conclusion of the research. A determination will be made as to whether research questions have been responded to.

## 5.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at exploring the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in rural schools. Traditional leaders and their councils have played an important role in building schools within their jurisdiction called community schools from their pockets. This made the apartheid government to subsidise those schools in a fund known as Rand for Rand. Those schools were named after the forebears of the traditional leaders and were built on their trust land. This made traditional leaders more powerful and encourage them to think that they could even influence the appointment of teachers to promotional posts. I argued that schools were built by traditional leaders;

but governance of schools was placed in the hands of the SGBs by law. The function of SGBs amongst others is to recommend teachers for appointments to the Provincial HoD. Traditional leaders have been excluded in all pieces of legislation governing appointments of teachers. This argument was confirmed by the traditional leaders themselves during the collection of data they view SGBs as being their subcommittees of traditional councils, and are expected to give an annual report to the traditional councils. It is against this background that SGBs were not imposed but elected by parents of the learners attending schools.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative research approach because I met the participants face to face at their research sites. Pacho (2015:44) and (Mohajan, 2018:2) confirm that the qualitative method was suitable for this research because it is “classically used to answer questions about the multifaceted nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of unfolding and accepting the experiences from the participants’ point of analysis”. In this study, I intended to explore the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointment in Limpopo rural schools. The participants were met and asked for their understanding about the role of traditional leaders on school governance. This was a complex activity because I had to seek traditional councillors to mediate the meeting with the traditional leaders. Mohajan (2018:2) affirms that qualitative researchers are interested in people’s beliefs, experience, and meaning systems from the perspective of the people.

I started to design a research plan to conduct my study by collecting data from more than one research site. In this context, this study employed multiple case study. Gustafsson (2017:9) endorses this idea by stating that in a multiple case study the researcher follows multiple cases in order to comprehend the comparison and discrepancies among the cases. I visited three primary schools and three secondary schools as well three traditional councils with the aim of generating thick and strong evidence connected to the research topic under study. It is against this background that multiple case studies allow a wider discovering of theoretical evolution and research questions (Gustafsson, 2017:9).

## **5.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL DATA**

Based on the interview findings emanating from the previous chapter under the following themes, I intended to provide a brief summary of what was found to be significant. At later stage, these will be linked to the research questions:

### **5.4.1 Contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments**

**Key finding:** An overwhelming majority of participants stated that traditional leaders did not have influence on teacher appointments in rural areas; even though the schools were built on their tribal land. However, some participants confirmed that such influence is present.

### **5.4.2 Challenges of appointing the child of the soil in schools**

**Key finding:** Community interest groups exert pressure on School Governing Bodies and traditional councils to appoint local teachers. These community interest groups are comprised of local teachers and some members of SGBs and traditional councillors, without the knowledge of traditional leaders.

### **5.4.3 Toxic relationship between external bodies and the School Governing Bodies**

**Key finding:** School Governing Bodies have a tendency to violate the law when dealing with teacher appointments and they fail to respect the panels they have established. However, if the child of the soil is not appointed, the traditional council will threaten the school principals and there will be sour relationship between the school and the traditional council.

## **5.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE REVIEW**

In Chapter 2, Sabata (2008:1) asserts that during the apartheid period traditional authorities were directly involved in schooling and they were part of school governance, working hand in glove with school communities. they were part of school committees, working together with school communities. This relationship was redefined in 1994 and consequently traditional authorities were excluded from interfering from school (Sebata: 2008:1). It appears that the role of traditional leaders

does not feature in any law governing appointments of teachers in the new democratic dispensation.

Mbokazi (2015:2) affirms that traditional leaders have a history of interacting with the structures that govern schools and this could be traced from the Bantu Education era to the era of democracy in South Africa. The author explains that, in the 1940s numbers of 'tribal schools' were established through money raised within chiefdoms. However, governance of schools and recommendations of teacher's appointments became the responsibility of SGBs.

It is against this background that Phillips (2015:311) explains how traditional leaders and their representatives have become more sympathetic towards and interested in schools, as some of them had the chance of being educated themselves. They, therefore, believe they have ownership of these schools. Data collected revealed that this notion made the child of the soil believes that he/she could unduly influence community interest groups to put pressure on SGBs to appoint him/her based on locality. This idea is supported by Prinsloo (2006:363), who says that the SGB has to propose to the HoD the appointment of teachers at the school.

The engagements of teachers become the responsibility of SGBs subject to the EEA (Act No. 76 of 1998) and the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), as provided in SASA section 20(i). The principal must call a meeting of the SGB to inform them about the advertised post of the school. According to ELRC (2008:3), the principal may be a resource person or observer as the departmental representative. The principal together with SGBs must advertise those posts which are available at the school. They are in good position to know the curricular needs of the school. Teacher unions are invited as observers not as active participants during the processes of interviews and short-listing.

Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:181) state that parental involvement is vital in the advertising of teaching posts, and the hunt for and interviewing of good applicants, as well as in the identifying of the right person for each post. Furthermore, Heystek (2010:111) agrees with the previous authors on how the selection and appointment

the best qualified person for the specific post serves as a starting point of quality education.

## **5.6 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS EMANATING FROM THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this section, I hoped to answer the under-mentioned research questions based on the primary sources and secondary sources. In this context, the primary sources involved the literature review from different books, articles and journals, while secondary sources involved data collected through interviews held with the participants. These research questions are as follows:

- ❖ To what extent do traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural schools?
- ❖ How do School Governing Bodies make recommendations on teacher appointments in schools?
- ❖ Which factors influence teacher appointment in schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges facing SGBs concerning teacher appointments in selected rural schools?

### **5.6.1 What extent do traditional leaders influence teacher appointments in rural schools?**

Initially, I argued that traditional leaders do have influence on teacher appointments in rural schools. My belief was strengthened by the power traditional leaders have on rural communities. Furthermore, I hold the view that schools were built on the trust land of traditional leaders, and traditional leaders played a pivotal role in building such schools and later named after their forebears. Having said that, Mbokazi (2015:50) affirms that in the 1940s, traditional leaders played an important role in the establishment of schools in order to provide education for tribal communities.

However, my belief was weakened by overwhelming responses from the participants when they said that traditional leaders do not have influence on teacher appointments. The majority of the participants hold the view that the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments would be bad for the schools under their jurisdiction. However, the participants made mention of the expansion of community interest

groups that exert pressure on the SGBs to recommend the 'son of the soil'. Furthermore, these community interest groups operate without the knowledge of traditional leaders. The responses made by the participants further indicate that traditional leaders are supposed to take part impartially in the implementation of their responsibilities, which made them try to accommodate the wishes of everyone.

This belief exonerates traditional leaders of interfering with schools when recommendations are made. I concur with the participants that traditional leaders do not have influence on teacher appointments, because traditional leaders themselves are aware of the responsibilities of the SGBs on school governance. Traditional leaders are aware that recommendation of teachers rests in the hands of the SGBs.

### **5.6.2 How do School Governing Bodies make recommendations on teacher appointments in schools?**

Section 20(1)(i) of SASA contains a crucial staff appointment provision. It provides that SGBs must recommend, to the provincial HoD, the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Educators Employment Act NO.76 of 1998, (EEA). Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:173) affirm that SGBs exercise the functions granted to them in terms of the devolution of authority to the centres of learning of the communities.

In light of the above, this provision of the Act puts the SGB in a powerful position to govern schools. Likewise, community interest groups are aware of the powers of SGBs concerning teacher appointments. It is against this background that, for community interest groups to succeed in their demands for local teachers to be appointed, they have to work hand in glove with the SGBs. It now becomes obvious that, the responses from the participants revealed that traditional leaders do not want to interfere at schools, because the traditional leaders were represented by the SGBs.

### **5.6.3 Factors involved in teacher appointments**

Factors involved in teacher appointments are contained in PAM of 1998 (Personnel Administrative Measures). The Act provides that teacher unions should be included in the appointment and promotions of teachers in Chapter B of Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM, 1998:77), (Republic of South Africa 1998). In this policy, the union



representatives are required to be eyewitnesses in the procedure of short listing, interviews and the ranking of the favourite applicants in terms of their position on the list. These processes of short-listing and interviews were known to the community interest groups and traditional leaders.

The power to recommend teachers was bestowed upon the shoulders of the SGBs of each school. Additionally, Van Wyk (2005:52) states that, the contribution of these parties is intended at confirming both the precision and democratisation of the interviewing procedure and to make sure that the candidates for the position are accorded just, reasonable and impartial treatment.

#### **5.6.4 Challenges facing SGBs in rural schools on teacher appointments**

These challenges emanate from two aspects which are the poor level of SGBs' educational level and tribalism. The first aspect which is poor level of education makes the SGBs vulnerable to being easily manipulated by interest groups concerning promotional posts. This makes SGBs struggle to constitute the panels needed to carry out interviews. It is against this background that they sought assistance from principals of schools to serve on their panels for interviews. Mthiyane *et al.*, (2014:299) argue that manipulation of the recruitment processes by both the SGBs and teacher unions (mainly SADTU) has had detrimental results for schools. Incompetence among SGB members, combined with interference by teacher unions has compromised the efficiency and integrity of the recruitment processes. In certain instances, some people have even lost their lives.

The second aspect which is tribalism has opened the doors for community interest groups to force local teachers who are incompetent to be appointed on promotional posts. The overwhelming majority of the participants hold the view that the community interest groups argue that, locally, there are teachers who could do better for the local schools. Local teachers would be able to conduct Saturday studies, and attend meetings over weekends and instil discipline because they know the majority of the learners. In addition, they could visit their pupils in case learners are misbehaving. All these things are done without due regard of the law governing teacher appointments and become serious challenges for SGBs in running their schools efficiently.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The objectivity and fairness of teacher appointments remain the pillars of Constitutional democracy where people have a choice of movement in the country of their birth. The processes of appointment of teachers need to be fair and objective. It has two significant impacts: it ensures that suitable teachers will be appointed in the appropriate promotional post at the right time, based on skills, knowledge, and credentials. It also ensures that teachers' rights are not infringed upon. For the process to be conducted effectively and efficiently, other role players like teacher unions, and principal in terms of the law are urged to assist to the SGBs.

The following recommendations are made in line with the research findings:

### **5.7.1 Recommendation no1: Contrasting views related to the influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments**

By law SGBs are entrusted with the duty and responsibility of recommending teachers for appointment and promotion. Traditional leaders should have representatives on the SGB with an ex-officio status. The researcher recommends that SGBs and representatives of traditional leaders should be trained concerning policies dealing with the appointment of teachers. This will ensure that all role players will observe the law governing teacher appointments.

### **5.7.2 Recommendation no 2: Challenges of appointing the child of the soil in schools**

The power to recommend teachers by SGBs should be limited to post level 1 and, from post level 2 to principal-ship, positions officials from the district office have to be involved. This will eliminate undue influence from community interest groups.

### **5.7.3 Recommendation no 3: Toxic relationship between external bodies and School Governing Bodies**

An external body from head office should be allowed to run the process in partnership with parent members of SGBs only as observers. This will eliminate the unhealthy relationship between the SGB and the traditional councils.

## **5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Qualitative studies are not permitted to make any generalisations based on their research findings. The study covers only three traditional leaders and their councils, three principals and their chairpersons. I acknowledged this as a limitation in this study. It would be ideal for future researchers to replicate this study in other contexts, focusing on how pieces of legislation dealing with teacher appointments could be amended to reduce the undue influence of community interest groups in rural schools.

In addition, to the consideration of the above undue influences, researchers should investigate further as to how conditions in rural schools can be improved to level the playing field for potential candidates to contest without an hindrance of community interest groups on promotional posts. Based on the strong influence of these groups concerning decisions that the SGBs made regarding short listing, I would recommend that future researchers investigate the extent to which these inhibit equity and representivity in rural schools under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. Should these researchers reach the same conclusions, I hold the view that generalisation might be possible.

## **5.9 CONCLUSIONS**

The above discussions point to a conflict of interest concerning teacher appointments by community interest groups. The appointment of an official external body to conduct the processes of interviews from head office, and in partnership with parent components of SGBs only will eliminate any undue influence and will open equal opportunities for all candidates to be appointed. This will ensure equal treatment to all deserving candidates. However, community interest groups promote tribalism through the idea of the 'son of the soil'. Due regard for the law governing teacher appointments has sometimes been undermined and incompetent teachers have been appointed based on locality which is unconstitutional. There are teachers whose leadership capacity was sidelined due to being 'outsiders' and this is unacceptable. The quality of teacher who could make good principals has been side-lined because they are not locals. Quality education envisaged has been compromised by the poor behaviour of community interest groups. Traditional leaders have disassociated themselves with

any form of undue influence because they expect their schools to be productive and functional with the potential to serve their communities diligently.

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# ANNEXURES

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## Annexure 1

### The HoD

### Limpopo Provincial Department of Education



Mr. Makgati DC

C/O HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (HOD)

Integrated Planning, Research and Reporting

Department of Education: Limpopo Province

Private Bag X9489

POLOKWANE

0700

### Re: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I, Ramontsha ND, a Master's degree at University of Pretoria, Student No:**96182475** would like to request the Department to grant me permission to conduct research at schools of Limpopo. My research topic: **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools.**

With your kind permission, the interview will be tape recorded for accurate collection of data. You are also assured of confidentiality. The participants and schools will be kept in password-protected device and locked in an office cupboard. There are no risks anticipated.. Should you require further information, please feel free to contact me at **0826364994** or [ramskobodi@gmail.com](mailto:ramskobodi@gmail.com).

I will be happy if my request can be considered.

Yours truly

Ramontsha ND



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION**

Ref: 2/2/2      Enq: MC Makola PhD      Tel No: 015 290 9448      E-mail: [MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za)

Ramontsha ND  
P O Box 184  
Steelpoort  
1133

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

---

1. The above bears reference.

The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS ON PRINCIPALS APPOINTMENT IN LIMPOPO RURAL SCHOOLS."**

2. The following conditions should be considered:
- 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
  - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: RAMONTSHA ND

CONFIDENTIAL

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

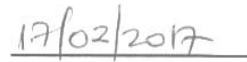
***The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!***

- 4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
- 5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



**Ms NB Mutheiwana**  
**Head of Department**



**Date**



## Annexure 2

### The principal



### LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH

Dear Principal

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in my research. I am a master's degree student at the University of Pretoria with a topic entitled: **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools**. I purposefully identified you as a participant because of the value you will add to my research.

The research will enable the principals to be pro-active in exploring partnerships with local traditional leaders on matters affecting their schools. The role of the principals will be important in interacting with the community structures like traditional leaders. The appointment of incompetent teachers on promotional posts affects the quality of education in rural areas. In this interview I would like to hear your views on this topic.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The discussion will take approximately 60 minutes. You may decline to respond to any of questions in the interview. You may furthermore withdraw from this exercise at any time without negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be tape recorded for accurate collection of data. You are also assured of confidentiality. Your name, and that of your school, will not appear anywhere to discredit you. Data collected will be kept in password-protected device and locked in an office cupboard. There are no risks anticipated.

If you agree to be part of the study, I request you to sign a consent form. Should you require further information, please feel free to contact me at 0826364994 or [ramskobodi@gmail.com](mailto:ramskobodi@gmail.com).

**CONSENT LETTER**

I, .....(name and surname), agree/ do not agree, to participate in research. I have understood the explanation given to me about this research, and that I can withdraw any time if I wish to discontinue with the interview.

Signature:.....Date.....

Researcher 's signature:.....Date:.....

## Annexure 3

### The SGB chairperson



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA  
Faculty of Education

PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH

### Dear SGB Chairperson

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in my research. I am a master's degree student at the University of Pretoria with a topic entitled: **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools**. I purposefully identified you as a participant because of the value you will add to my research.

The research will enable the SGB chairperson to be pro-active in recommending competent candidates for promotional posts. The role of the SGB will be important in interacting with the community structures like traditional leaders. Appointment of incompetent teachers to promotional posts affects quality of education in rural areas. In this interview I would like to hear your views on this topic.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The discussion will take approximately 60 minutes. You may decline to respond to any of questions in the interview. You may furthermore withdraw from this exercise at any time without negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be tape recorded for accurate collection of data. You are also assured of confidentiality. Your name, and that of your school, will not appear anywhere to discredit you. Data collected will be kept in password-protected device and locked in an office cupboard. There are no risks anticipated.

If you agree to be part of the study, I request you to sign a consent form. Should you require further information, please feel free to contact me at 0826364994 or [ramskobodi@gmail.com](mailto:ramskobodi@gmail.com).

**CONSENT LETTER**

I, .....(name and surname), agree/ do not agree, to participate in research. I have understood the explanation given to me about this research, and that I can withdraw any time if I wish to discontinue with the interview.

Signature:.....Date.....

Researcher's signature:.....Date:.....

## Annexure 4

### Traditional councillors



### LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH

#### Dear Traditional council

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in my research. I am a master's degree student at the University of Pretoria with a topic entitled: **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools**. I purposefully identified you as a participant because of the value you will add to my research.

The recommendation of teachers to promotional posts in schools is placed in the hands of school governing body in South Africa. However, this power of SGBs has been contested by other stakeholders having power in schools and communities such as traditional leaders. Some research has been done on the influence of traditional leaders in school governance in South Africa and other African Countries like Ghana and Zimbabwe, but we hope to find out what influence do traditional leaders have on teacher appointments in rural schools. In this interview I would like to hear your views on this topic.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The discussion will take approximately 60 minutes. You may decline to respond to any of questions in the interview. You may furthermore withdraw from this exercise at any time without negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be tape recorded for accurate collection of data. You are also assured of confidentiality. Your name, and that of your traditional council, will not appear anywhere to discredit you. Data collected will be kept in password-protected device and locked in an office cupboard. There are no risks anticipated.

If you agree to be part of the study, I request you to sign a consent form. Should you require further information, please feel free to contact me at 0826364994 or [ramskobodi@gmail.com](mailto:ramskobodi@gmail.com).

**CONSENT LETTER**

I, .....(name and surname), agree/ do not agree, to participate in research. I have understood the explanation given to me about this research, and that I can withdraw any time if I wish to discontinue with the interview.

Signature:.....Date.....

Researcher' s signature:..... Date:.....

## Annexure 5

### Traditional leader



### LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH

#### Dear Traditional Leader

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in my research. I am a master's degree student at the University of Pretoria with a topic entitled: **The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools**. I purposefully identified you as a participant because of the value you will add to my research.

The recommendation of teachers to promotional posts in schools is placed in the hands of school governing body in South Africa. However, this power of SGBs has been contested by other stakeholders having power in schools and communities such as traditional leaders. Some research has been done on the influence of traditional leaders in school governance in South Africa and other African Countries like Ghana and Zimbabwe, but we hope to find out what influence do traditional leaders have on teacher appointments in rural schools. In this interview I would like to hear your views on this topic.

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**CONSENT LETTER**

I, .....(name and surname), agree/ do not agree, to participate in research. I have understood the explanation given to me about this research, and that I can withdraw any time if I wish to discontinue with the interview.

Signature:.....Date.....

Researcher's signature:.....Date:.....



## **Annexure 6**

### **Interview protocol for the participants**

**Title: The influence of traditional leaders on teacher appointments in Limpopo rural schools**

**Student: Ramontsha ND (96182475)**

**MEd Degree**

**Department: Education Management and Policy Studies**

**Interview Protocol**

**SCHOOLS and TRADITIONAL COUNCILS**

#### **A. Semi-structured interview questions with the SGB**

1. What is your perception of your role as SGB chairperson at this school?
2. What are the main functions of SGBs?
3. Are there any traditional leaders involved in governance matters?
4. If yes, describe how they became involved in matters relating to school governance.
5. Have you ever advertised teacher posts for the school during your tenure as SGB members?
6. Have you ever advertised promotion posts for the school?
7. Were traditional leaders ever involved in teacher appointments?
8. Do you think they have an influence in your recommendations for promotional posts?
9. What happens after recommendations concerning teacher appointments/ promotions are completed?
10. How do you communicate with traditional leaders in matters of school governance?

## **B. Semi-structured interviews with Principals**

1. How long have you been the principal of the school?
2. Have you ever advertised teaching posts (both initial and promotional)?
3. What is your role in teacher appointments/ promotions?
4. What do you know about the relationship between the SGB and traditional leaders?
5. What influence do traditional leaders have on school governance, if any?
6. What role do traditional leaders play in teacher appointments/promotions?

## **C. Focus group interviews for Traditional Councils**

1. How long have you been a member of the traditional council?
2. How would you describe your role in local school governance?
3. What is your relationship with the SGBs in the area?
4. Do you know of any teaching posts advertised in the schools around here (in the past three years)?
5. Have you or the Traditional Leader participated in their appointment?
6. Do you give me permission to discuss teacher appointments/promotions with the Traditional Leaders?

## **D. Focus group interviews for Traditional Councils**

1. How long have you been a member of the traditional council?
2. How would you describe your role in local school governance?
3. What is your relationship with the SGBs in the area?
4. Do you know of any teaching posts advertised in the schools around here (in the past three years)?
5. Have you or the Traditional Leader participated in their appointment?
6. Do you give me permission to discuss teacher appointments/promotions with the Traditional Leaders?

#### **D. Semi-structured interviews for Traditional leaders (Magoshi)**

1. How long have you been a Traditional Leader in this community?
2. How many schools have been built under your jurisdiction?
3. Have the schools been built on tribal trust land?
4. How often are you invited to the SGB meetings?
5. How have you participated in school governance matters?
6. What is your view of traditional leaders influencing teacher appointments?
7. Why do you think this influence happens?
8. Have you been upon called to resolve conflicts regarding teacher appointments/ promotions?
9. How can the relationship between the school and traditional leaders be improved?

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