

**SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN
LIMPOPO'S RURAL SCHOOLS:
ARE THE KEY ROLE PLAYERS SINGING FROM THE
SAME LEGISLATIVE BOOK?**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Makopane Jeremiah Marodi, declare that this thesis is my own work. It is submitted for a Masters' degree at the University of Pretoria. I have not previously submitted this thesis for a degree at any university.

Signature: _____

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SUMMARY

This study investigates the nature of the conflict that exists in rural schools in Limpopo, particularly as it relates to the relationship between school governance and school management. Previous studies have alluded to a troubled relationship between governance and management in schools across South Africa.

New legislation was introduced in education after 1994, and it brought about a shift in responsibility by trying to distinguish between school governance and school management. Instead of bringing clarity concerning roles for governance and management, the legislation seems to have created confusion between the two, as can be seen in how they interact. The study looks at the possible causes of the conflict that exists between the two key role players within the school (i.e., the SGB chairperson and the principal).

The study used a phenomenological case study, where respondents were allowed to express their lived experiences. In-depth interviews were used to gather data from four SGB chairpersons and four school principals from four districts in Limpopo. These respondents were chosen on the basis of their experiences in conflict situations at their respective schools.

The analysis of the data and the interpretation of the findings pointed out to the following possible causes of conflict between the two key role players: (a) one key role player plays the role that is supposed to be played by another key role player; (b) one key role player fails to follow procedure; and (c) the existence in some instances of personality clashes between the two key role players.

KEY WORDS

Governance

Management

Conflict

School governing body

School principal

Policy

Phenomenological case study

Financial management

School governance legislation

School management legislation

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and overview

Prior to the introduction of the South African Schools Act (SASA, Act 84 of 1996), principals used to wield an insurmountable amount of power and influence, and the functions that they performed were somewhat unlimited, and without a legal basis (Beckmann, 2000). They were able, for instance, to determine unilaterally the amount that parents could pay as school fees (Bush and Heystek, 2003). Basically, school governance was in the hands of 'school committees' which, as Mabasa and Themane (2002) contend, were dominated by school principals. Most of the decisions taken by these School Committees were largely influenced by the principals, and therefore "undemocratic and exclusionary" (Mabasa and Themane, 2002: 112).

These school committees consisted of parent representatives, and had limited decision-making powers. However, they had influence over the appointment and dismissal of educators (DoE, 2004). The principals had a large influence on who could be hired at the schools. They used the low level of literacy on the part of the School Committee members (most of whom were parents) as a loop hole which they could use to put themselves 'in charge' (Van Wyk, 2004: 53). This resulted in school principals having more impetus in the activities of the School Committees, more especially in decision making. Generally, school principals by then regarded themselves as the final authority in matters of management at school level, and the buck stopped with them. This was made possible by the absence of the relevant legislation that might have helped to curb their powers.

After the introduction of SASA, things began taking a new shape. The Act ensured that some of the powers that the principals enjoyed were taken away from them so that they could be shared between the school principals and the

School Governing Bodies (SGBs) which became legally constituted and therefore, legally recognised. This was in line with the new democratic changes which were being introduced in the country after the new democratic dispensation was ushered in. The introduction of this Act was very crucial as it helped to make a distinction between school management (which is the responsibility of the School Management Team (SMT), of which the school principal is an integral part) and school governance (which is the responsibility of the SGB, the chairperson of which is a key element), in an effort to bring harmony between the two functions.

The process of transforming the education system in South Africa brought about a number of changes into education. The introduction of SASA necessitated the existence of SGBs, which have to work according to certain guidelines prescribed by the Act. Some of these new roles assumed by the SGB would inevitably be those that were previously played by the principals. This has led to a situation where the SGB ends up performing some of the functions allocated to the SMT, and the SMT performing those functions allocated to the SGB, which leads to confusion as far as the running of the school is concerned. This problem, as Robinson *et al.* (2003) put it, can be attributed to the confused governance framework in which the principal is both an SMT member and an SGB member.

1.2 Problem statement

In a number of schools in Limpopo Province there is a serious problem revolving around the issue of school governance. In some schools there has been conflict between school management and school governance, caused by the perception on the principals' part that the SGBs were encroaching on management territory. And in other schools the SGBs were in conflict with the principals because of their understanding that the principals were performing roles that fell under their jurisdiction. In one school a chaotic situation erupted and academic activities were temporarily halted because the SGB wanted to fire the principal.

This situation is compounded by the fact that in most instances SGB training regarding the powers given to them and the role that they have to play is hardly provided to newly elected SGB members, or where it is provided, this is not effectively done (Bush and Heystek, 2003).

Given this scenario, we have to find out the principals' and SGB chairpersons' understandings of their roles and powers vis-à-vis management and governance practices in schools, and also the extent to which these understandings resonate with policy as stipulated in SASA and other relevant legislation such as the National Education Policy Act (NEPA, Act 27 of 1996).

1.3 Rationale for the study

There have been a number of studies which have been conducted in this broad field of school management and governance. However, the current study was different from previous studies in the following respects:

- Whereas previous studies focussed on the governance structure alone (i.e. the SGB), this study focuses on both governance and management structures.
- With regard to the previous studies, even where the focus was on both structures, all members of the SGB and the principal or all parent governors and the principal were involved in the studies. In the current study the major focus is only on the key role players (i.e., the school principal and the SGB chairperson).
- Previous studies tried to probe the perceptions of a variety of stakeholders on governance and management. The current study tries to probe the key role players' own understandings of governance and management (hence the phenomenological research tradition).
- None of the previous studies done focused specifically on schools which have had problems of conflict. This study focuses on schools which have experienced the phenomenon (conflict) in the past (hence the purposive sampling).

- Most of the previous studies focused on urban settings, although some of them tried to focus on the rural setting. This study focuses entirely on the rural setting, which has been under-studied.
- On the issue of methodology, most previous studies used large sample sizes (e.g. finding out perceptions of different stakeholders). This study uses only a small sample (i.e., 4 schools = 8 participants). This allowed for an in-depth study of the phenomenon in question.

1.4 Aims of the study

It was the aim of this research project to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the nature of the relationship between school management and school governance.
- To probe the extent to which principals and SGB chairpersons understand their roles and powers in so far as they pertain to issues of management and governance in schools.
- To try and find out the extent to which these understandings resonate with policy as stipulated in SASA and other relevant legislation such as the NEPA.

1.5 Research questions

The proposed study was guided by the following critical question:

“What are principals’ and SGB chairpersons’ understandings of their roles and powers in relation to how they deal with issues of management and governance in schools?”

The above question gives rise to the following sub-questions:

- To what extent do these principals’ and SGB chairpersons’ understandings of their roles and powers resonate with policy as stipulated in SASA and other relevant pieces of legislation such as NEPA?

- What is the source of the conflict that is a perennial characteristic of the relationship between school management and school governance in most schools?
- What guidelines could be offered to school governors to improve and consolidate service delivery in issues related to school governance?

1.6 Theoretical framework

My research was based on the theory of decentralisation of power. In this case, I looked at the question of decentralisation of power from the macro-level (i.e., the government) down to the micro-level (i.e., the classroom). This study was influenced by how decentralisation of power works, and the effects of the devolution of power on the people at the grassroots level.

Governance in a decentralised structure provides for the distribution of authority and accountability at various levels of the system. Decentralisation can take various forms, the most common of which are deconcentration, delegation and devolution.

1.6.1 Deconcentration:

This has a lot to do with the delegation of responsibility from a central authority to the local site. Decisions can be made at the local levels, but only by those individuals who are accountable to the central authority (DoE, 2004).

1.6.2 Devolution:

This involves transferring power from the central authority to local structures such as provinces and local governments. This kind of transfer of power must be backed by legislation, which means that if this power is to be withdrawn from these local structures, the legislation will have to be amended.

1.6.3 Delegation:

With this form of decentralisation, power to make decisions is transferred to local structures, regardless of whether those structures were democratically put into place or not. With delegation, it is not necessary to amend legislation when the delegated power is withdrawn.

Nieuwenhuis (2003) defines decentralisation as the process of transferring power and authority as well as resources from central government to the lower levels of government. The aim is to promote local democracy through participation of citizens. This theory of decentralisation takes root in the belief that services will be provided more efficiently and effectively if power and authority is located at the local level. Another notion that influences decentralisation is that if more people share authority, they are less likely to abuse it.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2003), decentralisation is linked to power and authority. He defines power as the ability to demand that people do something, as well as say how it should be done; and defines authority as power which is granted by consent.

Sayed (2002) argues that decentralisation within the education context should be measured in terms of the efficiency (which should result from the delegation and devolution of education authority) in the provision of educational services and goods. He contends that it is only when all learners experience improvements in the quality of schooling through this process that one could argue that this policy of decentralisation has effected significant societal transformation.

In the education context, this theory of decentralisation assumes that education will improve if decision-making and accountability are moved closer to the educational institution. This theory will help us to understand the powers given to SGBs by SASA, and how SGBs should execute these powers. The research will also test the theory that decentralisation of power allows those who are in power

(and are closer to the people) enough time to manage efficiently, while at the same time giving people an opportunity to run their own affairs in the manner that will be beneficial to themselves.

1.7 Outline of the chapters

The study is divided into five chapters according to the following guidelines:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This chapter consists of the introduction, the problem statement and the aims of the study as well as the critical questions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on the review of literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter concentrates on the research design and methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The chapter presents the findings of the research, and the explanation of those findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the research findings as well as the interpretation and analysis of the data. The chapter also includes recommendations and conclusions.

1.8 Conclusion

Education during the pre-1994 era was in shambles, thanks to the absence of legislation that regulated activities in such a way that order would be restored at schools. Principals wielded more power, and more often than not abused it. It was only after the new political dispensation which was ushered in 1994 that things started to change for the better. New legislation was introduced in education, which saw a considerable amount of power taken away from the principal and given to the newly-introduced structure called the SGB.

The next chapter will look at the studies carried out previously on school governance and school management in an effort to find possible gaps which can be filled by the present study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1 I provided a broad overview of the study. I also outlined the rationale as well as the aims of the study. The research questions guiding this inquiry, together with the theoretical framework, were also presented in this introductory chapter.

Chapter 2 will focus on some of the available research studies that have been previously conducted, which specifically focused on the issue of the relationship between school governance and school management, the relationship between the SGB and the principal, as well as the issue of building capacity of the SGB. The aim is to try and locate gaps which exist in those studies, so that this study will make an attempt to plug those gaps.

2.2 Goals of democratic governance

The idea of school governance was introduced in an attempt to facilitate stakeholder participation in the governance and management of schools, with a view to providing a better teaching and learning environment (Van Wyk, 2004). The following are some of the goals of democratic school governance (Gauteng Department of Education, 1997: 2):

- To deepen social democracy. As schools reflect society, democracy must also be practised in our schools, by electing representatives to make decisions for and with our children.
- To broaden participation and ownership of the education process: It is important to involve all members of the school in making decisions that affect the school.
- To make sure that the school provides quality education.
- To help transform education.

- To help develop a culture of learning and teaching in all schools.
- To encourage teachers, learners and parents to be responsible for the school providing education effectively.
- To ensure that the needs of their school community are met: Parents, learners and teachers are often in the best position to see what their school needs.

Most of the current research literature available on school governance and management (e.g., Beckmann, 2000; Taylor, 2004; Ntshangase, 2002; Sadiki, 2003) makes an attempt to look at the relationship between the SGB (led by the SGB chairperson) and the SMT (led by the school principal), the distinction between management and governance, and the issue of capacity building. Below I will critically focus on the postulations of this research literature and extrapolate some of the key aspects that have relevance for my study.

2.3 The relationship between school management and governance school

Most of the problems that exist in schools are related to the relationship between school governance and school management. There is a need for a clear demarcation between governance and management, so that governors and managers will be able to stick to their respective roles.

The Report of the Committee to Review the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools (DoE, 1995) makes an attempt to draw a line between governance and management. The report states that governance and management are interwoven elements in a process that is aimed at enabling schools to provide effective and efficient education. The report acknowledges that it is difficult to have discrete definitions of governance and management because of the close relationship between them. Governance is widely agreed to be concerned with the formulation and adoption of policy and management with the day-to-day delivery of education.

SASA tries to draw a distinction between the governance and management of a public school. Section 16 (1) states that “the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body.” Section 16 (3) goes on to say that “subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal under the authority of the Head of Department” (RSA, 1996).

Despite this attempt by SASA to delineate the two concepts, in practical terms there seems to be no clear distinction between governance and management of a public school. Beckmann *et al.* (1997), argue that the line of demarcation between governance, on the one hand, and management, on the other, is not always clear. In general terms, governance implies overall control and authority of the school and its policies and direction, whereas management implies day to day supervision and administration of the activities within the school (1997).

The following are functions of all governing bodies, as specified by section 20 of SASA (RSA, 1996):

- promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;
- adopt a constitution;
- develop the mission statement of the school;
- adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions;
- determine times of the school day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school;
- administer the school’s property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;

- encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school;
- recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Educators Employment Act, 1994 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995;
- recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non-educator staff at the school, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995;
- at the request of the Head of Department, allow the reasonable use under fair conditions of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school;
- discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act; and
- discharge other functions consistent with this Act as determined by the Minister by notice in the Government Gazette, or by the Member of the Executive Council by notice in the Provincial Gazette.

Section 21 of SASA specifies the following functions (RSA, 1996):

- maintain and improve the school's property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy;
- purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school;
- pay for services to the school; and
- other functions consistent with this Act and any applicable provincial law.

Although SASA spells out these functions of governing bodies in an exhaustive manner, it does not elaborate on tasks and duties which must be performed by a principal.

Maleka (2003) alludes to co-operative management with regard to school effectiveness, with specific reference to the conflictual nature of the relationship between school governance and school management. Maleka (2003) places more importance on the principal as a key element in this relationship between school governance and school management. According to him, trust is the key element, and it is the principal who must make an effort to build it if this relationship is to survive.

Tshifura (2002) happens to think that there is a “clear distinction” between governance and management in the context of a public school (2002: 36). His study claims that all the stakeholders interviewed “showed awareness of the range of functions that SASA expects SGBs to perform” (2002: 96). What is not clear, however, is whether this awareness of the functions means that the governors understand the roles that they have to play. He also alludes to the issue of educator representatives in the SGB articulating the need for greater clarity regarding functions and roles.

Sometimes it can be very difficult for SGB members (the principal included) to really understand the roles that they have to play in the governance of the school. As Robinson *et al.* (2003: 274) put it, this difficulty is attributed to a confused governance framework where the principal is both an SGB member and a representative of the employer. This has the possibility of leading to a situation where the principal finds himself crossing the line of divide between management and governance. Another contentious issue raised by these authors is what they see as “over-involvement in management” and “under-involvement in governance” (Ibid, 2003: 274) by SGB members.

All this confusion raises doubts as to whether the two parties (i.e., the SGB and the principal) actually understand their respective powers and the roles that each party has to play.

Beckmann (2000) brings another dimension to the ever-growing debate about the relationship between school governance and management. He argues that Section 16 of SASA hints at a partnership between the SGB and the principal in so far as the governance and professional management of the schools are concerned. He raises questions which intimate that there is disharmony and tension between SGBs and SMTs (which include principals). He avers that there seems to be a lot of confusion as to what constitutes governance and what constitutes professional management, with one school of thought arguing that governance refers to policy making and that professional management refers to policy implementation.

Section 20 (1) (a) of the SASA requires the SGB to promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. Beckmann (2000) argues that this provision could lead to a situation where the SGB ends up claiming that nothing in a public school is put beyond their reach in SASA, thus paving the way for SGB interference in the professional management of the school. The author here is hinting at the possibility that the SGB might not be fully conversant with the powers that they have and the roles that they have to play.

The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) of 1999 (RSA, 1999) gives the principal a duty regarding the keeping of financial records at the school, which is the same duty that SASA gives to the SGB. Beckmann (2000) does not explain whether both the SGB and the principal understand this role in order to avoid the existence of disharmony and tension alluded to above.

The debate on the relationship between governance and professional management is taken further by Taylor (2004) who argues that stakeholders come to the task of school governance with unequal understandings and preparedness. A bigger concern is about the principal, who enters the governance territory wearing two caps, which might result in confusion. Taylor

hints at a possibility of a power struggle between governance and professional management, instead of a productive partnership. An important statement that he makes is that power does not reside in a person but in policy. This seems to suggest that neither the SGB chairperson nor the principal can make decisions alone to the exclusion of the stakeholders they represent, as those decisions would be undemocratic and therefore null and void.

2.4 The relationship between the SGB and the principal

In most instances the relationship between the SGB and the principal appears to be unsound, characterised by tension and conflict. Most studies conducted in the field of school governance allude to this (Beckmann, 2000; Mabasa and Themane, 2002; Ntshangase, 2002).

The report on the Review of school governance in South African public schools acknowledges that there are conflicts between SGBs and SMTs. The source of these conflicts seems to be the distinction between what constitutes governance and what management entails (DoE, 2004).

The report has this to say about this sort of conflict: “In some schools, SGB chairpersons have been able to assume leadership in the school, at the expense of the principal’s professional authority and obligation” (DoE, 2004: 83). In certain instances, by contrast, principals assume leadership of the SGB by way of giving direction on the agenda of the SGB, so much so that they end up determining how chairpersons should carry out their jobs (DoE, 2004).

Ntshangase (2002) conducted a study in the rural schools of the Vryheid region in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. His study focused more on the parent governors, with much emphasis on the role these parent governors should play, and the kind of influence they have on major school-level decisions about the school.

The findings of his study highlight the “adversarial and conflictual relationships that existed between parent governors and principals” (2002: 49) in the Vryheid region. These kinds of relationships, as the researcher avers, could probably have been caused by negative attitudes by principals towards parent governors. Ntshangase (2002) contends that most principals thought that, while having too much power, parent governors did not understand the role that they had to play.

Problems between SGBs and principals are endemic and not restricted to one area. Gagu (2001) conducted a study in schools around Gugulethu in the Western Cape Province. His study focused more on the problems besetting the SGBs in that region. One of those problems was the fact that the learner-governors were barred from engaging themselves in discussions on certain issues (like finance and the hiring of staff, especially educators) during SGB meetings. He argues that this hampers the effective implementation of school governance, particularly with regard to the promotion of democratic values. This author seems to ignore the fact that learners, by virtue of their age, are by law not allowed to enter into – or form part of – any contract like the hiring of an educator, as they are regarded as minors. The author contends that the issue of power relations is critical, and thinks that this could be addressed by building the capacity of the SGB, so that their roles would be clear to them.

In another study conducted by Earley (2003) in the UK, parent governors who were interviewed admitted that they were aware that they were supposed to support the head teacher, and offering advice in the process, but they are “not teachers and cannot always understand fully” (2003: 359). This apparent lack of understanding on the parent governors’ part with regard to the role they had to play finds expression in their “lack of time” (2003: 359) to help the head teacher, which eventually leads to a situation where decision making is left entirely in the hands of the head teacher.

On the other hand, Earley (2003) contends that head teachers appeared to have a limited concept of the role that the SGB had to play. If, on one hand, parent governors do not fully understand what role they have to play in order to help the head teacher, and on the other hand the head teacher has a limited concept of the role of the SGB in supporting him or her, then one wonders what kind of a picture this will create. Both parties seem to have a faint idea of the role which each party should play. It is in this context that conflictual relationships easily manifest themselves.

Most parent governors, especially in rural areas, are either illiterate or semi-literate, which can be attributed to their failure to execute their duties. This leads to a situation where principals end up “being in charge”, as Van Wyk (2004: 53) points out.

By contrast, in some cases one finds that there is a good rapport between the SGB chairperson and the principal, so much that the two end up taking decisions to the exclusion of the stakeholders they represent (Van Wyk, 2004). This can again be attributed to a lack of understanding of the powers that each party has, and the roles they have to play.

2.5 Building capacity of the SGB

Another issue that rears its head oftentimes in the literature about school governance is the issue of capacity building of the SGB. One of the problems encountered in school governance is the fact that most SGBs have not been capacitated enough to enable them to carry out their duties efficiently.

Sadiki (2003) alludes to this issue of capacity building of SGBs, and tries to create an ideal situation by claiming that “the national government has introduced a system of capacity building programmes decentralised to respective provinces whereby school governing bodies are oriented toward the principle of democratic school governance through induction courses organised by...

Regional offices” (2003: 70). One finding from his study is that there is insufficient training of SGB members. Even where training is offered, the programmes are of limited quality and are often presented by incompetent trainers.

Section 19 (1) of SASA states that the Head of Department must establish a programme that will assist in providing training for newly elected governing bodies as well as providing training to governing bodies on an ongoing basis. Sadly, there is empirical evidence that points to the contrary. Vandeyar (2000) argues that the inadequate training offered to SGBs results in the SGB being ill-equipped to manage the duties and responsibilities of the SGB, like drawing up policies for the schools. As a result of this, the SGB ends up delegating those duties to the principal, which in turn gives rise to conflict between principals and parent members. The author contends that this lack of adequate training results in misconception and confusion in the SGBs. For instance, the fact that SASA gives them power to recommend the appointment of an educator makes them think that they are the employer of educators at school.

Mabasa and Themane (2002) argue that stakeholder participation in governance activities is hampered by the fact that stakeholders, more especially parent governors, seem stranded. This they attribute to the lack of preparation for new governors before they do their work, which leads to governors experiencing problems such as being unfamiliar with procedures followed in meetings. The results of their study also point to a strong presence of tension between various stakeholders in their participation in school governance.

The fact that stakeholder participation is characterised by tension leads one to ask whether this perceived tension is not a result of the low level of understanding of their roles and powers on the stakeholders’ part. The two authors seem to think that this tension stems from lack of training for governors before they assume their duties. Surely, if all stakeholders clearly understood

their powers and roles, there would be no tension. The authors do not address this question in their study.

Ntshangase (2002) also alludes to the fact that there is lack of adequate training put in place to enable parent governors to be fully involved in matters of school governance. This lack of training results in governors not being fully conversant with the powers given to them and the roles that they have to play, which is the cause of the mayhem that characterises most SGBs.

Bush (2004) seems to agree that there is inadequate training of school governors, and this includes principals. In a study conducted in the province of Gauteng by a team of researchers from the University of Pretoria and Lincoln University (UK), his findings reveal that even in cases where training was offered, it was of a short duration, thereby compromising the depth and sustainability of the training. More often than not, the training was limited to law, policy and other basics, with little attention being paid to teaching and learning or to governance.

The same could be said about governance training. The training on school governance was invariably short, although the topics covered by the training were relevant (Bush, 2004).

2.6 Conclusion

Various studies conducted in the field of school governance and management seem to have concentrated much on the conflictual nature of the relationship between school governance and school management (Beckmann, 2000; Mabasa and Themane, 2002; Ntshangase, 2002; DoE, 2004). This they did without giving much thought as to what could have been the cause of the conflict. It was, therefore, the intention of this study to make an endeavour to plug this gap by finding out the extent to which principals and SGB chairpersons understand their roles and powers in relation to issues of management and governance of

schools, and to ascertain whether these understandings resonate with existing pieces of legislation such as SASA and NEPA.

The next chapter will deal with the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe how the research process unfolded by explaining the research design used, the methodology, the population, the sampling procedure, the sample, the method of collecting data, how the interviews were conducted and recorded, how the data was analysed, the researcher position in relation to the study, the limitation of the study, as well as the time frame envisaged.

3.2 Research design

The type of research that this study envisaged was the phenomenological case study method. Creswell (1998: 51) argues that “a phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon.” A case study is concerned mainly with the investigation and interpretation of certain attributes, characteristics and behaviour patterns of the phenomenon being studied (Behr, 1973). The phenomenon is studied as a unique entity rather than as a representative type. Anderson (1990) defines a case study as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. From his definition, it becomes clearly evident that a case study deals with contemporary issues, how they happen and why. A case might consider the deliberations of a committee or other group of people and their interaction (Anderson, 1990).

Cohen *et al.* (2000) maintain that case studies can establish cause and effect, and one of their strengths is that they observe effects in real contexts, recognizing that context is a powerful determinant of both causes and effects.

In the present study, a case study was preferred because it focuses on individual actors or groups of actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events. It also highlights specific events that are relevant to the case.

3.3 Population

My population consisted of all school principals and all chairpersons of SGBs in all schools in rural Limpopo Province. The focus on this population was largely influenced by the fact that school principals and chairpersons of SGBs are the driving forces in SMTs and SGBs respectively, who are also influential in as far as decision-making processes in the running of the school, are concerned.

3.4 Sampling procedure

Purposeful sampling was used as a strategy to collect data. According to Paton (1993), purposeful sampling is the kind of sampling which involves the selection of information-rich cases for in-depth study. In this type of sampling researchers deliberately handpick the case to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement of their typicality (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Purposeful sampling is used by the researcher when the researcher wants to understand something about cases without needing to generalise to all such cases.

This sampling strategy was preferred over other strategies in this study because it allowed the researcher to select respondents who were most likely to yield fruitful data, as the respondents were likely to be more knowledgeable and informative about the problem which is being researched.

One advantage of using purposeful sampling is that a few cases studied in-depth will yield many insights about the topic. Another advantage attached to purposeful sampling is that it allows for an increase in the utility of information obtained from small samples.

I used criterion sampling as a type of purposeful sampling. Struwig and Stead (2001) define criterion sampling as the type of sampling which is used when the researcher wants to select cases in terms of pre-determined criteria. Here I selected school principals and SGB chairpersons from schools which have experienced conflict related to issues of school governance and management. The conflict was such that it was mostly between the school principal (who manages the school) and the SGB chairperson (who leads the SGB which governs the school), which essentially means that the conflict revolved around issues of management and governance. All the cases were eventually reported to the Circuit Office. Departmental officials from either the Circuit Office or the District Office intervened in all those situations of conflict.

3.5 Sample

The sample consisted of school principals and SGB chairpersons who are attached to schools which, at one stage or another, were involved in a conflict around issues of management and governance. These respondents were chosen on the basis of their experiences in such conflictual situations at their respective schools.

Four school principals and four SGB chairpersons were selected for the study. Of the four principals, two (i.e., P1 and P3) are males, while the other two (i.e., P2 and P4) are females. With the SGB chairpersons, interestingly, all four of them are males. Three of the four principals who took part in the study (i.e., P1, P2 and P3) head primary schools, while only one of them (i.e., P4) heads a secondary school. Only one SGB chairperson (i.e., SC2) is attached to a secondary school, while the other three (i.e., SC1, SC3 and SC4) are attached to primary schools. These respondents were chosen from four schools in the rural areas in four districts in the Limpopo Province, namely, Greater Sekhukhune, Vhembe, Capricorn and Waterberg. There are five districts in Limpopo Province. Four of

these districts are semi-rural districts (i.e., they have more rural characteristics than urban ones).

P3 and SC3 are attached to the same school. The other school principals and SGB chairpersons come from different schools. It would have been ideal to have a principal and an SGB chairperson coming from the same school, but this was not possible, due to the fact that in some of the schools targeted for the study, only the principal was available, with the SGB chairperson having not been re-elected to the SGB after his/her term of office had expired. In other schools included in the study, only the SGB chairperson was available, with the principal having either retired or transferred to another place in a different province.

3.6 Data collection

I collected data using interviews as my data collection tool. Behr (1973) explains an interview as a direct method of obtaining information from a face-to-face situation. He avers that the interview has the advantage of affording the interviewer an opportunity to give a full and detailed explanation of the purpose of the study to the respondent, and to ensure that the latter fully understands what is required of him. He argues that “the flexibility of the approach which is inherent in the interview technique is particularly valuable when information is sought from children or from illiterates” (1973: 69). Given that most parent-governors in rural Limpopo are illiterate, an interview was the most suitable tool. Behr (1973) points out that the interviewer seeks either objective information in the form of facts, or subjective information in the form of attitudes, beliefs and opinions.

Wiersma (1985) refers to an interview as an oral exchange between an interviewer and an interviewee, who may either be an individual or a group of individuals. According to Wiersma (1985), the interview has the advantage of being a flexible measurement device. The items of the interview are usually open-ended questions to which the individual can offer a fairly free response. An

open-ended question is one for which the individual constructs the response rather than selects it from a group of alternative responses. The author further points out that the interview provides further flexibility in that the interviewer can pursue the response with the individual and can ask for an elaboration or redefinition of the response if it appears incomplete or ambiguous.

An interview is, according to Anderson (1990: 222), “a specialised form of communication between people for a specific purpose associated with some agreed subject matter.” This means that the interview is thus a task which is highly purposeful, and which goes beyond mere conversation. Anderson (1990) attaches the following advantages to an interview:

- △ People are more easily engaged in an interview than in completing a questionnaire.
- △ The interviewer can classify questions and probe the answers of the respondent.
- △ Interviewing enables the interviewer to pick up non-verbal cues, including facial expressions, tones of voice and, in the case of the interview conducted on the respondent’s turf, cues from the surroundings and context.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993) attach the following advantages to interviews:

- △ Interviews enable the researcher to obtain multiple responses to set questions.
- △ They allow for detailed responses.
- △ There is flexibility and spontaneity.
- △ They offer the researcher the ability to probe and make follow-ups.
- △ There is also the question of non-verbal behaviour which can enhance the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

The kind of interviews that I used was semi-standardised interviews. Struwig and Stead (2001: 98) define a semi-standardised interview as “a combination of the structured and unstructured interviews.” With the structured interview the procedure to be followed is determined in advance of the interview. In this instance, predetermined questions are posed to each participant in a systematic and consistent manner, but the participants are also given an opportunity to discuss issues beyond the questions’ confines. An interview schedule is used, which details the pattern to be followed, the wording of the questions and instructions.

With unstructured interviews the series of questions to be asked are also prepared beforehand, but the interviewer is permitted to use his discretion and to depart from the set questions, as well as their order of presentation as the situation demands (Behr, 1973).

3.7 Conducting the interview

Wiersma (1985) contends that while the interview is well suited to probing the feelings and perceptions of the individuals, the items of the interview itself do not ensure accurate measurement of those feelings. It is very crucial that the interviewer establish a good rapport with the interviewee to eliminate any possible hostility from the interviewee. The author alludes to a possible pitfall in that sometimes responses may be faked, and advises that an attempt be made to enhance truthful responses by making sure not to imply that there are preferable responses, and to avoid controversial questions until the proper background and rapport have been established. I therefore made an attempt to enhance truthful responses by designing the interview in such a way that it contained questions that asked essentially the same information but were in somewhat different form or wording and appeared at different points in the interview, the purpose being to check on the consistency of the responses.

3.8 Recording the interview

I kept a record of the responses of the respondents. In that regard I sought permission and consent from the respondents to use a tape-recorder to record the interview, which is a convenient method of capturing the respondents' responses. The advantage of using a tape-recorder is that it provides not only a complete and accurate record of the entire interview, but it also preserves the emotional and vocal character of the responses. The tape-recording was replayed, and a full transcript of the interview was made for analysis.

3.9 Data analysis

In my analysis of the data that I collected, I made use of inductive analysis. In inductive data analysis, categories and patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on data prior to data collection.

I began my data analysis as soon as I had gathered the first set of data. In other words, data analysis was ongoing. This ran parallel to data collection as each activity (i.e., data collection and interim analysis) informs and drives the other activities. The data collected was grouped into themes by using codes. Codes are labels that assign units of meaning to the information obtained. These codes were used to study the interview transcripts of participants.

When analysing a transcript, a code could be linked to a word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or a larger section of data. I segmented the data and then divided them into relevant parts (units) and chunks of meaning, within a holistic perspective. I then categorised the data segments according to an organising system of topics predominantly derived from the data themselves. To process larger amounts of data, I physically assembled all material that belonged to one topic (category) in one place, using a file folder.

3.10 Researcher position

I am an employee of the Limpopo Province Department of Education, where I serve as a school principal. I interact with the SGB on a regular basis, and therefore have an idea of the kind of relationship that exists between school governance and school management. I worked on the assumption that the conflictual nature of the relationship that exists between school governance and school management emanates from the little (and often vague) key role players' understanding of their roles and powers. So I went into this research with a view to getting confirming or disconfirming evidence based on the respondents' understandings of management and governance. When conducting the research, I fiercely guarded against the temptation to show any form of bias which might have emanated from my regular dealings with the SGB at my school. This helped me to adopt and maintain an objective stance as a researcher.

3.11 Limitations of the study

A possible limitation of this study was the fact that, as a principal, I entered the field with preconceived notions (gained from my real life experiences as a member of both the SMT and the SGB), and was thus tempted to be biased in my research. I therefore tried everything possible to maintain a certain measure of objectivity in order to eliminate any form of subjectivity which might have emanated from this possible bias.

Another possible limitation was that the study focused on only four schools, which were selected on the basis of conflictual situations which, at one stage or another, erupted at these schools. As a result of this, the results of the study cannot be generalisable. However, this does not diminish the critical value of the study in terms of the insights it yielded regarding principals' and SGB chairpersons' understandings of their roles and powers vis-à-vis management and governance issues.

3.12 Time frame

It was envisaged that this study would be carried out over a period not exceeding one year. This period of time had been influenced by the fact that I hoped that the research would allow me to engage in intensive interviews with a number of respondents who were located at various parts of the Limpopo Province. The interviews were conducted at the respondents' place of choice, and the preferred place was the school premises.

3.14 Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined how the study was carried out by focusing on the research design and methodology of the study. The chapter also highlighted my position as a researcher in relation to possible problems of biasness and how I was not only conscious of these biases, but also made efforts to eliminate them in conducting the study. The limitations of the study, which relate to my position as a researcher and the aspect of a small sample, were also discussed in this chapter.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, focuses on the findings from the analysis of the data that was collected through interviews.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPREATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the responses to the questions posed to the respondents during the interview process. It makes an attempt to look into the lived experiences of the respondents, and to present the themes which emerge from those responses. The chapter will include direct quotes from the interviews so as to bring to the fore the lived experiences of the respondents in an effort to highlight their understandings of management and governance issues in their schools.

Respondents in this study are categorized as either P1, P2, P3 and P4 to denote the school principals or SC1, SC2, SC3 and SC4 to denote the SGB chairpersons.

4.2 Differences of opinion between the principal and the SGB chairperson on management and governance issues

There seems to be differences of opinion between principals and SGB chairpersons regarding management and governance issues. A key point around which these differences revolve seems to be the issue of financial management. The problem appears to be caused by the fact that at times one key role player seems to be doing what is actually supposed to be done by the other key role player, which one might call stepping on each other's toes. This becomes evident in what one respondent (P3) says about what happened in a parents meeting during discussions about the state of finances in the school. The principal had threatened to take legal action against those parents whom she accused of not willing to pay school fees. P3 has this to say about the SGB chairperson:

“He told [the parents] that it was the prerogative of the SGB and not the principal to go the legal route. He then told them that the SGB would never take such steps, as it was aware that most parents were not employed.”

Another respondent, SC2, echoes this idea when he says:

“Sometime ago there was this issue of increasing school fees. The principal and the teachers sat down in a staff meeting and discussed the issue without the knowledge of the SGB.”

The respondent, SC2, takes the argument further:

“I made him aware that it was the school’s needs that would influence the amount by which the school fees would be increased ... I also indicated to him that procedurally, if he felt the school fees needed to be increased, he would have to raise the issue in an SGB meeting, not in a staff meeting.”

This same view of one key role player playing a role that is supposed to be played by the other key role player is expressed by yet another respondent, SC3, who has this to say about what transpired in a parents meeting where the annual audited financial statement was being discussed:

“Then the principal requested to speak. She stood up and complained about the fact that some parents were unwilling to pay school fees, which is why the school fees were always inadequate.... She went on to propose that the school fees should be increased.”

Then the same respondent (SC3) adds that:

“I got fed up and almost lost my cool.... I then explained to them that the law says that if a parent is unemployed and can therefore not pay school fees, that parent has the right to approach the SGB, not the principal, in order to lodge an application for exemption.”

At other times the differences seem to be caused by failure by either of the two key role players to follow procedure, more especially when dealing with financial matters. What one respondent, SC1, says attests to this: *“There have been instances where the right procedure had not been followed when purchasing goods for the school.”*

This respondent (SC1) goes on to explain the procedure which is normally followed when cheques are issued out, then says:

“I was surprised to see the preceding claim form signed by the principal only. When I requested for an explanation from the principal, he predictably told me that I was not around when he needed the money, and it was urgent.”

This respondent, SC1, had earlier indicated that, *“...on one occasion the principal just requested the Treasurer to issue out a cheque to purchase stationery without following [this] procedure.”*

Another respondent, SC4, expresses the same idea when he explains what happened at their school at one stage about the signing of cheques. He has this to say about the situation:

“I remember this incident where the principal wanted to sign two blank cheques. When we asked him what he was going to buy with the two blank cheques, he told us the cheques must always be ready,

in order to avoid him having to go and look for signatories whenever he had to buy something for the school.... I found this very disturbing, as the previous year the audited financial statement indicated that some school money was unaccounted for, as no one could explain what happened [to the money] .”

Another key area which often leads to differences of opinions between the principal and the SGB chairperson is the issue of policy. Again, interestingly, the problem seems to be caused by either one of the two key role players stepping on the other’s toes. We see this in what one respondent, P2, has to say about what their SGB chairperson perceived to be a problem about late coming by one educator:

“I explained to [the SGB chairperson] that his duty as a parent member was to determine what time the school would start, in line with what Sec 20 (1) (f) of SASA says. Whether educators and learners came to school on time was my responsibility as a principal.”

Another respondent, P4, has this to say about a situation where their school had to come up with a school policy:

“In our case, our SGB insists on drawing a school policy that is so lacking in so many things and which is not consistent with existing laws. When I try to point out the weaknesses in the policy, they sulk and complain that I am undermining them.... The point is, they are not familiar with existing laws that govern education, and they cannot interrogate them. That is why they end up including things that are not covered by the law, which makes the policy illegal.”

The respondent (P4) explains it further by saying that:

“Another example is that in the learners’ code of conduct they included funny things like corporal punishment and that all learners should have one uniform hair style, which entailed shaving their heads.”

Again, when the respondent (P4) tried to show them the weaknesses in the policy (i.e., about the corporal punishment and the hair style), what happened was that, *“The SGB accused me of encouraging lawlessness among the learners. The chairperson even said that I was doing this because my child was attending a better school in town where there was better discipline, and that is why I didn’t care about their discipline.”*

P4 takes this argument further about the SGB also wanting to come up with a code of conduct for educators. He explains:

“Seemingly they got so excited that they wanted to draw the Code of Conduct for educators as well.... I told them that issue of the code of Conduct for educators fell outside their scope of operation....”

This idea of stepping on each other’s toes is also expressed by SC1, who argues that:

“There are times where you find out that management takes decisions on governance issues in the absence of the SGB. To cite an example, at one stage the principal and the teachers sat down to draw up a code of conduct for learners.... I tried to explain to him that management was not supposed to draw such a policy as this task didn’t fall within their scope of operation.”

One other area which reveals a difference of opinion between the two key role players is found in the process of filling vacancies on the staff, where one key role player seems not to be keen to follow procedure. This is revealed by one respondent, SC2, who says that, *“As SGB, we wanted to follow procedure by advertising the post in order to allow every interested, qualified person to apply for the post.”* He indicates that the SGB, in the presence of the principal, agreed about how the whole process would unfold, in line with what the law stipulated. The respondent has this to say about what the principal did:

“The following day [the principal] called me to the school. When I arrived, he told me that he had already found someone, who happened to be an Indian guy, to come and occupy the post.”

When this respondent (SC2) asked the principal how he could simply appoint someone just like that, *“... he told me that the vacancy was for a Maths post, and that it was a known fact that there was a shortage of Maths teachers all over the country, so we could not afford to waste time in advertising the post, as our chances of finding a suitable candidate through the process of advertising the post were virtually non-existent, meanwhile there was someone who could occupy the post immediately.”*

Clearly, this action was not only irregular but flew in the face of all the stipulated rules and procedures about the filling of posts as described in Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Committee of the Limpopo Province Chamber.

4.3 Understanding of the concepts *management* and *governance* as stated in Sec 16 of SASA

4.3.1 Understanding of the concepts *governance* and *management*

There seems to be general agreement by almost all the respondents on the question of what governance entails. All of them seem to understand governance to have more to do with policy formulation. One respondent, P2, has this to say about what governance entails: *“Well, governance has to do with a number of things, like policy formulation and the maintenance of the school.”* The same idea seems to be echoed by another respondent, P3, who says: *“Well, I understand governance to be associated with policy making so as to ensure that the school is run smoothly using the same policies.”*

Another respondent, P4, seems to concur with the two cited respondents above when he says that, *“Governance must concern itself with formulating policies which will ensure that all these parts [of the system] are coordinated in a functional manner.”* SC2 also seems to understand governance the same way as the other respondents. This is what he has to say about it:

“Well, the way I understand it, governance deals with the side of making laws and other policies which will help to regulate activities of all stakeholders within the school.”

Like the other respondents, SC3 holds the same view when he says that:

“[Governance] deals with the question of putting systems into place, which will enable the school to be functional. By systems here I am referring to the making of policies... which will help to regulate people’s behaviour within the school, thus aiding smooth interaction among all stakeholders.”

The same idea seems to be expressed by SC1, who puts it in this way:

“According to my understanding, governance is a process that has a lot to do with the formulation of policies which comply with education, aimed at governing the school.”

One respondent, SC4, was honest enough to admit that he did not understand much about the concept of governance, although at least he did indicate whose competency it is. This he expresses by saying that:

“I cannot say I understand much about what you have just asked me... I think governance must be done by the SGB”

Only one respondent, P1, seems to express a rather vague idea about what governance entails. However, it must be noted that at least there is some form of agreement with the other respondents on the question of governance ensuring the smooth running of the school. This is what she has to say about the concept: *“Governance means parental involvement. It means that the school must run smoothly.”*

On the question of what they understand the concept management to mean, again there seem to be a general consensus by all the respondents. They all agree that management has to do with policy implementation. P2 puts it this way:

“Well, management has a lot to do with the day-to-day running of the school. In other words, I as the principal have to ensure that everything is running smoothly within the school, and this can only be achieved if I implement the policies of the department and those of the SGB.”

Another respondent who expresses the same idea about the concept management is P3, who maintains that, *“In the same breath, management will refer to the implementation of those and other policies in order to ensure the smooth running of*

the school.” The same view is also held by another respondent, P4, who expresses it in this manner:

“In other words, management must ensure that those policies which the SGB shall have drawn are implemented without fail.”

SC1 also seems to have the same understanding as the other respondents about what management entails. This is how he puts it:

“Management mans that all the policies that are drawn up at school by the SGB are implemented and adhered to.”

SC2 also seems to agree with the view expressed by the previous respondent (SC1) when he says that, *“Management deals with the application and implementation of those laws and policies [that have been drawn up by the SGB].”* However, one respondent who seems to put it slightly differently is SC3, who says that, *“The concept management refers to the manner in which various processes within the school would be managed.”*

Another respondent who seems to hold a similar view to the one above is P1, who has this to say about the concept:

“In the case of management, well, management refers to all the activities within the school, like planning, leading, organising and control.”

SC4 also expresses uncertainty as regard what the concept management entails. He nevertheless seems to express the same idea as that expressed by the other respondents about whose job it is. He only points out that, *“...management must be done by the principal.”*

4.3.1 Roles ascribed to *governance and management*

A variety of roles come up from the respondents, but all the respondents consider the provision of resources as a key role of governance. One respondent, P2, puts it this way:

“Policies have to be there, and resources have to be made available to the school so that things will work out well.”

This view is echoed by P3, who says that:

“Governance must also ensure that various resources are made available to the principal, teachers, learners and other staff in the school to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.”

SC1 puts it in simpler terms when he says that, *“The role of governance is to formulate policies and to make resources available to the school....”* Another respondent, P1, seems to narrow this role to the provision of personnel when she says that, *“Governance roles have to do with hiring of teachers.”* SC3 also chips in with the same view concerning the provision of resources: *“For example, governance must make resources available, like money to buy stationery and other essentials for the school.”*

Although SC4 agrees with most of the respondents about this role of providing resources, he puts it slightly differently by suggesting that governance does not only provide resources, but maintains them as well. He says that:

“Another role which is the duty of the SGB is to fix the school property when it is broken or not working properly, like replacing broken window panes... and fixing broken door handles when they are no longer working.”

This view is also held by P3, who maintains that:

“It is also the responsibility of governance to see to it that the school buildings are in good condition and that the school grounds are not hazardous to the learners.”

This seems to be the same view expressed also by P4, who argues that:

“Other roles which can be ascribed to governance include the issue of maintaining the school grounds and buildings, so that the learners’ safety can be guaranteed....”

Another common view held by most respondents (six out of eight) about the role of governance is that it has the responsibility of formulating policy. One respondent, P3, articulates this view clearly when he says that:

“Err... as I have already indicated, governance has the responsibilities of ensuring that policies are in place, so that people will know during their interaction with one another that there are certain things that they can and cannot do.”

Again, P4 seems to express the same sentiment by saying that:

“As I have indicated already, governance must deal with formulation of policies which will be used to regulate all activities carried out within the school.”

This view is also articulated clearly by SC1, who also maintains that, *“The role of governance is to formulate policies and to make resources available to the school....”*

Another role which is ascribed to governance is to determine the curriculum of the school. This view is held by P3, who points out that:

“Governance must also determine the curriculum of the school as this will help to determine the direction the school will eventually take.”

On the issue of roles which can be ascribed to management, a common view held by five of the respondents is that management is responsible for implementing policy. P3 expresses this idea by saying that, *“Management must implement those policies which have been drawn by governance, so that everyone within the school will do what is right.”* P4 seems to echo this sentiment when he says that, *“Management entails implementation of those policies drawn by governance.”* This above-mentioned view is also held by SC1, who maintains that, *“The role of governance is to formulate policies... whereas management must implement those policies....”*

Another respondent who seems to agree with the other respondents on this role is SC2, who puts it in simple terms by pointing out that, *“Management deals with such issues as implementation of the policy....”* SC3 also agrees that, *“Management has to do with the actual implementation of these policies.”*

Another key role of management as pointed out by five of the respondents in this study is the management of resources. One respondent, SC3, details it explicitly when he says that:

“It also has to deal with ensuring that the school’s finances are utilised efficiently, that there is a smooth and healthy interaction among all stakeholders, that the curriculum is implemented in a manner that will benefit the learners, that physical resources are shared equitably among everyone within the school, and that parent involvement is maximal.”

P2 seems to share the above view. He maintains that management must manage the resources fairly:

“Resources have to be managed in such a way that they are shared equally among all stakeholders so that progress will be achieved.”

One respondent, SC4, seems to express the same idea differently. He argues that:

“The role of management which must be done by the principal is to make sure that the teachers go to the classroom to teach the learners everyday.”

Another respondent who expresses this idea of management managing resources, in a slightly differently manner, is P4. He submits that management must also organise parent and community involvement. He states that:

“It must also involve itself in organising all curricular and extra-curricular activities, as well as other activities that might have a bearing on education within the school, like parent and community involvement.”

4.3.2 Roles considered to be an interface between *governance and management*

All the respondents in this study seem to agree that the issue of financial management is the key role which acts as an interface between governance and management. One respondent, P2, articulates this point clearly when he says that, *“I think financial management is a contentious issue which sometimes leads to conflict or disagreement.”* P3 seems to fully concur with the respondent. He argues that, *“The question of finance has always been a bone of contention, and in our school it is always the source of many problems.”*

This view about financial matters is also clearly held by another respondent, SC2, who points out that:

“I want to believe that financial management is definitely one area that always causes problems in many institutions, especially schools.”

Half of the eight respondents also hold the view that the issue of policy making is also another key role that may act as an interface between governance and management. One respondent who seems to put it directly is SC3, who argues that:

“Another area which I think might lead to conflict is the question of policy making. Sometimes you get a situation where management wants to formulate policies which must be formulated by governance.”

One respondent who seems to hold the same view is SC2, who also points out that, *“... sometimes you have a situation where the teachers feel like they are in a better position to draw a particular policy than the SGB.”*

P4 agrees with the other respondents by submitting that:

“To me this issue of policy is sometimes a cause of conflict between governance and management. A classic example is our school, where the SGB wanted to come up with a Code of Conduct for educators, which is clearly not their responsibility.”

P3 seems to concur with this respondent (P4), although he argues it from a different perspective. He points out that:

“Among all the policies that the SGB must come up with, what worries me the most is the Code of Conduct for learners. Our SGB chairperson insisted on the SGB drawing it... and they ended up drawing a code of conduct that does not even start to address the problems that we are faced with at school every day of our working life. That, to me, is not right.”

Yet another role which is considered by three out of eight of the respondents to be an interface between governance and management is the issue of the hiring of teachers. Here the problem seems to be not who should do it, but how it should be done. One respondent who seem to articulate it well is SC1, who points out that:

“I think this issue of hiring educators can also be regarded as an interface between governance and management, where you find out that the SMT proposes the hiring of educators who are irrelevant to the school’s curriculum.”

Another respondent who argues it further is P2. He points out that:

“...sometimes the SGB’s choice of a particular candidate to fill a vacancy that exists at the school is not an ideal one. Oftentimes you find out that their choice is based not on the curricular needs of the school or competence of the candidate, but on sentiments.”

4.4 Sec 20 (1) (a) of SASA: Understanding of what the role means

When asked what their understanding of the role that is described in Sec 20 (1) (a) of SASA (i.e., that the SGB must promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school), all respondents, with the exception of P1, seem to be agreed that one way in which the SGB can promote the best interest of the school is through the provision of resources for the school. This feeling is expressed by P2, who says that:

“The SGB must do everything in their power to make available all the necessary resources that will be needed in order to help serve the interest of all learners within the school.”

Another respondent who shares the same sentiment as P2 is SC1, who goes on to try and outline some of the resources needed at the school:

“Well, in my understanding, this role means that the SGB must ensure that proper and adequate staff is available in the school. It also means that the SGB must get facilities for the school, like stationery and others, which will help to address the needs of the community within which the school is situated.”

SC2 puts it in simpler terms by saying that:

“[The SGB] must ensure that the school has enough resources that will enable the teachers and other support staff at the school to execute their duties without any hindrance.”

P4 seems to sum it up when he says that, *“The SGB should therefore make all kinds of resources available to the school so that everybody will find it easier to do their job.”* However, one respondent, P1, seems to understand the role differently. She argues that:

“Well, in my understanding, this role means that the SGB must work hand in hand with SMT in order to achieve their aims and objectives of the school.”

Another respondent who seems to express a different view is P2, who says that:

“Well, errr... I understand this role to mean that the SGB must take the initiative to determine and influence the direction which the school should take.”

P2 seems to hold the view that the SGB may, for instance, determine and influence the direction which the school should take by deciding which streams (e.g. science, commerce) the school may offer, as may be expressed in the vision and mission of the school.

4.4.1 Fulfilment of the Sec 20 (1) (a) role by the SGB

When the respondents were asked whether they thought the SGB was fulfilling their role pertaining to promoting the best interests of the school and striving to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school, five of them indicated that they thought the SGB was fulfilling the role. However, it is interesting to note that four of the respondents are all SGB chairpersons, while only one principal agreed with them. One respondent who feels that the SGB is doing enough to fulfil this role is SC3, who maintains that:

“We do this by making sure that we make resources available in order to enable the principal and the teachers to carry out their responsibilities effectively.”

SC2 also seems to agree that they are doing enough to fulfil the role. He points out that:

“As an example, we are constantly engaging the Department of Education in our province in an effort to convince them to provide more classrooms for our learners so as to ease the overcrowding that we are currently experiencing.”

Yet another respondent who expresses the same view is SC1, who argues that:

“The SGB has also ensured that the physical needs of the school are attended to. As an example, the SGB has just ensured that water is available by installing a new borehole, so that our learners do not have to suffer.”

Three of the respondents who indicated that they were not entirely convinced that the SGB was fulfilling the role are all the principals. Although P1 seems to agree with the other respondents that the SGB is trying to fulfil the role, she does not seem too convinced that they are doing enough. This can be easily detected in what she has to say that, *“I think the SGB is fulfilling this function, although lack of capacity causes them to lack in some roles.”*

The feeling among the other three principals is one of despair. They feel the SGB is not doing enough to fulfil this role. P2 has this to say about the situation:

“There are instances where I feel the SGB is not doing anything to that effect [of fulfilling the role as stipulated in Sec 20 (1) (a) of SASA]. To cite an example, as a principal I feel I have an obligation to market the school, so that more learners will be attracted to it in order to boost enrolment. I then initiate a particular function, like an award-giving function (where learners who work hard throughout the year are given trophies and certificates as a motivation to work

even harder). While I want to use this function for marketing purposes and to improve the quality of the results, the SGB will feel that this is a waste of money."

P3 seems to concur with what this respondent (P2) is saying. She argues that, "I honestly do not think that the SGB is doing enough to fulfil this function". She goes on to aver that, "If parents refuse to pay school fees and the SGB does nothing about it, and instead promotes this culture of non-payment, in my book that is not support."

The same feeling is expressed by another respondent, P4, who says that,

"No. I don't think the SGB is fulfilling this function the way I expect them to. When it comes to the provision of resources, more especially financial resources, it is a disaster. Most of the time, the SGB refuses to give me permission to buy goods for the school.... The school buildings are dilapidated and pose a threat to the safety of the learners, but there is nothing they are doing about it. So, no, they are not fulfilling this function as expected."

4.5 Sec 20 (1) (e) of SASA: Understanding of what the role means

In this section I address the issue of the support that the SGB ought to give to the principal, educators and other staff in the school in the performance of their professional functions. When the respondents were asked what their understanding of this role was, all of them, except SC2, mentioned the provision of resources as the kind of support the SGB must give to the school. This idea is articulated more clearly by P4, who explains that:

"The SGB must, for example, make resources available for the principal, educators and all other staff in the school, so that they can perform their duties unhindered."

P3 echoes this sentiment by saying:

“Like I said before, [the SGB] must also make resources available for all the staff, because we cannot perform our duties effectively if we do not have those resources.”

SC3 also seems to agree with afore-mentioned respondents when he says that, *“We have to ensure that we make all resources available to the staff in order to enable them to carry out their responsibilities well.”*

Another feeling that is shared by five of the respondents in this study concerning their understanding of what this role means is that the SGB must offer moral support to all the staff as well as the learners at the school. This support seems to be located in different areas. For example, one respondent, P2, talks of support in relation to learner discipline. He says that, *“The SGB must support the principal and the educators in maintaining discipline among the learners.”*

Another area of support is the one referred to by P4, which is the execution of tasks by both educators and learners. He puts it thus:

“We also expect the SGB to offer moral support to both educators and learners, by way of encouraging the educators to execute their task of teaching in a professional and acceptable manner, and by encouraging the educators to strive to reach high standards.”

Support must also be seen to be given in the area of policy implementation. This idea is expressed by one respondent, SC2, who points out that:

“The SGB must also help the principal in his implementation of the policies that the SGB will have come up with.”

According to another respondent, SC4, support can also be offered outside the school – outside the normal working hours. The respondent argues that:

“I think also that when teachers have functions like weddings at their homes, the SGB members must attend such occasions in order to give moral support, as this will help to foster good relations between the educators and the SGB.”

Another respondent, SC1, alludes to another area where support can be offered, which is in the planning and organising of all activities within the school. He says that:

“In my opinion, this role means that the SGB must be involved in the planning of all activities organised by the school, and also to take part in them, where this is possible.”

4.5.1 Fulfilment of the Sec 20 (1) (e) role by the SGB

When asked whether or not they felt the SGB was doing all it could to fulfil this role, seven out of the eight respondents responded positively, although two of them indicated that the role was fulfilled only partially. It is perhaps not surprising to note that all the SGB chairpersons indicated that they were fulfilling the role adequately, while also indicating in which areas. For example, SC1 indicates that they give support by encouraging parent involvement. He explains:

“In the previous parents meeting, we made an appeal to parents to help to clean the school yard, as it was full of weeds... the parents have so far responded positively, because soon after, a large group of parents came to school and cleaned the whole yard.”

His sentiment is echoed by another respondent, SC2, who maintains that:

“Whenever we have parents meetings, we also encourage parents to play a role in the education of their children by way of helping with homework and other projects, and by responding positively when requested to come to school.”

P1 also indicates that the SGB is providing support to their school. She says, *“Errr ... yes, I think the SGB is providing this kind of support the way I expect them to.”*

Another way in which the SGB is fulfilling this function is by offering moral support to both educators and learners. One respondent, SC3, explains it in this way:

“Again, sometimes if a teacher experiences the loss of a loved one, we also assist by offering financial and moral support by contributing money and by attending the funeral. Even when learners pass away, we get heavily involved in preparations for the funeral.”

SC4 expresses the same sentiment when he says that:

“We also attend functions organised by the teachers at their homes, in order to give them moral support, and to show them that we are indeed part of them as much as they are part of us.”

Provision of resources is another way in which the SGB fulfils this function. SC3 puts it in this manner:

“We ensure that physical resources are available for everyone within the school.... We also make funds available to the principal to operationalise the school budget.”

This sentiment is echoed by SC4, who goes on to say that the principal sometimes makes it difficult for them to help him:

“We do, however, make sure that we support [the principal] by making money available to him whenever he wants to buy something for the school.”

Another respondent, SC1, mentions a different kind of resource which they provide for the school, which is security. He explains that:

“The SGB also felt that there was a need to ensure the safety of the school property. After much deliberation, we decided to hire a night-watch man who would take care of the school property.”

There are those respondents who feel that although the SGB is trying to fulfil this function (i.e., giving support to the principal, educators and other staff in the school in the performance of their professional functions), it is not doing enough. Interestingly, it is again principals who hold this view. One respondent who feels that the SGB could do more is P2, who explains that:

“Well, I feel the SGB is partially fulfilling this role. When, for example, window panes are broken, the SGB repairs them. But when they have to buy new equipment or office furniture, like a new chair or a computer for the principal, it becomes a problem for them.”

Another respondent who shares the same view is P4, who seems to complain about what he perceives to be limited support from the SGB, where the SGB only attends functions without contributing financially. He indicates that:

“In this regard, the SGB is trying to fulfil this function, although I wouldn’t say in all respects. The SGB sometimes tries to give moral support to educators and learners, but the support is very limited. To

cite an example, when an educator experiences a loss of a loved one, or a learner passes away, or an educator has a function, the SGB members attend the occasion. But that is as far as it goes.”

The respondent (P4) also feels that the SGB is placing restrictions on his initiatives as a principal. He argues that:

“Concerning the issue of financial support, it is a serious problem, because they want to impose unnecessary restrictions which will hamper the school’s progress.”

One respondent who does not seem to agree that the SGB is fulfilling this function is P3, who strongly expresses her scepticism in this manner: *“I don’t think so. Look, I have indicated to you already that we are not getting the kind of support I feel we should [be getting].”*

4.6 Understanding of Sec 4.2 of the Personnel Administrative Measures vis-à-vis Sec 37 (1) of SASA

Five of the respondents indicated that their understanding is that the SGB must make funds available to the principal through various means, and then make this money available to the principal who must then use it to buy the necessary resources which will make it possible for the school to function properly. One respondent, SC2, puts it this way:

“What I understand about this is that it is the responsibility of the SGB to establish a school fund, and to open a bank account in the name of the school, where the money will be kept. The principal has the responsibility of ensuring that this money is used appropriately in line with the school’s budget, which the SGB will have drawn.”

This view is held by P2, who argues that:

“In my understanding, this role means that the SGB must open a bank account in the name of the school. But the SGB must also make funds available for the purchase of those items that I as a principal feel are a necessity to the school, and will benefit the learners.”

SC3 also expresses the same idea, while also highlighting the need to adhere to the law in spending the money. He argues that, *“As SGB, we are expected by law to make funds available for the school by establishing a school fund.”* Then he goes on to explain what must happen with the money:

“When all these funds are available, it will then be the responsibility of the principal to utilize this money in line with the budget which shall have been drawn by the SGB as required by the law.”

One respondent, P3, goes as far as suggesting what the SGB needs to do when she says that, *“They must also do everything they can in order to raise funds for the school.”* When it comes to the issue of how the money must be utilized, the respondent (P3) has this to say: *“The SGB must then make this money available so that we can use it to benefit the learners.”*

However, there is one respondent, SC4, who seems to hold a different view, especially with the manner in which the money must be used. He argues that:

“I think this role means that it is the responsibility of the SGB to open a school account at a banking institution, where the school fees will be banked. The SGB will then, in consultation with the principal, decide on how to use the money for the benefit of all the learners at the school.”

SC4 is not the only respondent who believes that how the money is used must be the prerogative of the SGB, although this, according to him, should be in consultation with the principal. P1 also seems to understand it the same way when she says that, *“The way I understand it, this role means that I as the principal must help the SGB with administering the money.”*

4.7 Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Council of the Limpopo Province Chamber: Understanding of the Resolution

Resolution 1 of 2000 pertains to the procedure that needs to be followed when a vacancy has to be filled, and sets guidelines concerning the establishment of a committee for short-listing and interview procedures by the SGB.

There seems to be a common understanding among all the respondents concerning the formulation or establishment of the interview committee. All the respondents are agreed that the SGB members must be the actual members of this committee. One respondent, SC1, puts it like this: *“In other words, [SGB members] must be the ones who actually sit on the committee, and to do the short-listing and interviews themselves.”*

The same idea is expressed by another respondent, SC2, who says that, *“My understanding is that the members of the SGB must be members of that [short-listing and interviewing] panel.”* SC3 also understands it in the same way as the others that, *“Members of the SGB must be members of this committee.”*

However, it is interesting to note that there is a feeling of lack of trust by the other group of respondents (the school principals) in the ability of the SGB to carry out this function. Three out of the four school principal respondents talk of co-option of competent people from outside the SGB into the interview committee. This idea is well articulated by one of the respondents, P3, who says that:

“If it happens that the SGB members are not competent enough and therefore not equal to the task, then the SGB co-opt members from outside the SGB and request them to come and do the job on their behalf.”

Another respondent who holds the same view is P2, who maintains that:

“But since most of [the SGB members] are not competent enough to execute these tasks, they should not be members of this panel. This means that they must co-opt members from outside who are competent enough for the tasks.”

P4 seems to take the argument to another level when he points out that:

“The SGB members always insist on being members of the interview committee even though they know they are not competent enough to carry out the accompanying tasks.”

He goes on to explain how he gets the SGB to accede to what he tells them to do (i.e., co-opting outsiders). He explains thus:

“So I go all out to twist their arm, and if it comes to a push, I threaten to stop the processes. I emphasise that, at the end of the day, I am the one to account if things don’t go well. That is why, most of the time, we end up with co-opted members in the committee.”

4.7.1 Fulfilment of the role by the SGB

When asked how the SGB has fulfilled the role of establishment of a committee for short-listing and interview procedures, one group of the respondents (the SGB chairpersons) are all agreed that the SGB has always fulfilled this role in the manner as prescribed by Resolution 1 of 2000. This view is articulated by SC3, who states that:

“The SGB has always fulfilled this role in the manner as indicated in the Resolution. We have always constituted the committee whenever there was a need to do so. We always insist that the interview committee must have members of the SGB in it.”

SC2 expresses the same idea slightly differently when he says that:

“Whenever we had vacancy in the past and there was a need for interviews, the SGB has always followed this procedure. But we have always insisted that there should be at least one member of the SGB in the panel, to oversee the proceedings.”

SC1 also seems to echo the same sentiment when he says that, *“Well, the SGB has always insisted on carrying out this role by constituting the short-listing and interviews committee.”* SC4 agrees by pointing out that:

“In the past, if a particular post became vacant, we have always ensured that there was a committee to deal with the short-listing and interview procedures.”

However, the other group of respondents (i.e., the principals) expressed some reservations about the manner in which the SGB has tried to fulfil the function. Although three out of four principals agree that the SGB has tried to fulfil this function, they point out that it was not in a satisfactory manner. One respondent, P3, picks up the argument in this manner: *“I think the SGB has always tried to fulfil*

the role, although not to a level that would leave one satisfied.” She contends that the reason for not fulfilling this function in a satisfactory manner could be their low level of education. She says that, “But then most of them are not competent enough to carry out this task, as they have not gone far with education.”

One respondent who expresses the same idea is P2, who maintains that:

“The SGB has always insisted on fulfilling this role, although it is clear that they lack the necessary expertise to do so, due to their low level of education.”

Another respondent, P1, is not wholly convinced that the SGB has done justice to the process. She strongly argues that:

“I don’t think the SGB has fulfilled this role that well. The way I see it, there is a lot of ignorance on the side of the SGB when it comes to the issue of skills of panel members. Some SGB members insist on being on the panel even though it is clear that they do not have the necessary skills to perform the task.”

4.7.2 Areas of conflict between the principal and the SGB chairperson in the fulfilment of the role

Concerning the issue of areas of conflict between the two key role players about the manner in which the SGB has tried to fulfil the role of establishing and constituting an interview committee, five out of eight respondents indicated that there were instances where they could not agree with the manner in which the SGB was supposed to carry out this role. SC1 indicates that:

“No, so far there has not been any incident of conflict between the principal and myself as far as this role is concerned.”

SC2 expresses the same idea by saying that:

“Since I became chairperson of the SGB, there has never been any sort of conflict between the principal and me in relation to fulfilment of this function.”

Another respondent, P1, also echoes the sentiment, but thinks the reason why there has not been any conflict around this role is:

“... because most of the time those panel members who do not have the right skills to interview are merely told to reproduce what they have been told to say during the interview process.”

SC3 admits that there has been conflict between himself and the principal around this issue, which he reckons was caused by lack of consultation. He mentions that:

“Sometimes the principal just decides that people who are not SGB members must be included in the committee, and she does this without consulting the SGB first.”

Another respondent, SC4, seems to echo SC3’s idea by indicating that the cause of the conflict was the principal who seems to undermine them because of their low level of education. He explains that:

“Sometimes the principal wants to look for outside members to come and constitute the panel. When we ask him why he wants that, he tells us that we are not competent enough to carry out the work, since we are not educated enough.”

P2 also admits to the fact that there has been conflict, and goes on to explain that:

“This conflict is caused by the fact that members of the SGB always insist on being members of the panel, despite the fact that they are not competent enough to do so. Oftentimes they mess up the situation due to their misinterpretation of some of the aspects of the Resolution [Resolution 1 of 2000].”

A similar sentiment is shared by another respondent, P3, who argues that:

“In many instances the SGB has insisted on members of the SGB being members of the committee. But then most of them are not competent enough to carry out this task, as they have not gone far with education.”

P4 adds his voice to the argument by strongly expressing a similar sentiment when he says:

“The SGB members always insist on being members of the interview committee even though they know they are not competent enough to carry out the accompanying tasks. Their incompetence ends up compromising standards, which in turn will lead to poor performance on the part of the learners.”

4.7.3 Dealing with the conflict

In dealing with the resultant conflict, a variety of measures seem to be applied in situations involving the affected respondents. In the case of SC3, the SGB simply stood their ground. This is revealed by SC3 himself, who says:

“We have always insisted that the principal cannot take such decisions alone to the exclusion of the rest of the SGB. We have

already explained to her that the task of co-opting members into the interview committee should be handled by the entire SGB members, and that the members of the SGB will then decide who to delegate this function to.”

In the case of P3, the respondent indicates that she tried to persuade the SGB to agree to co-opt competent people, but the SGB refused, because they thought she was trying to wrest control from the SGB. This is what she has to say about the situation:

“Well, I have tried to persuade [the SGB] to allow me to go out and look for suitable people who could be co-opted into the committee so that they could come and do a good job for the SGB. The problem is that the SGB chairperson thinks that I am trying to take over control of the SGB in order to render him powerless. So the SGB ends up turning my offer down, while insisting on being members of the interview committee themselves.”

With P4, bullying tactics seem to win the day in this sort of conflict. The respondent indicates that he simply bullies the SGB into submission. He argues that:

“We never find common ground in this issue, because I cannot allow them to tarnish the integrity of the interviews by doing a shoddy job which will result in a wrong person being hired.... So I go all out to twist their arm, and if it comes to a push, I threaten to stop the processes.... That is why, most of the time, we end up with co-opted members in the committee.”

In some instances there is a feeling of despair and insecurity among some of the respondents. With P2, he simply gives in and lets the SGB carry on with the task. He expresses this feeling by saying that:

“Since the SGB insists on constituting the panel itself, we just relent and let them carry on. Sometimes I am forced to sit them down and explain to them how the Resolution works, so that chances of them messing things up are minimised.”

With SC2, the feeling is that of insecurity which is most probably caused by the perception that they have a low level of education. The respondent explains that:

“It happens that most of the SGB members feel intimidated by the occasion of the short-listing and interview processes, so we end up giving in to the principal’s demand to have his own people in the committee for short-listing and interviews.”

4.8 Sec 19 (2) of SASA: Understanding of Sec 19 (2) of SASA

The assistance that Sec 19 (2) refers to, which is that the principal is expected to render all necessary assistance to the SGB in the performance of their functions, is understood in various ways by the respondents, and seems to come in various forms as well. For instance, with P1, her understanding is that she must help the SGB by explaining their responsibilities to them. This is how she puts it:

“Well, I understand this role to mean that I must do everything in my power to bring the SGB on board. What I mean by this is that I must explain their responsibilities to them, so that they will know what to do.”

This same idea is expressed by another respondent, P2, who says that:

“The way I understand it, it means as a principal I must help to clarify certain issues to them, like when it comes to the interpretation of Departmental policy.”

Another respondent who holds the same view is P2, who maintains that, *“I must also assist them by explaining to them certain procedures that they are not familiar with when executing some of their duties.”* SC4 also seems to concur with the other respondents as he says that, *“[The principal] must guide us, especially where we have to implement the policy of the Department.”*

SC1 adds that, *“For example, the principal must assist the SGB in drawing up the school policy.”* The idea of school policy is taken further by SC3, who maintains that:

“[The principal] must help us when we draw up policies for the school, so that we do not end up with policies that are not acceptable because they will not be consistent with provincial or national policies.”

SC1 extends the assistance to include the school’s budget as well. He says that, *“The principal must also assist the SGB in drawing the school’s budget.”* The same idea is expressed by SC3, who adds that:

“Even when we draw up the school’s budget, we expect the principal to play a key role by using her expertise to help us come up with a budget that will help the school to achieve its goals.”

4.8.1 Fulfilment of the role (Sec 19 (2) of SASA) by the principal

On the question of how the principal is fulfilling this role, again a variety of responses are elicited from the respondents. Three of the respondents feel that the principal is doing enough to fulfil the role, while another three of the respondents feel that the principal is just not doing enough to assist the SGB. But then, interestingly, there are two respondents who indicate their willingness to

help, but feel stifled by the SGB. For example, P1 feels satisfied about the extent to which she is fulfilling this role. She says:

“Well, I always try to bring them on board by explaining their responsibilities to them. I also conduct workshops for them on SASA, so that they will not do unlawful things while executing their duties.”

This view seems to be held by P2 as well, who explains that:

“I also help them with the procedure to be followed when they want to procure goods for the school, like, for example, looking for quotations for goods to be bought, and comparing the price against the quality.”

Another respondent, SC1, also expresses satisfaction about the kind of assistance they get from the principal. This is how he puts it:

“Although sometimes we have a difference of opinion in terms of interpretation of some of the issues... generally the principal is available to help the SGB in dealing with some of its responsibilities.”

However, there seems to be a voice of dissent expressed by other respondents with regard to the level of assistance the principal is giving. One respondent who indicates this idea is SC2, who says that:

“I cannot say I am satisfied with the level of assistance that we receive from the principal. Sometimes when we are unable to go forward because of lack of clarity in matters of procedure, instead of guiding us, [the principal] just keeps quiet and let us struggle alone. I interpret this to be his way of hitting back at us for not allowing him to have his way.”

Another respondent, SC3, echoes this sentiment by saying:

“I don’t think the principal is playing this role in the manner that she is expected to. To cite just one example, when we wanted to draw the school policy, she flatly refused to be part of the process, claiming that we wanted her to support us while we did not show any support at all when she needed it.”

SC4 does not seem to believe that the principal is doing enough in this regard, because he says that:

“The principal is not always willing to help us according to how we expect him to. For example, when we want to send him to town to go and buy goods for the school, he refuses, and then tells us that his car is not a school van that can be used to run the school, and that he uses the car to run errands for his family.”

Interestingly, two of the respondents (i.e., P3 and P4) indicate that although they are always ready and willing to help the SGB, the SGB does not allow them to. P3 argues that:

“I always make myself available to help [the SGB]. The problem is that sometimes they make it difficult for me to help them. Several times when I try to make inputs during discussions in SGB meetings, the chairperson dismisses them.”

The same view is expressed by P4, who has reason to believe that the SGB mistrusts him when it comes to financial matters. He maintains that:

“The problem is that the SGB is making it increasingly difficult for me to help them. To cite an example, when they have to draw the

school's budget, I always try to come up with inputs that will help to make the budget workable and acceptable, but the SGB rejects them, because they think that I will influence the budget in such a way that it will allow me to embezzle the money."

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter made an attempt to look into the lived experiences of the respondents, the purpose of which was to try and bring out the themes that emerged out of the responses. Looking at what emerges out of those lived experiences of the respondents, it becomes clear that the relationship between school governance and school management is not always a desirable one. This is due largely to the fact that there are perceptions of some kind of encroaching by one key role player into another key role player's territory. This encroaching seems to emanate from the apparent lack of clarity on the part of the key role players as to what their roles are.

However, it is also worth noting that there are instances where there appears to be agreement between the two key role players in terms of how they understand their roles to be, the reason being that they interpret some of the pieces of legislation in more or less the same way. This agreement notwithstanding, it does not necessarily mean that in these cases where the understanding of the roles seems to be the same between the two key role players, there will be no encroaching by one key role player into another key role player's territory.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, will present the findings of the study as well as make some recommendations based on the perceptions of the key role players about their understandings of management and governance relationships in schools.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will attempt to look at the results of the analysis of the data presented in Chapter Four of this study, and present the findings of this inquiry. In line with the objective of the study, the focus will be on the possible cause of the conflict that arose in schools which formed part of this study. The chapter will then come up with recommendations on what can be done in order to improve the situation.

It was the aim of this study to try and investigate the nature of the relationship between school management and school governance, so as to find out how the two practices contribute to the success or failure of the school. The study also set out to explore the extent to which principals and SGB chairpersons understand their roles and powers as they pertain to issues of management and governance in schools.

5.2 Discussion of the findings

The question pertaining to the issue of differences of opinion between the principal (who, one could safely argue, represents the employer within the SGB) and the SGB chairperson (who represents the entire parent community) reveals a lot in terms of the kind of relationship that exists between school governance and school management. It has to be emphasised that the success of any school will rely heavily on the good relationship that exists between the two key role players within the school.

One factor that seems to be key to most of the conflict situations at the schools involved in this study, as revealed by the respondents, is the fact that one key role player sometimes plays the role which is supposed to be played by the other

key role player. In other words, one role player steps on the other's toes. This proverbial stepping on the toes of others can happen either deliberately or inadvertently. A case in point is the principal who, in a parents meeting, threatens to take legal action against parents who do not pay school fees. Naturally, this issue must first be discussed in a parents meeting, where the principal would be given the platform to put forward her reasons for such a move. The SGB would have to agree with the reasons first, before they could inform the affected parents. The SGB would obviously feel embarrassed if they would be asked why the school did this without discussing it with the parents first, and would find it difficult to come up with a reasonable explanation. This is a clear case of one key role player not knowing what her responsibility is concerning school finances.

A similar problem happens at another school, where the principal and the teachers sit down in a staff meeting to discuss the financial situation of the school. After their deliberation, they decide to increase the school fees by a particular amount without the knowledge of the SGB. This also raises eyebrows, because the law does not make provision for teachers to determine how much parents should pay as school fees. Sec 39 of SASA (1996) alludes to the fact that only a majority of parents present in a duly constituted parents meeting can adopt a resolution to determine – and then – charge school fees. It stands to reason that the same procedure would have to be followed if the school fees were to be increased at a later stage.

This problem of people doing what they are not supposed to do resurfaces at another school, where the principal decides to hire an educator without discussing it with the SGB first. This action is obviously in stark contrast to what the law says. Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Council of the Limpopo Province Chamber states it categorically that it is the duty of the SGB to establish and constitute an interview committee in filling in vacancies at the school. This means that any vacancy that arises on the staff must be filled

through the process of short-listing and interviews. After the interview process has been completed, the SGB – not the principal – has the responsibility of recommending to the Head of Department the educator whom the SGB prefer for the post, subject to applicable pieces of legislation. This procedure is consistent with Sec 20 (1) (i) of SASA (1996). Now, when a key role player starts doing this kind of thing (i.e., hiring an educator without discussing it with the SGB first), one begins to wonder whether or not he is aware of the area in which he operates and the responsibilities attached to it.

In yet another school, there was a situation where teachers wanted to come up with policies for the school, like the Learners' Code of Conduct. When one looks at what the law says about the Code of Conduct for Learners, it becomes obvious that this is the competency of the SGB. Sec 20 (1) (d) of SASA, read in conjunction with Sec 8 (1) of same, puts it clearly that the SGB must adopt a Code of Conduct for Learners. Besides that, there are also prescripts provided to SGBs, which must be followed when they want to draw a code of conduct for learners.

The reason advanced by these teachers for wanting to come up with the learners' code of conduct is because, as one respondent (P3) puts it, the SGB members *"...do not know the kind of learners we have and what kind of problems we have concerning the learners, for the simple reason that they... spend a lot of time away from the school, which unfortunately is where the learners spend most of their time."* Considering what this respondent says, one could aver that this motivation is based more on sentiment than on fact, that is, what the law states.

A similar scenario plays itself out at another school, where the SGB seems to understand that drawing the code of conduct for learners is their responsibility. They draw it, but then embrace such issues as corporal punishment, which they strongly believe will help to curtail undesirable behaviour on the part of learners and to maintain order within the school. The code also forces all learners at the school to shave their heads as part of the school uniform. When the principal, who is fully aware that corporal punishment has been outlawed by Sec 10 of

SASA, tries to bring this to his attention, the SGB chairperson attacks him, and even accuses him of encouraging lawlessness and inculcating a culture of anarchy among the learners. The respondent (P4) indicates that the chairperson is convinced that he is doing this because “... *my child was attending a better school in town, where there was better discipline...*”

The problem of stepping on each other’s toes continues in the same school, where the SGB wants to draw a code of conduct for educators as well. Again, when the principal tries to help them, in line with what Sec 19 (2) of SASA says, by alerting them to the fact that the issue of the code of conduct is not part of their responsibility as it falls outside their scope of operation, the chairperson once more becomes upset, and then accuses the principal of undermining them, and of using the two documents that the principal cites to them (i.e., the SACE Code of Conduct and the Employment of Educators Act) as an excuse to avoid teachers being monitored by the SGB. Judging by this example, it becomes obvious that the chairperson is not fully acquainted with existing legislation and other regulations currently governing education.

At another school, this problem of one key role player playing the role that is supposed to be played by another key role player manifests itself in a situation where one of the educators reports late for work. Unfortunately for her, the SGB chairperson, who happens to be at the school at the time, witnesses it. Instead of addressing this issue with the principal, who is also around, he takes it up with the teacher. This inevitably leads to a heated argument between the teacher and the chairperson, which results in the SGB chairperson taking offence at the manner in which the teacher responds. The principal intervenes, and then tries to show the SGB chairperson that his responsibility as SGB chairperson in this matter is to determine the time at which the school should start, which will be consistent with Sec 20 (1) (f) of SASA, but that it is where it ends. The principal tells the SGB chairperson that, “*Whether educators and learners came to school on time was my responsibility as a principal.*” Instead of the SGB chairperson seeing

and understanding it from the perspective of what the law stipulates, he becomes “...livid...” and accuses the principal of “...siding with the educators, of promoting uncouth behaviour among the educators, and of treating them with kid gloves.” It would seem that the SGB chairperson is not aware of what his limits are in terms of school times.

In another school, the conflict is caused by a principal who, according to one respondent, “...just decides that people who are not SGB members must be included in the [interview] committee...” and who “...does this without consulting the SGB first.” According to Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Committee of the Limpopo Province Chamber, the SGB is tasked with the responsibility of establishing and constituting an interview committee whenever a vacancy on the staff has to be filled. The same Resolution makes provision for the SGB to co-opt people into the committee in the event that its members feel they do not have the capacity to carry out the responsibility. The problem here is that it is the principal, and not the entire SGB, who decides to co-opt people into the interview committee. It should be noted that the principal is not the SGB, but only a member thereof, which means that she cannot take a decision of this nature alone and to the exclusion of the SGB.

When one looks at the responses given by the respondents about the areas of conflict, another possible cause of the conflict emerges, which appears to be the fact that one key role player fails – or decides not – to follow procedure. In one school there was a situation where the principal had made a habit of signing blank cheques. When this habit is queried by the SGB, the principal explains that this practice saves him time, as he has to go out and look for signatories whenever he has to buy something for the school. This reason sounds invalid and therefore unacceptable, as financial prescripts dictate that no blank cheques should be issued out, as this might easily lead to fraud. This practice is also considered to be an irregularity. The respondent involved in this scenario even

alludes to the fact that at one stage this practice led to expenditure which was unaccounted for at their school.

Still on the question of failure to follow procedure, there is this situation in another school where cheques are issued out without following the right channels. According to one respondent, it would seem that the said procedure involves the question of the expenditure having to be authorised by both the principal and the SGB chairperson, both of whom would then counter-sign the claim form first before the Treasurer could issue out a cheque. In this instance, according to what the respondent has to say, the principal has a tendency of instructing the Treasurer to issue out cheques even if the SGB chairperson has not authorised the expenditure by counter-signing the claim form. Again, like in the other school, the principal tries to justify this practice by blaming the SGB chairperson for not being around at the time the cheque has to be issued out, which, I would argue, is indeed a flimsy excuse.

This problem of not sticking to procedure rears its ugly head again in the same school where the principal decides to hire a teacher without the said teacher being subjected to the normal process of interview. According to the respondent, the reason given by the principal is that there is an acute shortage of Mathematics teachers all over the country, which, he insinuates, necessitates that if you come across such a teacher, you simply put him in the vacancy without hearing what the teacher promises to offer. According to Resolution 1 of 2000, which was mentioned earlier, such a person has to be put through the process of interview first, regardless of the seriousness or urgency of the situation.

Another possible cause of the conflict seems to be a clash of personalities between the two key role players, which seem to fuel the fires. There was this case in one school which involved the principal who threatened to take legal action against parents whom she deemed to be unwilling to pay school fees, without discussing the issue with the SGB first. In this case, which has already

been alluded to above, when the respondent (P3) is asked whether she has experienced any instance where there has been a difference of opinion or understanding between her and the SGB chairperson on matters of managing and governing the school, she has this to say: *"We never to reach any agreement on anything and everything."* The respondent goes on to explain that when she raised the issue of parents who did not want to pay school fees in a parents meeting, *"...the SGB chairperson attacked me in front of everyone present at the meeting."* When the respondent mentioned the issue of legal steps being taken against the defaulting parents, the SGB chairperson, according to the respondent, *"...stood up and told the parents that I was lying, and that they must not allow me to intimidate them by mentioning legal steps."*

When asked whether she threw in the towel, she responds by saying, *"Not before I gave him a piece of my mind. I told him that what he was doing was tantamount to sabotage, and that it was clear that he was hell-bent on ensuring that I fail in my duties as a principal of the school."* The respondent was then asked whether it would not have been better if the issue was discussed in an SGB meeting first, where a consensus would have been reached before it could be taken to the parents. This is how she sums it up: *"You don't know just how stubborn the man is."* It becomes clear from the way the two key role players interact with each other that they have a problem of attitude. The kind of language that they use against each other in front of the parents does not hide their intense dislike for each other, and this can only serve to attest to the existence of a clash of personalities between the two.

It needs to be acknowledged, however, that in some instances the two key role players seem to have a common understanding of some of the aspects of the applicable legislation like SASA, although in most cases they differ in their understanding of the same aspects of the same laws and how they should be applied, as evident in some of their pronouncements and actions. For instance, seven of the respondents seem to have a common understanding of what Sec 20 (1) (a) of SASA entails. They understand the role to mean that the SGB must

make a conscious effort to provide all kinds of resources for the school, in order to make it easier for the principal, teachers, learners and other personnel in the school to do their work. As one respondent (P4) puts it, *“The SGB should therefore make all kinds of resources available to the school, so that everybody will find it easier to do their job.”* SC2 seems to echo what the above-mentioned respondent (P4) says. He (SC2) explains that, *“[The SGB] must ensure that the school has enough resources that will enable the teachers and other support staff at the school to execute their duties without any hindrance.”*

In yet another instance, seven of the eight respondents appear to understand Sec 37 (1) of SASA to mean that it is the responsibility of the SGB to make money available for the school. One respondent, SC1, puts it succinctly by saying that, *“It’s like the SGB must make money available for the school, and the principal must use the money to run the school.”* Another respondent who agrees with this respondent (SC1) is P3, who puts it thus: *“[The SGB] must also do everything they can in order to raise funds for the school.”* SC4 also explains that, *“I think this role means that it is the responsibility of the SGB to open a school account at a banking institution, where the school fees will be banked....”*

It should, however, be emphasised that the fact that there seems to be common understanding that exists between the two key role players about what their roles are, does not preclude the possibility of conflict arising between them.

As indicated in the first chapter, this study was based on the theory of decentralisation of power, where power is decentralised from the macro-level down to the micro-level. Decentralisation is meant to give people an opportunity to run their own affairs in the manner that will be beneficial to themselves. But if one looks at the responses given by the respondents in the cases cited above, it is evident that the decentralisation of power does not in and of itself imply smooth operation on the part of all the key role players. This becomes more evident in the cases cited above where conflict arises between two key role players in the execution of their duties. This conflict arises from a number of possible causes,

which leads to a situation where things do not turn out as well as they should. One could argue that the reason for things not turning out as well as they should is that sometimes power is not clearly defined, which results in people doing things that are supposed to be done by others, as was evident in the incidents already alluded to above.

5.3 Education Ministry proposal

It is worth noting that the national Minister of Education, Mrs. Naledi Pandor, has proposed changes to education laws. The Education Laws Amendment Bill, which has already been tabled before Parliament's Education Portfolio Committee, seeks to amend certain aspects of SASA and the Employment of Educators Act (EEA, Act 76 of 1998). The proposed changes, especially those involving SASA, have already created an aura of discontent among people across the spectrum.

Some of the changes, which impact directly on the SGBs, are the following:

- the SGB will recommend three candidates (instead of one, as is the case now) for educator appointments;
- the HOD will be able to convert the post of temporary educator into a permanent post, through consultation with, but not necessarily on the recommendation of, the SGB;
- limiting the powers of the SGB to suspend a learner.

These changes will have far-reaching consequences on some of the activities of the SGB, particularly in terms of the parents' inalienable right not only to decide what their children should be taught, but by whom they are taught.

5.4 Conclusion

If one looks at the interactions that characterise the relationship between the school management and school governance, it becomes clear that the two key role players (i.e., the school principal and the SGB chairperson) in the schools involved in this study are either not singing from the same (legislative) book, or are simply singing the same verse from the same book, but in different tunes. That is why the end product is undesirable, as it results in a sound that is cacophonous. This could be the result of the fact that these SGBs are elected and then start with their jobs of governing schools without being given proper guidance as to how they should do it.

Previous studies have found that the inadequate training offered to SGBs results in the SGB being ill-equipped to manage the duties and responsibilities of the SGB, like drawing policies for the school, as well as being not familiar with certain procedures involving their job, like, for example, chairing meetings (Vandeyar, 2000; Mabasa and Themane, 2002). Judging by what most of the respondents have to say, there is a general feeling of despondency expressed by the respondents about this lack of training.

5.5 Recommendations

With the types of challenges SGBs are faced within the current dispensation, it would be proper to make the following recommendations that might help to eliminate the potential for conflict in schools:

- 5.5.1 The capacity of SGB should be enhanced. This should be done through thorough, regular and intensive training of the SGBs organised by the Department of Education, as mandated by Sec 19 (1) of SASA.
- 5.5.2 The term of office of the SGB should be extended from the current three years to at least five years. This should be done in order to give the governors enough time to gain more knowledge about governance issues before their term of office expires which could

improve the manner in which schools are run. This will also allow them to finish projects that they might have started and not finished before the expiry of their term of office.

- 5.5.3 The responsibility to draw the school policy should be momentarily given to the principal and teachers. This becomes even more relevant in cases where the SGB is unable to interrogate legislation that guides them on how these policies have to be drawn. This could help to avoid a situation where the SGB includes clauses in the policy which are prohibited by the law. In the meantime, the Department of Education should provide opportunities for the SGB to undergo rigorous training that will include the aspect of their work that has to do with drawing up policies. Only after that could this responsibility be given back to the SGB, where the process of drawing up policies will then become a joint effort between the SGB and the educators.
- 5.5.4 Considering the fact that the capacity of the SGB is in question, the responsibility to manage the finances of the school should be taken away from the SGB and be put in the hands of the principal and his SMT, where the SGB will be consulted whenever a transaction has to be made. This consultation could be such that the principal and the teachers will be responsible for coming up with a draft budget for the school. They will then present the budget to the parents for approval. The parents could then play the role of overseer, just so they can ensure that the money will be used to serve the interests of the school, in line with the budget.
- 5.5.5 The Department of Education should enforce regular team-building sessions within the SGB in an attempt to diffuse the tension that sometimes characterises the relationship between school governance and school management, which most often lead to sour relations between the two.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

TITLE: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IIN IMPOPO'S RURAL SCHOOLS: ARE THE KEY ROLE PLAYERS SINGING FROM THE SAME (LEGISLATIVE) BOOK?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE SGB-Chairpersons

1. Gender?
2. Highest Qualifications?
3. Type of school (*Primary / Secondary school*)?
4. How long have you been an SGB member?
5. Of those years as an SGB member, how long have you been an SGB chairperson?
6. Have you received any governance training?
7. Do you know who provided the training?
8. How long was the training (*1 day / 2 days / 1 week / etc.*)?
9. What kind of training was given? (*lectures, workshop, group or individual activities, handouts home assignments etc.*)?
10. What areas did the training cover?
11. Did you find the training to be of any use to your functioning as an SGB member / chairperson? If yes, how so? If no, what was lacking in the training?
12. Did you receive any follow up support after the training?
13. Have you experienced any instances where there has been a difference of opinion / understanding between you and the principal on matters of managing and governing the school? If so, in which areas? How did you deal with these situations?
14. Sec 16 of SASA vests the governance of every public school in its governing body, while the professional management of the school is to be undertaken by the principal.
 - a) As Chairperson of the SGB, what is your understanding of the concepts "governance" and "management"?
 - b) In your understanding, which roles would you ascribe to each of the concepts? In other words, what does each one of them entail?
 - c) Which roles do you regard as an interface between "governance" and "management", which are likely to result in conflict?

15. Section 20 (1) (a) of SASA tasks the SGB with promoting the best interests of the school and striving to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school.

- a) As SGB Chairperson, what do you understand this role to mean?
- b) What does (has) it entail(ed) in practical terms? In other words, how have you actualized it in practice – how do you as the SGB fulfil this function / role?

16. According to SASA, section 20 (1) (e), the SGB must support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

- a) How do you (as SGB chairperson) understand this role to mean?
- b) What does (has) it entail(ed) in practical terms? In other words, how have you actualised it in practice – how do you as the SGB support the principal, educators and other staff in the school?

17. Sec 4.2 of the Personnel Administrative Measures stipulates that the principal must keep various kinds of school accounts and records properly and must make the best use of funds for benefit of the learners in consultation with the appropriate structures.

- a) As SGB Chairperson, what is your understanding of this role of the principal vis-à-vis what Sec 37 (1) of SASA stipulates with regard to the role of the SGB (i.e. to establish a school fund and administer it in line with directions issued by the Head of Department).

18. According to Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Committee of the Northern Province Chamber, pertaining to short-listing and interview procedures, it is the duty of the SGB to establish and constitute an Interview Committee.

- a) What does this role of the SGB mean to you? In other words, what is your understanding of what the SGB should be doing in line with this Resolution?
- b) How has the SGB fulfilled this role? Have there been any areas of conflict between you and the principal in the fulfilment of this function? If so, how have they been dealt with?

19. Section 19 (2) of SASA stipulates that the principal is expected to render all necessary assistance to the SGB in the performance of their functions.

- a) What does this role of the principal mean to you? In other words, what is your understanding of what the principal should be doing to provide this assistance?
- b) In your understanding, is the principal rendering the assistance in line with your understanding of what the legislation stipulates?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE School Principal

1. Gender?
2. Highest Qualifications?
3. Type of school (*Primary / Secondary school*)?
4. How long have you been a principal?
5. Of those years as a principal, how long have you been a member of the SGB?
6. Have you received any governance training?
7. Do you know who provided the training?
8. How long was the training (*1 day / 2 days / 1 week / etc.*)?
9. What kind of training was given? (*lectures, workshop, group or individual activities, handouts home assignments etc.*)?
10. What areas did the training cover?
11. Did you find the training to be of any use to your understanding of your role as the principal vis-à-vis the role of the SGB? If yes, how so? If no, what was lacking in the training?
12. Did you receive any follow up support after the training?
13. Have you experienced any instances where there has been a difference of opinion / understanding between you and the SGB on matters of managing and governing the school? If so, in which areas? How did you deal with these situations?
14. Section 16 of SASA vests the governance of every public school in its governing body, while the professional management of the school is to be undertaken by the principal.

- a) As a principal, what is your understanding of the concepts "governance" and "management"?
- b) In your understanding, which roles would you ascribe to each one of these concepts? In other words, what does each one of them entail?
- c) Which roles do you regard as an interface between "governance" and "management", which might lead to tension / conflict between the two?

15. Sec 20 (1) (a) of SASA tasks the SGB with promoting the best interest of the school and striving to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school.

- a) What does this role mean to you as a principal? In other words, what is your understanding of what the SGB should be doing in order to fulfil this function?
- b) Do you, in your understanding, feel that the SGB is fulfilling this function in line with your understanding of what the legislation stipulates?

16. According to SASA, section 20 (1) (e), the SGB must support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

- a) What does this role of the SGB mean to you? In other words, what is your understanding of what the SGB should be doing to provide this support?
- b) In your understanding, is the SGB providing this support in line with your understanding of what the legislation stipulates?

17. Sec 37 (1) of SASA gives the SGB the responsibility of establishing a school fund and administering it in line with directions issued by the Head of Department.

- a) As a principal, what is your understanding of this role vis-à-vis what Sec 4.2 of the Personnel Administrative Measures says regarding your role as a principal? (i.e. "To have various kinds of school accounts and records properly kept and to make the best use of funds for benefit of learners in consultation with appropriate structures").

18. According to Resolution 1 of 2000 of the Education Labour Relations Committee of the Northern Province Chamber, pertaining to short-listing and interview procedures, it is the duty of the SGB to establish and constitute an Interview Committee.

- a) What does this role of the SGB mean to you? In other words, what is your understanding of what the SGB should be doing in line with this Resolution?
- b) How has the SGB fulfilled this role? Have there been any areas of conflict? If so, how have they been dealt with?

19. According to SASA, section 19 (2), the principal is expected to render all necessary assistance to the SGB.

- a) How do you, as a principal, understand this role to mean?
- b) What does (has) it entail(ed) in practical terms? In other words, how have you actualised it in practice – how do you as a principal support the SGB in the execution of their duties?

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

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0739
23 September 2005

Professor Harry Nengwekhulu
Head of Department
Department of Education
Private Bag X 9489
POLOKWANE
0700

Sir

Request for permission to conduct research

I hereby wish to request for permission to conduct research at some of Limpopo's rural primary and secondary schools.

I am a student at the University of Pretoria, and am pursuing my studies towards an MEd degree in Educational Management, Law and Policy Studies. I am currently employed by the Limpopo Department of Education as a school principal.

The title of my research is "**School governance and management in Limpopo's rural schools: are the key role-players singing from the same (legislative) book?**" The research is aimed at finding out the principals' and SGB chairpersons' understandings of their roles and powers vis-à-vis management and governance practices in schools, and also the extent to which these understandings resonate with policy as stipulated in the South African Schools Act (SASA, Act 84 of 1996) and other relevant pieces of legislation such as the National Education Policy Act (NEPA, Act 27 of 1996)

Individual interviews of not more than 30 minutes will be conducted with school principals and SGB chairpersons outside of their normal working hours. Information gathered will be treated anonymously and confidentially, and will be used for academic purposes only. The results of this research will be shared with the Department should the Department express such a wish.

For further information, please feel free to contact me at: **0822582479**, or via e-mail at emjay1@webmail.co.za

I am looking forward to your favourable response.

Yours faithfully

.....
Makopane Marodi

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

P O Box 619
APEL
0739
15 January 2007

TITLE: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN LIMPOPO'S RURAL SCHOOLS: ARE THE KEY ROLE PLAYERS SINGING FROM THE SAME (LEGISLATIVE) BOOK?

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in a research project aimed at finding out the principals' and SGB chairpersons' understandings of their roles and powers in relation to governance and management practices in schools, and the extent to which these understandings resonate with policy as stipulated in SASA (Act 84 of 1996) and NEPA (Act 27 of 1996).

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established, unless you are willing to be contacted for individual follow-up interviews. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentiality will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you not wish to continue with an interview.

Your role as a participant in this research project will be to respond to questions during an interview, and you will also be allowed to ask questions of your own during the interview should you need clarity about any issue concerning the interview.

The results from this study will be used to improve our understanding of how principals and SGB chairpersons perceive their roles and powers, and to improve governance and management practices at schools.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, i.e. that you shall participate in this project willingly, and that you understand that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not obligate you to participate in follow-up interviews. However, should you decide to participate in follow-up interviews, your participation is still voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. Under no circumstances will the identity of the interview participants be made known to circuit, district or provincial officials or their representatives.

Participant's signature:.....

Date:.....

Researcher's signature:.....

Date:

Yours sincerely

.....
Marodi Makopane

APPENDIX D: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

ANNEXURE D



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE
DEGREE AND PROJECT

INVESTIGATOR(S)

DEPARTMENT

DATE CONSIDERED

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE NUMBER : EMP06/06/01

M.Ed Educational Management & Policy Studies
School management and governance in Limpopo's rural schools:
Are the key role players singing from the state legislative book?

Makopane J Marodi

Educational Management & Policy Studies

1 June 2006

APPROVED

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years from the date of consideration and may be renewed upon application

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS
COMMITTEE**

Dr C Lubbe

DATE

1 June 2006

CC

Mr JS Chalufu
Mrs Jeannie Beukes

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.


Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH – LIMPOPO

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Received Fax : 2008 Oct 20 11:58 Fax Station : Studente-ontwikkeling P. 2

20-OCT-2008 11:11 FROM: POSTNET-MOKOPANE 0866118697 TO: 0123669885 P.2



Limpopo
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Enquiries: Mokoka M B
Telephone: 015 290 7918
Fax: 015 297 2690
Reference: 2/5/6/1

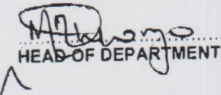
Corner 113 Biceard &
24 Excelsior Street
Private Bag X9489
Polokwane 0700
Tel: 015-290 7600
Fax: 015-297 6920
015-297 4220
015-297 4494

Makopane Marodi
P.O.Box 619
APEL
0739

Dear Student

Application For Permission To Conduct Research

1. Your letter dated 20th September 2005 bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research at schools in Capricorn, Waterberg, Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts is approved. The title of the research is 'School governance and management in Limpopo's rural schools: Are the key role players singing from the same (legislative) book?'
3. However, the following conditions must be adhered to:
 - 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 concerning the conduct of the study and the research should not be conducted during the fourth term of the calendar year, as schools would be making final preparations for the end of year examinations.
 - 3.3. Arrangements should be made with the schools in such a way that there will be minimal disruption of the academic programme.
 - 3.4. You share with the Department, the final product of your study upon completion of the research assignment.
 - 3.5. The research is conducted in line with ethics in research.
4. It is expected of you to produce the accompanying letter at institutions where you will be conducting your research, as evidence that permission for this activity has been granted.
5. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.


HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE: 22/9/05

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HEAD OFFICE