EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' LEGAL MANDATES.

THE CASE OF MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

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Date: 31 October 2022

DEDICATION

- This dissertation is dedicated to my three children, Vukosi, Masana, and Hlulani as well as my loving wife Agnes. They were understanding of my home absence as I conducted this project. I value your unwavering support, understanding, and encouragement.

- In this rapidly changing world, my late parents James and Mamaila Baloyi helped me understand education's importance.

- To make sure that everyone in the family received an education, the late brother Philemon Baloyi made financial sacrifices. May his soul rest in peace.

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ABSTRACT

Schools in Mopani District are governed by School Governing Bodies that are incapable of performing fiduciary responsibilities. They cannot interpret and implement school policies in their respective schools. Fiduciary duty is a legal concept describing the relationship between two parties that obligates one to act solely in the interest of the other. Most parents are illiterate preventing them from effectively participating in SGB meetings. In most cases, it appears that the views of the principals are considered final decisions because they have the necessary special skills. They dominate in the SGB meetings during discussions. Many studies have been conducted on SGBs and their functionality, however, I have not found any that sought to address my research question. Therefore, it is for this reason that this qualitative case study aims to explore the legal mandates of the SGBs in the Mopani District regarding policy interpretation and implementation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with focus groups. Four rural primary schools from different Circuits in Mopani District were purposefully sampled. In the first two primary schools, the Principal, the SGB chairperson, and the educator who represents educators in the SGB from each school were purposefully sampled for semi-structured interviews. The focus group interviews which consisted of six members from each school, the Principal, the SGB chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB, and three additional members of the SGB were conducted in the last two primary schools. Document analysis from four sampled primary schools was also conducted. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested: co-opting retired education practitioners to serve in the SGBs. To come up with a clear programme or schedule of SGB training and workshops. Assessing the level of understanding of SGB members at the end of the training and workshops. Recruiting experts on school governance bodies for capacitating the SGB members.

Keywords: Fiduciary, mandate, policy interpretation and implementation, school governance, School Governing Bodies.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BA	Bachelor of Arts
B Ed	Bachelor of Education
B Ed (Hons)	Bachelor of Education Honours
B O G	Board of Governors
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DOE	Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
LC	Local Council
LDE	Limpopo Department of Education
PDE	Provincial Department of Education
PTD	Primary Teachers Diploma
PTSAs	Parent Teacher Student Associations
SASA	South African Schools Act 84 of 1996
SDA	School Development Association
SDC	School Development Committee
SGB	School Governing Body
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
UNISA	University of South Africa

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in South African public schools were introduced in terms of the South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996. Motshekga (2018:5) points out that the South African Schools Act, No.84 of 1996 as amended (SASA) allows for School Governing Bodies (SGBs) as statutory bodies to be elected in all public schools every three years and serve as a vanguard to ensure support for effective learning and teaching to take place in every school. This was an initiation by the South African government because it declared education in South African public schools as a national responsibility. SASA as amended stipulates that the governance of a school is vested in its School Governing Body (SASA, 1996). Dibete (2015:136) says that as a way of decentralising power, the government of South Africa introduced new governance structures in schools in the form of democratically elected SGBs. These SGBs are governance structures in the schools that are mandated to implement the imperatives of SASA, with SASA placing an obligation on the SGBs to organise, govern, and manage schools.

According to SASA, one of the legal mandates of the SGBs is to understand and implement school policies accurately in schools. In addition, the SGBs aimed to involve parents, educators, non-teaching staff, and learners in secondary schools in the governing of public schools that included policy interpretation and implementation mandates. The issue of non-involvement of parents, educators, non-teaching staff, and learners in the SGBs of the South African public schools has been justified by Ndou and Mbunyuza (2015:153) when they say that since 1994, the apartheid state excluded most citizens from genuine and equal participation in South Africa. It used education to socialise young people into the status quo of inequalities through conformity to authoritarian structures. This aim was still applicable during the writing of this dissertation. The establishment of the SGBs was aimed at guarantying stakeholders' participation in public education. The new government which came into power in 1994, was committed to the development of a democratic system that created participation from relevant stakeholders in South African public education. Ndou and Mbunyuza (2015:154) indicate that the idea of government was to focus on democratisation, correcting past imbalances, achieving equity as well as the active

participation of all stakeholders in education. This has been done to improve school governance in public schools. If schools do not have good governance, the quality of teaching and learning is affected. Therefore, the academic performance of learners is negatively affected. Motshekga (2021:23) indicates that the DBE echoes the sentiments of research findings which indicate that schools that have effective SGBs generally perform better in relation to learner outcomes.

1.2   BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In the past, during the apartheid government, the SGBs were known as the school committees. The pathetic part was that they were not democratically elected. The role of the school committees was to govern South African public schools. It is supported by Quan-Baffour (2006:9) when he says that previously rural schools in black communities in South Africa were governed by school committees. Members of school committees were handpicked by traditional leaders of communities hence learners, educators, parents, and other relevant structures within the communities were excluded from making decisions regarding the education of their children. The people in higher authorities such as principals and inspectors used to make decisions for the schools (Motimele, 2005).

The main decision-makers for schools were inspectors, and principals (Van Wyk, 2007). He further states that despite having the majority representation on the SGB, many parents serving on the SGB are reticent and rely on the principal and teachers for leadership, and guidance in decision-making.

Furthermore, Ndou and Mbunyuza (2015:153) stress that the apartheid government excluded most people from taking part in education. This practice was a norm until1994 when the country gained freedom.

Communities formed Parents Teacher Students Associations (PTSAs) after 1994. They attempted to encourage participation from relevant structures of public schools in South Africa. The main aim of this association was to replace the school committees that did not encourage participation from all relevant stakeholders in education.

Nevertheless, this was not enough to solve the problem of stakeholders' participation in education. This was the reason for introducing SGBs to ensure that learning and

teaching centres run smoothly through proper interpretation and implementation of school policies.

This is the new dispensation and all relevant stakeholders in education need to take part in governance matters of schools in policy interpretation and implementation. Nong (2007:8) stresses that as the country has gained freedom, all educational stakeholders must participate in governance matters. Besides, the establishment of SGBs in public schools seemed to be the amicable solution because this structure involves all stakeholders that are relevant to education. This is the reason why the SGBs are still operational in South African public schools during this era. Ndou and Mbunyuza (2015:153) indicate that the country's new constitution brought new changes in education. One notable change was the introduction of new governance in public schools.

However, from my point of view, the majority of SGBs in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province cannot interpret and implement school policies accurately due to limited knowledge and skills. This might be because most of them are illiterate. What exacerbates the situation is that SASA which emanates from the country's constitution, gives SGBs certain functions they must execute in schools. For instance, they are mandated to take responsibility for the development policies in specific areas within their respective schools. Some of the school policies that the SGBs need to develop, adopt, interpret, and implement include the following:

- The SGB Constitution
- The vision and mission statement of the school
- Admission policy
- Language policy
- Religious policy
- A code of conduct for learners
- Safety policy
- HIV and AIDS policy

Motimele (2005:3) regards School Governing Body as a legal body of the school, established in terms of the South African Schools Act. It is mandated to set policies and rules that govern the school, and to monitor the implementation of the rules. All

the school policies that are established by this body must be in line with the laws determined by the national government. The laws are contained in the country's constitution.

The interpretation and implementation of the school policies mentioned above require skills and knowledge. My understanding is that special skills need to be acquired to ensure that schools become centres of excellence. With the change the country has undergone, SGBs need to display skills that match their expected tasks. As a result, stakeholders must be responsible in dealing with this important task. SGB members, therefore, require significant and complex communication, negotiation, and competency skills to execute their fiduciary roles and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Moreover, governors are expected to exercise reasonable rationality, knowledge, and wisdom when implementing educational policies in compliance with the law as they fulfil their governance oversight in the institutions. I would proffer that most SGBs in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province are not functioning properly in schools because they do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to interpret and implement policies correctly. Moreover, seemingly most SGBs are not even sure about their roles and responsibilities. Motshekga (2018:5) laments the lack of governance depth when she confirms the complaints her department received for the years about newly appointed SGB members who receive little training about their roles, and responsibilities.

Nhlabati (2015:121) states that the SGB members have little knowledge about their legal functions. What leads to the non-acquisition of skills and knowledge can be that the training they receive based on policy interpretation and implementation from Education Department in Mopani District seemed to be inadequate. Nieuwenhuis and Ntho-tho (2015:29) concur when they indicate that the SGB training programmes on offer were insufficient and yielded minor results on issues of policy crafting.

This problem occurs mostly in poor communities in South African provincial districts because most parents are ill-equipped to deal with fiduciary responsibilities, as I have already alluded to. As a result, most schools in the Mopani district appear to be dysfunctional since policies are not accurately interpreted and implemented as envisaged by stakeholders. Therefore, I strongly feel that this problem must be explored and addressed to determine blockages in policy interpretation and

implementation in line with fiduciary responsibilities. Many studies have been conducted on SGBs and their functionality. However, I have not found any that sought to address my research question.

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many Schools Governing Bodies (SGBs) are dysfunctional and not carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities (Motshekga, 2018). Dysfunctional SGB in my study refers to those members who lack legal and policy insight, competence, skill, or intent to carry out their fiduciary responsibilities. Some research studies on SGB indicate findings that dysfunctional performance should be blamed for poor training provided by provincial departments. Makhuvele (2016) confirms that his research findings reveal that most SGBs do not have the necessary capacity to interpret and implement policies in schools. He further indicates that this is because of the inadequate training that they receive during their term of office. Malatji (2018) conquers when he reveals in his study that there is a serious need to train members of SGBs at the school level because those that he interviewed complained about the time allocated for their training and the language used in their training by the facilitators. Motshekga (2021:13) justifies when she indicates that many SGBs currently receive initial training from provincial departments. Moreover, King (2020:8) says that although South Africa has several legislative and policy frameworks aimed at guiding the SGBs to perform their fiduciary and oversight roles effectively, research has shown that they continue to experience challenges such as lack of strong governance systems.

My study explored SGBs' continuous and consistent failure to accurately interpret and implement policies correctly in most rural public learning and teaching centres of Mopani District in Limpopo Province. This is the problem despite all efforts being made by the provincial education department. Most schools in the district are situated in rural areas. Most parents in these areas are illiterate; hence, their involvement in school governance especially around policy interpretation and implementation poses a challenge. Nhlabati (2015:119) justifies this when he indicates that the high level of illiteracy among parents has a negative impact on their participation and contribution to SGBs. This challenge has prompted me to conduct this research as this problem is still encountered in rural public schools of the Mopani district. Motshekga (2018:12) confirms that her research indicated that most of the newly elected SGB members do

not have the necessary capabilities to govern schools at the required level. She further indicates that this problem is really for those SGBs serving in poor communities and those located in rural areas.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of my qualitative study is to explore the legal mandates of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province.

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The study aims to explore how the SGBs' leadership exercises their fiduciary governance responsibilities on matters of policy implementation and law compliance in the Mopani District public schools to identify the generic skills and competencies which contribute towards effectiveness and efficiency in line with their mandate.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1) To determine the skills and competencies that are critical in SGBs' effective policy, law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools.
2) To understand how the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in the Mopani District supports the SGBSs in making them more effective in law compliance, policy interpretation and implementation.
3) To investigate the level of capacity building and empowerment strategies that are offered to SGB members and how often is it provided to improve their effectiveness when performing their roles.
4) To recommend capacity-building strategies for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework played an important role in my study. For instance, it supported the theory that I have used for this research study. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:54) point out that a theoretical framework constitutes a paradigm in which a

study is anchored and constructed. Theory is a difficult term to define precisely, however, the standardised definition which has been accepted by many researchers was offered by Kerlinger (2006:9). He indicates that it is a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining, and predicting the phenomena. In other words, a theory is a specific plan that comprises a set of concepts related to each other through logical patterns of connectivity (Mills and Birks, 2014:260). Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2005:25) indicate that a theoretical framework position one's research in the correct perspective. In other words, a theoretical framework enabled me to theorise about my research. It also provided an orientation to my study. My understanding is that any researcher must have a theory when conducting a study because it supports and justifies the research that is being conducted. My views are anchored on Bryman's (2016) assertion that a theory is important because it provides a backcloth and justification for the research that is being conducted. It also provides a framework within which social phenomena can be understood and the research findings can be interpreted. My observation is that most authors usually use a theoretical framework in qualitative research to put their research or studies in good perspective.

As part of my study, I employed a theoretical framework based on Grant-Lewis and Naidoo's theory of action that discusses school governance policy and practice in South Africa. This study is grounded on the primary proponent of the theory of action, although the secondary users of this theory were identified. I feel this theory is relevant to this study because the two authors used the 'theory of action' in their study to unpack the dimensions of school governance, although they are hardly the proponents of the theory of action. The authors stated that by exploring the theory of action which specifies the interpretation of these policies in practice, they were able to assess the degree of transformation, and the nature of participation in school governance. Moreover, according to the authors, the concept 'theory of action' provided a channel to explore assumptions informing educational policies and practices at systemic, programmatic, and individual levels (Grant - Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:101).

1.6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is:

How do School Governing Bodies (SGBs) leadership exercise their fiduciary governance responsibilities on matters of policy implementation and law compliance in the Mopani District public schools?

1.6.1 Sub-research questions

The following were the sub-questions that underpinned the main research question:

1) What critical skills and competences do School Governing Bodies (SGBs) possess for them to be effective in policy, law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools?
2) How the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani District does support SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance, policy interpretation and implementation?
3) What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB, and school management?
4) What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Despite the view that this research has affirmed the important fiduciary role that school governing bodies play in implementing educational reforms, resource provisions, learner assessments, facilitation of school stability, functionality, and exit requirements, some critics have contended that the traditional governance and policymaking roles of SGBs have been compromised by bureaucratic intransigence, a tendency to micromanage school system operations, and divisiveness caused by special interest groups. While one researcher has suggested that lay control of schools is a myth, others have argued that the SGB is essential to ensure the quality of public education services at the local level. King (2020:8) indicates that South Africa as a developing country has experienced challenges regarding the effectiveness of the SGBs. He elaborates that South Africa fails to perform its mandates of providing high

quality education and these challenges might be due to the problems associated with the SGBs.

While SGB operates locally within the confines of the state's delegation of power and the geographical boundaries of the district, it arises from the constitution, laws, and judicial decisions of the state itself. Malatji (2018) indicates that the school policies that are embodied in SASA document originate from the South African Constitution. By state legislative enactment, SGBs are delegated power and authority to develop policies, rules, and regulations to control the operation of the schools, including system organisation, school site location, part school finance, equipment purchase, staffing, attendance, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and other functions essential to the day-to-day operation of schools within the district's boundaries. SGBs may also be authorized by the state legislature to levy taxes, invest resources, initiate eminent domain proceedings, acquire land, and assume bonded indebtedness. It is therefore critical that evidence-based research is done to understand the entrenchment of public-school local power as exercised by SGBs. This is critical because it serves to inform the skills, and competence levels of those charged with fiduciary responsibilities in line with the prescripts of the law.

Dibete (2015:3) points out in his dissertation when he indicates that the reason behind the introduction of SGBs as one of the education reforms was to ensure that educators, parents, learners in secondary schools, and non-teaching staff would actively participate in the governance, and management of schools to provide a better teaching, and learning environment. Therefore, the significance of this study included the following:

1) To identify the hindrances that prevent the SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies effectively.
2) To assist in providing solutions to the problems the SGBs encounter in the interpretation and implementation of school policies.
3) Outline mandatory school policies that the SGBs are expected to develop, interpret, and implement in public schools.
4) Ensure that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in the district exercises its role in terms of supporting the SGBs to execute its responsibilities.

5) Recommend the appropriate capacity-building strategies for empowering the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation.

6) Assist in providing a better understanding of the complexity regarding the legal mandates of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation.

7) Use findings and recommendations of the study to promote effective governance in public schools, especially in the Mopani District where school policies are not interpreted and implemented accurately.

1.8   ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND DELIMITATIONS

It was important to include the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. For instance, I identified the weaknesses that can become a hindrance to the phenomenon. I knew the characteristics that limited the scope of my study. The boundaries of the study were defined as well.

1.8.1   Assumptions

My assumption was to ensure that the phenomenon under study, which is "*Exploration of School Governing Bodies legal mandates: The case of Mopani District in Limpopo Province*", had to be carried out efficiently and effectively. The study attempted to include all the aspects that were required when the research is conducted. Therefore, my analysis was that the challenges experienced by the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation in Mopani public schools were identified and addressed by this study.

1.8.2   Limitations of the study

Limitations that became potential weaknesses were as follows:

1) Some participants especially the parent component in the SGBs found it difficult to understand why they should be interviewed and why research of this nature had to be carried out.

2) I encountered difficulties in terms of accessing SGB records in one sampled school due to poor record keeping. Therefore, I was unable to analyse school policies from this school.

3) Minimal participation from the parent as a component due to lack of knowledge during focus group interviews was a challenge.

The above-mentioned weaknesses were beyond my control.

1.8.3 Delimitations of the study

The term delimitation means to mark or prescribe the limits or boundaries of something. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:38) indicate that delimitation as a term is like concepts such as the scope of the research or demarcation of the study. A study can be demarcated geographically, target population, methodologically, and so on. I was able to visualise the context been which this study had been conducted to avoid the study being wanting about delimitation.

The characteristics that limited the scope and defined the boundaries of the study were as follows:

I focused this research on exploring the legal mandates of the SGBs in policy interpretation, and implementation in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province only. I conducted my research in four rural Primary Schools.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTUAL TERMS

It is important to define the key concepts for this study since people have different knowledge and understanding of the meaning of words. I should define the context in which these concepts have been used to make readers understand my view. In addition, the key concepts contribute to an understanding of the study. Due to the frequent appearance of such concepts in this study, it is important to define them.

The concepts which appeared frequently in this study are:

    (a)   **School public policy**– can be understood as decisions of legally elected bodies taken through the processes of participation involving citizens, principals, and educators in principle that they believe will influence how fiduciary responsibilities can be achieved in line with existing empowering provisions (SASA, 1996). Motshekga (2021:25) justifies when she defines the school public policy as an external directive or general plan of action stipulated by national or provincial government underpinned by a statute or circular.

(b) **School Governing Bodies (SGBs)** – the structure or legal body of the school, established in terms of the South African Schools Act 84, of 1996. This body is democratically elected and is given powers by the Act to design specific policies and rules that govern the school and to monitor the implementation of those policies and rules. The body gets powers from learners, parents, teaching, and non-teaching staff when designing the policies and the rules (Motimele, 2005). Motshekga (2021:25) confirms when she defines the School Governing Body as an elected body consisting of parents, educators, non-educator staff, learners from grade 8 upwards, and the school principal.

(c) **School governance** – refers to the involvement of relevant stakeholders, such as educators, parents, non-teaching staff, and (learners only in secondary schools) in making decisions about the way in which the school should be governed. (Mavuso & Duku, 2014). Galetuke (2017) points out that according to section 16 of SASA, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body.

(d) **The South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996)** - is the act that aims to provide for a single national system for schools, which will redress past injustices in education provision and provide high-quality education for all learners in South Africa (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2011). South African Schools Act is an act of Parliament that governs the functioning of the South African schooling system (Motshekga, 2021).

(e) **Adopt** – refers to agreement and acceptance of a document that guides one's behaviour or conduct in a particular body, institution, or organisation. Selamolela (2019: 20) says, "For the SGB to function effectively, it must adopt a constitution which will guide its activities". SASA (1996) section 18 provides for each governing body to adopt a constitution and submit a copy to the Head of Department within a period of 90 days after the election of the governing body.

(f) **Mandate** – when a particular legal authority carries out tasks or policies because it has been mandated for that purpose (Motimele, 2005). It refers to the legal mandate (powers) that are given to the SGBs by SASA to govern schools effectively. (SASA, 1996).

(g) **Policy implementation** – refers to the process of applying the policy that had been designed for a particular purpose in any organisation or institution. It implies putting deeds into practice or acting (Zondo, 2016). Makhuvele (2016) justifies when he says, "to read and understand applicable policies for proper implementation".

(h) **Capacity-building** – the training aimed at developing or equipping people with skills and knowledge to achieve a particular purpose. Mahlangu (2008) refers to capacity-building as a form of assistance and training provided to those governors who performed similar functions in the past but who need to be informed especially about the provisions of the SASA. Makhuvele (2016) refers to the training and support that should be given to the SGBs to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to interpret and implement policies in schools.

(i) **Policy interpretation** – a principle which is clearly defined and explained in a manner that enables members of the organisation or institution to pragmatically implement correctly, what it requires (SASA, 1996). It refers to reading and understanding policies for proper implementation (Makhuvele, 2016).

(j) **Collective responsibility** - a group of members in an organisation or institution that works together to run or do something (SASA, 1996). **Fiduciary Responsibility –** School Governing Body members make many critical and legally binding decisions, such as recruiting and appointing educators, and augmenting governing board educators' salaries and physical resources. They monitor finances and conduct an annual audit. Care, loyalty, and obedience are key principles. Selamolela (2019:24) points out that one of the responsibilities the SGB is charged with in terms of the Schools Act is to recommend to the Head of Department, the appointment of educators and non-teaching staff.

(k) **Dysfunctional SGB –** refers to those members who lack legal and policy insight, competence, skill, or intent to carry out their fiduciary responsibilities (Motshekga, 2018). Dysfunctional SGBs are characterized by unstable governance conditions, inappropriate or lack of leadership, and lack of vision (Sebopetsa, 2018). According to Pretorius (2014:55),

SGBs are declared dysfunctional when they fail to accomplish the true purpose of executing their responsibilities.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The focus of the study was to explore the legal mandates of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation in schools from Mopani district of Limpopo Province. It was a concern to find out that most public schools in the district are not well governed due to incorrect interpretation and implementation of school policies. Therefore, the study attempted to identify all the hindrances encountered by the SGBs in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in public schools. If school policies are to be interpreted and implemented accurately, schools can become centres of excellence in governance. This can yield good results on learners' performance.   DBE shared sentiments of research findings which indicated that schools that have effective SGBs generally perform better in relation to academic performance (Motshekga, 2018: 23).

1.11 PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

Chapter two provides a relevant literature review for this study. It explores the views of other researchers based on the research title under study. In other words, the relevant literature, and the nature of the other researchers for the same topic has been explored.

It specifically looks at the legal mandates of the SGBs from the countries such as England, South Korea, and Zimbabwe. It also reveals the challenges in policy interpretation and implementation faced by the SGBs of the above-mentioned countries.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated at the end of chapter 1, this chapter provides relevant literature review for this study. A literature review is a process of searching the existing literature which is related to your research title to develop an appropriate theoretical or conceptual framework for your study. In other words, it links your research findings with what the literature says about them. It further places your study in perspective to what others have investigated about the issues (Kumar, 2019:480).

Based on the explanation given above, it was important to review the literature because it assisted me to be aware of the findings from other researchers on the phenomenon under study. The literature review plays a vital role as it serves many purposes. For instance, it shares with readers the outcomes from other studies that are closely related to the one being undertaken (Creswell, 2018:25). The literature review is an important component of the research process as it makes a valuable contribution when one researches a particular phenomenon. Connaway & Radford (2017:30) share the same views stated above when they indicate that a sound literature review identifies, cites, and provides a brief overview of related research studies. It presents an argument that builds to the gap identification, and the rationale for the problem statement for the study that is being undertaken. Therefore, the literature review helps in terms of identifying appropriate techniques when searching for outcomes from a phenomenon that is being studied. It is my view that this exploration will make a meaningful contribution to the available studies already conducted. My understanding is that current outcomes from research should be added to the available literature to re-check what other researchers have found.

In this study, this literature review provides SGB members with a better understanding of policy interpretation and implementation in public schools. Therefore, the views of the other researchers based on the exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation have been explored by this research study. It is important to review the available literature that relates to your research title as it is regarded as one of the most important stages when conducting research (Bryman, 2016:6). One of the aims of literature review is to identify what one

already knows about a particular research title. This can assist researchers to position what they are researching about appropriately.

Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:67) support my view when they indicate that the literature review acts as a crucial part of preparing and orientating the researcher about the raging debates taking place in the field in which he or she is about to conduct research. They further indicate that by conducting a scholarly literature review, you will be able to gain a strong foothold on your research topic, which will allow you to have a working insight into the subject of your study. In other words, the scholarly review provides you with the tools of the trade for doing research, which includes theories, models, methods, techniques, and data from other research findings amongst others.

2.2   SOME EXPERIENCES ON SGB FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITIES

It is imperative to explore the legal mandates of the SGBs from other countries and how they handle the issue of policy interpretation and implementation in their schools. The experiences of other countries in this area will assist South Africans to review some of their policies that are not yielding results in governance in schools. Therefore, this chapter also reveals the challenges about policy interpretation and implementation faced by the SGBs of the following countries:

- England
- South Korea
- Zimbabwe

England represented the European countries in this study. South Korea represented the Asian countries while Zimbabwe represented the African countries. Experiences in how these countries approach the issue of policy interpretation and implementation in their schools can contribute to creating a practical and feasible solution for the phenomenon that is being explored by this study.

2.2.1   The legal mandates of the SGBs in England

In England, government schools are required to have SGBs. These bodies are made up of relevant education stakeholders such as educators, learners, support staff, parents, and governors who are elected by the local communities. Some governors

are appointed by the local authority. Kingsley (2022:25) confirms when he indicates that the governing body is usually comprised of the head teacher, staff governors, parent governors, community governors, and governors appointed by the local authority. In other words, every government school has a School Governing Body (SGB) in England. Governors are responsible in providing strategic directions. In other words, they give a clear vision to schools. King (2020:4) justifies when he indicates that in England, school governors are the overseers of a school, and are entrusted with giving a school a clear vision, ethos, and strategic direction. Long (2019:3) confirms when he says that school governors provide strategic leadership and accountability in schools in England. They support staff members and ensure that the curriculum is standardised and worldwide based. They pay salaries to educators as they are the ones who appoint them. They review the performance of educators when they teach. They also monitor the finances of the school. They make sure that money for the school is spent accordingly. The principal (head teacher) is expected to account based on the academic performance of learners to them. The governors report to the parents at the end of every year. They give local stakeholders a say on how schools should be run. This is like the South African education system because the principal and the school management team are expected to present the academic performance of the learners to the parents. Nash (2014:8) says that effective governing bodies hold their head teacher and other senior leaders to account for improving school performance. Therefore, the effective SGBs are necessary in the running of public schools in England. King (2020) points out that the review of related literature reveals that the SGBs are essential in the running of public schools in England.

The composition of SGBs in England

- Generally, the following categories are found in the SGBs in England.
- Parents of children at the school elect the parent governors.
- Members of the school staff are responsible for electing the staff governors. (It is a must that one staff governor must be an educator. If there are three or more staff governors in the committee, at least one must be a member of the support staff).
- The local authority nominates the authority governors. Authority governors are known as LEA governors. Refer to figure 2.1.

- Community governors are members of the local communities. They are appointed by the rest of the governing body. (Long, 2019).

The board of governors consists of nine members. The minimum number and the maximum number of members on the board are twenty. The sponsor governors are additional to these numbers. The term of office for governors is four years and the term is renewable. This differs with the SGBs of the South African public schools because the term of office for SGB members is three years. The head teacher at each school automatically becomes the ex-officio member of the SGB. This is also applicable to the governance structures of the South African public schools. The head teachers are not forced to be ex-officio members of the board. The main responsibility of the head teacher is to manage the daily activities of the school while the role of the board is to provide strategic management. The BOG supports the head teacher and staff members. The BOG is offered training and support by the local education structures, the national governments, and other non-profit organisations. This is because the BOG must have the necessary skills to execute their responsibilities. The training also helps to address the skill gaps. Various organisations give voluntary support to BOG in England. In my view, this is commendable because governors gain skills that empower them to become effective in governing their schools.

There are many types of schools in England. These schools have the freedom to design their policies. In other words, powers to decide on educational policy are given to lower authorities. In my view, it differs from Korea because the national government controls all the education policies. For example, changes in the national education policy might not affect every local school in England. For instance, if educational policies change at the national level, a well-functioning local school can continue with its operation. This is because the educational policy is made through proper communication channels among Local Education Authorities (LEAs), parents, and schools.

In England, most schools were independent for the past recent years hence the mandate of BOG became necessary. For instance, local authorities were responsible for managing their affairs. This was because of the 2006 Education and Inspection Act. This Act gave access to schools so that they become accountable to outside organisations and not to the local councils only.

2.2.2   The challenges facing the SGBs in England

The SGBs of public schools in England are faced with challenges regarding policy interpretation and implementation. For instance, the role of the SGB is not clearly defined. Most schools operate under pressure because they have few people who are skilled to act as governors. King (2020:40) indicates that the quality of governance in many schools in UK is inadequate. He further indicates that there is a great need to strengthen the role of the SGBs in the UK so as to improve on school effectiveness. This challenge usually occurs in disadvantaged areas. This is similar to the South African situation. They also have a problem recruiting people to become part of governors. Long (2019:9) confirms when he indicates that recruitment of school governors is challenging. He further indicates that the report that he studied from the University of Bath found that there was a shortage of potential parent governors and willing volunteers from staff and the wider community. This is because being a board member is a demanding and challenging job that needs full commitment. These challenges were perpetuated by the education policy that was introduced in the past few years. This was an initiation from the national government. James, Brammer, Cannolly, Spicer, Jane and Jones (2013:1) support my exploration by stating that the SGBs of the public schools funded by the government in England are currently facing several substantive challenges of various kinds. Many of the challenges are long-standing, while others relate to the current context for governing wrought by recent education policy and the developments initiated by the central government.

The authors further indicate that the two types of challenges that emanated from policy imperatives and that of governing effectively were known as procedural imperatives. Therefore, I assume that the SGBs of the above-mentioned country are not executing their legal mandates as per the expectation because they cannot interpret and implement the policy from their central government. Second Report of Session dated 2013 – 2014 of House of Commons Education Committee Volume 1 points out that many governors have not received suitable training. The report, therefore, recommended that the government gives orders to all schools to train all newly elected governors. James et al (2013:4) suggest that school governors must be provided with training and support either by the local authority, by the central government, or by other organisations to improve their skills, and knowledge on policy interpretation and implementation.

National Governors' Association also discovered that many governing bodies experience challenges in getting governors with special skills. The National College for School Leadership observed as well that there was evidence that the BOG was just recruited for the mere representative role instead of looking for specific skills. This was because the ambition of the government in England was that all public schools should have excellent-performing governing bodies that understand their responsibilities. It should be consisted of people with relevant skills and experience and must operate efficiently and effectively through the proper application of procedures. Berridge (2020:13) justifies when she indicates that the effective governance is based on people with the right skills, experience, qualities, and capacity.

Although the training was not compulsory, the empowerment of governors through providing proper training was essential because it maximised their effectiveness. There is an emphasis from different stakeholders that the training of governors should be mandatory. My understanding is that government needs to emphasise the value of continuous training development for all governors so that the quality of governance in all schools in England be improved. Wilkins (2016:1) quotes Sir Michael Wilshaw who is the Chief Inspector of Schools in England and Head of Ofsted when he says that board members are made up of people who are poorly trained and do not even understand the importance of their role. Such people do not qualify to serve on the board.

Another contributing factor was that schools in England were not governed by the SGBs in the late 1980s. Although parents wanted to involve themselves in their children's education, their powers were stripped by the British Government. However, the Education Reform Act of 1988 brought changes to members of governing bodies because there were given powers to design policies for their schools. The SGB in England is responsible for initiating strategies for the schools through:

- Determining the aims and objectives of the school.
- Determining policies that will achieve the set aims and objectives.
- They were also responsible for determining the targets for achieving aims and objectives. (King, 2020).

Beyond that, they were also responsible for:

- Formulating rules and regulations for schools.

- Deciding a vision for schools.

- Appointing the head teacher.

- Giving a full financial report at the end of each financial year. (Long, 2019)

Furthermore, school governors faced major challenges as they were unable to make sure that the schools are governed according to their expectations. This was because most members of the BOG often lacked the potential to govern schools effectively. There were not sure about the task they had to do. In my exploration, the standard of governance in many schools in England was not of a high standard. The challenges that are encountered by the SGBs in England are also experienced by the SGB members of the South African public schools.

Lastly, skills together with experience are considered key components when they elect and appoint new governors in England. My observation is that there can be a meaningful contribution to education if governing bodies consist of people with special skills and knowledge. Governing bodies should check the skills of governors to identify specific gaps that need to be filled. I also feel that governors should be assisted by experts to understand their responsibilities. This is because their policies specify that anyone who appoint governors to the governing body must ensure that the person appointed has governance skills**.**
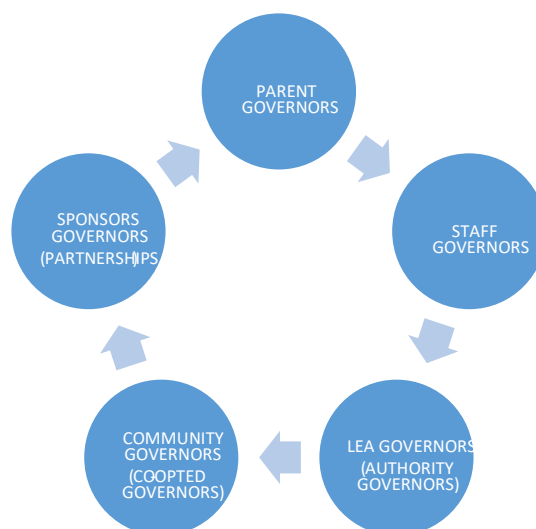
Figure 2:1 Illustration of the composition and the process of the SGBs in England.

2.3   THE LEGAL MANDATES OF THE SGBS IN SOUTH KOREA

The government of South Korea established the education policy which was called the "all schools equal "policy in 1974. The aim was to make both primary and high schools equal in terms of academic achievement. The central government has significant control over educational policy. In other words, the education system of South Korea is centralized. For example, the school curriculum is determined at the national level. OECD (2016:14) indicates that the Ministry of Education is responsible for the quality of the education system, with policies led by the central government. The principal organises and manages the curriculum according to the scope which was determined by the Minister at the national level. The powers of principals are limited. Local authorities in public schools have limited powers as well. Furthermore, schools in South Korea are the same and parents have minimum choices to decide which school their children should attend. Most parents and learners are not happy about the setup of formal schooling. The dissatisfaction is because learners who excel academically have a small chance of realizing their full potential in the classroom. At the same time, learners who need help cannot find it. In fact, this is a frustrating situation because Korean schools do not offer lessons according to learners' levels, but instead, they give one type of curriculum to all learners. The dissatisfaction led to young Korean learners opting to go abroad to study. The number of learners going abroad to study had been always on the rise. This is not happening in the South African schooling system. However, education is considered as a priority on the national agenda in South Korea. In other words, they all want to be educated. For instance, parents from poor families must ensure that their children get quality education.

The government of this country is responsible for establishing education policy. It is also responsible for erecting new school buildings. It monitors the school administration, curriculum, as well as methods of assessing learners. The educational policy is controlled by the state as already highlighted. The control measures apply to both public and private schools. In addition, the majority of schools teach learners the same subjects, and the time allocated for teaching is the same. Concerning specific subjects such as religious education, the contents of the subjects are not the same. All learners of this country find themselves learning the same content. They also use the same materials. It is similar to the South African education system.

The government reviews education policies on regular basis. Policies in schools are initiated from the national level. This was confirmed by OECD (2016) when it says "The Minister of Education is responsible for ensuring quality in education". The role of the governing bodies is to support the Minister. Primary and secondary education is administered by the Minister of Education, Municipalities, and Provincial offices. Higher education is administered by the Minister of Education and Councils for the university. Lastly, the school council that is consisted of parents, educators, and members of the local community governs all schools. In other words, the central government and local communities share powers in governing schools. Refer to figure 2.2.

2.3.1   The challenges facing the SGBs in South Korea

The challenge with the council is that it has no influence in decision-making whenever the policies of the school are designed. The principals are senior managers of schools. They are mandated by the state to supervise the affairs of schools in terms of administration and governance. The main responsibilities of Principals are outlined in Article No.20 of the Elementary and Secondary School Education Law.

The responsibilities of Principals also include the following:

- Managing the affairs of the schools.
- Managing teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Advising learners on social and academic issues.
- Determining school days, academic calendars, and holidays.
- Determining the enrolment of learners and class sizes.
- Determining the curriculum subjects and set the examination.
- Determining the admission policy and transfers.
- Determining early childhood centres.
- Collecting money for school expenses.
- Determining the disciplinary measures.
- Managing learners' activities.
- Monitoring the implementation of regulations.

In addition, principals are expected to account to the higher authorities, organisations, local communities, academic associations, educational organisations, social organisations, and religious groups. In the South Africa public schools, the SGBs are regarded as the highest decision-making bodies at the school level.

Based on the roles of Principals stipulated above, it is evident that SGBs are deprived of their legal mandates. In other words, they cannot play a meaningful role in the governance of schools. There is no opportunity for them to contribute directly to the affairs of the school, particularly around governance. My view is that parents and the local members of communities must be involved actively in the governance structures of the schools especially when policies are formulated. It is my view that schools must involve their local communities. For these reasons, I assume that the parent's component, cannot be able to interpret and implement educational policies accurately since they are not involved in the decision-making processes.

Despite all public schools having a high level of freedom of choice in terms of running their schools in South Korea, SGBs are deprived of their legal mandates to establish their school policies which they can easily interpret and implement in their respective schools. This is because the government only focuses on the financial budget, curriculum issues, extra-mural activities, and the welfare of learners. Moreover, SGBs of South Korea are deprived of their rights to design their school policies simply because there is no proper communication between stakeholders and schools. Schools seem to prefer advising parents on educational matters instead of listening to their opinions. Therefore, my view is that the SGBs of South Korea are not given the legal mandates by the central government to exercise their democratic rights in terms of policy interpretation and implementation in schools.

Lastly, on a positive note, self-governance in educational matters was introduced in 1991. At least educators managed to limit the powers principals had by participating freely in the decision-making processes. At the same time, parents who used to be overlooked were allowed to participate in decision making processes. This has been done through the formation of school councils. During the writing of this dissertation educators, parents, and the members of local communities could participate in the school council.

However, the remaining challenge was that the students were not considered in the school council.

PARENTS

EDUCATORS

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
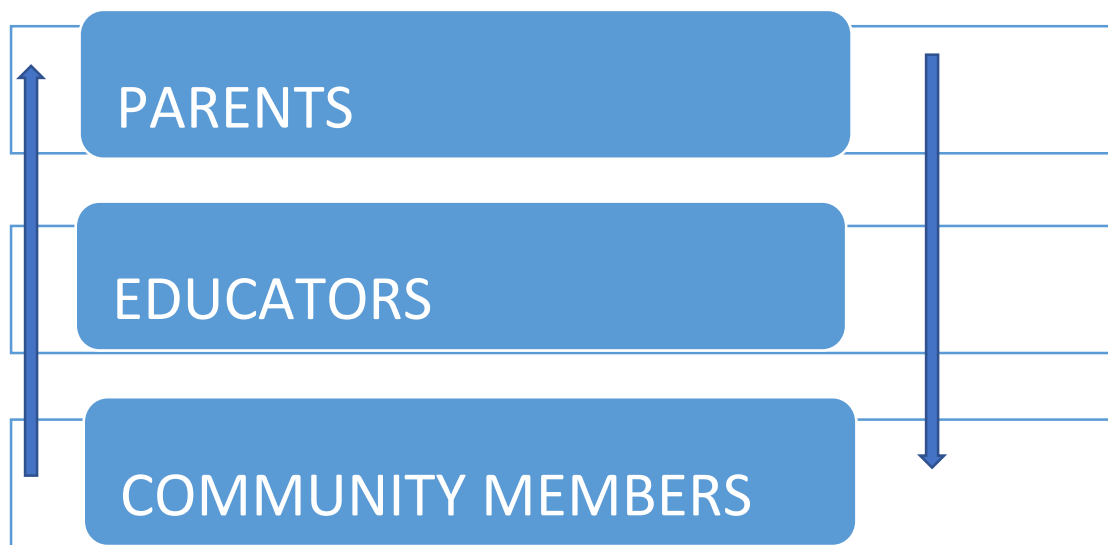
Figure 2:2 illustrates the School Council of South Korea

2.4   THE LEGAL MANDATES OF THE SGBS IN ZIMBABWE

Most of the people in Zimbabwe lacked resources and opportunities for formal education when the country gained its freedom from its oppressors in April 1980. The education system had restrictions, especially for the black population. The new government adopted a system of education that was characterised by racial discrimination. For instance, more resources were allocated to European children than African children. During their first 20 years of freedom, they experienced major changes in terms of schools' developments improvement of resources and teachers training. The aim of the government was to achieve equity and correct the inherited inequalities of the past in education. There are inequalities in terms of basic needs such as education, health facilities, and social services. For example, tuition is free in primary schools.

Irrespective of the benefits gained in education, economic, and political factors became hindrances to the commendable growth in education in the first two decades of freedom. Perhaps to cite a practical example, schools were no longer funded accordingly due to financial adjustment in expenditure. Another problem that contributed towards poor growth in education was the issue of redistributing the land. This programme was initiated by the ruling government in the year 2000. This

programme created many challenges economically. These challenges had a negative impact in the education sector. For instance, professionals such as teachers and lecturers left the country to seek jobs in neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana. It is a pathetic situation because Zimbabwe was once recognised as one of the countries that had the best education system after independence in Africa.

2.4.1 The challenges facing the SGBs in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean government established School Development Committees (SDCs) and School Development Associations (SDAs) respectively in their education system. The SDCs were established specifically for government-aided public schools and the SDAs were established for government public schools. These structures aimed to involve relevant stakeholders such as local communities in governing schools. The Education Act of 2006 was the tool that was used to establish the SDCs (Baruth, 2013).

The purpose of SDCs according to Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 was to:

- Assist the operation and development of public schools.
- Promote the moral, cultural, and physical activities of learners.
- To promote the welfare of learners and staff members.

2.4.2 The Election and composition of SDCs

The SDCs consist of most parents and principals. Learners are not directly included in the SGBs. Refer to figure 2.3.

School Governing Bodies are made up of ex-officio members, elected members, and co-opted members. The principals are ex-officio members of the SGB. People who are elected to SGBs include parents of learners at the school, educators, learners, and non-teaching staff. Members of the community's form part of the SGBs as they assist the schools with the different knowledge and skills they possess. This platform gives professionals such as doctors, accountants, and lawyers to be part of the SDCs. (Baruth, 2013).

SGBs are expected to elect office bearers from among themselves. They should elect a chairperson, treasurer, and secretary. The chairperson must be a parent member. SGB elections follow a particular procedure as outlined in the Schools Act. The schools' electoral officers must send out notices announcing the nomination meetings as well as the election dates. Electoral officers are trained by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). These people must be Principals or educators from other schools. The dates, times, and places of meetings must be stated on the notices. The notice must be sent out at least 14 days before the meeting. A hard copy is handed to every learner and must be given to their parents. Other channels of communication (such as SMS) are used. The procedure is that a person who is willing to be a member of the SGB must be nominated and seconded by a person belonging to the same SGB membership category. A nomination form, completed by the nominator, candidate (person who is willing to be a member of the SGB), and the seconder must be handed into the electoral officer not more than seven days and not less than 24 hours before the election meeting. It is allowed for a member to be proposed during the nomination session of the meeting, provided that another person from the same category seconds the nomination on the relevant template. The procedure is like the governance system of the South African public schools.

The required quorum of 15% from parents on the voters' roll is needed for the election and nomination meetings to proceed. If the quorum is not met, the meeting must be postponed for another day (for example, if there are 200 parents in the school, then 30 of them should be at the meeting). Voting happens on ballot papers. Each ballot paper has a school stamp on it, or some other distinguishing features to prevent fraud and corruption. A person with the right to vote is expected to cast his or her vote secretly and deposit it into the ballot box. After the votes have been counted, elected SGB members must be informed of their election results in writing. The school principal must be responsible in terms of arranging the first meeting of the SGB within 14 days of the election, so that the newly elected members could be introduced. After the introductions, the principal is expected to inform the District Manager in writing of people who have been elected.

The prefect system is used. The role of the prefects is to report issues of concern to the principal who in turn forwards them to the SGBs meetings. This is a challenge because learners are not included in the decision –making processes whenever

decisions are made. My view is that learners need to be consulted when schools make decisions that affect them. Through the Representative Council of Learners (RCL), learners can make a meaningful contribution to the curriculum, code of conduct, sporting, and cultural events. They need to be given the opportunity to play their role by representing other learners during disciplinary hearings.

Furthermore, the SGBs ensure that the quality in terms of the academic performance of learners is maintained. The SDCs are mandated to recruit and dismiss educators. The SDCs distribute their powers to parents. For instance, they allow parents to elect five other parents among themselves to be part of the SDCs. In my view, this is a good practice because affected stakeholders need to be included in the decision-making processes.

Moreover, the SGBs are responsible for the formulation of policies which are non-discriminatory. Regardless of the efforts by the government to empower the SGBs in the form of providing training, many parents still have little education and cannot interpret or implement school policies correctly. This is the challenge that needs to be corrected. I maintain that parents serving in the SGBs should be provided with adequate training so that they perform their functions correctly. The governance section from the District, Provincial and National level should make it a point that the SGBs are well-trained before they execute their duties and responsibilities. My view is that dealing with policies needs proper training, knowledge, and skills. Makhuvele (2016).
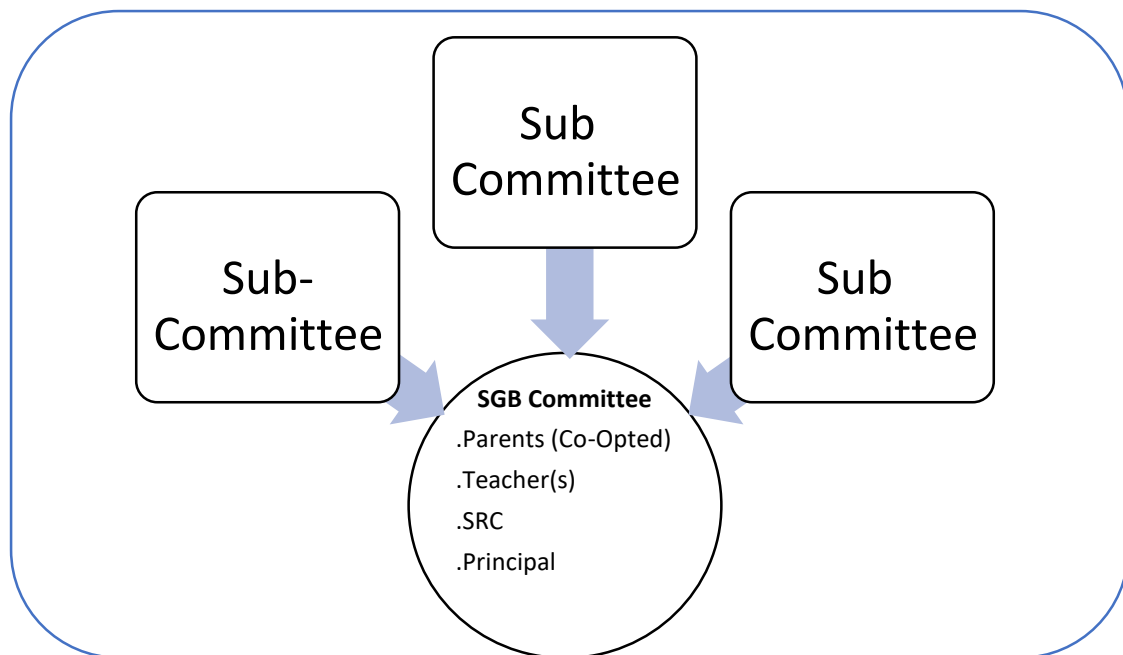
Figure 2.3: Composition and Sub-Structures of SGB Formations of public school in Zimbabwe

2.4.3 School Governing Body fiduciary mandate

According to statutory instrument 379 of 1998, every school is expected to establish the SDA. The objectives of the association are:

- To enhance and improve the maintenance of the school.
- To promote the morals and welfare of learners at school.
- To encourage educational and social programmes.

2.4.4 Membership of associations

Those who qualify to be in the associations are parents and legal guardians of learners enrolled at a school. Every parent or legal guardian of a pupil enrolled at a school qualifies to be a member of the association. Educators employed at the school are part of the association as well.

2.4.5 Membership of executive committees

The executive committee of an association consists of:

- Seven members as minimum and a maximum of eleven members.

- The headmaster and the deputy head serve as ex-officio members.
- Not more than two people from such bodies or organisations should be elected.

The executive committee members elect among themselves the following members:

(a)   Chairperson

(b)   Vice-chairperson

(c)   Secretary

(d)   Treasurer

Only parents who have children at the school qualify to be elected as members of the executive committees of an association. The election takes place at the annual general election of the association. Elected members of an executive committee of an association hold office until the next annual general meeting. The procedures are the same with the South African public schools.

2.4.6   Functions and duties of the SDAs

The SDAs are responsible for the following functions:

(a) Using the land, buildings, and other facilities for educational, and recreational purposes.
(b) To promote the best interests of the school.
(c) To maintain the buildings and facilities of the school.
(d) To administer the academic and non-academic activities of the school.
(e) To hire suitable educators in consultation with the headmaster.
(f)
(g) To ensure that no class with fewer than fifteen or more than fifty pupils is permitted to start at the beginning of any academic year.
(h) To repair and erect new buildings.
(i) To establish subcommittees that will support the SDAs.
(j) To provide scholarships and financial assistance to needy learners.
(k) To audit the financial report of the school (Baruth, 2013).

Recent studies conducted also revealed that there was no parental involvement in all decision-making processes in schools. The introduction of the Education Act of 1987 and that of 1979 stressed parental involvement in both public and private schools. In addition, the Education Act of 1979 was replaced by the African Education Act, which brought about the establishment of Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs). These associations aimed to turn government schools into community schools.

The SDCs and SDAs had challenges in terms of designing policies that are non-racial and non-discriminatory. These challenges emanated because the educational bodies failed to provide adequate training to SDCs and SDAs. There was evidence because recent studies have revealed that there was a lack of cooperation among the different educational bodies to afford skills training to SDCs (Baruth, 2013:135). In addition, they also had a challenge based on the formulation of an admission policy that is non-discriminatory at their schools. This happened because most parents had lower levels of education and therefore failed to either formulate or interpret admission policies. I also identified that many parent governors of the SDCs had lower educational levels and as a result failed to formulate non-discriminatory admissions policies. This challenge also occurs in the SGBs of the South African public schools. Therefore, I am tempted to assume that the SGBs in Zimbabwe had a problem with issues about policy interpretation and implementation due to a lack of skills and training.

2.5 THE LEGAL MANDATES OF THE SGBS IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, after democracy in 1994, the ruling government believed that it was important for relevant stakeholders such as educators, learners, non-teaching staff, and parents to work together to run schools. As a result, SASA gives the above-mentioned stakeholders the right to form School Governing Bodies. This body formulates policies relating to issues such as admission policy, language policy, religious policy, a code of conduct for learners, etc. SASA and the country's constitution are the guiding tools used to formulate these policies. This is one of the most exciting achievements of the new education system of South Africa.

SASA gives the SGBs responsibilities regarding to school governance. This is because the government acknowledges the fact that education can only succeed if all relevant stakeholders know what they are expected to do. My view is that stakeholders are suitable to be in governing bodies because they know the culture of the schools.

They are aware of the problems that schools face. It becomes easy for them to find solutions to the problems that are encountered by a school because they are closest to the situation. I support the South African Government when it declared education as a societal issue. (Motshekga, 2018:20). Therefore, my view is that SGBs need to mobilise members of communities to be involved in educational matters in schools.

SGB documents revealed that there are over 25 000 public schools in South Africa with SGBs that are democratically elected. The SGBs are expected to play an active role in governing public schools. For instance, they are expected to design policies for their schools (Motshekga, 2021).

The governing bodies of all public schools in South Africa are comprised of the following members:

(a) Parents of learners at the school.
(b) Educators employed at the school.
(c) Members of staff at the school who are not educators.
(d) Learners in grade 8 or higher at the school who are nominated by the Representative Council of Learners.
(e) Co-opted members (are optional and they are without voting rights).
(f) The principals of schools who are ex-officio members of SGBs. Refer to figure 2.4.

Functions of all the SGBs

(a) To promote the best interests of the school.
(b) To adopt a constitution.
(c) To develop the mission statement of the school which briefly states the values and core beliefs of the school.
(d) To draft a code of conduct for learners after consultation with learners, parents, and educators.
(e) To support the principal, educators, and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.
(f) To determine the times of the school day.
(g) To administer and control the school property.

(h) To encourage parents, learners, educators, and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school.

(i) To determine an admission policy provided it does not conflict with National and Provincial guidelines.

(j) To determine a language policy for the school, provided it does not conflict with National and Provincial guidelines.

(k) To have the authority to make the school premises available for unity, social, and fund-raising activities.

(l) To make schools available for conducting educational programmes other than those conducted by the school, e.g., adult education and training programmes, reading programmes, etc.

(m) To recommend to the Head of Department, the appointment of educators and non-educator staff at the school (SASA, 1996).

Allocated functions of the SGBs

(a) Maintain and improve the school's property, buildings, and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable.

(b) Determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school.

(c) Purchase textbooks, educational materials, or equipment for the school.

(d) Pay for services to the school.

(e) Provide an adult basic education and training class or centre subject to any applicable law (SASA, 1996).

Office-bearers of SGBs

The office-bearers of the SGBs consist of the chairperson, treasurer, and secretary. The SGB members elect the office-bearers among themselves. The chairperson of SGB must be a parent.

Term of office for members and office-bearers of SGBs

The term of office for learners is one year and for all other members is three years. Office-bearers including the chairperson, secretary, and treasurer must hold office for one year only. An office bearer may be re-elected or co-opted after the expiry of his or her term of office. According to SASA, SGBs are elected to conduct elections every three years. (SASA, 1996).

National Department of Basic Education	
Provincial Department of Basic Education	
District Office	
Circuit Office	
Ex-Officio (Principal) + School Governing Body (SGB)	
Educators + Non-Teaching Staff	
Learners (Grade R - 12)	
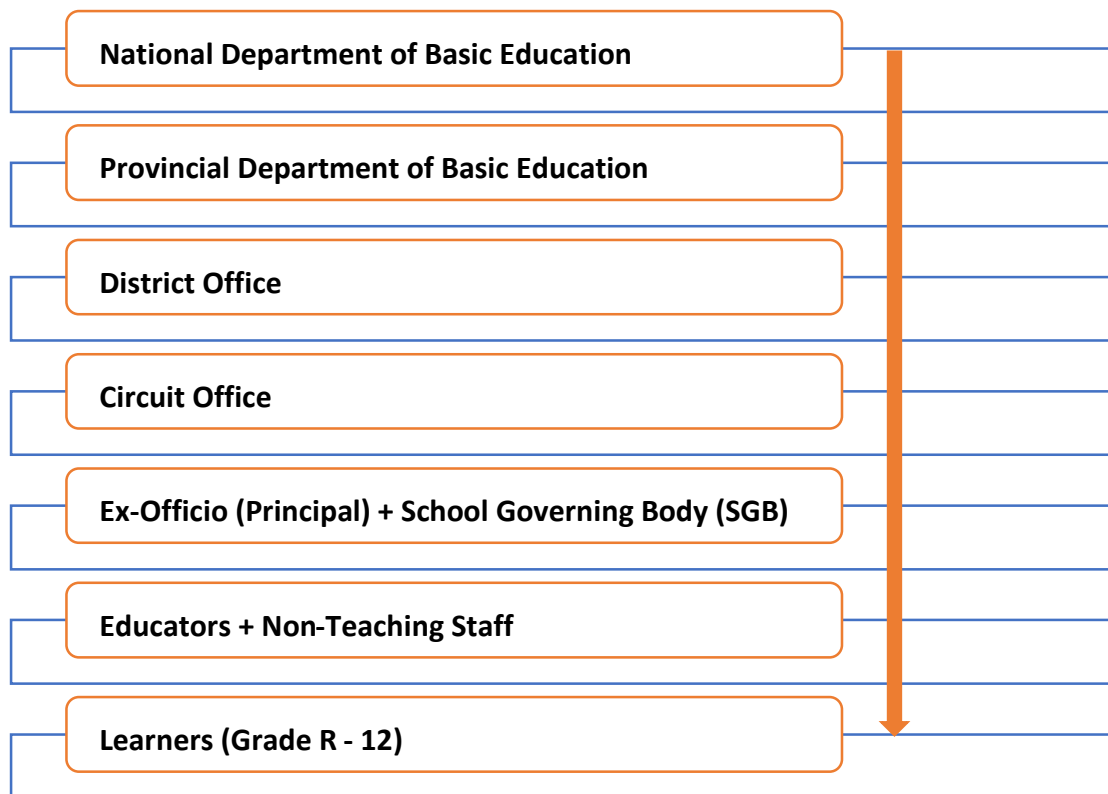
Figure 2.4: The structure of governance in South African public schools

2.5.1   The challenges facing the SGBs in South Africa

There are challenges facing the SGBs regarding policy interpretation and implementation in South African public schools. Perhaps, to cite a practical example, the SGBs are expected to draft a constitution within ninety days of having been elected. They must submit a copy of the constitution to the Provincial Education Department. The challenge is that the majority of the SGBs are not able to perform this task because they are not educated. Drafting a constitution needs people who are knowledgeable in terms of policy interpretation and implementation. What makes the situation difficult is that the drafted constitution must not contravene the constitution of the country.

SASA also expects SGBs to draft mission statements for their schools. The mission statement briefly states the values and core beliefs of the school. This task is not feasible in most public schools in the Mopani District hence most schools operate without a mission statement. Drafting a mission statement needs skilled people who can read and interpret the values and beliefs of the community. The pathetic situation

is that most members serving in the SGBs cannot read or write as the level of illiteracy is high in most communities.

Nhlabati (2015:120) says that the high level of illiteracy amongst the parent's component impacts negatively their participation and contribution to the SGB. This is the situation that needs to be redressed by the higher authorities of education because the SGBs that function properly are of great benefit to the school and the community.

Apart from drafting the stated documents, the SGBs are also required to formulate policies that are within the framework of the National and Provincial legislations. Policies related to the governance of the school that the SGBs must formulate include:

(a) The admission policy

(b) Language policy

(c) Policy on religious matters in the school

(d) HIV / AIDS policy

(e) School Development Plan

(f) Policy on the use of substance abuse

(g) Disciplinary policy for learners

(h) Behavioural policy of SGB members

(i) Draft financial budget for the current financial year

(j) Safety policy, etc.

Developing the above-mentioned policies is a challenge to most SGBs hence most schools do not have them. They do not even know where to start. They rely on the principal who sometimes adopts policies from other schools which are not even applicable to their situations. Most SGB members cannot draft policies because they are illiterate. They only know - how to append their signatures. My analysis is that although they do not know how to write, continuous training can assist to alleviate this problem. Zondo (2016:132) says that such trainings must equip members or teach them the necessary skills which will help them become worthy SGB representatives. I feel that the Provincial Education Department must support governing bodies in schools through well-planned training programmes. The programmes must be aimed at instilling confidence in SGB members. Motshekga (2018:23) says, "In the spirit of supporting good governance in schools, the training programmes by Provincial

Education Departments will aim to enhance the confidence of SGBs to better support in their schools."

The studies conducted previously by other researchers revealed the following issues:

(a) Most SGBs in rural areas lack special skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation. Van Wyk (2004:50) points out that many SGBs, particularly in less advantaged areas, do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their powers. Xaba (2011:206) also supports this by stating that parents also express a feeling that, due to a lack of know-how, they rely on educators to draw up policies, even though educators sometimes take advantage and make policies to suit teachers.

(b) There is no effective capacity-building training based on policy interpretation and implementation for the SGBs. I maintain that irrespective of the training programmes provided by the department of Basic education, SGBs continue to experience governance challenges. King (2020) indicates that the SGBs continue to experience challenges irrespective of the policies that guide them.

(c) The majority of SGB members are illiterate and as a result, they feel inferior. SGB members especially parents are not educated. In most cases where there are SGB workshops, I have observed that most parents do not attend them. My assumption is that their illiteracy problem will be exposed.

(d) Maile (2002:239) also maintains that illiteracy among SGB members, especially parent-governors, may contribute to their inefficiency and argues that this is possible because illiteracy precludes parents from accessing relevant information.

Lastly, I feel it is important to indicate that the dysfunctionality of the SGBs has a negative effect on the academic performance of learners.

2.6   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.6.1.   Theory of action

The purpose of this research was to explore the School Governing Bodies' legal mandates in the Mopani district of Limpopo Province. The study was guided by the theory of action. In other words, this study employed a theoretical framework based

on the Theory of Action' cited by Grant–Lewis and Naidoo in their research journal that talks about school governance policy and practice in South Africa. It is appropriate to indicate that the primary proponent of the theory of action is a sociologist. This study is grounded based on the primary proponents of the theory of action even though the secondary users of this theory were cited. This has been highlighted in chapter 1 as well. Although the two authors are hardly the proponents of the theory of action, the theory is relevant to this study because the two authors employed the theory of action in their study to unpack the dimensions of school governance.

These two authors utilised their theory to understand both government policy and school-level actors' meanings of two dimensions of governance, participation, and representation. This theory is linked to this study because most SGBs especially in rural public schools falling under Mopani district lack the necessary skills and expertise to interpret and implement school policies correctly. The authors stated that by exploring the theories of action underpinning the specification and interpretation of these policies in practice, they were able to get positive results. For instance, they assessed the extent of transformation and the nature of participation in school governance. Moreover, according to the authors, the concept of the theory of action provided a means to explore assumptions informing educational policies and practices at systemic, programmatic, and individual levels (Grant - Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:101).

The theory maintains that the SGBs do not understand the role that they should play hence they are easily manipulated by the principal and educators during policy interpretation and implementation. The participation of the parent's component is limited. In some instances, most SGBs do not involve the entire parents. In addition, the theory further revealed that there is a minor misunderstanding between the role of governance and that of management in schools that can be rectified by training. I concur with the theory as my understanding is that SGBs need to be aware of their legal mandates.

The study is embedded within the constructivist paradigm. This is because I explored and interpreted the views and experiences of members serving in the SGBs. As a result, knowledge of why most SGBs is unable to interpret, and implement policies accurately in public schools was constructed and interpreted in this study.

2.7   REVIEW OF RESEARCH ORGANIZED BY THEMES

When I reviewed the collection of literature or scholarship reviews cited above, the assessment revealed that there is still a gap or need to come up with pragmatic strategies that can enable the SGBs to function properly, especially on the issue of policy interpretation and implementation in rural public schools of the Mopani district. This is because the existing findings do not provide a feasible solution to the problem encountered by the SGBs. I realised that an amicable solution that empowers the SGBs to operate effectively has not yet been found hence this research adds value to solving the problem.

The literature review also exposed the lack of capacity-building and training among members of the SGBs. Baruth (2013:242) points out that the SGB members were not provided with any capacity-building workshops and training sessions to enable them to fulfil their role functions and responsibilities. Members of SGBs do not understand what is expected of them due to a lack of capacity building workshops. They cannot interpret or implement school policies from SASA. Lack of adequate knowledge and training based on policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district was regarded as another theme. The low level of educational background among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district was the theme that was also identified by this research study as well.

My observation was that the PDE had failed in providing adequate training for members of SGBs. If members of SGBs could get extensive training on how to interpret and implement school policies, schools will be governed properly. Since the SGBs are new to most South African schools, National and Provincial authorities should therefore equip the SGB members with continuous training programmes. This is because they cannot be able to perform the allocated functions due to a lack of expertise.

I also feel that the involvement of parents, educators, non-teaching staff, and learners in secondary schools in policy interpretation and implementation promotes the culture of learning and teaching in schools. Sambo (2016:29) supports my view. The author indicates that the involvement of parents, learners in secondary schools, teachers, and non-teaching staff in school governance is intended to enhance the academic

performance of learners. My view is that if schools could have high-performing SGBs in terms of how they operate, the academic performance of learners can improve.

2.8   CONCLUSION

Literature review revealed that there are challenges that are being experienced by the SGB members based on the issue of policy interpretation and implementation in rural public schools of the Mopani district, Limpopo Province. The evidence that I have presented showed that a lack of skills, competencies, and knowledge restricts the SGB members from participating effectively when governing schools. This problem also affects other countries such as England, South Korea, and Zimbabwe.

2.9   PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

The next chapter provides the qualitative methodological approach that I used for this research study. The chapter identifies the research design as well as the research questions for the study. It also shows the way data was collected for this study. Furthermore, it outlines data collection techniques used during data collection. Moreover, it highlights the significance of ethical clearance.

CHAPTER 3: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As already indicated at the end of chapter 2, chapter 3 deals with the research methodology that I have employed for this research title. It identifies the research design that was used including the research questions, setting, and participants. It shows the way data was collected. It presents broadly, different techniques that were used during data collection. Qualitative research concepts such as trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, and dependability were included in this chapter. Lastly, the chapter will be concluded by highlighting the importance of ethical clearance.

The focus of this qualitative study is to add value based on equipping the SGB members to exercise their legal mandates in governance matters in the Mopani district schools. The study is aimed at exploring the capability of the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani district schools to identify the generic skills and competencies, which contribute towards effectiveness and efficiency. This was prompted by my observation that most SGBs in rural areas are not possessing the required skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation due to lower levels of education. My observation is that many parents have little role in the formulation of school policies in public schools. This problem emanates because most of them have lower levels of education. (Nhlabati, 2015:120). I realised that many SGBs particularly those located in rural areas, lack skills and knowledge of governance (Van Wyk, 2004:50). I support the idea that most parents rely on educators when school policies are drafted (Xaba, 2015:206). In my view, this creates problems because educators usually formulate policies which usually suit them. This tendency occurs because the majority of SGB members seem to be lacking knowledge related to policies in education.

In addition, there is minimal active participation in policy interpretation and the way it is implemented in public schools from relevant stakeholders of Mopani district. I support the view that one of the reasons that led to the establishment of SGBs was to encourage stakeholders such as educators, parents, learners in secondary schools, and non-teaching staff to participate actively in governance matters (Dibete, 2015:3).

My understanding is that the reason pointed out can assist in creating a conducive learning and teaching environment.

3.2   PHILOSOPHICAL OVERVIEW

Paradigm

The paradigm is the view of the researcher that constitutes truth and knowledge. In other words, every researcher views the world from his or her perspective. I will find out what constitutes truth and knowledge for this study. A paradigm is informed by philosophical assumptions based on ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology. Kivunja and Kuyin (2017:28) note the four components of the research paradigm, namely ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology.

(a) **Ontology** - is about what is true. The phenomenon of the study is policy interpretation and implementation, which is one of the legal mandates of SGBs in public schools. The reality of this study is that most rural SGBs in Mopani district lack knowledge and skills on accurate policy interpretation and effective implementation. Xaba (2013) supports this when he says, "Many SGBs, particularly in most disadvantaged areas do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their powers."

(b) **Epistemology** – is about methods of figuring out those truths. Cohen, Marion, and Morrison (2011:7) define epistemology as an interpretation of the nature and aspects of current information. The truth in this study is that governance managers from Mopani district keep on complaining about the incorrect interpretation and implementation of governance policies by most SGBs in rural schools. I noted this outcry from the workshops that I attended for the past three years. I also noted that only one governance workshop takes place at the beginning of every year.

(c)**The methodology** - comprises the research design, methods, approaches, and procedures used in the study to reach the final stage.

(d) **Axiology** – Axiology refers to ethical issues that need to be considered when organising the research, for the right decisions to be taken (Kivunja & Kuyin 2017:28).

The issue of ethics was taken into consideration when I conducted this study. For instance, I did not reveal the names of the participants.

3.3   THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

The methodology I have applied for this research title is qualitative. It is because I conducted this research in a real environment. I wanted to interact with participants in a natural environment so that they share their views and experiences. For instance, I interacted with my participants during interviews in their workstations. Holiday (2016) indicates that qualitative research looks deep into the quality of social life. This author further indicates that it locates the study within settings, which provides opportunities for exploring all possible social variables. In other words, I studied the behaviour of participants by interacting with them in their natural environment during interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2015:5).

My observation was that interviewing participants in their workstations was a brilliant idea because that is where real experiences occur. I managed to explore and understood their behaviour and attitudes (Creswell, 2018:204). This methodology was suitable for this study because it involved fewer participants. This view is supported as it was indicated that qualitative research usually involves smaller sample sizes (Maree, 2007). In addition, it was quite easy for me to do sampling in qualitative research as the process was flexible. This was because data never became saturated. For example, I continued interacting with participants until no new themes emerged.

Moreover, qualitative research methodology was suitable because it allowed me to use different techniques of data collection such as interviews, focus groups, and analysis of documents.

Baruth (2013:167) supports my view as she indicates that she used the same techniques in her research study as well. Lastly, my findings were based on the views and experiences of participants because I have used a qualitative approach. This approach was used to identify the blockages that the SGB members experience in policy interpretation and implementation particularly in rural schools that fall under Mopani district. Creswell (2013:48) supports my view when he indicates that he used qualitative research because he wanted a comprehensive and clear understanding of

the phenomenon he explored. For example, he indicated that he talked to people. He even visited their homes as well as their workplaces.

3.4   THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is described as the plan and blueprint that provides specific direction for procedures to be carried out in the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:11). My research design outlines how the study was conducted. It unfolded my research study and as a result, my research questions were answered. It included the way data was collected and how it was analysed. I regard it as a key plan because it brought the research results for my study. Maree (2018:72) supports my understanding when he defines a research design as a plan that shows how participants are selected, the methods to be used when collecting data, as well as how data will be analysed.

Creswell (2018:11) justifies this when he explains research designs as tools that give direction for procedures to be followed in research. This description is also supported by Yin (2018:26) when he indicates that research design is a logical plan which directs people to move from one step to another. In addition, Bryman (2016:38) indicates that a research design provides a plan on how to collect and analyse data. Moreover, Kumar (2019:154) elaborates when he expressed his views indicating that a research design is a plan which is used to get answers to the set research questions. Therefore, a research design enables a researcher to have an overall framework that informs to conclude of the data collected.

3.4.1   Case study research design

Case study as a research design played a prominent role in exploring my phenomenon. It provided an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. This was supported by Creswell (2018:247) when he indicates that one can explore a particular phenomenon in detail when using a case study research design. On the other hand, Thomas (2016:23) indicates that case studies are used to analyse phenomena such as people's behaviour, attitudes, policies, and decisions using one or more methods. Bryman (2016:38) makes a similar point when he indicates that a case study has an in-depth exploration of a specific phenomenon such as a person or community.

Furthermore, Yin (2018:15) defines a case study as an experimental or observation method that is used to explore in detail, a particular phenomenon in a real-life situation. I used multiple case studies (or collective case studies) as a research design. This is because I conducted this study from several research sites. For instance, data was collected from four different primary schools in different circuits of the Mopani district. Creswell (2013:99) supports my view when he indicates that in a collective case study (or multiple case studies), one case or concern is selected, but the researcher can select multiple case studies to illustrate a particular case or concern. The author further indicates that usually researchers select multiple cases on purpose to show different views or experiences. What I like about this research design is that it assisted many researchers to answer their research questions. The most exciting part is that it answers the "how" and "why" questions (Creswell, 2015).

Yin (2018:27) supports this idea when he indicates that this type of research design is more appropriate for answering the stated questions. For example, I was able to get answers directly from the SGB members on how they execute their legal mandates in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies. Furthermore, the case study research which I used was interpretive or critical. This was done to check how participants behave among themselves in their workplaces. There was a comprehensive exploration of the legal mandates of the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation as the phenomenon under study was within its real-life context. Lastly, I managed to use multiple sources and techniques such as interviews, documents, and focus groups during the data-gathering process. This was a result of this research design.

3.4.2   The exploratory research design

I combined exploratory design with a case study to get more information about my research title. I had to be flexible and that led me in discovering emergent data and ideas, revelations, and insights. I explored the legal mandates of SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation in rural public schools found in the Mopani district. Through the exploration, I understood what I was researching from the participant's point of view, for example, I gathered more information regarding the challenges that the SGB members experience during policy interpretation and implementation. I obtained a detailed report about challenges faced by SGBs because I went to the

research sites where these challenges occur. Kumar (2019:16) supports my views when he indicates that the qualitative approach is aimed at exploring complex issues from different dimensions. He emphasises that the approach is based on expressing feelings perceptions, and experiences instead of quantifying or measuring things. In addition, Creswell (2018:204) confirms when he indicates that information which emanates from qualitative research is descriptive. In other words, information is reported in words (primarily the participants' words) or pictures, rather than in numbers. Creswell (2018:204) further indicates that the focus of qualitative research is based on participants' viewpoints and experiences. The idea is to understand a particular phenomenon from different angles.

3.5   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is:

How do School Governing Bodies (SGBs) leadership exercise their fiduciary governance responsibilities on matters of policy implementation and law compliance in the Mopani district public schools?

The following are the sub-questions that underpinned my main research question:

(a) What critical skills and competencies do SGBs possess for them to be effective in policy and law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools?

(b) How the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani district does support the SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance, and policy interpretation and implementation?

(c) What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members, and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB, and school management?

(d) What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

3.6   THE SETTING

This research took place in May. This was purposely done so that I may not disturb the Mid-year examinations that normally start in June. I conducted my study in four primary schools from the Mopani district, Limpopo Province.

These are rural schools emanating from four different Circuits of the Mopani district. Stratified purposive sampling was used to select the schools. These schools were purposefully selected because their SGBs were not exercising their legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation. I was informed by the reports from their circuits and governance officers from the Mopani district.

I used pseudonyms for each school for anonymity and confidentiality reasons.
They were as follows:

(a) A Primary School
(b) B Primary School
(c) C Primary School
(d) D Primary School

Most learners who attend the above-mentioned schools come from poor-stricken families. There is poverty and a high rate of unemployment in these communities. Most parents depend on social grants for survival. Most people from these communities cannot read or write hence, their participation in governance matters poses a challenge. In addition, most learners stay far from their schools and are bound to walk some kilometres to and from the school.

3.7   SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Sampling is the process that is used to select a portion of the population that a researcher wishes to study. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) justify when they define sampling as a criterion for who will be eligible to be in your study. Nagy Hesse-Biber (2017) conquers when he indicates that qualitative approaches to research are often characterized by small sample sizes. I used stratified purposive sampling to select four rural primary schools that are found in the Mopani district. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018) indicate that in qualitative research, often non-probability, purposive samples are employed. I chose the sampled primary schools based on my observation that they seemed to be struggling with issues about policy interpretation

and implementation. What I observed was that the sampled schools did not exercise their legal mandates accordingly in terms of policy interpretation and implementation in their respective schools. My observation was justified by the circuits and district reports that kept on complaining about the governance of the sampled schools. Therefore, my observation assisted me in identifying and selecting the sampled schools for participation in this study. Motshekga (2018) justifies this when she indicates that her department has received many complaints for several years about newly elected SGB members who receive insufficient training regarding the functions they must perform.

My sampling consisted of principals, SGB chairpersons, and educators from the four sampled primary schools. A sample size of three participants from two primary schools comprising of the SGB chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB and the principal who is an ex-officio member of the SGB was purposeful chosen for semi-structured interviews. For the other two primary schools, the sample size comprising the principal as an ex-officio member, the SGB chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB as well as the three additional members of the SGBs was chosen for focus group interviews. In other words, the study consisted of 18 participants from the sample of four primary schools. I felt the participants purposefully sampled were relevant to this study because they were members of the SGBs in their respective schools.

3.8   PILOTING THE INSTRUMENTS / TOOLS

I felt it was important as the researcher to pilot data collection instruments and tools that I had to use. The data collection instruments that I used for this research study were semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and documents. In addition, I also used requisite tools which included a digital voice recorder, a checklist for documents to be requested from the SGB, identification cards to be used during focus group interviews, a field notes diary, and interviews schedules. I chose these instruments and tools to get accurate data. I sampled one different primary school for this purpose which did not participate in the actual study. I used one day for this activity.

As a point of departure, I reminded the principal of sampled pilot primary school telephonically about my appointment with her a day before visiting her school. I tested my digital voice recorder to check if it was working an hour before the actual interviews

began. For instance, I recorded myself for a few minutes, pretending as if I was conducting the interviews. The device had recorded exactly according to my expectations. Then, I checked the documents I had to request at the end of the interview. I also checked my field notes diary as well as my interviews schedules. I was well prepared on this day. I then conducted my interviews and the focus group interviews.

3.9   SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

My study consisted of members from School Governing Bodies as participants. The study consisted of 18 participants from a sample of four primary schools. The participants came from four different circuits of the Mopani district. These participants were purposefully selected to provide rich data for my research title because they were serving in the governance structures of their schools. They were comprised of parents, educators, and principals who are ex-officio members in the SGBs. As already highlighted above, I used stratified purposive sampling to select four rural primary schools from different circuits of the Mopani district. The two primary schools selected were led by female principals, and the other two were led by male principals. A sample size of three participants from two primary schools comprising of the chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB, and a principal who is an ex-officio member of the SGB was purposefully chosen for semi-structured interviews. For the other two primary schools, a sample size comprising the principal as an ex-officio member, chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB as well as the three additional members of the SGBs was chosen for focus group interviews.

I also focussed on two documents such as the Constitution of the SGB and the Code of Conduct for Learners that the SGBs had designed. The secretaries of SGBs in consultation with their chairpersons and principals assisted me in accessing documents. I checked whether the documents that were designed complied with the criteria needed by the DBE while drafting policies. This activity was conducted in the four sampled schools at the end of the semi- structured interviews and focus group interviews. Documents as data collection techniques shed light on the phenomenon that was being studied. The participants that had been chosen supplied the information that helped in understanding what the SGB members of Mopani were experiencing in their schools.

3.10   DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PLAN

The data collection plan and its execution entail an 'in-depth' and elaborate process of collecting artefacts from a variety of selected participants in a demarcated site to answer the main research question(s). Qualitative data collection methods are exploratory in nature, and they assist researchers to gain insights and understanding of the phenomena being studied. Data obtained using qualitative data collection methods can be used to find new ideas, opportunities, and problems, test their value, and accuracy, formulate predictions, explore a certain field in more detail, as well as explaining the numbers obtained using quantitative data collection techniques. Refer to figure 3.1.
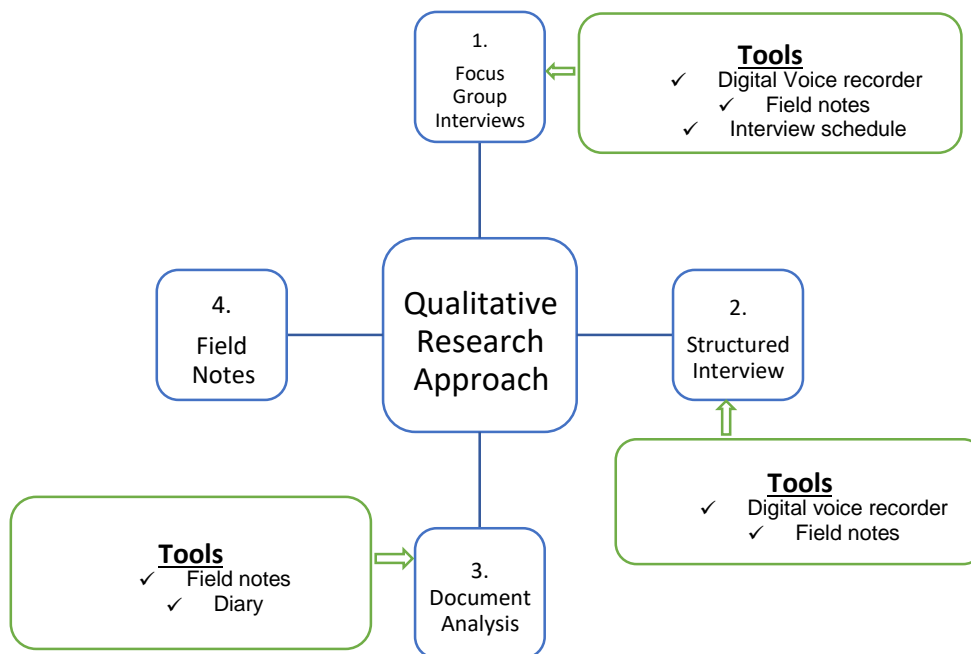
Figure 3.1: Data collection synoptic plan incorporating methods and requisite tools used to collect data in the study field (Nyoni & Baloyi, 2020)

How data is collected can be regarded as a series of related activities which aim at collecting relevant information that can assist to answer the research questions that emerge (see figure 3.1).

This view was supported by Creswell (2013:14) when he points out that he visualized data collection as a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions. The same author further says that data collection, however, involves much more. It means gaining permission, conducting a

good qualitative sampling strategy, developing means for recording information both digitally and on paper, storing the data, and anticipating ethical issues that may arise (Creswell, 2013:145). The data collection instruments that were used for this research study were semi structured interviews, focus group interviews, and documents. This was done to get an in-depth understanding of the SGBs' experiences and challenges based on policy interpretation and implementation in the schools they govern.

Maree (2013:79) points out that gathering techniques, like interviews, and observations are dominant in the naturalist (interpretive) paradigm. These instruments were suitable for this study because I was able to get the relevant information that was hidden from the participants.

3.10.1 Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a conversation between two people where the interviewer asks the participant some questions to collect information. Interviewing is a commonly used method of collecting information from people. Lune & Berg (2017:65) support my view when they indicate that interview can be defined as a conversation with a purpose. Specifically, the purpose is to gather information. Harding (2019) indicates that the qualitative interview provides an opportunity for the researcher to listen to the views or experiences of one respondent for an extended period and to ask probing questions to explore ideas further.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015:5) define it as a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views in everyday conversations and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach to obtain thoroughly tested knowledge. I chose semi-structured interviews to understand the views of the participants on policy interpretation and implementation in public schools. The aim of using the semi-structured interview was to explore how the SGBs in the Mopani district interpret and implement school policies in their respective schools.

In other words, the aim was to obtain rich descriptive data that will help me to understand the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015:31) further point out that a semi-structured life-world interview attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subject's perspectives. This kind of interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the interviewers'

lived world concerning the interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena. In addition, Maree (2018:93) indicates that semi structured interview is commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources. Furthermore, Kumar (2018:221) indicates that in a structured interview, he asks a predetermined set of questions, using the same wording and order of questions as specified in the interview schedule. Moreover, Gray (2014:386) indicates that semi-structured interview allows for probing of views and opinions where respondents should expand on their answers.

During the interviews, I used the first probe to get the full picture of the issue under discussion and to ask the participant to talk more about a certain answer or example given. I used the second probe to check if the understanding of what has been said is accurate. I used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews. I got permission from the participants to record the interviews before they started. For instance, the participants signed a consent form that indicated that the interviews will be recorded. I also took notes while interviewing the participants. I decided to do this so that I can be able to review the answers and ask additional questions at the end of the interviews. This strategy had a positive impact because it assisted me to identify the questions that needed a follow-up.

Thomas (2016:190) says that in a semi-structured interview, you provide the structure with a list of issues (rather than specific questions) to be covered and you have the freedom to follow up on points as necessary. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in two primary schools. They were conducted with the sampled members of the SGBs which included the chairpersons of the SGBs, educators serving in the SGBs as well as the principals as ex-officio members in the SGBs. I collected rich information from these interviews. For example, I was able to learn more about the views and the experiences of the participants regarding their legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation in their SGBs. The interviews took place in the research sites where the members of the SGBs operate. Corbin and Strauss (2015:39) indicate that some researchers prefer semi-structured interviews because they enable researchers to maintain some consistency over the concepts that are covered in each interview.

I took into consideration, the factors that make the interviews successful. The examples of such factors were as follows:

(a) Alert the person you interview, with the aim of the interview and what you want to gather from him or her.

(b) The interviewer should not dominate the interview. He or she must be a good listener.

(c) A good interviewer should not criticize or be judgemental.
(d) The manner of asking questions is important, e.g., tell me more about your legal mandates in the SGB.

The semi-structured interviews had research questions that were clear and relevant. The participants knew what was expected of them. The participants were also allowed to choose the language they prefer to use prior to the interviews. This created a conducive atmosphere because they all felt comfortable during the interviews. One SGB chairperson from those interviewed preferred to be interviewed in English while the other chairpersons preferred to use their vernacular. All the principals and the educators preferred to be interviewed in English. All the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. I translated those that were conducted in vernacular into English. I never had difficulties in terms of translation because the participant's local language is my home language. At the same time, English is the First Additional Language that I teach at my workplace. As a result, all the interviews were successfully conducted.

3.10.2 Focus group interviews

I can define this type of interview as a group of people gathered to discuss a focused issue of concern. In other words, in a focus group interview the focus is on a topic, and that the debate or conflict that assists in data generation is encouraged. I asked semi-structured questions to the participants and at the same time, I was the one who facilitated the focus group interviews. According to Lune & Berg (2017), it is an interview style designed for small groups of unrelated individuals, formed by an investigator, and led in a group discussion on some topic or topics. Kumar (2019:197) makes an addition when he says that this type of interview is a form of strategy in qualitative research in which attitudes, opinions, or perceptions towards an issue,

product, service, or programme are explored through a free and open discussion between members of a group and the researcher.

The aim of using the focus group interview in this study was to explore the views of the participants based on how the SGB members interpret and implement school policies in their schools. Connaway & Radford (2017:249) state that the focus group interview is designed to examine in-depth, the feelings, and beliefs people hold and to learn how these feelings shape behaviour.

In addition, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015:175) indicate that the main aim of the focus group is not to reach a consensus about, or solutions to, the issues discussed, but to bring forth different viewpoints on an issue. Furthermore, Bryman (2016:398) says that in focus groups, people involved can bring to the fore, issues about a topic that they deem to be important and significant. The author continues to indicate that the focus group offers the researcher the opportunity to study how individuals collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it.

Moreover, Gray (2014:468) points out that a focus group is essentially an organized discussion among a selected group of individuals with the aim of eliciting information about their views. The purpose is to gain a range of perspectives about subjects and situations.

The focus group interviews were conducted in the other two primary schools. Each focus group consisted of the principal as an ex-officio member of the SGB, an educator serving in the SGB, the chairperson of the SGB, and the three additional members of the SGB. The total number of participants per each focus group interview was six. I explored the hidden comments and perspectives from these two focus group interviews. I was able to explore the unexpected comments and new perspectives easily within these focus group interviews. The focus groups were conducted at the research sites of the participants. I asked the participants semi-structured questions. During the focus group interviews, the participants expressed their views and the challenges they experience during policy interpretation and implementation as members of the SGBs.

I facilitated the discussions to give directives. Marshall and Rossman (2016:153) point out when they indicate that the interviewer / facilitator creates a supportive environment, asking focused questions to encourage discussion and the expression

of differing opinions and points of view. What I noted was that the participants were completely free to air their views based on the challenges they face. The information acquired from the focus group interviews helped me to understand the perceptions and attitudes of the participants regarding policy interpretation and implementation in public schools found in the Mopani district. There was an opportunity to observe the interactions of the participants for a limited period. Therefore, I managed to collect rich data that provided an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences and meanings.

3.10.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was one of the data gathering techniques that I used during data collection. The aim of using this data collection instrument was to justify or complement the information that had been gathered from semi- structured interviews and focus group interviews. Marshall and Rossman (2016:164) justify when they indicate that different types of documents can provide background information that helps establish the rationale for selecting a particular site, program, or population. The documents that I analysed from four primary schools for this research study were only two, namely:

•   The SGB constitution
•   Code of Conduct for Learners

Marshall and Rossman (2016:164) further indicate that examining documents becomes potentially quite rich in portraying the values and beliefs of people involved in the setting. Minutes of meetings, logs, announcements, formal policy statements, letters, and so on are all useful in developing an understanding of the organization, setting, or group studied.

Ethically or procedurally, I requested the principal, the chairperson as well as the secretary of the SGB of each school, permission to have access to the documents towards the end of the interviews and focus group interviews. At first, the above-mentioned stakeholders were reluctant to release the documents to me. Finally, they gave me copies of the documents they had after assuring them of my confidentiality. I evaluated the originality of the documents. In other words, I evaluated the genuineness and accuracy of the records before analysing them. For instance, policies become

valid if they are approved in the form of appending signatures by relevant officials from higher authority.

Most of the documents that were given to me were primary sources of data. The documents that were examined gave light on the phenomenon that is being studied. Maree (2011:82) indicates that using documents as a data gathering technique helps one to focus on all types of written communications that may provide light on the phenomenon that you are investigating. While I was carefully studying the documents, I was interested in checking the way the SGB members exercise their legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation in their schools. In my view, documents from each school provided an in-depth understanding of how the school operates. In fact, they clearly indicated the philosophies, operations, and systems of the school. Baruth (2013:197) points out that each school's documentation provides a greater understanding of the school's working philosophies, operations, and systems. I compared the documents to ensure if there are differences or similarities. I used the information that reflected in the documents to verify the data that I retrieved from the semi-structured interviews, and focus group interviews.

3.11   DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

Data analysis can be defined as a process of reviewing, synthesising, and interpreting data to explain the phenomenon that is being studied. Bryman (2016:11) indicates that data analysis is fundamentally about data reduction. It is concerned with reducing the large body of information that I have gathered so that I can make sense of it.

Data analysis in qualitative is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data, it tries to establish how participants make meaningful of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences to approximate their construction of the phenomenon. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:132) point out that data analysis is one of the most important steps in the qualitative research process because it assists researchers to make sense of their qualitative data.

As soon as the interviews were completed, I transcribed data immediately. I made the transcriptions by listening to the digital voice recordings of each interview with the aim

of familiarising myself with the participant's words. All the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim (rewritten word for word). Maree (2013:104) supports this idea when he says that audio tapes must be transcribed verbatim- i.e., rewritten word for word. I also included the additional field notes that had been taken during the interviews. The analysis and interpretation of data was an exhaustive task as it demanded a lot of time. I then saved all the data in a separate file on the computer after typing. In addition, I made a printout so that I could have a hard copy. Thomas (2016:82) indicates that one needs to have a responsibility to keep the data one collects about people or institutions secure, even though one will have taken every effort to anonymise that data. I decided to analyse data manually because the database was fewer than 500 pages.

Data collected was analysed using thematic analysis. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:141) define thematic analysis as a method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset about a research question. Data was then coded by breaking it down into labelled meaningful pieces. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:138) also indicate that the idea of coding is to break down and understand a text and attach and develop categories and put them into an order over time. The coding process involves the grouping and labelling of segments of data. Bryman (2016:11) shows how data can be analysed qualitatively while coding is a process whereby the data are broken down into their parts and those parts are then given labels. I coded the data using open coding, which can be described as the process of identifying themes that emerge from the raw data. The data was then used to determine categories. Within categories, there were sub-categories. I used colour coding to mark parts of the text or cut and paste text sentences into cards. I organised data in a manner that addressed the research question. Analysed data was then presented in a written form. All the themes in the coding scheme were clear and could be easily identified. This resulted in sub-themes emerging on their own. The open coding process for the semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews resulted in a coding scheme with four major themes indicated as follows:

(a) Lack of adequate knowledge and training based on policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

(b) Low level of educational background among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

(c) Inadequate support from the Department of Basic Education based on equipping the SGB members with skills and knowledge in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

(d) Inappropriate capacity-building strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani district.

3.12   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

I have experienced some limitations while conducting this study. I felt that it was important to expose these limitations as no research is perfect. Gray (2014:61) asserts that no research is perfect, so it is important for researchers to identify and admit the weaknesses and limitations of their work (otherwise supervisors and examiners will be critical of them). Since I have only involved four primary schools in my research study, it was a bit difficult to make a generalisation about other primary schools in the Mopani district. In addition, the sample for this study was small and could not represent the entire population as a result. My understanding is that experiences and opinions may differ according to the different dimensions in other schools that fall under Mopani district. Moreover, my focus was on primary schools whereas there might be the same challenges regarding the interpretation and implementation of school policies in secondary schools as well. Therefore, I limited this study on purpose due to contributing factors such as time and availability of resources. Perhaps, emerging researchers may embark on exploring the challenges related to policy interpretation and implementation in secondary schools.

Another challenge I encountered during data collection was that it was difficult to secure appointments with the participants, particularly with the principals. They kept on postponing the dates for the interviews due to Departmental programmes that they had to attend. This made the interviews to be time-consuming and tiring. Some of the data collected from the interviews were inadequate. This was because some participants were afraid to speak the truth as they had to please their principals. Moreover, the language issue seemed to be a challenge as well. For instance, I had to conduct the interviews in Xitsonga to accommodate the SGB members who could not speak English. In this regard, I had the task of translating the interviews from Xitsonga into English. Despite all the limitations highlighted above, I assume that this

study is beneficial to the members of the SGBs within the South African public schools, especially in the Mopani district.

3.13 ENHANCING CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE FINDINGS

Trustworthiness is the most important component in qualitative research. In other words, assessing the trustworthiness of data was a major part of my data analysis. Maree (2013:113) supports this when he indicates the importance of trustworthiness in qualitative research. Assessing trustworthiness is the acid test of your data analysis, findings, and conclusions. I took into consideration the procedures that need to be kept in mind when assessing the trustworthiness of the data analysis. The procedures that I have used that assisted me in terms of enhancing the trustworthiness of the study included the following:

3.13.1 Using multiple data sources

I used data from different sources to check the findings. For example, I combined individuals' semi-structured interviews with the information collected from the focus group interviews and documents. I was pleased because the data from these different sources pointed to the same conclusions. This made me have confidence in the results of this study.

13.2 Verifying raw data

I also used the procedure of verifying raw data. In this case, I submitted my transcripts (field notes) to the participants so that they can correct mistakes. This activity was done at the end of the interviews. I performed this task during an informal conversation with the participants. I asked the participants to verify the data gathered. The aim was to check if the interpretation of what they shared with me was correct or not.

3.13.3 Stakeholder checks

By providing participants and stakeholders with an opportunity to comment, interpret, and draw conclusions, the findings became more credible. For instance, the participants were allowed to comment on whether my interpretations were in line with the experiences they tried to share during the semi-structured interviews and focus

group interviews. I conducted this activity informally during data collection. A governance manager who trains the SGBs from one of the circuits in the Mopani district had an interest in this research. When asked to comment, he excitedly explained how the training of the SGBs takes place in his circuit.

3.13.4 Verifying and validating my findings

As the findings and data analysis process were the most critical parts of the study, I provided the participants with a draft of the report. It was my request that they provide me with written or oral feedback on the report.

3.13.5 Controlling for bias

I tried not to be biased during the research. For example, I avoided generalisation. This has been already highlighted. This was because the aim of the qualitative research was not to generalise the findings across the population, but rather provide a better understanding of the participants' experiences and attitudes.

3.13.6 Trustworthiness in coding data

In my view, it was necessary to give explanations of the two concepts, namely, *Inter-coder reliability and Intra-coder reliability* before talking about trustworthiness in coding data. Inter-coder reliability refers to consistency among different coders. Intra-coder reliability refers to consistency within a single coder (Maree, 2013:114). I, therefore, asked an independent coder to code some of the data. I provided this person with the objectives of my research objectives and some of the raw text. The coder coded and developed categories from the text. I then compared the coded data from the independent coder to my codes and categories.

3.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics can be defined as the way the researcher researches a particular situation in a way that does not hurt anyone. This is because research that is likely to harm the participants is regarded as unacceptable according to ethical standards.

Thomas (2016:78) defines ethics as principles of behaviour to identify what is right and wrong. Creswell and Creswell (2018:88) state that researchers need to protect their research participants, develop trust with them, and promote the integrity of research, guard against misconduct and impropriety that reflect on their organisations or institutions. In this case, I adhered to the research ethics policy from the University of South Africa (UNISA). For instance, I obtained an ethical clearance from the University mentioned above before commencing with data collection. I also considered the following ethical principles for this research study:

3.14.1   Informed consent

The selected participants were invited by me to participate in the research through invitations in the form of letters. The letters contained the necessary information that made the participants aware of what they were expected to do. Participated people were requested to sign a consent form. Creswell and Creswell (2018:91) justify when they indicate that one needs to have participants sign informed consent forms agreeing to the provisions of the study before they provide data. This was an indication that the participants were not forced to participate in the study. I made the participants aware of the fact that they were participating voluntarily and could withdraw at any time without penalties. Creswell and Creswell (2018:93) confirm when they say that taking part in a study should be seen as voluntary and the researcher should explain in the instructions for the consent form that participants can decide not to participate in the study. Creswell and Creswell (2018:89) further emphasise that one needs not put pressure on the participants into signing consent forms.

On the other hand, Thomas (2016) supports this when he says that consent is about the agreement of people to take part in the study. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015:93) also support this when they state that informed consent entails informing research participants about the general purpose of the investigation, its main design features as well as any possible risks and benefits of participating in the study. Informed consent further involves obtaining the voluntary participation of the people involved and informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. I also made them aware that they have the right to refuse to participate in some aspects of the research if they do not feel comfortable. Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:92) indicate that before someone can agree to participate in a research study, the person needs to

know exactly what participation will entail, to enable them to make an informed decision about whether they would like to participate.

3.14.2 Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity

The participants' personal, and the names of their schools were not revealed. Their privacy was protected. The participants were also assured that the information they provided will be treated confidentially. It will be used only for this study. Kumar (2019:360) says that disclosing information about a respondent with others for purposes other than research is unethical. In addition, Creswell, and Creswell (2018:95) stress that researchers should avoid disclosing information that would harm the participants. Manase (2021:46) also emphasises that one should not tell people information that is not relevant to them. I changed the names of the participants into pseudonyms. This was a clear indication that the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed.

Furthermore, Kumar (2019:360) indicates that it is unethical to identify an individual respondent and the information provided by him or her. Moreover, Thomas (2016:81) suggests that one should always treat any information provided to him or her as confidential, always taking care not to breach or compromise that confidentiality. Maintaining the anonymity of your participants is a key part of this, in your everyday dealings and conversations with others, in your storage of data and reporting. In my opinion, not protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of participant information is unethical.

Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:95) indicate that confidentiality implies that the data that includes identifiable information about the participants cannot be revealed to others without the explicit, signed consent of the participants. Corbin and Strauss (2015:44) conquer when they indicate that maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of participants are important aspects of doing research. Mason (2018:102) stresses that one needs to work through issues of confidentiality and anonymity, to ensure that what you do is consistent with promises you to have made to participate as well as with your good practice.

3.14.3 Permission to conduct research

I applied for permission to conduct the research from the Limpopo Department of Education. The permission was granted. The province further directed that I should make necessary arrangements with the District Director, Circuit Managers, and principals of the four sampled schools. After making these arrangements at district, circuit, and school levels in writing, I was given the mandate to visit the four sampled schools for data collection.

3.14.4 Feedback

Feedback will be given to all the participants as well as the participating schools at the end of the study. This feedback can empower the SGB members to be effective in policy interpretation and implementation in their schools. The findings and the recommendations of this study can also assist the Provincial Department of education to develop a manual that can be used to develop SGB members on policy interpretation and implementation in schools.

3.14.5 Justice

In my view, there was a fair procedure in the selection of the participants. For example, I selected both male and female participants. There were two female principals and two male principals from four primary schools in this study. Both male and female SGB members were available for this study.

3.14.6 Honesty

I did not fabricate data to support my opinions. For instance, data was practically collected from the sampled participants and schools. The evidence in the form of audio discs is available and stored in a safe place. Therefore, the research findings were reported as the true reflection of the participants' opinions. Connaway and Radford (2017:219) are against deception when they said that deception in qualitative research is a critical concept and is to be strictly avoided.

3.15   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter has provided an in-depth description of the research methodology used for this study. In other words, what I have done so far was to collect data as explained in this chapter. The methods that I have used in collecting data from the participants have been explained in detail.

3.16   PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

In the next chapter, I will provide data analysis and interpretation of results from the data collected during semi-structured interviews, focus group, and documents. This chapter also presents the way the findings are organised according to the research questions. In addition, it highlights the context of the sampled schools as well as the biographical information of the participants.

CHAPTER 4: DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data analysis and interpretation of result on data collected during semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis. It also presents the way the findings were organised according to the research questions. The study consisted of 18 participants from the sample of four rural primary schools. These schools are found in different circuits of the Mopani district. The sample size of three participants for each school, from the two primary schools, comprising of the SGB chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB and the Principal who is an ex-officio member in the SGB was purposeful chosen for semi-structured interviews. Mason (2018:22) states that a semi-structured interview is the most appropriate way to generate data. Corbin and Strauss (2015:39) support the views of Mason when they indicate that some researchers prefer semi-structured interviews because they enable researchers to maintain some consistency over the concepts that are covered in each interview. In semi-structured interviews, the same topics are covered in each interview. After the questions on the list have been covered, participants are free to add anything else to the interview that they might feel is relevant to the discussion.

For the other two primary schools, the sample size for each school, comprising of the principal as an ex-officio member in the SGB, SGB chairperson, an educator serving in the SGB as well as the three additional members of the SGBs was chosen for focus group interviews. I was able to explore the views of the SGB members based on policy interpretation and implementation while using the focus group interviews. Mason (2018:130) points out that focus groups are usually thought to involve a group assembled to ascertain views and opinions or stimulate discussion on specific issues, to provide data, and usually group interaction is seen as the key mechanism to generating data. Gray (2014:470) supports the use of a focus group as well when he indicates that focus groups allow researchers to explore the feelings, attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, reactions, and experiences of a subject, in a way that would not be so accessible through other approaches such as observation, interview or survey. Bryman (2016:398) further supports the use of a focus group as a data collection instrument when he says that the focus group offers him the opportunity to study the

ways in which individuals collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it.

The names of all the participants involved in this research study together with their schools were not disclosed because I assured them of confidentiality and anonymity. This was supported by Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:95) when they say researchers have the responsibility to ensure that appropriate precautions are taken to protect the confidentiality of participants' data. For instance, names and any information from which identities could be inferred (e.g., locations) should be removed. Aidley (2019:38) also says that maintaining anonymity and confidentiality helps to avoid the harm that participants might suffer if their data was made public or fell into wrong hands.

Furthermore, the participants in the research were both male and female. All the participants were appropriate and relevant for this study because they were members of the SGBs in their respective schools.

In addition, I also used document analysis to strengthen and supplement the data collected from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups. For instance, the analysis of the mandatory policies from the sampled primary schools was conducted to check whether data obtained from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups correlate or not. Dibete (2015:68) indicates that the analysis of the documents from the schools was conducted in order either to corroborate or refute the data obtained from the interviews and to contextualize, verify and clarify the data obtained from the interviews. Yin (2018:115) also conquers when he says that during fieldwork, one should arrange access to examine the files of any organisation being studied, including a review of documents that may have been put into "cold storage" by an organisation.

Copies of the SGB constitutions and the Codes of Conduct for Learners from four sampled primary schools were requested and analysed to gather further information on the issue of policy interpretation and implementation. The issue of analysing the school documents to gather more information about the phenomenon under study was supported by Mabusela (2016:62) when she says that to gather further information, the following documents were requested from the schools which were visited.

4.2   DISCOURSE DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

A qualitative discourse data analysis (QDDA) is the systematic process of converting collected written data such as interview and field notes into coherent findings. A method of analysis of naturally occurring talk and all types of written text. There are no formulas, recipes, or rules for this process, for which one needs skills, knowledge, experience, insight, and a willingness to keep learning and working at it. There are many ways of doing QDDA. They include the case study approach, theory-based approaches, and collaborative and participatory forms of analysis. I was at liberty to try to involve others, including my supervisor, in the process and to discuss and review my findings as much as possible. This helped me make my findings more useful and trustworthy. No matter what method of analysis and interpretation is used, my aim was always to produce good quality findings. Refer to figure 4.1.

1. Record data and prepare memos	8. Triangulate data sources	9. Make conclusions and recommendations, prepare draft report
2. Label and archive data	7. Interpret findings, assess contribution to impact and summarise	10. Seek feedback and validation
3. Review study objectives or aims	6. Identify and summarise themes	11. Communicate findings
4. Analyse contextual and demographic data	5. Carefully read data and begin coding	12. Proffer recommendations

Figure 4.1: Qualitative Discourse data analysis (QDDA) plan

Qualitative Discourse data analysis (QDDA) plan helps one think through the collected data, what one uses it for, and how one analyses it. In my study, creating an analysis plan was an important way to ensure that I collected all the data I needed until saturation and used all the data I collected, and followed the triangulation process thereof. Analysis planning can be an invaluable investment of time. It can help one to select the most appropriate research methods and statistical tools. It ensures that the

way one collects one's data and structures one's database helps one get reliable analytic results (Nyoni & Baloyi, 2020)

4.3 DATA PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

Transcripts and voice recordings were stored on my private laptop, which requires a password to access. A locked cupboard was used to store the transcripts to ensure their confidentiality. The narrative information was organised into files with password protected access. Afterward, I analysed data collected from semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis.

Morse and Field (1995:126 in Polit and Beck 2018:531) describe qualitative data analysis as "the process of fitting data together, or making the invisible obvious, or linking and attributing the consequences to antecedents". Polit and Beck (2018:131) also refer to it as "an active and interactive process". Data analysis was out to answer the research questions and objectives set in chapter 1. The findings were merged and integrated to show the similarity and different perspectives of research participants. Qualitative data aim to transform data into findings.

The data analysis was done manually. This study's trustworthiness was enhanced by different data sources in different settings. Since I was able to identify general concepts through the analysis and interpretations of data, I applied deductive and inductive logic to the process. I relied on my experiences in particular settings to analyse the information provided by the participants in this study. Qualitative data analysis was based on assumptions and the use of interpretive frameworks to ensure that the final report includes the voices of participants. The analysis played a prominent role as it helped in terms of exploring the reasons that are hindrances to SGB members on the issue of policy interpretation and implementation.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

I followed the four-step process for qualitative data analysis outlined by Creswell & Creswell (2018:185). The process involves levels of analysis to arrive at and establish findings and themes. These were used to develop an instrument for the qualitative phase, as illustrated in figure 4.2.

THEMES   **DESCRIPTION**

CODING THE DATA

READ THROUGH THE DATA

ORGANISING AND PREPARING DATA FOR ANALYSIS

RAW DATA (TRANSCRIPTS & NFIELD NOTES)
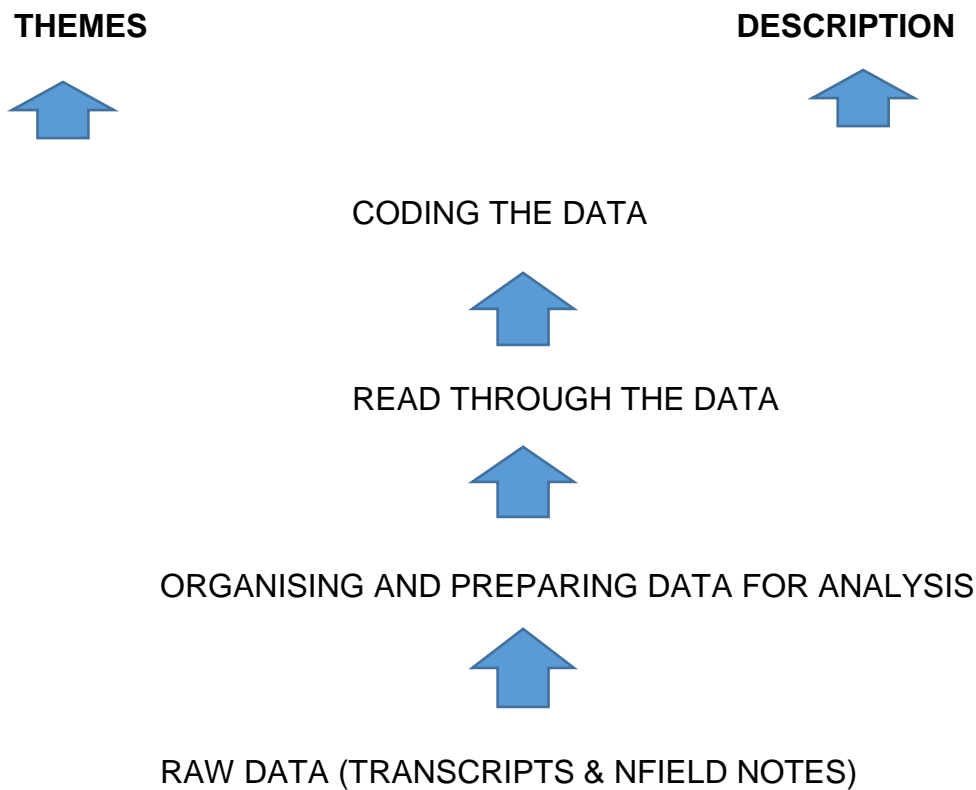
Figure 4.2: Qualitative data analysis process (adapted from Creswell & Creswell 2018: 194)

4.4.1   Steps of qualitative data analysis

4.4.1.1 *Organising and preparing data for analysis*

While scanning through the transcription materials, I listened to the audio-recorded interviews one by one. The transcripts were then sorted by date and location. My next step was to organise them into files for easy access. Transcribing the interviews gave me the opportunity to immerse myself in the data.

4.4.1.2 *Read and look at all the data*

I read through all the data. In the next step, the data were aggregated into smaller units that were easier to manage. By alternating between transcripts and writing down key concepts as I heard them, I was able to keep track of emerging ideas. While reading the data, I had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the information. By writing memos in the margins of transcripts, I got general impressions and ideas from the participants.

Further, I reviewed the notes taken during interviews to confirm and disproved the main idea. Using the particular words used by most participants during interviews, I extracted key concepts from the emerging ideas. According to this approach, the principle of similarity and contrast was applied.

4.4.1.3 Coding the data

In multiple files, I summarised the segments of data that were written as memos and related to the research question. The data was later categorised based on the number of times the word appeared in all the files. The counting was not based on frequency per individual file, but on how widespread the word appeared in the overall data (Elliot 2018:2857). A code was then assigned as an indication of the participants' idea of interest in the research question. Coding was then done by comparing new data with what already exists from the conceptual framework. The data were compared with each other for similarities. I finally used both theoretical codes and Nvivo codes which are the exact words of the participants as stipulated by Bazeley (2013 in Creswell & Poth 2018:193). I also used axial coding which interconnects and links the categories of codes. The codes represented both the information that I expected as the researcher. I also got surprising information that I did not expect.

4.4.1.4 Generating themes and subthemes

The codes forming the same idea were aggregated into smaller units of data while checking for patterns and overlaps. To develop themes from those classified into smaller units, I used Bazeley's (2013 in Creswell & Poth) 2018:194) strategies. The themes displayed multiple perspectives from participants and were supported by diverse and specific evidence from the literature.

4.5   THE CONTEXT OF THE SAMPLED SCHOOLS

The four selected primary schools are found in the rural areas of Mopani district. The four communities where the selected schools are found are very poor. For instance, they lack basic needs and facilities such as proper houses, drinking water, clinics, and science equipment at schools, libraries, etc. Most parents from these communities are not educated. The rate of poverty is high as most of them are unemployed. Old people rely on social grants for survival. Some cut and sell the wood to supplement the little

income they get from the social grant. Most young boys and girls do not attend school. Most young boys spend their time drinking homemade liquor at their nearest taverns while some young girls' resort to loitering to get money for survival. The rate of crime is high in these communities. My observation is that education is not valued as a tool to fight poverty in these communities. As a result, there are few graduates from tertiary institutions as education is not rated by young people.

Most parents are not affording to buy prescribed school uniforms for their children. Most parents travel long distances to fetch water from the borehole. This makes most learners to arrive late at school. This situation discourages learners from attending school regularly. This leads to a high rate of school dropout. The schools in these rural areas lack resources such as libraries and science laboratories with equipment. The school must organise transport to a science centre so that learners can access the science laboratory. The Municipal library is available in town and is far from the sampled schools hence most learners are struggling to read at their schools because of this situation. In most cases, another challenge I identified was that learners are prevented from going to schools due to protests by the villagers as they demand service delivery for their communities. They are also disturbed during the examinations because the villagers normally block the roads when they demand services from the local Municipality. Most leaders of these protests are those who dropped out of school.

4.6   BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The biographical information of the participants involved in the semi-structured interviews is illustrated in the tables below. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in schools A and school D while the focus group interviews were conducted in schools B and C, respectively. This biographical information justifies that the majority of SGB members have a lower level of education. I will use the codes indicated below when presenting data and making quotations. Therefore, the units of analysis are as follows:

Units of analysis

School	Participant category	Code	Position in SGB	Experience in Years	Education
A	Parent 1	AP1	Chairperson	2	Gr 7
A	Educator 1	EA1	Secretary	6	PTD
A	Principal 1	PA1	Ex-officio	8	BEd (Hons)

B	Parent 1	BP1	Chairperson	2	Gr 7
B	Parent 2	BP2	Member	2	Gr 9
B	Parent 3	BP3	Member	2	Gr 6
B	Parent 4	BP4	Member	3	Gr 7
B	Educator 1	EB1	Secretary	6	PTD
B	Principal 1	PB1	Ex-officio	8	BA
C	Parent 1	CP1	Chairperson	9	Gr 8
C	Parent 2	CP2	Member	2	Gr 6
C	Parent 3	CP3	Member	6	Gr 7
C	Parent 4	CP4	Member	4	Gr 10
C	Educator 1	EC1	Secretary	2	PTD
C	Principal 1	PC1	Ex-officio	7	BEd
D	Parent 1	DP1	Chairperson	2	Gr 6
D	Educator 1	ED1	Secretary	2	PTD
D	Principal 1	PD1	Ex-officio	7	BEd

Table 4.6.1: Biographical information of sampled interviewed parents serving in the SGB

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of years serving the SGB	Level of education
School A	Parent 1	F	Chairperson	2	Grade 7
School D	Parent 1	M	Chairperson	1	Grade 6

Table 4.6.2: Biographical information of sampled interviewed educators serving in the SGB

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of years serving the SGB	Level of education
School A	Educator 1	F	Secretary	6	PTD
School D	Educator 1	M	Secretary	2	PTD

Table 4.6.3: Biographical information of sampled interviewed Principals as ex-officio members in the SGB

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of years serving the SGB	Level of education
School A	Principal 1	F	Principal	8	BEd (Hons)
School D	Principal 1	M	Principal	7	BEd (Hons)

Table 4.6.4: Biographical information of participating parents during a focus group interview

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of Years serving the SGB	Level of education
School B	Parent 1	M	Chairperson	2	Grade 7
	Parent 2	F	Additional member	2	Grade 9
	Parent 3	F	Additional member	2	Grade 6
	Parent 4	M	Additional member	3	Grade 7
School C	Parent 1	M	Chairperson	9	Grade 8
	Parent 2	M	Additional member	2	Grade 6
	Parent 3	F	Additional member	6	Grade 7
	Parent 4	F	Additional member	4	Grade 10

Table 4.6.5: Biographical information of participated educators during a focus group interview

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of years serving the SGB	Level of education
School B	Educator 1	F	Secretary	6	PTD
School C	Educator 1	M	Secretary	2	PTD

Table 4.6.6: Biographical information of participated Principals during focus group interview

School	Participant	Gender	Position in the SGB	Number of years serving the SGB	Level of education
School B	Principal 1	M	Principal	8 years	BA
School C	Principal 1	M	Principal	7 years	B Ed

The primary aim of this study was to explore the School Governing Bodies' legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation in rural public schools found in the Mopani district. The research questions asked in this study were intended to explore the capacity of the SGBs in policy interpretation and implementation to identify the generic skills and competencies, which contribute towards effectiveness and efficiency. This study revealed the views of participants regarding the research questions that were investigated. For instance, the main research question and the sub-research questions that underpinned the main research questions were as follows:

How do School Governing Bodies (SGBs) leadership exercise their fiduciary governance responsibilities on matters of policy implementation and law compliance in Mopani district public schools?

The following were the sub-questions that underpinned the main research question:

1) What critical skills and competencies do SGBs possess for them to be effective in policy and law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools? This sub-question is linked to theme 1 which talks about the difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation.

2) How does the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani district support the SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance and policy interpretation and implementation? This sub-question is linked to theme 2 which talks about the low level of educational background.

3) What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB, and school management? This sub-question is linked to theme 3 which talks about inadequate capacity-building and empowerment strategies.

4) What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

The themes identified below emanated from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis. Therefore, the table below shows the link between the themes and the subthemes that emerged from the analysis of findings.

Table 4.6.7 Illustration of themes and subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
• **Theme 1** Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation.	- Lack of adequate knowledge of policy interpretation and implementation. - Inadequate training on SGB-related matters.

• **Theme 2** Low level of educational background.	- Inadequate education on policy matters - Illiteracy - Language problem
• **Theme 3** Inadequate capacity-building and empowerment strategies	- Insufficient support on policy-related matters - Short training programme on policy issues
• **Theme 4** Ineffective recommended strategies	- Lack of creativity and innovation. - Lack of commitment from DBE

4.7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This part focused on the above-mentioned themes and the sub-themes that were identified during the data analysis process. I decided to conduct this study to explore the views of rural Governing Bodies of public schools on accurate policy interpretation and effective implementation in the Mopani district. The findings that are organized according to the research questions and the themes are outlined in this manner:

SUB QUESTION 1: What critical skills and competencies do SGBs possess for them to be effective in policy and law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools?

THEME 1: Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

The findings revealed that most SGB members, and parents, have difficulty identifying the mandatory school policies that they are supposed to interpret and implement in their schools. This challenge happens in some rural public schools that are found in the Mopani district. From the findings, this is caused by a lack of knowledge and low educational background. This has been confirmed by the responses from the principals of school A and school B (PA1 and PB1). They indicated clearly that the main challenge is that most parents serving in their SGBs have a low level of education and cannot identify, interpret, and implement the mandatory policies of the school. For instance, it was difficult for the SGB chairperson of school A (AP1) to state the mandatory school policies they have in their school. She only mentioned the admission policy whereas the school has so many school policies. For example, when I asked about the types of policies they have, AP1 said, "We have the admission policy in this school". The PA1 gave me some copies of the school policies. She confirmed that her school has many mandatory school policies. In addition, she also mentioned all the mandatory school policies the school has. Therefore, this is a clear indication that most SGBs found in the Mopani district rely on their principals in identifying all the policies the schools have.

- **Subtheme 1**: Lack of adequate knowledge of policy interpretation and implementation.

Participants BP1, BP2, BP3, and BP4 indicated that the training that they normally receive as SGB members is minimal. For example, they said that they are only trained by the principal at the beginning of the year. It is my understanding that the DBE must take a lead in terms of initiating training for SGB members on regular basis.

Research question 2:

How the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani district does support the SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance and policy interpretation and implementation?

The findings from the research question stated in 4.5.2 resulted in the second theme stated in this manner:

Theme 2: Low level of educational background amongst the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district

- **Subtheme 1: Inadequate education on policy matters**

The findings revealed that most parents serving in the SGBs have a lower level of education. This has been confirmed by the biographical information of sampled parents serving in the SGBs under the level of education. For example, the PA1 indicated that she is the one who advises the chairperson and all members of the SGB on how the policies are formulated. To justify what I said, *PA1 says, "I am the one who advises them so that we can make it a point that the policies are in line with the Constitution of South Africa. As the ex-officio, I advise the chairperson of the SGB and all the members on how the policies are formulated."*

PA1 further said, "I take all the mandatory responsibilities as the Department is concerned. As the Principal, I capacitate the SGB with the policies."

According to SASA, one of the main functions of the principal is to manage the day-to-day activities of the school. In other words, teaching and learning activities are the responsibilities of the principal in school. It is the principal's responsibility to organise and support the professional development of their staff and they play a key role in this domain by creating a school climate that motivates and promotes learning (Li, Hallinger & Ko, 2016). In addition, Ogina (2017:15) says that the school principal is responsible for school administration, managing infrastructure, and teachers.

I support the idea of the PA1 when she said she advises the chairperson of the SGB because that is her role as an ex-officio member of the SGB. I tend to differ with her when she said she capacitates the SGB with policies because the issue of capacitating the SGB members with school policies is the responsibility of the governance officers dealing with the SGBs at the circuit, district, and provincial levels. These are the people that deal directly with governance matters in public schools. SASA also indicates that the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body, and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act (SASA, 1996).

Furthermore, in schools B and C, the dominant participants during focus group discussions were educators and principals namely EB1, EC1, PB1, and PC1. Parents, namely BP1, BP2, BP3, BP4, CP1, CP2, CP3, and CP4 were not active during the discussions although I tried to engage them politely as the facilitator of the discussions.

They were reluctant to speak. I detected through their gestures that they might be lacking understanding of the role and the responsibilities as members of the SGB. I considered this as a limitation of this data-gathering instrument.

In most cases, this situation tends to give the educators and the principals platform to take advantage of in terms of interpreting and implementing the school policies in the manner that suit them. This makes the legal mandates of the SGB, parents, compromised. Therefore, my observation is that school policies cannot be implemented effectively if policies are not well interpreted by all members of the SGB.

If the issue of policy interpretation and implementation is left in the hands of the principals, my observation is that the school policies would be interpreted and implemented in the manner that suits them. My determination of principals' practices is that they dominate in the governance of the schools. This becomes a conflict because the principals are not allowed to impose decisions because they should legally act as ex-officio members in the SGBs according to SASA. Their role is to advise the SGBs to ensure that they are always on track with the departmental policies.

Another finding was that most of the school policies that come from the national and provincial education departments are written in English. These policies are distributed to SGB members during meetings, but they are unable to read, interpret, and implement them because most of them cannot read or write. When I asked about the challenges that are faced by the SGB during the formulation of school policies, the PC1 had this to say: "*Firstly, the SGB consists of parents. Most parents in this community who are available in the SGB are illiterate. This means that they are unable to read and write. When it comes to formulating policies, it becomes a problem. The SGB parent component relies heavily on the teacher component. The result is that the formulated policies are biased or one-sided.*"

PC1 also says, "Parents, due to their illiteracy do not engage in reading the school policies. Due to this, they are not aware of education development trends. It becomes a problem when formulating policies because their contribution to developing policies is minimal and ineffectual."

The same sentiments were shared by PD1 of school D when she said:

"Most parents serving in the SGB of this school are not educated."

Therefore, my observation is that the challenge of illiteracy among the SGB members needs an intervention strategy from the Department of Basic Education. I felt that the members of the SGB cannot be able to interpret and implement school policies effectively in the Mopani district if they still face the challenge of illiteracy.

- **Subtheme 2: Illiteracy**

In school A, the findings also revealed that the PA1 is the one who always reads and interprets the school policies to SGB members, the parent's component. This indicates that most parents are unable to read and write.

- **Subtheme 3: Language problem**

Most of the school policies are written in English. Since most parents have a lower level of education, they are not able to understand them. Therefore, the issue of language becomes a barrier when it comes to policy interpretation and implementation.

Research question 3:

What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB, and school management?

The findings from the research question in 4.5.3 generated the third theme as follows:

Theme 3: Inadequate capacity building and empowerment strategies from the Department of Basic Education pertaining to policy interpretation and implementation in rural public schools of the Mopani district.

- **Subtheme 1: Insufficient support on policy-related matters**

The findings also revealed that there is no sufficient support from the Department of Basic Education in terms of capacitating the SGB members with skills and knowledge of policy interpretation and implementation. In other words, capacity-building strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation are not enough in the Mopani district. For instance, in school A, the

PA1 and the ED1 representative in the SGB indicated that they had only two SGB workshops for the whole year. The first one was conducted by the principal at the school level and the second one was conducted by governance officers from the Mopani district.

From the findings, the DBE seems to be good at distributing the SGB materials in the form of manuals and pamphlets in public schools. It neglects the practical part of capacitating the SGB members. According to the findings, there is a need for SGB members to be capacitated on how to interpret and implement the SGB manuals and pamphlets coming from DBE. This is because some principals end up filing the SGB documents instead of giving the SGB members to read and apply them. Therefore, I contend that the SGB members should be capacitated by the governance officers at least once every term. I also proffer that the Department of Basic Education needs to develop an annual capacity-building programme for the SGBs. This can assist the SGB members to keep on revisiting the school policies on regular basis.

- **Subtheme 2: Short training programme on policy issues**

I discovered that the DBE provides only one short training programme at the beginning of the year. I feel that this is not enough as the SGBs deserve more time to learn and understand their roles from the training programme. My understanding on this matter is that a scheduled training programme should be developed to equip the SGBs with skills and knowledge so that they provide good governance in schools.

Research question 4:

What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

The findings from the research question in 4.5.4 generated the fourth theme:

Theme 4: Ineffective recommended strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in Mopani rural public schools.

Subtheme 1: Lack of creativity and innovation

There is a lack of creativity and innovation from DBE. This is because the findings revealed that the capacity-building strategies for empowering the SGBs are not effective in some rural public schools that are found in the Mopani district. For instance, there are no adequate SGB workshops and training for SGB members at provincial and district levels. This was the concern I had because there are people appointed at these levels to deal specifically with the governance of public schools, which includes capacitating the SGB members in the form of workshops and training. From the semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews I had with the SGB members, it emerged that the SGB members are not provided with enough capacity-building workshops and training to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. For instance, in school A, the PC1 uses general knowledge when formulating strategies that encourage learners to attend school. The principal of this school indicated that parents serving in the SGB wanted to beat learners who do not attend school on regular basis due to a lack of policy understanding. This is against the law because section 10 of SASA prohibits anyone from administrating corporal punishment to a learner.

"No person may administer corporal punishment to a learner at a school." (SASA, 1996).

I discovered from the findings that few workshops and training only take place at schools and circuit levels which is not enough. In most cases, some of the school policies that the SGB use in their schools are derived from the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education. One suggests that the provincial department should first capacitate the governance officers who in turn should capacitate the SGB members before policies are sent to schools for implementation. The conclusion drawn from the findings indicates that the provincial department of education had failed in capacitating the SGB members to know their roles and responsibilities in terms of policy interpretation and implementation. Therefore, my view is that if the newly elected SGB members can receive adequate training and workshops, they could be able to interpret and implement school policies effectively in their schools.

Subtheme 2: Lack of commitment from DBE

There is no commitment from DBE in terms of developing the recommended effective strategies that can be applied to improve governance in public schools.

The findings revealed that some of the school policies in school A were not signed by the principal, SGB chairperson, and the Circuit Manager. Therefore, they cannot be regarded as official documents by the upper structures of education departments. These structures must keep a copy after approving every school policy. Minutes of meetings were not well captured as they were incomplete. I also discovered from the minutes of the SGB that the tariffs for travel claims of educators were not in line with the departmental policy of the Mopani district. According to departmental policy from the department of transport, travel claims of all government employees are regulated by the circular that is distributed to all government departments on monthly basis. This is clear evidence that the SGB members from this school need to be capacitated in policy interpretation and implementation.

4.8   DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The use of document analysis as one of the data collection methods played a vital role in this study. Maree (2018:88) says that when you use documents as a data-gathering technique, you will focus on different types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon that you are investigating. As I have already indicated in chapter 3, I focussed on two documents only in all the four sampled primary schools. The documents that I examined at the end of each interview and focus group interview were the SGB Constitution and the Code of Conduct for Learners. Therefore, the findings were as follows:

4.8.1   Findings from A Primary School

I discovered that the chairperson of the SGB in A Primary School mentioned only one school policy document that the school has. For example, she only spoke of the admission policy. On the other hand, the principal of this school indicated that they have many school policies. She gave me some of the hard copies of their school policies. This was a clear indication that the school has indeed many school policies. While examining the two documents, I discovered that they were not signed by the principal, SGB chairperson, and the Circuit Manager to show that they are legal documents ready to be implemented.

4.8.2   Findings from B Primary School

In school B Primary, I noted that they have a problem of learners who come late at school, yet they have a Code of Conduct for Learners. Therefore, I can assume that the SGB members of this school are failing to interpret and implement their Code of Conduct for Learners.

4.8.3   Findings from C Primary School

In school C Primary, I was not given access to examine the SGB Constitution and the Code of Conduct for Learners. The reason that was cited by the principal was that the file containing these two documents is kept by the SGB secretary at home. According to SASA, the documents of the school are regarded as the school assets and should always be kept at the school premises. (SASA, 1996). Although they indicated during the focus group that they have a school Code of Conduct for Learners, finance policy, procurement policy, HIV/AIDS policy, and other policies, I was not given access to examine these documents. The principal simply kept on promising that I would have them. Therefore, the indication might be that the filling system of the school may not be in order, or the policies are not available.

I can conclude that other members of the SGB do not have access to these documents, hence they cannot read, interpret, and implement them. This was a setback for using this data collection instrument, particularly in this school because, in other sampled schools, I was given access to analyse their documents. This shows a lack of understanding amongst the SGB members on how the school records should be kept.

4.8.4   Findings from D Primary School

In school D Primary, I discovered that the SGB Constitution and the Code of Conduct for Learners were not designed according to SASA. For instance, the SGB Constitution of this school was without the allocated functions of the SGB. This shows incompetency in policy formulation by the SGB members. Another thing that amazed me was that their Code of Conduct included corporal punishment as a corrective measure which is prohibited according to SASA. SASA (1996:10) stipulates that no

one should administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner. This shows inability by the SGB of this school to interpret SASA while formulating school policies.

4.9   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it emerged from the analysis of the findings that the majority of the SGBs that are found in rural public schools of the Mopani district are not competent in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in their schools. Makhuvele (2016) justifies when he indicates that the SGBs do not have the necessary capacity to interpret and implement policies in schools. Malatji (2018) conquers when he expresses that his personal experience and observations indicate that there is a lack of knowledge and skills regarding the drawing up and implementation of governance policies at schools. Lack of adequate knowledge of policy interpretation and implementation, a short training programme on policy issues, lower level of education among SGB members, insufficient support from the Department of Basic Education, and inadequate capacity-building strategies, were found to be the hindrances that prevent the SGB members from interpreting and implementing the school policies accurately in schools. My understanding is that since the SGBs have been given the legal mandates to govern public schools according to SASA, they need support in the form of workshops and training programmes from the Department of Basic Education. The SGB members should be equipped with skills and knowledge so that they can have a clear understanding of how to interpret and implement school policies correctly in their local schools.

In addition, according to SASA, the governing body of a public school must develop the school's mission statement, adopt a code of conduct for learners, and determine the school's admission and language policies. My understanding is that members of the SGB cannot be able to perform these duties and responsibilities if they do not possess the required competencies. I feel that the SGB members need to be trained at the beginning of their term of office and sufficient time for training sessions should be provided. The province and the district should allocate funding for SGB training programmes in their budget on annual basis. The training sessions must be well organised and need to be conducted in the local vernacular. The training sessions should address the needs of the SGB members. They should focus on the areas where the SGB members lack competencies.

My analysis is that if the SGB members do not possess the required skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation, this can affect the culture of learning and teaching in most public schools. In other words, good governance from the SGB members plays a vital role in yielding good results in schools. This was supported by Sebopetsa (2018) when he says that dysfunctionality is the result of poor governance and poor management by both the school principals and the SGBs. Sambo (2016:33) conquers this view as well when he says that the involvement of parents, learners in secondary schools, and teaching and non-teaching staff in school governance is intended to enhance the academic performance of learners, teaching, and school management.

Lastly, the analysis of data generated the following four broad headings or themes:

1) Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district.

2) Prevalence of illiteracy among SGB members

3) Inadequate Department of Basic Education support system for SGB members.

4) Ineffective capacity-building strategies for SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation.

4.10   PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

In the next chapter, I will discuss the research findings as well as the conclusions that are organized by the research questions. I will also discuss the hindrances that prevent the SGB members from complying in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies in rural public schools of the Mopani district.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter four, I presented data analysis and interpretation of results on data collected during semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis. Therefore, this chapter presents the discussion of findings and the conclusions that are organized by research questions. Fundamentally, the theory of action provided a framework for this study.

5.1.1 Thematic Analysis Process

Thematic analysis is invariably and predominantly used in qualitative research for time immemorial (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It has rarely been appreciated in the same way as grounded theory, ethnography, or phenomenology. Braun and Clarke (2006) denote that thematic analysis should be a foundational data analysis approach for qualitative analysis, as it provides core skills and competencies for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis including case study designs. Refer to figure 5.1
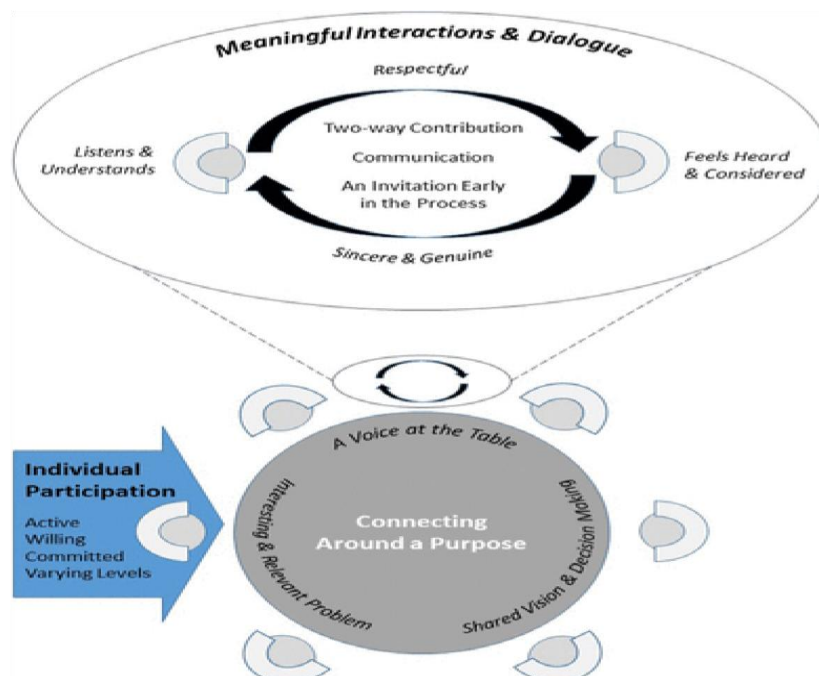
Figure 5.1: Components of the Engagement Process

5.2   DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

On the same wavelength, findings are discussed using a thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis in qualitative research is the main approach to analyse the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Research requires rigorous methods for data analysis, and this requires a methodology that can help facilitate objectivity. Rigorous thematic analysis can bring objectivity to the data analysis in qualitative research. The study was conducted to expose the obstacles that prevent the SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies in tandem with other legislative instruments accurately in their schools.

The analysis report presents not only the analysis but interpretation of the analysis of data. Refer to figure 5.2.

Identify and familiarize with data	Read the data and get familiar with the data type and content Check any mistakes in data recording or any loophole sin data collection Check the overall credibility of data
Identify codes	Identify interesting elements in data Document anything that seems interesting Keep a documented trail of each step Document the main codes that you find in your data
Find themes in data	Look for themes in the data Document these themes Look for data that is relevant to each theme Keep record of each and every step
Finalize themes	Finalize your themes and their names Look for the data that can be analyzed under each theme
Review each theme	Review each theme for its credibility Check that no data is missing from being sorted in some theme Check that each theme should have a specific identity
Document analysis	Analyze the resultant themes and draw inferences Document data electronically or manually Make sure that no data that is important related to your research question is left unanalyzed.

Figure 5.2: Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

Therefore, the findings discussed below use four major themes, namely, difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation, low level of educational background, inadequate capacity-building and empowerment strategies, and ineffective recommended strategies.

5.2.1. Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation

In school A, the discussion revealed that the SGB members have trouble in understanding policy interpretation and implementation due to insufficient training. They do not understand their legal mandates as provided for in the plethora of legal instruments. They are not sure about their roles and responsibilities. They do not know what they are expected to do as members of the SGB. They do not know the policies of schools (Mahlangu, 2008). It will appear there is a conflation of fiduciary responsibilities with principals' management and administrative duties for any directive that needs to be taken in schools. The principals do as they like. For instance, they draft the policies of their schools and give the SGB members to sign. The problem exists because the majority of the SGB members are not given enough training by governance officers. For instance, governance officers from Mopani district provide one workshop for the newly elected SGB members once every three years. Some principals try to capacitate the SGB members, but it is not enough. This is one of the reasons that make the SGB members have limited knowledge while serving in the SGBs. Therefore, most SGB members are not capable of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in schools because of this problem.

5.2.2   Low level of educational background

In school B, the study also revealed that there is a low level of educational background amongst the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district and that has a negative impact on skills and competence and affects fiduciary oversight and responsibilities. Some causes of dysfunctional rural schools can be traced back to ineffective SGBs. This was justified by the biographical information that revealed that the majority of SGB members left formal education at primary school. Only the SGB educator component was literate, and it was able to dominate governance fiduciary activities. Many principals are concerned about the fact that many governance members are illiterate and not sure of their responsibilities in governance issues. The challenge prevents the SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies in line with the law. The situation prompts the educator representative and principals to craft policies that suit their best interests. The situation is so dire that failure to comply with the constitutional, national policy act, and schools act, constitutes dereliction of duty by SGB.

5.2.3 Inadequate capacity building and empowerment strategies

In school C, the findings of the study detected that most SGBs cannot govern schools due to inadequate support from the DBE in the Mopani district. The DBE gives minimal support to SGB members. For instance, it allocates insufficient time for training the SGB members to empower them with skills and competencies. In addition, facilitators with less expertise are hired to facilitate the SGB workshops. Moreover, the SGBs are supported at the circuit level only. My view is that the SGBs should be supported at all levels of the department. Motshekga (2018:23) indicates that governance members must be supported at all levels of the education system – school, district, provincial, and national levels. Therefore, inadequate support hinders the SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in public schools. This is the conclusion drawn from the findings.

5.2.4   Ineffective recommended strategies

In school D, the study revealed that few capacity-building strategies are employed by the Mopani district to empower the SGB members with skills and knowledge. For instance, SGB members are trained once after being elected. The induction workshop does not focus on challenging issues that the SGB members experience. Few facilitators with less expertise are hired to conduct the SGB induction workshop. There are no refresher courses for SGB members during the year. There are no strategies for addressing the issue of illiteracy among the SGB members in the SGBs. My view is that the DBE should provide adequate capacity-building programmes for the SGBs which will focus on areas such as policy development, planning for school development, and other related issues. Motshekga (2018:14) suggests that all newly elected SGB members or governors undergo an induction or orientation programme. The purpose of this programme is to prepare members or governors for performing their roles and responsibilities in schools. Provincial officials should plan capacity-building programmes focusing on the key areas after the initial orientation.

The discussions from semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and documents analysis enabled me to arrive at the following salient major findings:

(a) Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation amongst the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district.

The findings revealed that most SGB members lack adequate knowledge and training on policy interpretation and implementation in some rural public schools of the Mopani district. This was confirmed by the National Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga (2018:12) when she says that research indicates that most of the newly elected SGB members do not have the necessary capabilities to govern schools at the required level. This is particularly true for those SGBs serving in poor communities and those located in rural areas. Nieuwenhuis and Ntho-tho (2015:29) conquer when they indicate that the training the SGBs had received was insufficient and had a significant impact on the procedures they use in dealing with policy crafting.

(b) Low level of educational background amongst the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district.

The findings also revealed that there is a low level of educational background among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district. This has been confirmed by the biographical information indicated in chapter 4. The biographical information revealed that the majority of SGB members have primary school qualifications hence they cannot be able to interpret or implement school policies accurately in their schools. Most educators and principals are the ones educated within the SGBs in the Mopani district. This challenge affects the parents' component in the SGBs in the sense that they rely on principals and educators for policy interpretation and implementation.

(c) Inadequate capacity building and empowerment strategies from Department of Basic Education based on equipping the SGB members with skills and knowledge in some rural public schools of Mopani district.

According to the research findings, the Department of Basic Education in the Mopani district lacks the capacity in terms of providing adequate support based on policy interpretation and implementation to SGB members. These findings are justified by Motshekga (2018) when she says that for many years her department has received complaints that newly appointed SGB members receive little guidance regarding their

roles and responsibilities. It is my view that the support should be at all levels, e.g., local, district, provincial, and national. This view was supported by Motshekga (2018:23) when she says that the SGB must be supported at all levels of the education system – school, district, provincial, and national level. In addition, Zondo (2016:133) indicates that such training must equip members or teach them the necessary skills which will help them become worthy SGB representatives. Insufficient training poses a threat since learners and other stakeholders need to be empowered to carry out their respective roles.

(d) Ineffective recommended strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in Mopani rural public schools.

The findings revealed that the capacity-building strategies used by the DBE to empower the SGB members with skills in policy interpretation and implementation are not appropriate. Motshekga (2018:23) justifies when she says that despite the capacity-buildings strategies initiated by DBE to empower the SGB members in the past, the problem is not yet solved as the majority of the SGBs are still struggling in terms of understanding, interpreting, and implementing school policies. Xaba (2011:202) maintains that regardless of the level of effectiveness of such capacity-building strategies, SGBs continue to experience governance challenges.

5.3   DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study explored the SGB's legal mandates in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani rural public schools. The study answered the main research question stated as follows:

  How do School Governing Bodies (SGBs) leadership exercise their fiduciary governance responsibilities on matters of policy implementation and law compliance in the Mopani district public schools?

In attempting to answer the main research question, I employed the following sub-questions.

(1) What critical skills and competencies do SGBs possess for them to be effective in policy and law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools?

(2) How the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani district does support the SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance and policy interpretation and implementation?

(3) What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB and school management?

(4) What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

The study was conducted because the majority of SGB members in rural public schools of the Mopani district could not interpret and implement school policies accurately in schools. This challenge exists because most SGB members, parents in particular, are illiterate. On the other hand, SASA mandates the SGBs to develop, adopt, interpret, and implement school policies. Therefore, the discussion of the study provided answers to the sub-questions stated above.

(1) What critical skills and competencies do SGBs possess for them to be effective in policy and law interpretation and implementation in rural public schools?

On this issue, the study concluded that:

- The SGB members of school A have limited knowledge of their legal mandates. These include the failure to adhere to their roles and responsibilities as enunciated in the Republic of South African Constitution Act 106 of 1996, National Education Policy Act, 1996 (No. 27 of 1996), South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, and Northern Province School Education Act No. 9 of 1995

- Most SGB members are not familiar with the school policies which emanate from SASA.

- Most SGB members are not able to identify the mandatory policies that they have in their schools.

- The principals of all the sampled schools have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

- Mandatory policies such as admission policy, language policy, religious policy, etc. are not interpreted and implemented accurately in schools.

- The policies of the school are interpreted and implemented by the principals of the schools only. Parents' component plays a minimal role in the development of school policies.

- The school policies are there in the school shelves for compliance instead of being interpreted and implemented maximally for the benefit of the schools.

(2) How the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in Mopani district does support the SGBs to make them more effective in law compliance and policy interpretation and implementation?

The study concluded that in school B:

(a) The principals interpret and implement the school policies on behalf of the SGB members as most parents have low educational backgrounds.

(b) The SGB members rely on principals for policy interpretation and implementation.

(c) Interpretation and implementation of school policies suit the interests of principals in most cases.

(d) The principals tell the SGBs what to do regarding policy interpretation and implementation.

(e) Most parents are not able to interpret and implement the policies of the school due to a low level of education.

(f) Principals are the only people who have access to SGB policies and documents.

(g) Copies of the school policies are not distributed by the principals to SGB members for interpretation and implementation.

(h) Some of the schools operate without school policies due to poor record keeping.

(3) What kind of capacitation and empowerment strategies are offered to SGB members and how often are they provided to increase effectiveness of good working relations among department of education officials, the SGB and school management?

Based on this issue, the study concluded that in schools C and D:

(a) The SGBs cannot govern the schools due to insufficient support from the DBE in the Mopani district**.**

(b) The support that the Department gives the SGB members in terms of empowering them with skills and training is insufficient.

(c) The DBE allocates inadequate time for training the SGB members.

(d) Some facilitators lack the necessary skills and competencies to facilitate SGB workshops and training.

(e) The SGBs are only supported at the circuit level. There is no support from district, province, and national.

(f) Parents who serve in the SGBs are not supported in terms of acquiring skills and knowledge by the DBE in the Mopani district.

(4) What appropriate capacity-building strategies can be recommended for empowering the SGBs with skills and knowledge in policy interpretation and implementation?

The study concluded the following regarding the issue of capacity building strategies provided by Mopani district:

(a) Few capacity-building strategies are employed by the Mopani district to empower the SGB members with skills and knowledge.

(b) SGB induction workshop takes place for one day after the election of the new SGB members.

(c) This induction workshop does not focus on challenging issues that the SGB members are experiencing.

(d) Few facilitators with less expertise are hired to conduct the SGB induction workshop.

(e) There are no refresher courses for SGB members during the year.

(f) There are no strategies for addressing the issue of illiteracy amongst the SGB members in the SGBs.

(g) The budget for capacitating the SGB members is minimal.

(h) SGB members are not capacitated specifically on how to deal with governance matters in schools.

(i) The DBE disseminates the policies to schools without capacitating the custodians of such policies.

(j) The effectiveness of the SGBs is not monitored adequately by governance officials.

Therefore, it is my view that incapacity and a lack of proper training from the Mopani district make the SGB members dysfunctional in their operation in the SGB.

5.4   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, my overall findings informed me that most SGB members cannot interpret and implement school policies accurately in rural public schools that are found in the Mopani district. The study revealed that most SGB members in the Mopani district lack the skills and knowledge based on policy interpretation and implementation (Makhuvele, 2016). This situation prompts the principals and the educators who serve in the SGBs to dominate in decision-making processes during SGB meetings. The study also revealed that members of the SGBs are not fully supported with adequate training and workshops by the DBE in the Mopani district. The study further noted that there are a few capacity-building strategies aimed at empowering SGB members with skills and knowledge. This study also revealed that most parents who serve in the SGBs have low levels of education hence they cannot

interpret and implement school policies accurately in the schools they govern. Therefore, my analysis is that poor school governance has a negative impact because it normally contributes to learners' poor performance in schools. My understanding is that all the relevant stakeholders such as the SGB members, School Management Team (SMT), educators, and learners can be effective in executing their roles and responsibilities if school policies are well interpreted and implemented.

5.5 PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

The next chapter concludes the study by providing an overview of the research, a summary, conclusion, recommendations as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 6: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter presents an overview of the research study to indicate how the research aims and objectives as well as the research questions expressed in chapter 1 have been addressed and achieved. It also gives the summary, a conclusion, and recommendations of the research study.

The theory of action had provided a framework for this study. The qualitative research method was employed to explore the hindrances that prevent most SGB members from complying in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in rural public schools found in the Mopani district of Limpopo Province.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This dissertation has been divided into six distinct chapters.

Chapter 1 introduced the study by giving the background of the problem. It outlined the legal mandates of the SGB members as stipulated in the South African Schools Act of 1996. It also identified the challenges governance members experience when executing their roles and responsibilities in school governance, particularly in rural public schools of the Mopani district. In addition, it identified the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the theoretical framework, and the research questions. The chapter concludes by giving the significance of the study, the definition of operational words as well as the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 2 provided the relevant review of the literature related to the legal mandates of SGB members in the South African education system. It also looked at how different countries such as England, South Korea, and Zimbabwe handle the issue of policy interpretation and implementation in their public schools. This has helped me to identify the gap which exists in the literature concerning the legal mandates of the SGB members in policy implementation and interpretation.

Chapter 3 discussed the research design, research questions, data collection, and data analysis. It also discussed the setting as well as the research participants. Ethical

issues and the strategies used to ensure the credibility of the study were presented in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presented the research findings organized by the research questions. It also presented the themes which originated from the data collected during semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis.

Chapter 5 provided a detailed discussion of research findings and conclusions organized by research questions.

Chapter 6 provided an overview of the research, the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study as well as the suggestions for future research.

6.3   SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The summary of research findings is presented in terms of the identified themes which are presented as follows:

(a) Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

The analysis of findings revealed that most SGB members lack adequate knowledge and training on policy implementation and interpretation in some rural public schools of Mopani district. This was confirmed by Motshekga (2018:12) when she says that research indicates that most of the newly elected SGB members do not have the necessary capabilities to govern schools at the required level. This is particularly true for those SGBs serving in poor communities and those located in rural areas. The findings also revealed that the majority of SGB members rely on the knowledge of principals and educators who serve in SGBs for the interpretation and implementation of school policies. As a result, the views of the principals and educators dominate during SGB meetings. I contend that this situation compromises the legal mandates of the SGB members.

(b) Low level of educational background amongst the SGB members in some rural public schools of Mopani district

The findings also revealed that there is a low level of educational background among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district. This has been confirmed by the biographical information indicated in chapter 4. The biographical information revealed that the majority of SGB members have primary school qualifications hence they cannot be able to interpret or implement school policies accurately in their schools. Therefore, I proffer that the issue of low level of educational background is a hindrance to the issue of policy interpretation and implementation amongst the SGB members.

(c) Inadequate support from Department of Basic Education based on equipping the SGB members with skills and knowledge in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

The Department of Basic Education in the Mopani district lacks the capacity in terms of providing adequate support based on policy implementation and interpretation to SGB members. This is justified by Motshekga (2018) when she says that over the years the department has received complaints that newly appointed SGBs receive little guidance regarding their roles and responsibilities.

(d) Inappropriate capacity-building strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani rural public schools.

The findings revealed that the capacity-building strategies used by the DBE to empower the SGB members with skills in policy interpretation and implementation are not appropriate and feasible. This is because the majority of the SGBs are still struggling in terms of understanding, interpreting, and implementing school policies. This was confirmed by Motshekga (2018:23) when she says that despite capacity-buildings strategies initiated by DBE to empower the SGB members in the past, the problem is not yet solved as the majority of the SGBs are still struggling in terms of understanding, interpreting, and implementing school policies. Xaba (2011:202) also supports this when he says that regardless of the level of effectiveness of such capacity-building strategies, SGBs continue to experience governance challenges. Figure 6.1 below shows relational transparency and accountability in legal compliance.

Relational Transparency and Accountability in legal compliance
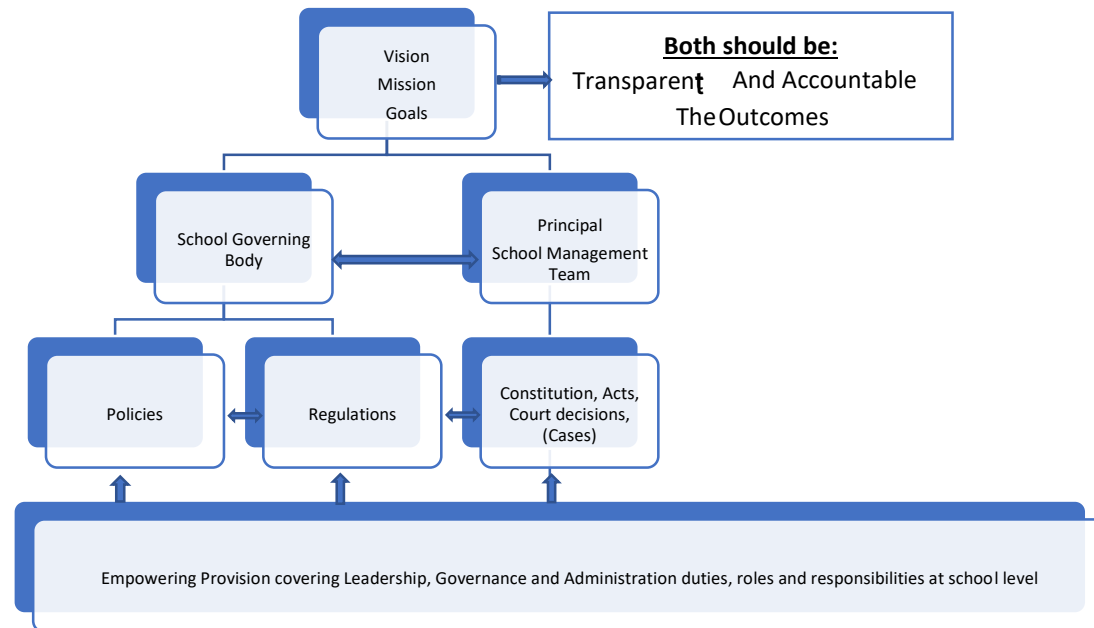
Figure 6.1: Relational Transparency and Accountability in legal compliance.

SGBs are not adequately trained before embarking on their fiduciary responsibilities and this manifests in problems such as unfamiliarity with legal mandate compliance, inability to correctly interpret policy and legislation, failure to budget in line with the law, the conflation of their roles with those of the principal, etc. Capacitation training is lacking to empower SGB members as well as principals so that respective entities should work effectively as guided by entity legal mandates (Baloyi & Nyoni, 2020).

According to the Schools Act, the roles of SGBs include the following:

- To start and administer a school fund.
- To open and maintain one bank account for the school.
- To prepare an annual budget and submit it to parents for approval.
- To draw and submit audited financial statements to the provincial department of education.
- To buy textbooks, educational materials, or equipment for the school.
- To pay for services of the school.

- To supplement the funds supplied by the education department (in the case of section 21 schools) by collecting and administering school fees and other fund-raising efforts.

- To decide on applications for exemptions from school fees. (SASA, 1996).

Principals are expected to attend and participate in all SGB meetings and guide SGBs about school policies and legislations. The principal is responsible for the following functions:

- Monitors and guides the school's expenditure in consultation with the SGB.

- Helps the SGB to keep proper records of school accounts and all school records.

- Oversees the drawing of the school budget.

- Advises on textbooks, educational materials, and equipment to be purchased by SGB.

- Monitors the collection and banking of cash (money) for the school.

- Represents the DBE at the school level. (SASA, 1996).

6.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on research findings and subsequent discussions, the following recommendations are made:

(a) The DBE should develop an effective training programme for incompetent SGB members on policy interpretation and implementation.

(b) Experts on school governance should be appointed to conduct the workshops and training programmes for the incompetent SGB members on regular basis.

(c) Election procedures for SGB members should be revisited. There should be stipulated criteria for electing SGB members. For instance, SASA stipulates that any parent who has a learner or acts as a guardian at the school qualifies to be elected in the SGB irrespective of whether that parent can read and

write. The policy should state that members of the SGB should read and write to qualify for election.

(d) Parents who cannot read and write in the SGBs should be assisted by other literate governance members to understand the policies of the school. There should be continuous workshops at the school level to attend to this challenge.

(e) The workshops should be aimed at addressing the areas where the SGB members have challenges.

(f) Incompetent parent components should be trained specifically on issues of school policies.

(g) SGB workshops based on the functions of the SGB should be conducted on regular basis, e.g., once every school term.

(h) Attendance certificates should be issued to SGB members who attend and complete the workshops and training.

(i) Community members who have expertise in educational matters should be recruited to be in the SGBs irrespective of whether they have children at the school or not.

(j) There should be assessment criteria to check the level of understanding of SGB members at the end of every training session and workshop.

(k) DBE should hire experts on school governance for capacitating the SGB members at school, circuit, and district levels.

(l) Elected members of the SGB must be able to read and write.

(m) School policies should be written in all the official languages spoken in South Africa.

(n) The term of office for SGB members should be extended to 5 years as the current three-year term is not enough. Motshekga (2018) justifies this when she says that most governors only begin to fully understand their mandates towards the end of their three-year terms.

(o) Schools with incompetent SGBs should co-opt retired education practitioners to serve in the SGBs so that they can assist in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in public schools.

(p) The facilitators should train the SGB members using their home languages during the workshops. Makhuvele (2016) points out that the SGB members must be trained in their home languages.

(q) The District Director of Mopani East district should hold regular meetings to discuss governance issues affecting schools in the district once per term.

6.5   SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In the final analysis, I contend that the exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates based on policy interpretation and implementation in rural secondary schools, needs further research. This is because my study focused on rural primary schools only. Further studies can be undertaken to explore the hindrances that prevent SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in secondary schools. The study can also look at how government officials can engage parents with the low educational backgrounds to be effective in terms of exercising their legal mandates, roles, and responsibilities in the SGBs. Other researchers can use the quantitative method in this title since this study was qualitative. Further research based on the study can assist in terms of providing effective governance in secondary schools.

6.6   CONCLUSION

In this study, it emerged that most SGB members cannot interpret and implement school policies accurately in rural public schools of the Mopani district. Malatji (2018:7) justifies when he indicates that there is a lack of knowledge and skills regarding the drawing up and implementation of governance policies at schools, and a general inability among School Governing Body members to correctly interpret the South African Schools Act. The findings of the study showed the major hindrances that prevent SGB members from interpreting and implementing school policies accurately when they govern schools. The findings included the following:

- Difficulty in understanding policy interpretation and implementation among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.
- Lower levels of educational backgrounds among the SGB members in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.

- Inadequate support from Department of Basic Education based on equipping the SGB members with skills and knowledge in some rural public schools of the Mopani district.
- Inappropriate capacity-building strategies for empowering the incompetent SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani rural public schools.

Based on the study of findings, it became evident that the SGB members of rural public schools in the Mopani district need assistance in terms of policy interpretation and implementation. This can promote effective governance in schools and further improve and refine fiduciary responsibilities. According to Bryston (2017:12), the SGBs are important structures that ensure the smooth running of schools. I proffer that governance in rural public schools can improve through joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, members of local communities, and various education departments. Finally, my view is that the implementation of the recommendations made by this study could assist in bringing a solution to the problem encountered in this study. This study revealed that the SGBs require critical skills and competencies to improve the governance of schools. Lastly, it is my view that rural public schools with good governance structures are likely to produce high-quality results.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: UNIVERSITY ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2019/02/13

Dear Mr Baloyi

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2019/02/13 to 2024/12/13

Ref: **2019/02/13/30423104/14/MC**
Name: Mr DG Baloyi
Student: 30423104

Researcher(s): Name: Mr DG Baloyi
E-mail address: 30423104@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 73 255 7772

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof J Nyoni
E-mail address: nyonij@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 84 688 6226

Title of research:
Exploration of school governing bodies' legal mandates. The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province

Qualification: M. Ed in Educational Leadership and Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/02/13 to 2024/02/13.

The *low risk* application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/02/13 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa

2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/02/13**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number 2019/02/13/30423104/14/MC should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Mckayvi@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

APPENDIX B: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

SATI
South African Translators' Institute
SATI – Bridging Language Barriers

Members of SATI.

CERTIFICATE OF PROOFREADING AND LANGUAGE EDITING

Jale
HOLDINGS

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

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Manuscript Title:

EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' LEGAL MANDATES. THE CASE OF MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Author: DAVID GEZANI BALOYI

Date Issued: 15 May 2020

Certificate Verification Key: SATI/00523/V/Jale/2020

Signed:

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APPENDIX C: APPLICATION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (DIRECTED TO THE HEAD OF LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

ENQ: BALOYI D G

STUDENT NO: 30423104   P O BOX 3950

CELL: 073 255 7772   GIYANI

E-mail: davidg@webmail.co.za   **0826**

18 March 2019

The Head of the Department

Limpopo Department of Education

Private Bag X 9489

POLOKWANE

0700

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MOPANI DISTRICT SCHOOLS

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH: Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province.

My name is David Gezani Baloyi. I am a master's student under the supervision of Prof J. Nyoni in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management. I am an educator attached to Mbhangazeki High School in Nsami Circuit, Mopani district.

I request permission to conduct the research study in sampled schools in Mopani district.

The study is entitled: **Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province.** This is my part towards fulfilling

the requirements for the master's degree at the University of South Africa. The aim of the study is to explore the capacity of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in policy interpretation and implementation in Mopani district schools to identify generic skills and competencies, which contribute towards effectiveness and efficiency. The study will entail collecting important information that could assist in terms of interpreting and implementing policies accurately in schools.

The benefits of this study are to capacitate the SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in schools and to encourage relevant stakeholders to participate in the development of school management and governance. Participation involves answering semi-structured questions during the interview and the focus group interview which will last for approximately ten minutes. The focus group will also involve audio taping. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants are under no obligation to consent to participation. If they do decide to take part, they will be given the information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent. They are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

There are no foreseeable risks of harm or side effects as well as inconvenience or discomfort to the participants. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. The findings and the recommendations of the study will be sent to all the participants. The names of the participants will not be recorded anywhere, and no one will be able to connect them to the answers they give. Their answers will be given a code number or pseudonym and they will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or any other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Their answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that the research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review. Otherwise, records that identify them will be available only to people working on the study, unless they give permission for other people to see the records. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

Hard copies of their answers will be stored by me for a period of five years in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Hard copies will be

shredded, and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer using a relevant software programme.

Should you have questions about the way the study is going to be conducted, you may contact Prof Nyoni who my supervisor at UNISA email is: **nyonij@unisa.ac.za** **or 084 688 6226.** This letter is accompanied by ethical clearance certificate from the Unisa College of Education Ethics Review Committee. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for assisting in this study.

Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

_____

BALOYI D G (MR)

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE HOD OF LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2   Enq: Mabogo MG   Tel No: 015 290 9365   E-mail: MabogoMG@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Baloyi DG
P O Box 3950
Giyani
0826

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.

2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES LEGAL MANDATE: THE CASE OF MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO".**

3. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: BALOYI DG

CONFIDENTIAL

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

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
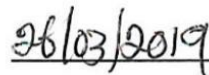
4   Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5   The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

Ms NB Mutheiwana
Head of Department

26/03/2019
Date

APPENDIX E: APPLICATION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (DIRECTED TO THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF MOPANI DISTRICT)

ENQ: BALOYI D G

STUDENT NO: 30423104   P O BOX 3950

CELL: 073 255 7772   GIYANI

E-mail: davidg@webmail.co.za   **0826**

18 March 2019

The District Director

Mopani District

Private Bag X 578

GIYANI

0826

Dear Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MOPANI

DISTRICT SCHOOLS

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH: Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani District in Limpopo Province.

My name is David Gezani Baloyi. I am a master's student under the supervision of Prof Nyoni in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management. I am also an educator attached to Mbhangazeki High School in Nsami Circuit, Mopani District.

I request permission to conduct the research study in sampled schools in your district. The study is entitled: **Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province.** This is my part towards fulfilling

the requirements for the master's degree at the University of South Africa. The aim of the study is to explore the capacity of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in policy interpretation and implementation in the Mopani district schools to identify generic skills and competencies, which contribute towards effectiveness and efficiency. The study will entail collecting important information that could assist in terms of interpreting and implementing policies accurately in schools.

The benefits of this study are to capacitate the SGB members in policy interpretation and implementation in schools and to encourage relevant stakeholders to participate in the development of school management and governance. Participation involves answering semi-structured questions during the interview and the focus group interview which will last for approximately ten minutes. The focus group will also involve audio taping. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants are under no obligation to consent to participation. If they do decide to take part, they will be given the information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent. They are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

There are no foreseeable risks of harm or side-effects as well as inconvenience or discomfort to the participants. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. The findings and the recommendations of the study will be sent to all the participants. The names of the participants will not be recorded anywhere, and no one will be able to connect them to the answers they give. Their answers will be given a code number or pseudonym and they will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or any other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Their answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that the research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review. Otherwise, records that identify them will be available only to people working on the study, unless they give permission for other people to see the records. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

Hard copies of their answers will be stored by me for a period of five years in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Hard copies will be shredded, and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer using a relevant software programme.

Should you have questions about the way the study is going to be conducted, you may contact   Prof Nyoni who my supervisor at UNISA email is: **nyonij@unisa.ac.za or 084 688 6226.** This letter is accompanied by an ethical clearance certificate from the Unisa College of Education Ethics Review Committee. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for assisting in this study.
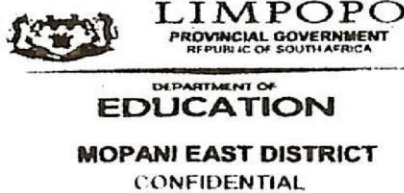
Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

_____

BALOYI D G (MR)

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF MOPANI DISTRICT

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

MOPANI EAST DISTRICT
CONFIDENTIAL

REF: 2/2/2   ENQ: NKANYANI H G   EMAIL: NkanyaniHG@edu.limpopo.gov.za

TO   : BALOYI D G

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' LEGAL MANDATES. THE CASE OF MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE.

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research on the above-mentioned topic has been approved.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
   3.1 Arrangement should be made with the affected schools.
   3.2 The research should not be conducted during the time of examinations, especially the 4th term.
   3.3 During research, applicable research ethics should be adhered to, in particular, the principle of voluntary participation should be respected.
   3.4 Upon the completion of the research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
   3.5 The research should not have any financial implications to the Limpopo Department of Education.
4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter to schools where you intend to conduct your research since it will serve as a proof that you have been granted permission to conduct research.
5. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your research.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR

DATE 18/03/2019

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MOPANI EAST DISTRICT, Private Bag X 578 GIYANI, 0826
Tel 015 811 7803

APPENDIX G: APPLICATION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (DIRECTED TO THE FOUR CIRCUIT MANAGERS OF MOPANI DISTRICT)

ENQ: BALOYI D G
STUDENT NO: 30423104
CELL: 073 255 7772
E-mail: davidg@webmail.co.za

The Circuit Manager

………………Circuit

Private Bag X 9654

GIYANI

0826

Dear Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. I request permission to conduct the research as part of my studies at one of the schools in your circuit.
3. The research will not disrupt the academic programmes of the school as it will be conducted after school hours.
4. The research will take place in April 2019 and only one day will be utilised.
5. Applicable research ethics will be applied during the research, for instance, the principle of voluntary participation will be applied.
6. Upon completion of the research study, I will share the research outcomes with the Department of Education.
7. This research study will not have any financial implications for the Limpopo Department of Education.

8. The approval letter from the Head of the Department as well as the ethical clearance from the Unisa College of Education Review Committee are attached.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully

_____

BALOYI D G (MR)

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION LETTERS FROM THE FOUR CIRCUIT MANAGERS OF THE MOPANI DISTRICT

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Klein Letaba Circuit
GEMPC
P/Bag 9654
Giyani
0826
Tel: (015) 812-1793
Fax: (015) 812 1141

ENG:Machumele M.M
Cell: 082 808 9085

09/04/2019

Mr Baloyi D G

P O Box 3950

Giyani

0826

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. We acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 08 April 2019.
3. Permission is granted on condition that you do not disrupt the academic programme of the school.
4. The circuit wishes you well in your research and hope that you will share your findings with the Department of Education in Limpopo Province.

Good luck!!

CIRCUIT MANAGER

LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Confidential

Ref: 2/2/2
Enq: Ringani TP/Rivisi T.N
Tel: 015 812 1131

15 April 2019

Mr Baloyi D.G
P O Box 3950
Giyani
0826

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

1. The above matter bears reference.
2. Kindly note that your request for permission to conduct educational research has been granted.
3. The following conditions should be considered:

   - The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
   - The research should not in any how disrupt the academic programme at the school.
   - The research should not be conducted during the time of examinations, especially the fourth term.
   - During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to, in particular, the principle of voluntary participation should be respected.

4. Thanking you in advance.

DR CHAUKE TM
CIRCUIT MANAGER

SHAMAVUNGA CIRCUIT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
MOPANI EAST DISTRICT, Private Bag X 9564 GIYANI, 0826
Tel 015812 1131

NSAMI CIRCUIT
PRIVATE BAG X9654
GIYANI
0826
TEL: 015 812 1456
FAX: 015 812 1151

LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MOPANI DISTRICT
NSAMI CIRCUIT

ENQ : NTSANWISI M E
TEL : 015 812 1842

TO: MR BALOYI D G

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. We acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 08 April 2019.
2. Permission is hereby granted for Mr Baloyi D G to conduct research in one of the schools in our circuit.
3. However, this office would appreciate if this research will not disturb the smooth running of the school.
4. I hope you will find the above matter in order.

CIRCUIT MANAGER   **DATE: 17/04/2019**
(NTSANWISI M E)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NSAMI CIRCUIT

2019 -04- 1 7

PRIVATE BAG X9654
GIYANI 0826

LIMPOPO PROVINCE
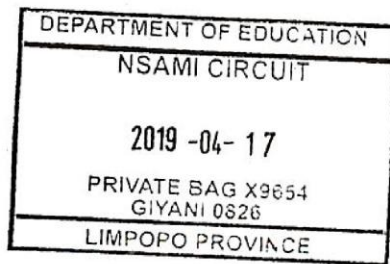
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
MOPANI DISTRICT, Private Bag X 578 GIYANI, 0826
Tel 015 812 1911 Fax No. 015 812 3412 OR 015 812 3692

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

:

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOPANI DISTRICT – MAN'OMBE CIRCUIT

Enquiries	: Ndhukwani GT	Date: 12 April 2019
Tel. No.	: 015 812 0637	

ATTENTION: MR BALOYI D G

RECOMMENDATION FOR BALOYI D G TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter refers.
2. The recommendation for Baloyi D G to conduct research has been approved.
3. Kindly note that the research programme should be conducted after school hours to avoid interference with the academic programme of the school.
4. The circuit wishes you good luck in your research.

....
CHABALALA M.E: CIRCUIT MANAGER

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MAN'OMBE CIRCUIT
PRIVATEBAG X 9654 GIYANI 0826
14 APR 2019
TEL: 015-812 0637/4421
CIRCUIT DIRECTOR
CHABALALA M.E
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

APPENDIX I: FOCUS GROUP CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIAL AGREEMENT

I _____ grant consent that the Information I share during the focus group may be used by _____ (name of the researcher) for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name (Please print)   : _____

Participant Signature   : _____

Researcher's Name: (Please print)   : _____

Researcher's Signature   : _____

Date   : _____

APPENDIX J: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR SAMPLED PARTICIPANTS

Date: _____

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

Title: Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province.

My name is Baloyi David Gezani. I am a master's student under the supervision of Prof Nyoni in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management.

I invite you to participate in the research study entitled: Exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates: The case of Mopani district in Limpopo Province. This study is expected to collect important information that could assist in terms of interpreting and implementing school policies accurately in schools. You are invited because you are a member of the School Governing Body (SGB). I obtained your contact details from the principal. Participation involves answering semi-structured questions during the interview that will last for approximately ten minutes. The interview will also involve audio taping. Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. The possible benefits of taking part in this study involve participation in the development of school management and governance.

There are no foreseeable risks or harm or side effects as well as inconvenience or discomfort to the participants. Your name will not be recorded anywhere, and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or any other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that the research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other

people to see the records. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by me for a period of five years in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Hard copies will be shredded, and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer using a relevant software programme. You will not receive payment or any incentive for participating in this study. If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me at the above contact details.

Should you have concerns about how the research has been conducted, you may contact   Prof J. Nyoni, my supervisor at UNISA email at nyonij@unisa.ac.za or 084 688 6226. Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

_____

DAVID GEZANI BALOYI (MR)

APPENDIX K: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY (RETURN SLIP)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits, and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had enough opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview where I will respond to semi-structured questions related to the exploration of School Governing Bodies' legal mandates, which involves policy interpretation and implementation in schools under the Mopani district.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ……………………………   (Please print)

Participant Signature ………………………………Date ………………………

Researcher's Name & Surname ………………… Date ……………………….

Researcher's Signature   ……………………… Date………………………

PPENDIX L: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS (DIRECTED TO FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS)

NAME OF SCHOOL : _____

DATE OF VISIT : _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW : _____

1. You have been elected to serve in the SGB. So, what are your key functions and responsibilities in your governance structure?

2. How are you involved in the SGB?

3. What prompted you to become part of this structure?

4. Who takes final decisions in this school?

5. How do you contribute during policy formulation of the school?

6. What have you achieved since you have been elected as a member so far?

7. What are the challenges that you face during policy formulation?

8. What would you like to change in your SGB?

9. Where do you get the skills and knowledge to interpret and implement school policies?

10. In conclusion, how do you add value as a member of the SGB in this school?

APPENDIX M: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO SAMPLED PRINCIPALS

NAME OF SCHOOL : _____

DATE OF VISIT : _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW : _____

1. As the Principal of the school, what are your main responsibilities in the

    SGB?

2. Who formulates school policies in your school?
3. How is the relationship between you as the Principal and the SGB members?
4. What role does the SGB play in your school?
5. Who trains the SGB members on how to interpret and implement school policies?
6. How often is the SGB training provided to the SGB members?
7. What are the school policies that have been formulated by the SGB?
8. What are the challenges that are faced during the formulation of school policies?
9. What are your recommendations to capacitate SGB members?
10. Is there anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX N: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO SAMPLED SGB CHAIRPERSONS

NAME OF SCHOOL : _____

DATE OF VISIT : _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW : _____

1. What are your main responsibilities as the Chairperson of the SGB?

2. Who designs policies in your school?

3. How are you involved when school decisions are taken in your school?

4. Where do you get the capacity to interpret and implement school policies effectively?

5. Who trains you on how to govern the school?

6. What are your strengths in your SGB?

7. What are the critical challenges that you face in the SGB?

8. As the Chairperson of the SGB, what aspects of school governance would you like to change?

9. What have you achieved as the Chairperson of the SGB so far?

10. In conclusion, is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX O: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO SAMPLED EDUCATORS SERVING IN THE SGBs

NAME OF SCHOOL : _____

DATE OF VISIT : _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW : _____

1. As the representative of educators in the SGB, what is your role during the SGB meetings?

2. How many years have you been teaching?

3. How many years have you served in the SGB?

4. In which way are you actively involved in the formulation of all the policies in your school?

5. What contributions have you made in terms of policy formulation in your school

6. What do you consult during the formulation of school policies?

7. How do you present the needs of educators during the SGB meetings?

8. How do you interpret and implement school policies in your school?

9. What are the strengths of your SGB?

10. What are the challenges that you encounter in the SGB?