The role of school governing bodies in the democratization of secondary school education in Zambia: a case study

By

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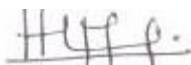Degree: **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT**

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THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ZAMBIA: A CASE STUDY

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To my children, Collette and Clive, who are to take up the mantle and complete what I started.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The functioning of school governing bodies (SGBs) has been extensively studied worldwide. However, the literature has revealed few studies in Zambia. This study sought to explore SGBs with a view to establishing the democratic enablers/disenablers present in secondary schools in Zambia. The research was guided by the following questions: What are the enablers/disenablers of democratic school governance; to what extent do the SGBs contribute to democracy and how could they be used to promote it? The study was informed by the concepts of decentralization and democratic school governance and adopted a qualitative approach. An interpretive/constructivist research paradigm was applied in the study. School governors from two public secondary schools in the Southern province formed the study population. The sample comprised members of SGBs (14 parents, 14 educators and 8 learners). Data collected from interviews and focus group discussions were analysed thematically, while observations and document review data were analysed using content analysis. The study established the existence of both enabling and disabling elements in SGBs. The study concluded that the SGBs were, in the main, democratic and had implemented the principle of decentralisation with participation by all eligible stakeholders. Despite the presence of democratic features, certain undemocratic elements were identified in the SGBs Democratic structures include the SGB itself, parent–teacher associations and learner's representative councils and these were recognised as legal entities for promoting democratic school governance. Despite that, SGBs' lack of adequate preparation impacted negatively on effective delivery by members. Furthermore, the study revealed that stakeholders' participation on boards enhanced their leadership skills. The SGBs had therefore succeeded in nurturing decision-making skills and stakeholder participation. Whether the acquired democratic values will be transferred to real-life situations remains a matter for further empirical investigation. Based on the evidence and the key findings, the study recommends the need to strengthen enabling democratic practices related to equity, collective decision-making, deliberation, freedom of expression and member participation at all levels of the school governance process. The study also advocates for the training of governors if they are to act more democratically.

KEYWORDS: school governance, school governing bodies, education and democracy, education boards, democracy, democratic governance, enablers in democratic governance, disablers, decentralised education, Zambia.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FGD: Focus group discussion

HOD: Head of department (at school level)

MMD: Movement for Multi-Party Democracy

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoGE: Ministry of General Education

PTA: Parent–teacher association

SASA: South African Schools Act

SDA: School development association

SDC: School development committee

SGB: School governing body

SMT: School management team

UNIP: United National Independence Party

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Following Zambia's adoption of multi-party democracy in 1991, the education system was restructured. One notable feature of the restructured education system was the decentralization of the education sector. Decentralization of education in Zambia was implemented by establishing governing bodies, also referred to as education boards, at district, college and secondary school levels (MoE, 2002). This meant that the previous system, which was highly stratified, was abandoned and replaced with a unified entity designed to promote equal opportunities and the participation of various stakeholders in education. Among the measures identified to enhance stakeholder participation in education was the institutionalization of education boards at the secondary school level. The institutionalization of these governing boards in Zambia ushered in a new approach to school governance in the education system (MoE, 2006; Bowasi, 2007). According to Bowasi (2007), one notable reform was the democratic governance of secondary schools through the involvement of stakeholders at grassroots level. For this purpose, membership of a school governing board comprised fifteen governors from various stakeholder groups, the majority of which were the parent governors. The school governing boards were seen as vehicles through which communities were enabled to participate in planning and decision-making with regard to the education of their children. In addition, school governing boards were established in order to provide a platform on which communities could participate in such planning and decision-making in the spirit of community service; by so doing, they are enhancing the democratic governance of education (MoE, 2005:19; Singogo, 2017). These functions demonstrate that the principle objective of decentralization in the Zambian education system stems from the need for the citizenry to exercise control of its local affairs. Using the theories of decentralization and democratic school governance, this study reports the findings of a large-scale survey of school governing bodies in the Southern Province of Zambia.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

School governance in Zambia today can, just as in any other postcolonial state, only be understood and explained against the backdrop of the policies of the colonial period. The racial segregation of black people, such as the "pyramidal" structure which allowed few black

learners to proceed up the formal education ladder constituted the mainstay of the colonial regime policies (Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), 2013:1).

Against this background, in 1964, the newly independent Zambia embarked on the task of dismantling this racist system of education and developed a system that would provide equal opportunities for all regardless of race, tribe, or religious affiliation (Carmody, 2004; MoE, 1995:4). This led to various reforms which had the express purpose of eliminating the inequalities that prevailed during the colonial era (Carmody, 2004). The education policy at that time was guided by three main objectives: equality of education opportunities for all, promoting national unity, and serving the needs of national development (MoE, 1995:4).

As a result of these objectives and guided by policy principles, policy issues were concentrated on how the education system could be reorganised, focusing on access to primary, secondary and higher education, the nature of the curriculum, retention of pupils in school, the financing of education, teacher supply, and the ownership and management of schools. In order to realise the above intentions, the Zambian government decided to take centre stage in the management of the education system. This brought about a highly centralized education management system (Mwanakatwe, 2019).

A prominent feature of this form of management system and governance was the abolition of school fees. School fees were replaced with statutory school funds (Kelly, 1996, Hankuba, 2022). However, with the deteriorating economy in subsequent years, the need to involve parents in contributing to their children's education became apparent. This led to the creation of parent–teacher associations (PTAs), that is, school policy bodies in 1976. The PTAs introduced PTA funds to cater for school supplies and special projects (MoE, 1995:4).

As the challenge to increase access and provide quality education continued to grow, the government embarked on the first-ever major education policy reforms in 1977. These reforms emphasised the need to integrate study and work, stressing equal balance between education and production. The reforms could not be implemented, however, due to a number of factors; prominent among them were economic constraints such as the fiscal crisis that hit the country following a sharp decrease in the price of copper in the 1970s (Kelly, 1991; MoE, 1995:4).

Similarly, it should be noted that the government, led by the United National Independence Party (UNIP), had at the time adopted a socialist mode of education which was highly centralized. This model was apparently informed by the thinking that since the main focus was

redressing the previous imbalances nationwide, the central government was best placed and resourced to drive this daunting task (MoE, 1995; Lungwangwa, 1995). The reforms cost the central government a lot in terms of salaries and allowances, transport, services, pupil grants, furniture and equipment, student loans, examination expenses and the like.

By 1991, when the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) came into power, the heavy government expenditure on education was no longer sustainable or defensible. In the first place, rapid education expansion gave rise to grave concerns over economic efficiency (Kelly, 1991). Critics of the education system noted a steep and evident decline in pass rates and the quality of education with correspondingly high unemployment rates for school graduates (Kelly, 1991). Secondly, the highly centralized top-down system of governance made it difficult, if not impossible, for stakeholders at various levels of the education system to participate in decision-making, thereby alienating them from the entire process and pointing to the need for a change in the organisational culture (MoE, 1995; Singogo, 2017; Nswana and Simuyaba, 2021).

These realities represented a "wake-up" call for a paradigm shift from centralized education governance situated at the grassroots. This paradigm shift reform was informed by the belief that resources would be better used and the task of creating good quality and more equal education would be more effectively addressed if the means and methods were chosen at the local level by stakeholders rather than the central government (MoE, 1995; Mubanga, 2008; Changala, Lisulo & Moonga, 2013). The decision to decentralize was also intended to allow for more rapid reaction and action regarding problems and opportunities that occur at the point of delivery, thereby empowering lower levels with decision-making responsibilities (MoE, 2005:19; Kandondo & Muleya, 2013:1; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021:152). Decentralization was also aimed at promoting community participation in all matters relating to education (MoE, 2005:5).

In 1992, the MMD government ushered in an interim National Education Policy, called Focus on Learning, which emphasised the issues of resource mobilization to support education provision (ibid.). Later on, the second major National Education Policy, Educating Our Future, was launched in 1996 (ibid.). This policy basically addressed issues of education delivery in a liberalised economy environment and a democratized political governance system. Educating Our Future was based on the democratic principles of liberalization, decentralization, cost sharing, efficiency, equity and quality education (Bowasi, 2007:2; Lungwangwa, 1995:31;

MoE, 2005:19;). Among these, decentralization as a policy reform in Zambia can be singled out for the purpose of this study.

In keeping with the democratic and liberal philosophy the country had embraced, Zambia decided to decentralize the education delivery system. This was implemented through governing bodies, also referred to as "education boards", at district, college and secondary school levels. The establishment of these governing bodies ushered in a new approach to school governance in the Zambian education system (MoE, 2006:20; Bowasi, 2007:3). One notable reform according to Bowasi (2007), was the democratic governance of secondary schools through the involvement of stakeholders. For this purpose, membership of school governing bodies (SGBs) comprised the headteacher (who is the chief executive officer of a secondary SGB), two teacher representatives, two learner representatives, one local councillor, one resident of a particular district (district representative), three members of the community chosen by parents during the parent–teacher association meeting (the parent governors), two teacher union representatives, the PTA chairperson, one church representative (nominated by the PTA) and one representative from the office of the District Education Board Secretary (MoE, 2005:21). In this arrangement, parents are supposed to be the majority in the SGBs and the chairperson of the SGB should come from the parent component.

The fifteen member composition discussed in the previous paragraph seeks to democratize school governance, as stipulated in the 1996 Ministry of Education (MoE) policy document, *Educating our Future,* which was based on fulfilling the democratic principles of liberalisation, decentralization, cost sharing, efficiency, capacity building, access, equity and quality education. Further to this, SGBs in Zambia are seen as the main vehicle through which communities are enabled to participate in educational planning and decision-making (MoE, 2005). Apart from enabling communities to participate in educational matters, the SGBs are also intended to allow for a more rapid reaction to and actions on the problems and opportunities that occur at the points of delivery, thereby improving the learning environment and consequently the quality of education provided (Banda, 2009; Changala et al., 2013). In addition, the MoE document adds that SGBs were established to provide a platform on which communities could participate in planning and decision-making for the education of their children, in the spirit of community service, and by so doing, they are enhancing the democratic governance of education (MoE, 2005:19).

The above functions clearly demonstrate that the principal objective of decentralization in Zambian education stems from the need for the citizenry to exercise control of its local affairs. This requires some degree of authority given to the provincial, district and school level contrary to absolute control by the centre (MoE, 2005; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021), particularly when compared to the centralization policies that were present at the time. The decentralization of decision-making power to the school level has become an internationally acclaimed reform (McGinn & Welsh, 1999; Chikoko, 2008) that is claimed to be consistent with the notion of "good" governance (Grant & Motala, 2004 cited in Mncube 2005: 2009; Bowasi 2007; Banda 2009). According to Watson (2005) and Mncube (2009), the decentralization of decision-making power to the school level is a means to several ends: the socioeconomic transition to democracy and good governance, improved service delivery by shifting decision-making closer to the grassroots for improved accountability and responsiveness, and the empowerment of citizens and participation in governance.

Many educationists believe that transferring governance and management authority from a centralized state agency to schools will rejuvenate schools by giving parents, pupils and the local community a greater role in setting school missions (Fiske & Ladd, 2000; Van Wyk, 2004; Chikoko, 2008; Changala et al., 2013). Mncube (2012), an eminent writer on the democratization of education in South Africa through SGBs, emphasises the need for stakeholders at secondary school level to engage fruitfully in deliberations dealing with school governance as this would in turn lead to democracy where every "voice" would be heard. However, it is worth noting that limited scholarly information is available in Zambia regarding the operations of secondary school governing boards, let alone their contribution to the democratization of secondary school education. This study therefore, focussed on mounting efforts with the aim of unearthing what prevails in SGBs at the secondary school level in Zambia.

Democracy embodies the idea that decisions affecting an organisation as a whole will be taken by all its members and that all members will each have equal rights to take part in such decisions (Beetham & Boyle, 1995:1). It entails collective decision-making and equality of rights by all stakeholders concerned. By adopting the National Decentralization Policy of 2002, the MoE in Zambia aimed at fostering democratic school governance, thereby introducing a school governance structure that involves all the stakeholder groups of education. The

stakeholders also become involved in active and responsible roles in order to promote issues of democracy, tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making (MoE, 2002).

Additionally, through the operations of SGBs, the MoE wanted all stakeholders in these governing boards to take part fully in issues of school governance, thereby enhancing democracy (MoE, 2002). Furthermore, decentralized school governance in Zambia aimed at promoting in schools the ideals of representation and stakeholder participation, which were not common during the era of heavy centralization under the previous one-party dictatorship – the UNIP (MoE, 2005; Nswana & Simuyaba 2021:153). Thus, the decentralization of the education system meant that the broad masses of the people, regardless of socioeconomic standing, would now be able to have a "voice" in the decisions that have a direct or indirect impact on them in school communities. Ideally, SGBs are there to engage society in education. However, anecdotal evidence tends to suggest that this does not seem to be wholly reflected in the case of Zambia (Carmody, 2004; Makwaya, 2005; Bowasi, 2007). If the MoE's rationale for introducing SGBs is, among other things, to promote the democratization of education, then it is worth investigating the actual functioning of SGBs, particularly as they enable or disable democracy at Zambian secondary schools.

1.3.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internationally, since the adoption and implementation of SGBs, intense scholarly discourse and policy attention has been paid to issues related to the participation of learners, parents and other stakeholders in SGBs (Hendricks, 2000; Ngidi, 2004; Mncube, 2005; 2007; 2008; 2009; Bowasi, 2007; Banda, 2009). Issues in relation to inequality among SGBs have also come under scrutiny (Young, 2000; Gilmour, 2001; Heystek, 2004; Makwaya, 2005; Mncube, 2007). Scholars such as Hendricks (2000), Karlsen (2002), Lundahl (2002), Mncube (2005), Naidoo (2005), Malik (2007); Chikoko (2008) and Chombo and Mohabi (2020) have linked the operations of SGBs to the democratization of education within their cultural context. Against this backdrop and in the light of research findings on the operations of SGBs, it appears that the link between SGBs and the democratization of education in Zambia is missing; thus, the findings of this research would fill the knowledge gap on the link between school governance and the democratization of secondary education in Zambia. Furthermore, the findings of this research may contribute to the current international debates among scholars on the impact of SGBs in the democratic governance of secondary schools.

1.4.   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to investigate whether SGBs enable or disenable democracy in selected secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia.   Objectives of the study

1.4.1.   The specific objectives of the study were to

- find out how SGBs enable or disenable democracy in secondary schools in Zambia
- explore whether or not SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in schools
- investigate whether SGB members are sufficiently prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools
- establish how secondary school SGBs could be used in promoting democracy in the wider Zambian society.

1.5.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question: what are the enablers/disenablers of democratic school governance in selected secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia?

1.6.   SUB-QUESTIONS

1. How do SGBs enable or disenable democracy in secondary schools in Zambia?
2. To what extent do SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in Zambian secondary schools?
3. How are SGB members prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools?
4. In what ways can SGBs be used in promoting democracy in the wider Zambian society?

1.7.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As a social scientist and an educationist, the researcher attaches importance to concepts of decentralization and democratic school governance as they relate to education. An understanding of the role of school governing bodies in the democratization of secondary school governance in Zambia motivated the researcher to undertake this study. This is because decentralization and democracy in education implies that a broad range of the people, regardless of socioeconomic standing, would have a "voice" in the decisions that have a direct or indirect impact on them in school communities. The thirsty to understand what goes on in school governing board meetings motivated the researcher to undertake this study with a view

to inform policy direction in Zambia. Furthermore, the need for greater democracy in education has been supported by a great deal of literature internationally (Hendricks (2000); Mncube (2005); Naidoo (2005); Malik (2007); Mncube 2007); Chikoko (2008) and Chombo and Mohabi (2020). However, it appears that the link between SGBs and the democratization of education in Zambia is missing. This study therefore, highlights the role of school governing bodies in the democratization of secondary school education in Zambia. It is hoped that the findings of this research would fill the knowledge gap on the link between school governance and the democratization of secondary education in Zambia. Furthermore, the findings of this research may contribute to the current international debates among scholars on the impact of SGBs in the democratic governance of secondary schools.

1.8.   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The main focus of this study – SGBs – was chosen for a number of reasons, particularly because of international debates regarding their operations in different sociocultural contexts (Hendricks, 2000; Heystek, 2004; Makwaya, 2005; Malik, 2007; Chikoko, 2008; Mncube, 2009; Bowasi, 2007; Banda, 2009) and the paucity, if not absence, of similar literature as it concerns secondary schools in Zambia. It is my belief that knowledge on the operations of SGBs, being a typical policy issue, needs to be evaluated in order to inform policy direction.

Although evidence of research on SGBs as they relate to school performance in Zambia exists (see Mukena, 2001; Makwaya, 2005; Banda 2009), findings on the relationship between school governance and the democratization of education in Zambia are absent. Indeed, school democracy is a new concept for most governments globally, but particularly in Africa because only in recent times have many countries in the continent embraced democracy, owing to the long dominance of colonial rule and military dictatorships. A study on secondary school democracy in Zambia is therefore necessary.

Evidence from research on SGBs has indicated that community participation in school governance and democratic leadership styles improves school governance. Wallace (2003:66) suggests:

> Devolution of responsibility and wider community participation in decision making would ensure that schools are places where people are prepared for, and participate in, making decisions as part of the democratic process. In addition, school based

management, through greater local control over the use of resources and setting of educational policy, would produce more effective educational output.

This view implies that the participation of stakeholders will improve school output and school governance, as the community fully participates in the governance and management of the school, promoting democratic processes in the school. Thus, in understanding the full implications of school governance for the democratization of education in Zambia, as it relates to national development and the democratization of the country, the impact of SGBs on the democratization of education in Zambia deserves a thorough study and analysis. Such an analysis could help to clearly document school-based policies and their effects on the wider society, as well as the implications it will continue to have for Zambian society should SGBs not be implementing policies with an aggressive plan of action.

Moreover, evidence from the literature search revealed that the Zambian Government's policy strategy for the implementation of college governing boards required some training of college governors, subsequently empowering and involving the grassroots as well as reducing the financial burden on the central government (MoE, 2006; Bowasi, 2007; Makwaya, 2009). However, the implemented decentralised programme lacks specific and strategic policies on stakeholder education that can help empower governors to perform their duties effectively (Bowasi, 2007; Makwaya, 2009, Kandondo & Muleya, 2013). A study on the actual functioning of secondary school SGBs would therefore be indispensable in gaining an understanding of what obtains at this level of education.

Furthermore, a thorough review of the literature vis-à-vis SGBs in Zambia revealed that, to date, anecdotal research evidence suggests that scholarly works on Zambia have not contextualised the functioning of the SGBs as they relate to the democratization of the country. Accordingly, an analysis of the governing arrangements in secondary schools in relation to democracy is necessary and is academically and intellectually justifiable.

In addition to the above-stated motive for an inquiry into the operations of SGBs, I chose to research this phenomenon because previous academic research into SGBs in Zambia has focused on the performance and effectiveness of governing bodies in higher education systems (see Bowasi, 2007; Hamweete, 2008). The role of SGBs in the democratization of secondary schools in Zambia has been somewhat ignored. Additionally, previous research studies have been found to be important in providing a link between quality education and the effectiveness

of SGBs (Banda, 2009; Makwaya, 2009). Accordingly, a study on the role of SGBs in relation to democracy is necessary, given that the findings may point to new thinking.

This research focuses on, among other things, policy implementation, analysis and evaluation. I was motivated to undertake this policy implementation and evaluation project, with a special emphasis on the implementation of the policy of decentralization through SGBs, in order to contribute to a better understanding on the part of myself and of Zambians generally of the actual roles and operations of SGBs in relation to the democratization of education in Zambia.

My twelve years' experience as a lecturer in the Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University of Zambia, and having worked closely with the community as a secondary school teacher for fifteen years in the same province, have revealed that the community lacks the skills required to govern the schools despite their willingness to do so. Cumulatively, through personal experience, I note that the Zambian Government's decentralization policy, which aims at engaging the community through formal structures such as SGBs and PTAs in some schools, is not functioning effectively. This prompted me to explore the extent of community participation in school governance and whether such participation improves school governance.

Having studied other Zambian educational policies and their implementation processes extensively (Simuyaba, 2012; 2021; Bowasi, 2007; Mwanza, 2010; Masaiti & Simuyaba, 2018) I was motivated to undertake a study on Zambian government policies and programmes that relate to the democratization of education. In so doing, I looked at how SGBs relate to the democratization of education at the school level and how effectively government policies have been implemented considering that Zambia is experiencing issues of human rights abuse (Human Rights Report, 2018; 2020), which are in themselves the enemies of democracy.

Related to the above motive for the current study is a study carried out by Mwanza (2010), which revealed that principals did not exercise democratic leadership styles due to a lack of management training. Because the multiplier effects of poor governance at any level of education may be devastating for a country that has embraced a new political dispensation, I therefore found it important to understand the impact that school governance may have on the democratization of education in Zambia. Coupled with poor governance is the aspect of the democratization of education. The dire need to understand these issues provided me with the motivation to undertake this study, especially because I know that the findings could be used

as a resource aid for training upcoming SGB members and PTAs on their roles, as Naidoo, Mncube and Potokri (2015) demand in their study titled the "Role of principals in the democratization of schools in South Africa".

1.9.   DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to two districts in the Southern Province of Zambia. Two schools were selected, i.e. one rural and one township school. The selection of the Southern Province was necessitated by the prevalence of public schools in the province. The sampled schools were confined to one province so as to avoid differences resulting from dissimilarities in local governance and administrative policies among provinces.

1.10.   LIMITATIONS

This study was self-sponsored and thus conducting qualitative research among school governors with diverse backgrounds working at different secondary schools proved to be very difficult and expensive for the researcher. As such, and because of the complex nature of the subjects of study, two schools had to be removed from the list of targeted schools. This reduced the number of schools to two from the earlier planned four. This did not affect the findings however.

In addition, the researcher was met with resistance at one of the secondary schools where she had gone with an introductory letter. The unwillingness of the school to make minutes and other "sensitive" documents available resulted in the researcher spending time in the field waiting for responses that were never forthcoming. Accordingly, access to some school documents was denied and, as a result, document study at the school level proved to be a challenge.

While it is most unlikely that the results of the study could be representative of the Zambian context outside the Southern Province (considering the scale and population of this study), useful insights about the operations of SGBs and the democratic/undemocratic tendencies that could be applied elsewhere have been generated. Moreover, moderate generalizations are still possible especially for public schools with similar school governing features and policies.

Studies which aim to make greater generalizations usually use large national samples and employ sophisticated techniques for data analysis (Luchembe, 2020). However, this study was

not primarily aimed at generalization. Furthermore, it would have been both inappropriate and impossible to use a very large sample, given the time limitations and the fact that the study was qualitative in nature.

1.11. KEY CONCEPTS IN THE STUDY

For a better understanding of this study, it is imperative that certain terms and concepts are clarified. The concepts being used in the study include, among others, capacity building, decentralization, the democratization of education, parental involvement and school governance:

Capacity building refers to the introductory or continuing training provided to school governors.

Decentralization – within the context of this study, decentralization refers to the devolution of power from the central government to the local level, in districts and schools (MoE, 2006:3). It also means the transfer of power/responsibilities to the points of delivery.

Democratization of education – according to the National Education Policy document (1996), the democratization of education is a practice that requires the government to create an enabling environment, and establish rules and regulations that will protect the rights of various educational stakeholders to full and fair participation in educational development.

Governance refers to the manner in which the affairs of a school governing body are conducted.

Educational decentralization in the Zambian context refers to the process whereby decision-making powers and functions are transferred from the more central structures of government and its ministries to local-level structures (and, at times, even to districts, schools, NGOs, communities and individuals).

Management team in this study refers to an inner group (comprising the head teacher, deputy head teacher and heads of department (HODs)) which deals with the professional day-to-day running of the school.

Parent – the learner's parent or guardian, or a person legally entitled to the custody of a learner. Parents are usually adult males or females who care for children attending schools. In this case, a parent or a guardian can be the biological or social caregiver of a child.

Parental involvement – the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based activities, which may be educational or non-educational.

Participation – the idea of working together towards certain collective goals of the community to which people belong.

Policy refers here to a law enacted by government to determine the direction and pace of changes in schools in order to achieve educational aims and objectives.

Public school – a school maintained largely by means of funds made available by the government of the Republic of Zambia.

School governing board refers to a democratically elected board charged with the governance of a public school.

School governing bodies (SGBs) – these are bodies comprising elected community members (usually parents and guardians), teachers and school administrators to govern local schools.

School head teacher refers to the principal or manager of a primary or secondary school. According to Everand and Morris (1990:5), head teachers/school managers are those teachers who have some responsibility for planning, directing, organising and controlling the work of other teachers. For the purpose of this study, the term "head teacher" is used to refer to those persons who have this responsibility.

School management team (SMT), also known as school administrators in Zambia, refers to an inner group comprising the head teacher, deputy head teacher and heads of departments. This team deals with the professional day-to-day running of the school (MoE, 2005:20).

Secondary schools are schools comprising classes from Grades 8 to 12.

1.12. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This section presents the layout of the chapters of the study and outlines their content.

This thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by providing background on school governance in Zambia. This is followed by the statement of the problem and a description of the research purpose, the research objectives and the research questions. The motivation for, and the limitations and delimitations of, the study are also addressed and key

concepts are defined. The last part of the chapter outlines the entire study, briefly describing the contents of each chapter.

Chapter two explores the literature, focusing on the concepts of decentralization and educational decentralization, and democratic school governance in Zambia and other parts of the world, as well as the concept of governance. The roles of SGBs and PTAs in school governance are also discussed and then the chapter turns the focus to the roles of school governing board members in Zambia. Thereafter, the spotlight falls on SGBs as legal entities. The chapter ends by examining the factors influencing the operations of SGBs, after which a review of the literature on democratic practices in education is given.

Chapter three discusses theories of decentralization and school governance. This chapter is divided into two parts: the first deals with school governance and the second discusses the decentralization of education. The final section of the chapter covers the research paradigm applied to achieve the research purpose. The chapter ends with a summary of the two concepts.

Chapter four presents information on the methodological aspects of the study. It begins by stating the research methodology and the design adopted, while justifying their selection. In addition, the chapter describes the research site, population sample, sampling strategies and the method of data collection and analysis. The final part of the chapter addresses ethical considerations.

Chapter five focuses on the presentation, interpretation, and discussion of the main findings of the study and is informed by the qualitative findings. It starts with the presentation of demographic profiles for the sampled schools. Then the chapter presents particular findings corresponding to the research questions revolving around the role of SGBs in the democratization of secondary school education in Zambia. Thereafter, the chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the findings. The last part of this chapter discusses the major findings that emerged from the study, while contrasting them with data gleaned from the literature.

Finally, chapter six provides a conclusion to the entire study and makes certain recommendations. This is done by way of providing the purpose and research question that guided the study at hand. The chapter commences by giving a quick summary of the entire research process, addressing key issues such as the research aim, methodology and contributions of the study. That done, the chapter presents the major findings of the study by drawing certain broad conclusions based on each of the chapters discussed. The chapter also

gives a summary of the theoretical framework with some implications for the main findings, subsequently making a number of recommendations. The chapter concludes by suggesting areas for future research.

1.13.   SUMMARY

This chapter presented the background to the problem, highlighting the policy developments which led to the institutionalization of SGBs at the secondary school level. The chapter further presented scholastic evidence which supported the problem statement that formed the basis of the research purpose, objectives and questions, as well as the significance of the study. The delimitations, limitations and operational definitions of the study were addressed and, finally, the layout of the entire study was outlined. The next chapter provides a review of the literature on decentralization and school governance for the purpose of positioning the study in the context of current knowledge, as well as identifying gaps in the current knowledge, hence justifying the need for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1	OVERVIEW

The previous chapter presented the background to the problem that led to this study. It highlighted, among other things, the contextual background of the territory in which school governing bodies (SGBs) operate. Thereafter, the chapter provided a statement of the research problem, as well as presenting the research purpose, objectives, questions and significance of the study. The final part of the chapter explained the theoretical framework guiding the study, followed by the study delimitations and limitations and, ultimately, the definitions of key terms.

The present chapter examines the literature on other studies related to this study. The literature was selected on the basis of its relevance to the topic under investigation. The chapter opens with a definition of educational decentralization followed by a discussion on educational decentralization and democratic school governance as they apply to Zambia and other parts of the world. The roles of SGBs and the parent–teacher associations (PTAs) are also discussed after which the aspect of SGBs as legal entities is examined. The final segment of the review addresses the factors influencing the operations of SGBs.

## 2.2	EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization in education originates from the belief that the state alone cannot control schools, but should share its power with other stakeholders, particularly those closer to the schools, on a partnership basis (Marishane, 1999; Van Wyk, 2004; Mncube, 2008; Banda, 2009; GRZ, 2013). Thus, improved participation by local stakeholders is a reason for educational decentralization and its successful implementation requires the transfer of resources to local government as well as increased public participation at the local level (MoE, 2008; GRZ, 2013).

Decentralization in education is concerned with increasing efficiency in management and governance, especially where state bureaucracy appears heavy and slow (Mncube, 2005; Bowasi, 2007), as well as other issues of concern to teachers and school administrators. In situations where it has been proven that the state is unable to tackle issues such as teacher deployment, teacher payment, the purchase and distribution of equipment and materials and the maintenance of buildings, decentralization appears to be the solution (Putnam, 1970; Carmody, 2004; MoE, 2005).

In the Zambian education setup, educational decentralization refers to the shifting of workloads from the central government or ministry headquarters to its field agents outside the central ministry office. This does not imply that the ministry headquarters is giving up any authority, but is simply a matter of transferring it to their agents outside the central office, while these agents continue to be accountable to the central government (MoE, 2005: 2008; Kelly, 2006). This further suggests that decentralization involves the devolution of authority from the core to the grassroots. Bush and Gamage (2001) and Carmody (2004) argue that the devolution of authority will lead to healthier and stronger relationships between schools and communities, as well as provide an alternative form of accountability to bureaucratic surveillance. This is based on the understanding that when educators and communities collaborate in making important decisions about education alternatives, a true mutual responsibility will grow (Carmody, 2004; MoE, 2008; Mwanakatwe, 2013). For this reason, arguably, advocates of decentralization base their reforms on the assumption that to ensure improvement in schools, those closest to learners should be offered the authority to make key decisions (Carmody, 2004; Makwaya, 2005; Kelly, 2006; MoE, 2008; Mwanakatwe, 2013).

Related to the preceding argument is the motive of enabling grassroots control of local affairs in learning institutions. This is reflected in the principle objective of educational decentralization in Zambia, which stems from the need for the citizenry to exercise control of its local affairs and to foster meaningful educational development (MoE, 2005, Revised National Decentralization Policy, 2013; Mwanakatwe, 2013). Fundamental to this perspective is the principle of shared responsibility that revolves around the community and school settings which influence the growth and development of children (Bowasi, 2007). Accordingly, decentralization in Zambia implies that parents and other members of the community around a school setup may have a significant effect on the overall development, growth and achievement of children (Banda 2009; Carmody, 2004; Mwanakatwe, 2013).

As Bowasi (2007), Banda (2009) and Changala et al. (2013) state, the implementation details of educational reform require that some degree of authority should be given to provincial, district and school level in contrast to absolute control by the centre. Thus, in order to remove absolute control by the centre, the Zambian MoE found it necessary to transfer authority, functions and responsibilities to the lower levels in what is commonly known as corporate governance (MoE, 2008). The thrust of these reforms, in line with the policy milestones of Zambia's Third Republic, began to show significance in 1995 (Carmody, 2004; Kelly, 2006;

Mwanakatwe, 2013). However, if this function were to be executed successfully, the transfer of authority, functions and responsibilities should have been matched by the transfer of resources to the lower levels. However, this does not seem to be the case with the strategy implemented in Zambia's decentralized education system.

Unlike in Zambia, decentralization in other places such as Chicago aims at engaging parents and community members, along with teachers and principals, by allocating them a major, active role in school decision-making (Chikoko, 2008; Falconer-Stout et al. 2014). Educational decentralization is therefore a common way in which the community can participate in the governance and management of schools.

It is clear from the above discussion that the concepts of democratic school governance and decentralization cannot be divorced from each other, particularly when dealing with issues of participation and representation. In terms of the present study, these two concepts refer to participation by all stakeholders in the governance of schooling, taking into consideration the issue of power relations among adult school governors and learner governors, as Bowasi (2007) notes.

2.3   EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION AND DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN ZAMBIA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

Educational decentralization in the Zambian context refers to the process by which decision-making powers and functions are transferred from the more central structures of government and its ministries to local-level structures (and, at times, even to NGOs, communities and individuals). Kelly (2006:200) likens educational decentralization in Zambia to the principle of "subsidiary function", that is, that a higher-level group or organisation should not do for a lower-level group what the lower-level group can do for itself. Thus, a group or organisation above the other level of individuals should not do for the individuals what the individuals can do for themselves.

With regard to its inception, Kelly (2006) contends that educational decentralization in Zambia can be traced back to the Local Government Act of 1980, which entrusted the responsibility for establishing and maintaining colleges, schools and day nurseries to district councils. It is worth noting that, apart from establishing preschools, councils did little else to implement this Act. Thus, following the return to a multi-party system in December, 1990, the Local Government Act of 1991 replaced the 1980 Act. Under the 1991 Act, there was a clear divorce

of school structures from the district councils, the abandonment of the integrative roles of the councils in learning institutions, and the introduction of school governance boards in order to provide a platform on which communities could participate in education matters (MoE, 2005; 2007; 2008; Kandondo et al., 2013). After the launch of the 1991 Act, preparations were made for the adoption and implementation of a decentralized and democratized education system.

The first real steps towards the decentralization and democratization of the education system in Zambia began in 1995 with the establishment of school governing boards in Copperbelt Province. Since then, this practice has spread to all the other ten provinces of Zambia (Carmody, 2004:61; Bowasi, 2007; Banda, 2009; Revised National Decentralization Policy, 2013). This reform was informed by the belief that resources would be better used and the task of creating good quality and more equal education would be more effectively addressed if the means and methods of governance were chosen by stakeholders at the local level (Carmody, 2004:61; MoE, 1995; Changala et al., 2013; Nswana, 2021). Additionally, the decision to decentralize was also intended to allow for more rapid reaction and action in regard to problems and opportunities that occur at the point of delivery, thereby empowering lower levels with decision-making responsibilities (MoE, 2005:19; Kandondo, 2012; Kandondo & Muleya, 2013:1; Mwase et al., 2020). Educational decentralization in Zambia also aimed at "promoting community participation in all matters relating to national development efforts" (Carmody, 2004:61; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021).

In light of the above, the most fundamental rationale for educational decentralization in Zambia lies in the opportunity it presents to bring the government closer to the people by providing citizens with greater control over the decision-making process and, thus, allowing their direct participation in the education system (MoE, 2005; 2008; Bowasi, 2007; Banda, 2009, Revised National Decentralization Policy, 2013; Mwanakatwe, 2013; Falconer-Stout et al., 2014). The decentralized delivery of education services at school level was to be implemented largely through SGBs commonly referred to as education boards (Bowasi, 2007). Bodies similar to the Zambian school governing boards exist in other parts of the world, and are often viewed as instruments for school accountability (Mncube, 2008). According to Mncube (2008), examples of such governing bodies may be found in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Portugal, Ireland, some parts of the USA, Tanzania, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Zimbabwe and many other African states, some of whose details will be given in the succeeding chapters.

In Ireland, national schools have had boards of management since 1975 (Bowasi, 2007). The Irish Education Act (1998) places the governance system on a statutory basis and sets out the responsibilities of the boards. However, national schools in Ireland are not obliged to have boards of management, as the patron of the school has the right to decide whether or not to have one, although in practice most national schools in Ireland do. If the patron decides that it is impractical to appoint a board, he/she must give reasons to the parents, teachers, staff and minister, but he/she cannot be forced to appoint one (The Irish Education Act, 1998). The Irish school board's main function is to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and to provide an appropriate education for each student at the school (The Irish Education Act, 1998). The role and method of operation of boards of management of schools in Ireland was agreed by the education department, school managers, parents and teachers in 2003 (Public Service Information for Ireland, 2007:2). Similar in operation to the school boards obtaining in Ireland are the boards of education in England and Wales, as highlighted below.

In England and Wales, school boards have been in existence since as far back as the 1980s, and exist as instruments for enhancing school accountability (Farrell and Law, 1999; Mncube, 2005). Their functions include, among other things, overall administration of schools fall under local education authorities, with the assumption that governing bodies would be better able to manage and be accountable than these authorities (Mncube, 2005). The operational guidelines for SGBs are enshrined in the 1980 Education Act, which made it compulsory for every school in England and Wales to have a governing body. Furthermore, the 1980 Act requires that there is parental and teacher representation in the SGBs (Field, 1993:1; Farrell & Law, 1999; Mncube, 2005). However, learner governors do not form part of this composition. This legislation was driven partly by a desire to promote local accountability in schools (Thomlison, 1993:12; Mncube, 2005).

South Africa also has bodies similar to those obtaining in England and Wales. The SGBs in South Africa were registered in 1996 and were first implemented in 1997. The South African Schools Act (SASA, no. 84 of 1998) stipulates that all public schools in South Africa must have democratically elected SGBs, comprising, in the case of secondary schools, the principal, educator representatives (teaching and non-teaching staff), parents and learners. The Act was intended to foster tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making (Mncube, 2008). Corresponding evidence exists of the operations and practices of similar bodies in Zimbabwe (Chikoko, 2008).

SGBs in Zimbabwe were introduced in the 1990s when heavy government expenditure on education and other sectors was no longer sustainable (Chikoko, 2008). This led to a paradigm shift from a centralized to a decentralized governance system in society in general and education in particular (Chikoko, 2008:3). The move to decentralization saw the creation of school development committees (SDCs) in non-government schools and school development associations (SDAs) in government schools to govern the affairs of these institutions (Education Act, 1996 in Chikoko 2008). According to section 9 of the Education Act, schools in Zimbabwe are classified (a) as either government schools or non-government schools, and (b) in such other categories as the Minister may determine, taking into account the socioeconomic environment in which the schools concerned find themselves. The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture employs professionals (teachers and schools heads) in schools while rural development committees oversee the election and operations of SDCs (Chikoko, 2008).

The composition of SGBs differs from country to country. For example, in Ireland the composition of the board of management for schools with more than one teacher is limited to two direct nominees of the patron; two parents of the children enrolled in the school (one mother and one father) elected by the parents; the principal; one teacher appointed by the staff, and two extra members agreed by the representative of the patron, teachers and parents (Public Service Information for Ireland, 2007:2). This differs from what obtains in other contexts, for example, the composition of a typical SGB in Zimbabwe, consists of (a) five persons elected by parents of pupils at the school; (b) the head of the school; (c) the deputy head of the school; (d) a teacher representative at the school; and (e) a councillor appointed by the local authority (Government of Zimbabwe, Statutory Instrument 87, 1992).

Slightly different from the aforementioned accounts is the case of Zambia. The Zambian SGB has fifteen members (MoE, 2005; Moonga, 2016). This implies that in Zambia, just like Zimbabwe and other African countries like South Africa in the region, enjoys the presence of a legally decentralized school governance structure of which the parents form the majority of members (Bowasi, 2007; Chikoko, 2008; Mncube, 2008). The chairperson of the SDC in Zimbabwe is a parent governor. This structure is somewhat similar to the one obtaining in Zambia, though with remarkable differences in terms of membership and numbers. For example, the Zambian governing board has additional members like union leaders, church leaders and district education officials.

In spite of the differences in composition and membership numbers, common features can be identified among SGBs the world over. Firstly, power is typically passed on to school-level governing bodies, while operational management remains the responsibility of the school head teacher (Bush & Gamage, 2001; Davies & Harber, 2003; MoE, 2005; 2008; Kelly, 2006; Bowasi, 2007). Secondly, SGBs are generally underpinned by notions of democracy and school effectiveness (Mncube, 2008; Moonga, 2016; Mwase, et al., 2020).

2.3.1 School Governance

2.3.1.1 The Concept of Governance

Governance is about the use of power and authority in a country; and how power and authority relates at the different levels of governance from the state down to the local community (Moonga, 2016; Nswana and Simuyaba, 2021). In the education system, governance is concerned with the distribution of power and authority in decision-making processes at all levels; that is, from the ministry headquarters down to the school or classroom and the local community (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009; Kamba, 2010; Falconer-Stout et al., 2014). Education governance therefore, is about the relationship between informal and formal management and the administrative structures in the school. It is also about how the school governance structures can increase community participation in school governance so as to increase the sense of school ownership, and in holding the education providers accountable (MoE, 2008; EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009).

Moonga (2016:68) views school governance as "an act of determining policy and roles by which a school is to be organized and controlled. This includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively". The implication of this is that a school governing board promotes the best interests of the school and, in particular, of the learners, as well as being responsible for developing a strategy to ensure that quality education is provided (Falconer-Stout et al., 2014) and, subsequently, that this strategy is implemented. The SGB does this by means of monitoring and evaluation as defined by the day-to-day management responsibilities of the principal and staff (Bush & Heystek, 2003:139; Xaba, 2010). Xaba (2010:210) adds that in school governance, all members of the SGB strive for the best interests of the school and the learners. Therefore, the role of school governors is defined by the meaning of governance.

Kogan (1986 in Coleman & Earley, 2005) argues that "schools and colleges have to be coordinated as a sector of society, and be held accountable" (ibid. 86) by, for instance, holding

education providers liable and accountable for their actions if they have failed to satisfy those with whom they are in a relationship of accountability. This view implies that schools and colleges as education providers should be held accountable, despite the fact that the way in which educational institutions relate to each other and stakeholders, and the cultural and governance arrangements of a society, could differ (ibid.). This therefore calls for the adoption of a model which suits the environmental arrangements of a particular institution.

Coleman and Earley (2005) report four models of governance, as postulated by Glatter (2003), which can be used for analysing governance in educational institutions within different national contexts. These are discussed below (Coleman & Earley, 2005):

2.3.1.2 Models of Governance

The four models of governance proposed by Glatter (2003 in Coleman & Earley, 2005) for analysing governance in educational institutions are the competitive market model, institutional empowerment, local empowerment and quality control. I will merge institutional and local empowerment to form one concept and will describe the aspect of quality control without discussing the competitive market in this study.

2.3.2 Institutional and Local Empowerment

In this model, individuals in schools as educational institutions (e.g. stakeholders such as the community, parents, teachers and pupils) are empowered in making decisions. It is argued that in regard to institutional empowerment the focus is more on the institution and how it is governed and managed than on its competitive activities "against" other institutions (ibid. 86). As regards local empowerment, power and authority wielded by the centre is moved to the local level, specifically to district authorities, groups and/or to the families near educational institutions and in particular the school and the community.

2.3.3 Quality control

In this model, educational institutions are seen as the centres for the production of quality and are conceived as being able to provide quality control. Therefore, "authorities at national or regional level lay rules and establish targets, evaluation criteria and monitoring arrangements aimed at ensuring quality education is 'effectively delivered'" (ibid.). By laying down rules and establishing targets at the national and/or regional level, the education authorities seek to

ensure quality education, which is why the curriculum and examinations in most countries are centralized. Firstly, this is meant to protect the quality and, secondly, to ensure that the involvement of stakeholders is focused on ensuring quality and control, since the parents and the community will hold education providers accountable (Coleman & Earley, 2005; MoE, 2008; EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009).

Coleman and Earley (2005) conclude that models such as these present a broader idea of how educational institutions should be coordinated with each other and how stakeholders are legitimatised to operate in SGBs, thereby cementing the principles of community participation in both school governance and democracy.

2.3.4   Secondary School Governance in Zambia

Secondary schools in Zambia are governed by education boards, which are institutions established by law to govern and manage the provision of education at the school level (MoE, 2008:4). The members of this governance body are appointed by the Minister of Education (ibid. 4) and are expected to be involved in the planning and decision-making processes of the school. The expected role of the governance body of each school board in planning and decision-making is to consider suggestions from the community and recommendations from the management team in line with the vision and mission statements of the board, and to come up with plans and decisions (ibid. 9). SGBs are therefore an expression of democratic and communal legitimacy. For example, the MoE in Zambia recognises the importance of community participation in school governance and management (MoE, 2006:2; 2008; Falconer-Stout et al., 2014). In its 2006 National Policy document, the Ministry recognised the establishment of SGBs viz-à-vis the education boards and the PTAs, whose formation underlies the fact that sole responsibility for education does not lie with the government, and that communities, being the custodians of the schools, must care for them and maintain them (MoE, 2006:136). The MoE (2008:5) document adds that "community participation is the cornerstone for inclusive governance in a democracy like one that Zambia has embraced". This exposition clearly shows that the community is engaged in the governance and management of schools, and plays a major role in school sustainability. Arguably, the existence and operations of SGBs in Zambia are an expression of democratic and community participation in schools, as highlighted in the Zambian Policy Document, Educating our Future of 1996, which states that SGBs provide a platform on which communities can participate in education matters and allow

for a rapid reaction and action in regard to the problems and opportunities that occur in their respective areas (ibid. 135–136; see also, MoE, 2005: ii).

SGBs in Third World countries manifest differently from place to place and their roles are varied. An example of what school governance entails is explicit in the example of South Africa, as the Department of Education in South Africa explains that:

> Just like the country has a government, the school that your child and other children in the community attend, needs a "government" to serve the school and the school community (Bush & Heystek, 2003:128 in Coleman & Earley, 2005:90).

It goes further to state that:

> The democratization of education includes the idea that stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners and other people (such as members of the community near your school) must participate in the activities of the school (ibid.).

This view means that the involvement of stakeholders in the governance and management of the school improves the quality of the education system, likening the school to government, as the SGBs act like and/or represent a form of government in the school. As Kendall (2007; Moonga, 2016;) points out, enabling parental and community participation in school governance occurs mainly through the creation of formal structures such as school governance boards or PTAs, through which parents and the community can actively play their roles in the governance and management of the school.

2.3.5 Roles of School Governing Bodies and Parent–Teacher Associations in School Governance

There is growing research evidence on the roles of school governance boards and PTAs in matters related to improvement in educational quality, school governance and management, pupil retention, and parental and community participation. For instance, school governance bodies and PTAs in developing countries are charged with the roles of "monitoring children's progress, increasing enrolment, developing improvement plans and monitoring the management of operational budgets" (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009:157; Falconer-Stout et al., 2014). In view of these roles, one could argue that those of school governance bodies and PTAs are basically focused on budget management, school improvement plans and

development, an increase in local participation for the sake of legitimacy, resource mobilization and accountability, as the government has devolved the authority of school governance and management through the policy of educational decentralization. Accordingly, authority for school governance and management rests with the community.

2.3.6   Roles of School Governing Bodies in Zambia

Commenting on what was expected of governing boards, once implemented, the 2005 MoE document, "Principles of Education Boards: Governance and Management" advises that:

> These are not business ventures that generate resources to which the member can look up for handsome remuneration. These are institutions that have been established to provide a platform on which communities can participate in the planning and decision making for their children, under the spirit of community service (MoE, 2005:19).

SGBs can therefore be viewed as non-profit community bodies aimed at enhancing community participation in schools.

Furthermore, SGBs in Zambia are seen as the main vehicle through which communities are enabled to participate in educational planning and decision-making (MoE, 2005). Apart from enabling communities to participate in education matters, the governing bodies are also intended to allow for more rapid reaction and action in regard to problems and opportunities that occur at the points of delivery, thereby improving the learning environment and, consequently, the quality of education provided (Changala et al., 2013). Furthermore, the MoE document adds that SGBs were established in order to "provide a platform on which communities can participate in planning and decision making for the education of their children, under the spirit of community service and by so doing, they are enhancing the democratic governance of education" (MoE, 2005:19).

In addition to the roles stated above, the MoE (2005:26–30) document outlines the broad functions of SGBs in Zambian secondary schools. These functions fall under two structures, that is, the governance body and the management team. A detailed outline of these structures according to the MoE (2005:26–30) is provided in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Specific Roles of the Governance and Management Teams at the School Level

Governance Body	Management Team

1. Formulating local policies for regulating the management of the institution	1. Implementing the decisions of the MoE and the local policies of the institution
2. Ensuring that the institution has a mission statement that has a vision	2. Initiating and managing the delivery of quality education to the satisfaction of the clients
3. Establishing the long-term goals of the SGB and ensuring that strategic objectives and plans are established to achieve those goals	3. Identifying developmental and capital projects of the institutions involved
4. Ensuring that the management structures are in place to achieve those objectives	4. Organising various services of the community that may not require approval from the board
5. Guiding the implementation of strategic decisions and actions, and advising management as appropriate	5. Identifying the training needs of the human resources available including board members
6. Reviewing and adopting annual budgets for the financial performance of the SGB and monitoring its performance on a monthly basis	6. Managing board finances through staff and initiating the development of fundraising activities
7. Ensuring the preparation of annual and half-yearly financial statements, communicating, and disclosing information to stakeholders	7. Representing the board at various meetings
8. Overseeing the implementation of adequate control systems and relevant compliances with the law, governance, accounting, and auditing standards	8. Representing the board in relation to third parties and courts of law for all transactions whatsoever, including transactions relating to the acquisition of assets, administration, and expenditure of the resources of the board
9. Initiating the appointment of board members	9. Reporting on the activities of the board-to-board meetings, the MoE and other stakeholders
	10. Preparing the annual work plans for the board and the MoE

10. Ensuring the effective functioning of the board and its committees
11. Monitoring development projects for the institutions.
12. Supervising development projects for the institution(s)
13. Lobbying pupils/teachers and other staff to support the institutions
14. Sensitising communities and parents/PTAs to the policies of the board and MoE
15. Formulating policies for the institutions
16. Nomination of persons to fill vacant posts on the board
17. Renewal of membership to and determining tenure of office of the board
18. Monitoring the expenditure of funds meant for the board
19. Holding heads of institutions responsible for the effective operation of the institution
20. Recruiting and deploying staff and maintaining staff discipline in accordance with public service regulations and conditions
21. Approving fees and charges to be paid to institutions
22. Encouraging parents to regard themselves as partners in the task of education delivery

11. Keeping the board fully informed on all work carried out and making recommendations in this regard
12. Registering the assets of the board, and improving and maintaining infrastructure and the grounds of the institutions
13. Keeping minutes of all meetings of the board and its subcommittees, and sending copies thereof to the board as required
14. Maintaining books of accounts including statements of receipts and expenditure for the years concerned in the form prescribed by the MoE and the board
15. Collecting, receiving, and recovering all rents and other monies due and payable in respect of leases of any part of the institution(s)
16. Regulating the conditions of local staff and the enrolment of pupils/students at the institutions
17. Determining and proposing fees and other charges to be paid to the institution(s)
18. Providing incentives to teachers and other staff of the board
19. Development of rules and regulations for the institution(s)
20. Regulating the calendar to be observed at the institution, the

23. Interpreting the needs of parents and the local community in the field of education and mediating between them and the professional staff of the institution in establishing the character and ethos of such institution	subjects of instruction to be provided and syllabus to be followed 21. Purchasing of textbooks, educational materials, and equipment for the institution 22. Deciding on conditions of suspension and exclusion for pupils/students enrolled at the institution 23. Establish precise needs for the accommodation of teachers and determine with the community how these needs can be met 24. Arranging for the secondment of public officers and other persons to the board 25. Authorising the reasonable use of institutional facilities for community, social and institutional fundraising purposes

Source: MoE (2005) Guidelines for Implementation of School Governing Boards in Zambia

The functions displayed in Table 2.1 clearly demonstrate that the principal objective of decentralization in Zambia stems from the need for the citizenry to exercise control of its local affairs. This requires some degree of authority being given to the provincial, district and school level, in contrast to absolute control by the centre (MoE, 2005). The decentralization of decision-making power to the school level has become an internationally acclaimed reform (McGinn & Welsh, 1999, Chikoko, 2008) which is declared to be consistent with the notion of "good" governance (Grant & Motala, 2004). In addition, it is seen as a means to several ends, namely, the socioeconomic transition to democracy and good governance, improved service delivery by shifting decision-making closer to the grassroots for improved accountability and responsiveness, the empowerment of citizens and participation in governance (MoE, 2005; Watson, 2005; Nswana, 2021).

Many educationists believe that transferring governance and management authority from a centralized state agency to schools will rejuvenate schools by giving parents, pupils and the local community a greater role in setting school missions (MoE, 1995; Fiske & Ladd, 2000; Falconer-Stout, et al. 2014). Mncube (2008; 2009; 2010; 2012), an eminent writer on the democratization of education in South Africa through SGBs, emphasises the need for stakeholders at the secondary school level to engage fruitfully in deliberations dealing with school governance, as this in turn leads to democracy where every "voice" is heard. This refers to a different geographical context however. The focus of the current study is to establish whether or not the above-stated roles are in line with the practical operations of Zambian SGBs in a secondary school setup.

2.4   SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES AS LEGAL ENTITIES

An SGB is a legal entity known as a corporate body and it has a legal existence separate from that of its members (https//czone.eastsussex.gov.uk accessed 8.09.2018). A Zambian SGB is a legal entity made up of elected and appointed members of the community and is responsible, together with the head teacher and staff, for the management of the school, ensuring that it provides all its pupils with high quality education. The SGB is made up of representatives elected or appointed from many groups in the local community.

The history of SGBs in Zambia can be traced back to the Local Administration Act of 1980, which entrusted the district councils with the responsibility for establishing and maintaining colleges, schools and day nurseries (Kelly, 2006:28). Apart from establishing preschools, councils did very little to implement the Act. Thus, the first real steps in the decentralization of education were taken in 1995 with the establishment of education boards in the Copperbelt Province. Kelly explains that these governing boards, as legal entities, have full authority for education, including the recruitment and discipline of teachers and other staff, the administration of funds, the imposing of fees (within certain limits), as well as administering, controlling and maintaining their institutions (ibid.).

The Statutory Instrument of 1997 provides that school governing boards should be composed of fifteen members, only one of whom is an education official. The rest are teachers, parents, pupils, school heads, and district council nominees (MoE, 2005). With this decentralized education system, the central ministry is by law allowed to retain certain powers: making legislation, formulating policies, planning at national level, mobilising and allocating national

resources, setting standards, monitoring and evaluation, collecting and analysing data, and ensuring the sustainability of effective mechanisms for financial accountability within the province (MoE, 2008:9). School governing boards were, among other things, entrusted with devising rules and regulations for their institutions.

SGBs as legal entities are not unique to Zambia. The Irish Education Act (1998) puts school governance on a statutory basis and sets out the responsibilities of education boards. The main responsibility of the board is to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and to provide an appropriate education for each student at the school (The Irish Education Act, 1998). Similarly, the operations of school boards in England and Wales are enshrined in the 1980 Education Act, which made it compulsory for every school in England and Wales to have a governing body. Furthermore, the 1980 Education Act requires that there is parent and teacher representation in the SGB. This legislation was, according this Act, driven partly by a desire to promote local accountability in schools (Thomlison, 1993:12, Mncube 2005).

Further examples of SGB operations can be cited from the Southern African region. In South Africa, SGBs were registered in 1996 and were first implemented in 1997. The South African Schools Act (SASA, No. 84 of 1998) stipulates that all public schools must have democratically elected SGBs comprising the principal and representatives of educators and parents, as well as learners in the case of secondary schools. In Zimbabwe, the Education Act (1996) saw the creation of SGBs (i.e. SDCs in non-government schools and SDAs in government schools), whose chief function was to govern the affairs of these institutions. Section 9 of this Act classifies schools as either government or non-government schools. The details and composition of these governing bodies are found in the Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 which provides that a governing body should have five persons elected by parents of pupils at the school, the head teacher of the school, the deputy head teacher, two teacher representatives and a councillor appointed by the local authority (Government of Zimbabwe, Statutory Instrument 87, 1992; Chikoko, 2008).

The exposition above has revealed that the reasons for establishing SGBs as legal entities may vary from place to place; for example, the creation of SGBs in Zambia entails that parents, neighbours, pupils and other stakeholder have the opportunity to share in the responsibility for education (Carmody, 2004:61; Banda 2009:8; Moonga, 2016). Fundamentally, this perspective relates to the principle of shared responsibility that revolves around the community and school

settings, thus influencing the democratic aspect of education (Banda, 2009). Accordingly, SGBs were created so that various stakeholders would have an opportunity to share in the responsibility for the education system in Zambia (MoE, 2005; Bowasi, 2007; Banda, 2009; Moonga, 2016; Mwase et al., 2020). This was intended to foster local participation and instil a sense of ownership in what goes on in the education system (Carmody, 2004:61; Banda, 2009; Mwase et al., 2020). Banda (2009) further argues that the representation of the community in SGBs in Zambia was the first step to guaranteeing their participation in uplifting the standards of education.

The involvement of parents and the wider community in mobilising resources for education institutions, within the framework of decentralization, contributes to enhancing the democratization of the education system in Zambia (Carmody, 2004:159–160; Banda, 2009:9). This therefore implies that SGBs were primarily meant to promote democratic principles such as partnership and grassroots participation in Zambian schools (MoE, 2005; Moonga, 2016; Mwase et al., 2020).

2.5 FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Zambian national policy documents such as Educating our Future (1996) and the Zambian *National Guidelines on Implementation of Education Boards* (2003), as well as the South Africa Department of Education document (1997b), contend that capacity building is a major requirement for the successful deployment of SGB members. Similarly, Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008) emphasise the need for SGB member training in order for SGBs to function efficiently. Recent studies have also recommended the training of SGBs if they are to carry out their functions effectively (Moonga, 2016; Singogo, 2017; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). Lack of training is therefore a common feature that might influence SGB operations.

In Zambia, the concept of liberal democracy which guides the operations of secondary schools is underpinned by the core values of rational and moral autonomy, community engagement, consensus, equality, fairness and liberty (MoE, 2006:1; Moonga, 2016; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). Accordingly, an understanding of the principles of a liberal democracy is essential, because if these principles are undermined in any way, it brings the democratic function into dispute (Makwaya, 2005). The evidence from England (Mncube, 2009), South Africa (Mncube, 2009) and Zambia (Bowasi, 2007; Makwaya, 2009; Mwanza, 2010; Moonga, 2016) indicates that training is essential if governing bodies are to achieve the objectives set for them.

This, therefore, supports the need for the training of school governors if they are to function efficiently.

Other variables also influence the operations of SGBs; for example, Makwaya (2005) notes that participation by school governing board members is sometimes hindered by factors such as the inability of the community to participate actively in the delivery of education services, as well as the failure of the community to engage fully in decisions that affect the use and management of education resources. Another notable factor highlighted was that the expected outcome of transparency, accountability and a sense of ownership by community members had not begun to show to any significant extent. If these democratic aspects are lacking it would suggest that no democratic values are embedded in the practices of SGBs in Zambian institutions of higher learning. The reasons given for the absence of democratic values in learning institutions was a lack of training among school governing board members (Makwaya, 2005; Bowasi, 2007; Moonga, 2016).

These hindrances are not unique to Zambia. Internationally, they form part of the factors that inhibit SGBs from operating democratically. For example, Mncube (2008:18) has this to say in this regard: "the issues related to full democratic participation of school governors in South African schools have not been fully resolved." According to Mncube (2009), the factors that inhibit SGBs from operating democratically in some South African schools include the level of education of parents in general, a lack of education and lack of parental involvement in school activities, a fear of "academic victimization" of their children, language barriers, and difficulty in attending meetings. Similar barriers to the effective operation of SGBs have been observed in South Sudan. For example, Kamba (2010) contends that the roles played by SGBs were underperformed in South Sudan mainly due to a lack of training and a lack of management skills by the board members. The absence of such skills made school governors shun programmed meetings, and this in itself undermined the principles of democracy in South Sudan (Kamba, 2010).

A study conducted by Mwanza (2010), "Education training for high school managers: A luxury or a necessity", established that secondary school principals in Zambia did not exercise democratic leadership styles due to a lack of management training. This therefore implies that these school principals did not understand the impact poor school governance may have on the democratization of education. Related to Mwanza's findings above, Heystek (2004) maintains in regard to South African school principals that the roles of the principal and the governing

body are not clear, since the legislated functions of the governing body do not provide sufficient clarity on its daily functioning, and this sometimes makes it difficult for principals to manage schools effectively. This view is corroborated by Brown and Duku (2008), who argue that conflict and tension in school governance is likely to continue unless leadership practices and policy provisions reflect more of people's customs and traditions. The multiplier effects of poor governance at any level of education may be devastating for any country that has embraced a new democratic dispensation (Malik, 2007). This therefore calls for the training of school governors if democratic values are to be embraced at the school level. Ngidi (2004) and Chombo (2020) corroborates this view by suggesting that providing training programmes for the members of SGBs, in the form of seminars or workshops, can play an important role especially that SGBs perform poorly in debates involving curriculum-related activities.

Other than the training aspect, which has been referred to over and again by earlier studies, there are many other variables that impact on SGBs and which have to be considered to determine whether their practices contribute towards sustaining the principles of democracy or not. For example, a number of studies have revealed that many tensions exist in SGBs (Karlsen, 1999; Naidoo, 2005; Sayed & Soudien, 2005; Brown & Duku, 2008; Kamba, 2010). SGBs have also been viewed by some scholars as profoundly middle class in identity, and this in turn leads to isolation among those participants with low socioeconomic status and those who do not fall into the middle-class category; as such, their participation is compromised. SGBs have also been accused of normalising parental participation in middle-class terms (Brown & Duku, 2008; Mncube, 2008) and that parents have the resources and time to spend on school activities Sayed & Soudien, 2005), yet their participation in SGBs is still questionable.

Mncube (2005; 2008; 2012) highlights a number of factors leading to a lack of parents' participation in SGBs, namely, unequal power relations, socioeconomic status, lack of confidence and expertise caused by the absence or lack of training, poor communication of information, the rural–urban divide, different cultural expectations of diverse communities, language barriers, poor organisation and the high turnover rates for governors.

All these variables need to be considered in studies relating to the democratic functioning of SGBs in order to determine whether or not the SGB is on course. In addition, Brown and Duku (2008) write that SGBs are burdened with social tension, rejection, domination and psychological stress. However, a survey of the literature on SGBs in Zambia so far (Makwaya,

2005; Bowasi, 2007; Moonga, 2016), does not reveal the presence of social tension and rejection among the board members; as such, there is a need for empirical studies on this aspect.

Parental and learner participation is a key aspect of SGBs, as rightly noted in recent studies, for example Makwaya (2005), Bowasi (2007), Chikoko (2008), Mncube (2009), Nkamba, (2010), Singogo (2017), and Chombo (2020). Highlighting the aspect of parental and learner participation in SGBs, Mncube (2009) make the following observation about South African SGBs:

> Although the South African Schools Act (2006) wants all stakeholders to take part fully on issues of school governance, in practice this is not happening, but instead parents and learners in most cases are not accorded, directly or indirectly, the opportunity to take active part on school governance issues. Instead learners are only in the SGBs for "window-dressing and tokenism" (Mncube, 2009:18).

On account of the above, Mncube (2009), commenting on parental involvement in school activities, suggests that while parents are meant to take part in robust activities of school governance, they tend to be involved in their personal and daily routine at work or at their place of business. Mncube argues that parents are more comfortable dealing with their private lives rather than public involvement. In relation to the above, Mncube summarises his argument by stating that "parents do not use the opportunities available to them to make their voice heard, which prevents social justice from manifesting in schools" (ibid. 18).

2.6 DIFFERENT FORMS OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IDENTIFIED BY OTHER STUDIES

Joorst (2007) discusses different forms of learner participation in school governance. These include the voice, manipulation, exclusivity, trivialisation, tokenism and decoration. The following is a discussion of these forms of learner participation.

2.6.1 Voice

Holdsworth (1986:5) contends that, "Student participation has simply been seen as providing a *voice* for young people". What he refers to as voice, or voicing, is a simple focus on being heard which can serve to make it appear that young people are active participants. This may in

reality serve as a safety valve to ease pressures relating to real decision-making, or may simply be a way of making students feel as if they are doing the right thing.

2.6.2 Manipulation

Haddock (1999:200) describes *manipulation* as "skilful managing, often in an unfair way". In this form of participation students are led in a certain direction of thinking by the authorities and often also their co-governors in SGBs and feel pressured to support those views.

2.6.3 Exclusivity

"Exclusivity" refers to reserving positions on governance structures for particular persons. According to Holdsworth (1986:7), there has been a disturbing trend among schools to move attention from participation to representation – and to focus on only developing the skills of the few students elected or appointed to elite positions, creating pockets of student elitism in the school. Similarly, although there is a strong move to inclusion (of all children irrespective of background, race or culture), there is a tendency in schools to choose the already, advantaged, such as popular students or students with influential parents, or students who will best represent or advertise the school.

2.6.4 Trivialisation

Gray (2001) adds *trivialisation* as a situation where governing bodies like learner representative councils exist in name only. This would result in a weakening of student interest, the development of distrust in, and disrespect for, the principal and staff and, ultimately, cynical and counterproductive attitudes.

2.6.5 Tokenism

The word "tokenism" refers to symbolic representation. Hart (1992:2) quoted in Joorst (2007) views tokenism as a process where children are asked to say what they think about an issue but have little or no choice about how to express it. Holdsworth (1986:8) holds that the view that what is regarded as student participation can become limited and limiting. It is, unfortunately, still common to find that both students and teachers simply think that some form of student organisation is what student participation is all about. This can lead both to token participation by students in "safe issues" and, particularly, to the exclusion of student participation from what is central to the school – the learning and teaching that occurs there. Learning about active

citizenship in schools has to include support for active student voice and participation by the school governing board members in various areas of school governance.

2.6.6 Decoration

Holdsworth (1986:11) elaborates on the issue of participation by adding another level of participation. He refers to decoration as being a form of participation where children participate but do not really understand the issues. Decoration here literally means that the learner representatives in a school governing board are used as display items just in case anybody asks about the inclusion of learners in the governance of the school. In line with Holdsworth's view, Joorst (2007) established that learner representative council members were often invited to SGB meetings just for the sake of student representation. He further established that the learner governors came to these SGB meetings without being properly prepared for the issues at hand. This lack of preparation compromises the effectiveness of the learner governor's participation in the SGB.

Holdsworth (1998:8) contends that giving attention only to selective ideas of "leadership" or "participation" in school governing boards may be self-defeating. Where governance has excluded the broad range of learners and by-passed their interests, concerns and abilities, learners have grown increasingly distrustful and angry at what they see as another form of oppression and deflection. Jansen (2001:249) contributes to the debate by pointing out that, although groups are invited to participate, it does not mean that the views of all the participants prevail in SGB meetings. He further contends that participating groups have unequal power and expertise, leading to different kinds of emphasis in policy outcomes. As the research evidence highlighted above is from other contexts, the researcher executed this study to explore the actual functioning of SGBs in Zambia.

2.7 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

A survey of the literature on learner participation suggests that the nature of learner participation in governance can be understood in terms of internal (in-school) and external (socialisation and environmental) factors (Joorst, 2007; Mncube, 2009). Below is a discussion of these:

2.7.1 External factors

Parents are an influential force in our lives. We go to church with them, we are part of their families, we go to their schools, read their books, and consume their culture (Joorst, 2007). Previous research (Willow, 1997 Joorst, 2007) suggests that the relationship between the actions of parents and their children is to some extent due to the transmission of other characteristics that are related to these actions. Willow (1997) contends that parents have a substantial influence on the decisions of their children. They may use this influence to guide their children in the directions they find desirable. In many cases, these directions are close to the ones they have followed themselves. As a result, children of religious parents attend Sunday school, children of musical parents join musical groups, and children of politically active parents are more likely to participate in the student (learner) councils at school. Moser and Kalton (1977) contends that some adults do not think it appropriate to involve children in the planning stages of service delivery, and so they undervalue their competences.

Social behaviour is controlled to a great extent by cognitive scripts that are stored in a person's memory and are used as guides for behaviour and social problem solving. Such a script suggests how the person should behave in response to events, and what the likely outcome of those behaviours would be. Joorst (ibid) add that people appraise situations and decide which scripts are appropriate for them. In addition, they state that cognitive scripts largely determine behaviour and that these scripts are retrieved in response to situations. It seems reasonable to infer then that children learn cognitive schemas and scripts of interpersonal relations from parental behaviour in parent–child interactions and that parents are important role models for children's future interactions. These different models provide for different levels of participation by children in different arenas.

2.7.2 In-school factors

Hess and Toney (1967) in Joorst (2007) claim that school experiences may be more influential than families in socialisation. In some Instances, school influences children both in formal ways (via curriculum content, teacher style, school values) and non-formal ways (such as social composition and school ethos). Similarly, Moonga (2016) believes that schools are a major arena for the development of citizenship skills and political knowledge, and that the school experience is a key factor in determining the magnitude of early political learning.

Many academicians tend to hold the view that the culture of the school reflects the local culture in many ways (Makwaya, 2009; Mwase, et.al 2020). Patterson, Purkey and Parker (2016), summarise the general knowledge base regarding school culture as follows:

- School culture affects the behaviour and achievement of elementary and secondary school students (though the effect of classroom and student variables remains greater).
- School culture does not fall from the sky; it is created and thus can be manipulated by people within the school.

Schools are generally responsive to constituent groups. This means that people outside the schools will influence the type of new programmes that may be introduced (Kerlinger, 1969:134). Change efforts fail if the community does not provide ongoing encouragement, support and resources (Falconer-stout, Simuyaba and Mayapi, 2014). Conversely, schools are vulnerable to pressure for change from external groups because they must try to satisfy what their constituents believes is proper for the schools.

The attitudes and beliefs of persons in the school shape its deliberative culture. Innovations such as that of the Learner Representative Council are often not put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works that limit people to familiar ways of thinking and acting (Senge, 1990; Senge & Lannon-Kim, 1991). This failure is played out in schools on a regular basis. The attitudes and beliefs of those in the school create mental models of what schooling is and how others in the school should and will respond to events and actions. It is from these attitudes and beliefs that the culture of the school is created.

Moonga (2016) points out that students are typically seen only as the potential beneficiaries of change rather than as participants in the change process. This traditional view of students is reflected in the observations of Fine (1991). The principal of the high school in Fine's study seemed to believe that merely telling students what to do, without their involvement, would compel their compliance. Furthermore, as a result of their findings regarding the close relationship between teachers and student attitudes. Joorst (2007) agree that the role of students in school improvement activities needs to be evaluated. Students are rarely informed about plans in spite of the fact that the plans cannot be carried out successfully if students are not committed to cooperate with the plan, and do not know what to do or how to do it (Fullan, 1991). According to Fullan (1991), students will participate if they understand, have the necessary skills and are motivated to try what is expected. Fullan's view can be likened to

learner participation in school governing boards. If learners are prepared by the adult governors for their roles in school governing boards, their participation is likely to yield more positive results. Having discussed the factors that affect learner participation in school governance, the next section discusses some democratic practices in school governance gleaned from the literature.

2.8   DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

In his policy paper entitled "Education, justice and democracy", Ball (2013) argued that schools have a responsibility to develop the capability of parents, learners, teachers and other local stakeholders to participate, discuss, challenge and critique. He further indicated that it is time to get down to basics; to think seriously about what education is, its purpose and what it means to be educated and who should decide these things.

A study carried out on the history of democratic education in American public schools (Loflin (2008) quoted in Moonga (2016) looked at schools in a democracy and democracy in schools. The study refers to the Democratic Education Consortium, formed in 2004 in Indianapolis, an independent group of adults and youths dedicated to promoting democratic practices in public education. This is done through a forum for public voices on education which seeks to encourage future civic engagement by learners by encouraging shared governance in schools and classrooms that empowers teachers and learners.

Research evidence from the United States seems to demonstrate that a democratic school environment nurtures democratic values, dispositions, skills and behaviours (Ibid) Hepborn, 1984). Though carried out in a different context, these studies indicate that democratic education is not only possible but that it is feasible, even within the bureaucratic structure of American schools and against the shifting attitudes of society. Moreover, these studies add to the evidence that in other countries, democratic experiences in school and in the classroom do contribute to the participatory awareness, skills and attitudes fundamental to life in democratic societies; an aspect our study hopes to investigate with special reference to Zambian SGBs.

Banks et al. (2005) mention that the Centre for Multicultural Education was convened at the University of Washington with support from the Spencer Foundation as a diversity citizenship and global education consensus panel. The goal of this panel was to publish a set of principles, guidelines and concepts that school practitioners could use to build or renew citizenship education programmes. These programmes would balance diversity and unity, while also

preparing learners to become more effective citizens in the global context. Therefore, the developed principles and concepts were to be reflected in schools (Banks et al, 2005). The publication was further meant to be used by educators to promote democratic and multicultural practices in schools and the various states of the world (Banks, 2005). Learners were to be taught knowledge about democracy and democratic institutions and were provided with opportunities to practise democracy. This meant that learners were to participate in democracy in schools, which implies producing a learner that would participate regularly in decision-making about the problems and controversies of school life in school governance and policy making (Parker, 2003).

Other scholars (Angel, 1998; Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1998) report that educators in Denmark, Australia and England have done much to revitalise learner councils and classroom meetings by involving all the learners. For example in England, it was established that elementary and secondary school learners were involved in regular meetings in which they deliberated and resolved their concerns and grievances and advise their representatives of the school councils. Opportunities were provided for frequent meetings between learners and their representatives to discuss matters that affect their school life. In this way, administrators, teachers, pupils and the community at large learnt to coexist.

Another study carried out in Britain, which compared two secondary schools, showed that the one which was traditional and authoritative instilled fewer civic attitudes among learners, while the democratic one scored higher on the democratic values and attitudes of its learners. After comparing the two schools, it was revealed that the democratic school encouraged pupils to express themselves freely and promoted equality in comparison to the traditional school (John & Osborn, 1992).

Myers (2008) investigated teachers' experiences with democratic school reform in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The findings of this study suggest that the idea of collective decision-making in schools is a popular democratic educational reform model. The study further established that participation in school decision-making empowers teachers and improves teaching. The results showed that in Brazil, the election of principles by teachers, learners, parents and staff reshaped school–authority relations, resulting in greater freedom for teachers to introduce democratic teaching methods, while articulating the school as a democratic institution.

Additionally, Myers (2008) indicates that collective decision-making in schools, in which teachers, learners and the community members collaborate with administrators to set up school policies and to determine the curriculum, has been a popular democratic reform model in North America since the 1980s. This participation in school decision-making empowers and professionalises teachers which in turn promotes democracy in schools. This type of participation recognises teachers and learners as key actors in the process of educational change, as they are given more freedom thereby changing the power relationships in schools among stakeholders (Myers, 2008; Moonga, 2016).

In 2013, Yuen and Leung (2014) conducted a survey on learners' participation in school governance and their citizenship development in Hong Kong. They explored the level and scope of pupil participation in school governance, and the facilitating and hindering factors influencing learner participation. The findings of the research revealed that the civic mission of schools in nurturing critical thinking and participatory citizens had always been downplayed in Hong Kong schools. The idea of civic awareness had never been ranked high on the agenda. Besides, because of the conservative nature of schools, pupils were rarely encouraged to participate in school governance for the enhancement of their citizenship development/democracy. The study concluded that the practice of learner participation in school governance does not facilitate the nurturing of active participation by citizens, hence the urgent need for democratic development in Hong Kong (Yuen & Leung, 2014).

In line with the theoretical perspective of delivery, educators (Like Dewey, 1915) have argued that the school, as a microcosm of society, should have some of the characteristics of a democratic community. Some scholars further argue that democracy is learnt by practising it in all areas of life (Moonga, 2016).

In his study, Harber (2006) argues that there is increasing evidence from studies of school effectiveness that democratically organised schools are more successful in terms of conventional indicators of effectiveness than traditional schools. However, democratic practices are viewed differently in different circles. What, therefore, might a democratic school look like? Haber emphasises that democracy is not just about participation but, more importantly, about how participation takes place in schools. In advancing this argument, Harber (1995:3) notes, for example, that participation rates were high in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union but this did not make them democracies. This therefore implies that there are important procedural values underlying democracy which education must foster and encourage, including

tolerance of diversity and mutual respect between individuals and groups, evidence of respect in forming opinions, a willingness to be open to the possibility of changing one's mind in the light of such evidence and regarding all people as having equal social and political rights as human beings (Harber, 1995; Moonga, 2016; Nswana, 2021).

Moonga (2016) adds that if schools are to be democratic, they must be organised in such a way as to develop democratic skills and values through experience. Participation in school governance must be meaningful and not merely on paper. Every participant must make a positive contribution to the governance of schools; therefore, the participation of all stakeholders strengthens the leadership role of school administration and increases teamwork among all the interested parties.

Thornberg and Elvstrand (2012:3) conducted a study on democracy and pupil participation in Swedish schools. They established that when pupils were supposed to be treated as democratic agents in school matters, they were instead strongly restricted from participation. Moreover, school administrators rarely think of pupils as participants in school governance to improve school management and pupil performance (Fullan, 1991). Although learner participation has been neglected, research on participative democracy seems to demonstrate a positive impact on schooling and greater effectiveness or efficiency in education (Hooge, 2012:7–8). Moreover, learner participation in school decision-making leads to better decisions because learners know better what type of education they want. In addition, they are more aware of what goes on in the classroom during the teaching and learning process than administrators. Therefore, it is imperative that they be involved in decision-making and in school governance.

In spite of all the difficulties and issues prevailing in SGBs, the researcher is of the opinion that participation of all stakeholders in SGBs is an important ingredient in building democracy in the school system, as well as in the wider society. For this reason, the researcher tends to agree with Bush and Heystek (2003), who argue that despite the evident difficulties in SGBs, these bodies are the best forums for bringing stakeholders together for the benefit of the school and its community. Their argument suggests that SGBs provide the best arena in which the practice of democracy can prevail in schools. To sum up, Carmody (2004) indicates that the prevalence of democracy in schools is depicted in representation and debates that are theoretically and practically open and fair. In addition, and in contrast, as observed by Carmody (2004:61), "relations between teachers and learners remain hierarchical … as yet, it is not clear that anything approaching a liberating critical education has appeared at any level of the education

system in Zambia". Whether or not the SGBs in Zambia enable or disenable the democratization of education at secondary school level, as enshrined in the national policy document, Education our Future *(1996),* remains a conjecture. It is, therefore, the purpose of this study to ascertain whether or not the decentralised school governing boards in Zambia are serving the purpose for which they were created: addressing issues of democracy in schools.

2.9   SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed the literature related to educational decentralization and SGBs. It started with a conceptual definition of educational decentralization followed by a discussion on educational decentralization and democratic school governance as they apply to Zambia and other parts of the world. The roles of SGBs and PTAs were also discussed after which an aspect of SGBs as legal entities was examined. The last section of the review in this chapter addressed the factors influencing the operations of SGBs. The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework utilized to achieve the research purpose.

<center>**CHAPTER THREE**</center>

<center>**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**</center>

3.1   OVERVIEW

In chapter two, the researcher reviewed the literature related to SGBs in order to provide a theoretical foundation for the study. A conceptual framework is required to understand the underlying assumptions of the functioning of SGBs in Zambia. Accordingly, in this chapter, the researcher presents and discusses two concepts that she believes will provide the best guidelines for explaining the functioning of SGBs in Zambia. These concepts were identified during the review of related literature in the previous chapter and include the concept of democratic school governance and the concept of decentralization in education. The researcher selected these concepts, on the assumption that they would offer an eclectic approach to the envisaged functioning of SGBs in secondary schools in Zambia. The underlying assumptions of the two concepts are discussed in the following sections.

3.2   THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The concept of democratic school governance emanates from theories of democracy as they relate to governance. These two concepts are useful for understanding how schools are governed. The concept of governance refers to the use of power and authority in a country, and how power and authority relate at different levels of governance from the state, down to the local community level (Olowu & Soko; 2002, Nswana, 2021). In the education system, governance is concerned with the distribution of power and authority in decision-making processes at all levels of the education system – from the central ministry down to the school or classroom and the local community (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009; Makuba & Mafa, 2013). Education governance is therefore about the relationship between informal and formal management and administrative structures in the school and how the school governance structures can increase community participation in school governance so as to increase a sense of school ownership and in holding the education providers accountable (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009; Lungu, 2015; Singogo, 2017).

Coleman and Earley (2006) contend that schools and colleges have to be coordinated as sectors of society and be liable and accountable for their actions if they have failed to satisfy those with whom they are in a relationship of accountability. This view implies that schools and

colleges as education providers should be held accountable despite the fact that this could be in terms of how education institutions relate to other stakeholders and in terms of the cultural and governance arrangements of society (ibid. 86).

A broad range of literature reveals that the concept of governance has attracted international debates as part of the new policy agenda of the neoliberal framework, as well as the new policy agenda for democratic school governance (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Grant, Lewis & Motala, 2004; Chikoko, 2008; Mubanga, 2008; Mncube, 2010; Dibete & Potokri 2018). The policy agenda advocates that countries must exercise democracy and good governance and that if good governance is to prevail, decision-making power must be spread across the entire organisation. This, in essence, is participatory democracy, which is presumed to lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness (Harber & Muthukrishna 2004, Mncube 2010; Singogo, 2017; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021).

Several writers have linked the theory of democracy to education both nationally and internationally (UNICEF 1995; UNDP 1995; Harber & Davies, 1997; Bowasi, 2007; Chikoko 2008; Mncube, 2008; Dibete & Potokri, 2018; Chombo & Mohabi, 2020). However, different countries perceive democracy differently and the term "democracy" is highly contested (Davies, 2002; Chikoko, 2008; Mncube, 2008; 2010; Dibete & Potokri, 2018). Despite the variance in perceptions, it is common to many countries to use democracy and its associated principles, as well as theories, in governance that is not limited to general state affairs but extends to formal and informal subsectors, departments, ministries and organisations. This perception is evident in the shift of countries such as Tanzania, Zambia, the former Soviet Union (Russia) and the like from socialism to democracy.

Davies (2002) and Mncube (2008) argue that a democratic school governance is concerned with the process of "double democratization", the simultaneous democratization of both education and society. This suggests that without the democratic development of a society, a more democratic system of education cannot be promoted. Conversely, without a more democratic system of education, the development of a democratic society is unlikely to occur. The school itself must be organised along democratic lines, taking into account that democracy is best learnt in a democratic setting in which collective participation is encouraged (Davies 2002; Singogo, 2017).

Starkey (1991) and Carmody (2004) highlight other democratic principles necessary in any democratic dispensation such as freedom of expression, a sense of justice and fairness, and exercising democratic approaches which allow the nurturing of qualities such as participation, innovation, cooperation, autonomy and initiative in learners and staff.

Other scholars are of the view that in a democratic dispensation, all members of an organisation are included equally in the decision-making process and, as such, these decisions would be considered by all as legitimate (Young, 2000; Moonga, 2016; Singogo, 2017; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). By advancing equality in the decision-making process, Young (2000) meant "inclusivity or inclusion", a key principle that supports democracy (ibid.). In his analysis, Young (2000) identifies two types of inclusion, namely, external exclusion – where some individuals are kept out of the forums for debates or decision-making processes – and internal exclusion. The latter refers to exclusions where individuals, although normally included in the group, are excluded by, for example, the interaction privileges, language issues and participation of others; thus they are dismissed as irrelevant.

The issues of participation that have been highlighted above start with the process by which candidates are selected to run the SGBs, the election process itself, including who voted and the degree to which the community and the school itself are represented by candidates and elected members. Other writers view the nature of participation to mean the specific functions and decision-making powers that are assumed by parents, teachers, learners and the education bureaucracy (Mubanga, 2008; Moonga, 2016; Mwase, et al., 2020). In terms of the duties and functions of stakeholders of education, these functions are generally explained in national documents or parts of school constitutions. For example, in the case of Zambia, the document *Principles of Educational Boards, Governance and Management Manual* of 2005 is the reference point for issues that concern school governing board regulations. The scenario highlighted here may not be valid for some Third World countries. For example, available literature in Zambia does not explain whether school governing board members are acting as representatives of their constituents, as representatives of the school as a whole, or in the case of principals, as representatives of the education bureaucracy.

However, in general terms, education governance reforms worldwide have involved attempts to dismantle a centralized education bureaucracy to create devolved systems entailing varying degrees of institutional autonomy and forms of management (Whitty, Power & Helpin, 1998; Carmody, 2004). These reforms involve a complex process that can result in major changes in

the way school systems are organised, as well as in formulating policies, generating revenue and spending funds, managing schools, and developing and delivering the curriculum among other functions (MoE, 2005; Naidoo, 2005). Such governance functions link democratic school governance to the concept of decentralization which will be discussed in the following sections.

3.3   PERSPECTIVES ON DEMOCRACY AND SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Adams and Waghid (2005) perceive democracy as a sphere of social and political life that is constituted by the values of positive liberty (freedom of self-development) and political equality. Their notion of democracy as a sphere of social relationships is linked to the operations of SGBs in which different stakeholders (the head teacher, parents, teachers, learners, and the non-teaching staff) invariably relate to one another socially. Social democracy (they argue) challenges class distinctions and promotes equality of opportunity for all citizens. This understanding of social democracy may arguably include equality in class and freedom from racial, ethnic, religious and gender discrimination.

Pateman (1979:27), however, sees social democracy as emphasising participation on the grounds of equality and liberty. In this respect, it means that people have the right to control their lives so that they may become competent in self-management and self-governance. It is particularly the reference to self-management and self-governance that informs the researcher's understanding of democracy with specific reference to SGBs.

Barber (1994:44, in Sayed (2002) argues that democracy is "about common decision making and action, about doings things in common, in the absence of truth and in the presence of conflict- even ignorance". This statement leads us to conclude that the process of democracy operates within a domain of conflict where common decision-making becomes rare. In this case, consensus is forced into play. The general defining principle of consensus is sharing that which somehow binds. Sharing in this sense refers to the general agreement among members of a community on fundamental issues which affect them all. In Adams and Waghid's (2005) view, consensus revolves around what is commonly referred to as the "rules of the game". Of these, the one paramount rule that must precede all others is one that establishes how conflicts are to be resolved. The claim that in a democracy "we agree to disagree" has its roots in such an understanding of consensus. Disagreement within such rules is disagreement that democracy protects and enhances consensus. The conflict-solving rule is, therefore, a prerequisite for

democracy. It is apparent that consensus is not only an integral part of democracy, but that the system cannot function meaningfully without it (ibid.).

Therefore, democracy needs to create space for criticism and even dissent within the context of consensus or according to the rule of "agree to disagree". In this regard, Sartori (1987:92) claims that "a dynamic processing of consensus based on the principle that whatever claims to be rightful, or true, must hold its own against, and be revitalized by, criticism and dissent". In order for democracy to succeed, it is imperative that its basic qualities or principles not only be kept intact, but also nurtured. Conversely, a violation or negation of its constitutive meanings would be tantamount to undermining the concept of democracy, which could possibly lead to undemocratic practices.

Although it is arguably a very difficult task to determine what all these qualities and principles of democracy are, for the purposes of this study, the researcher explored the concepts of freedom, power and rationality as constitutive features of democracy in a school governing board. In doing so, the researcher refers to democratic principles such as collective decision-making, tolerance, deliberation, responsibility and accountability. The purpose of doing this is directly related to determining whether SGBs necessarily enable the principles of democracy, as espoused by the National Decentralization Act of 2002 in Zambia.

3.3.1   Freedom

The concept of freedom comes from the word "free"; for example if people are free to do something, it means that there is nobody stopping them from doing so. Freedom only prevails if there is a general system of regulation that safeguards against interference from others (Adams & Waghid, 2005). Traditional theories have viewed a democratic form of governance as the condition for human freedom, where this freedom is conceived principally in terms of the liberty of individuals to do as they choose without external constraints (Gould, 1988:31). In terms of this understanding of freedom, democracy is a system of political rules, where freedom is at its utmost and where constraints are allowed to permissible levels. In such a system, social order prevails by mutual consent.

The terms "freedom" and "liberty" are used interchangeably, giving the impression that they are synonymous. In this study, the researcher also uses freedom and liberty as synonyms. Scholars like Birch (1993:96) view liberty as freedom for the individual to do whatever he or she wants to do; in short, liberty is the absence of restraint. A person may be free if he or she

possesses these requirements, or what is referred to as enabling conditions, to make specific choices.

Linking freedom to the concept of enabling conditions in school governance is critical to the functioning of SGBs in Zambia. This is because this form of school governance is relatively new in Zambia as it only appeared in the Third Republic after the implementation of the national decentralization policy in 1995. In this enabling environment, parents, educators and learners are supposed to be free to deliberate and make decisions on issues that affect the education of their children (MoE, 1996). The parents being the majority on the school governing board, they were supposed to adapt to this new policy. The decentralization policy (2005) in Zambia gives all stakeholders in education – the educators, parents and learners – some level of authority to make decisions in the school environment. One cannot presuppose that by serving on a school governing board it will naturally lead to democratic practices. Hence, self-development and preparation of school governing board members is essential to enhance freedom and with it to keep this principle of democracy intact (Adams & Waghid, 2005; Nswana, 2021).

Of particular importance to this understanding of freedom in relation to SGBs, is the notion of a cooperative form of social interaction, access to training and mutual recognition of each other's freedom. Freedom in this sense is linked to the concept of autonomy, where the individual can reach his or her own conclusions. In this form of freedom the stakeholders in a school governing board are aware of roles and regulations and will stick to their principles, (Petens, 1973:123). The same notion of freedom is linked to the concept of transparency. This understanding of freedom in a broad sense is critical to ensure that SGBs function democratically. Conversely, a disregard for freedom in this sense would inevitably lead to less democratic practices among SGBs. Having examined the element of freedom as held by academics, the researcher now focuses on the democratic principle of power, with a view to linking it to the functioning of SGBs in Zambia.

3.3.2   The Concept of Power

Historically, the concept of power is linked to political power. In a democracy, however, using power to control others does not automatically translate to inducing force. In this study, the researcher is more interested in the issue of power, and linking it to how the electorate is being represented on a school governing board in Zambia. The issue of representation in school

governing boards is critical as it relates to power relations. Bobbio (1987:47) claims that there are two types of representation. I quote his theory to clarify his point:

> How does A represent B? A can represent B either in the role of delegate or in the role of "fiduciary". If it is a delegate, A is purely and simply a spokesman, an ambassador, an emissary, a messenger of those he represents, and thus the scope of the mandate is extremely restricted … If, on the other hand, A is in the position of a fiduciary, this confers the power to act with a certain independence in the name of and on behalf of those represented. (Ibid p47).

In the second instance, the elected representative as a fiduciary may use their discretion to interpret the interests of their electorate, meaning that they operate without a binding mandate. Bobbio (1987:47) refers to this as representation without "mandation". Contained in this interpretation is the fact that the representative has to represent and be answerable to their constituency. In terms of SGBs, this seems to be a recipe for conflict, for each representative is almost forced to "deliver" to his or her own constituency. Bearing in mind that different groups are represented on school governing boards, conflict in terms of group interests seems likely. Even though mechanisms for removal because of non-delivery exist, power still remains a means or measure for control. This notion for control, as mentioned earlier, may easily lead to conflict. The issue therefore should not relate to what power is or who has it, but rather how it should be utilized. I will now explain what this might mean in school governance using school governing board members in Zambia.

School-based decision-making has become the lynchpin in school restructuring efforts in Zambia. Membership of school governing boards is predetermined by the National Decentralization Act of 1992. This includes head teachers, teachers, parents, learners and education representatives. By bringing these voices together, power and influence are restricted to individuals who traditionally had a previously curtailed voice in school governance. It should also be evident that each representative grouping would want to enhance their own interests, which could possibly occur at the expense of another group's interests. It is this tactic which leads to the decision-making process becoming an arena of strife, struggle, and conflict.

Johnson and Scollay, (2001:49) identify four leadership power bases:

1. Legitimate power – the legitimate right of the leader usually by virtue of the position that the leader holds to prescribe or control behaviour

2. Coercive power – the leader's control over punishment
3. Expert power – the leader's special knowledge or expertise
4. Referent power – the subordinates' desire to identify with the leader

The school head teacher utilizes one or more of these power categories to influence the "subordinate". The term "subordinate" used in this sense is significant for it assumes degrees of authority. If this is so then one might reasonably presume that the representative groups serving on SGBs are not equal. On a school governing board there are leadership positions i.e. that of the chairperson, deputy chairperson, head teacher, etc.

Sartori (1987:30) explains his understanding of power when he claims that within any group of people as a whole (e.g. the school governing board members), some people count more, while others count for less. In Adams and Waghid's (2005) view, "count" relates to the individual capacities that each governor brings to the school governing system. It would be ridiculous to expect that teachers, learners and parents should all be equal in terms of the skill levels they possess. Rahim in (Johnson & Scollay, 2001:49) established that the utilization of legitimate, expert and referred power bases was positively associated with resistance. Because resistance is a form of conflict, it stands to reason that school governors should be in a position to identify the outcomes of the use of the power bases prior to their utilization (i.e. the outcomes). Once this is done, some forms of conflict can be avoided. If this happens, SGBs would operate in a peaceful environment.

It should, however, be noted that head teachers on a school governing board, by virtue of their position of "leadership power", are not the only source of influence, but that all governing board members should at least have the potential to influence the decision-making process. Each of the representatives constituting the school governing board should ideally bring their own basis for influencing decisions. This is the ideal in democratic school governance.

Powers also come with responsibility. In this regard, Morron (1989:3) posits that "a person can be held neither accountable nor responsible for something which is not under his or her control". Conversely, a person cannot be held responsible for something over which he or she has no power or influence (Adams & Waghid, 2005:9).

The National Decentralization Act (2002) classifies power in terms of how school governing boards in Zambia should function. This was later explained in guidelines that govern school governing boards at school level. I refer to two examples to show that the responsibility

mechanism is directly linked to power. Firstly, every school governing board must operate within the confines of the law or constitution, thus limiting its sphere of influence and power. Secondly, school governing board members or governors are legally recognised as legal entities to participate in school governance. What this means is that they can be sued. At the same time, school governing board members are responsible and answerable to their electorates. This form of "built in" checks and balances prevents the misuse of power and could act as a deterrent to school governing board members. In this sense it discourages irresponsible representation.

In summing up this section, it is worth acknowledging that SGBs bring together people from different economic, ethnic, political, religious and social backgrounds. The boards are further fragmented into what Adams and Waghid (2005) call pressure groups (the parents, educators and learners), each advancing their own interests. The significance of this is that the school is an arena for serious decision-making processes. In view of this, dialogue is the order of the day in democratic school governance. This should involve all school governing board members. Given the fragmented nature of school governing board members in terms of composition, dialogue as an integral principle of democracy seems a viable option. In fact, failure to invoke this democratic principle of dialogue might enhance conflict, which could ultimately result in undemocratic practices. This could in turn create a situation which might undermine the very reason for the existence of school governing boards.

3.4   CONCEPTUALIZATION OF DECENTRALIZATION

Multiple reasons are cited in the literature as the basis for decentralization in Third World countries including Zambia. Rondinelli and Cheema (1993) argue that the 1970s and '80s saw a greater emphasis on decentralization for three reasons. Firstly, developing countries were dissatisfied with the results of centralized planning and administration. Secondly, international development priorities changed during the 1970s away from economic growth to equitable distribution, improved productivity and improved income for all segments of society. Thirdly, by the end of the 1970s, most developing countries were facing economic and fiscal problems with the onset of the rising price of oil, decreasing levels of exports and reduced financial assistance. These factors forced countries to find ways to use resources more effectively (Bowasi, 2007; Singogo, 2017; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). Decentralization appeared a possible solution to these fiscal problems (Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983:6–7; Carmody, 2004; Dibete & Potokri, 2018); thus developing countries in Africa pursued decentralization.

Increased administrative efficiency is another reason cited for decentralization (Rondinelli, Nellis & Cheema, 1993; Carmody, 2004; Simuyaba & Nswana, 2021). In relation to this, decentralization was preferred since "monopoly control over planning and resource was considered to be inefficient (Rondinelli 1981:135). Proponents of decentralization argue further that it promotes accountability and reduces corruption in government.

Decentralization has also been supported on the grounds of allocative efficiency; that is, decisions are more relevant to local needs and in tune with local knowledge and preferences (Hayek 1945, Carmody, 2004; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2019), and thus more likely to be effective. Ribot (2002) contends that in a decentralized system, local coordination and decision-making reduces transaction costs, and that decentralized decision-making is quicker and more efficient. Local actors allocate resources more efficiently as they benefit from cost reductions (Conyers, 2000:8; World Bank, 2000:18; Ribot, 2002:9).

The literature on decentralization further asserts that competition between public agencies, of which schools and educational institutions are examples, reduces bureaucratic waste (Niskanen, 1971). This, in turn, allows for regional difference in preferences (Tiebout, 1961), serves as a discovery procedure (Hayek, 1968), and improves local democracy and public accountability through competition between politicians (Tiebout, 1961). Thus, local governments are more likely to be responsive to the preferences of their constituents and to tailor services accordingly (Salmon 1987; Breton, 1996; Carmody, 2004; Mncube, 2008).

The conditions highlighted above may not be valid for some developing countries. For example, Ribot (2002) argues that the claim that decentralization leads to efficiency in the allocation of resources may not be valid in that matching of the supply and demand of local public goods in developing countries with weak democratic conditions may not happen. In Zambia, tribal and regional politics, rural–urban differences in terms of resource allocation and the zeal for personal wealth accumulation may inhibit politicians from fostering the provision of public goods under patron–client relationships (Silanda 1997; Nswana 2021). Thus, conditions of free, efficient markets for public goods, votes and information (for democracy to work) may not be valid assumptions in some instances.

Decentralization could improve "procedural equity" because disadvantaged populations may have recourse in a decentralized system. However, there is little evidence that decentralization is instituting procedures and/or that it is an instrument for representative, accountable and

empowered forms of governance (Ribot, 2002). Decentralization may lead to distributional equity through intra-jurisdictional distribution of government services (ibid. 78). In addition, Ribot (2002) asserts that there is limited evidence of this in Africa when he stresses the impact probability of decentralization on equity among districts. However, this might depend on the willingness of the central government to shape equity through the redistribution of educational and other services across grassroots and local stakeholders.

An overriding motivation for decentralization is to reduce public expenditure, and thus educational decentralization is often part of the broader structural adjustment programmes supported by international development institutions (Malik, 2007; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). This support is based on the assumption that the central government's financial burden can be reduced by decentralization: it will force increased efficiency in local expenditure and generate local revenues more efficiently by local governments (Conyers, 2000; Carmody, 2004; Malik, 2007; Dibete & Potokri, 2018). However, austerity programmes and fiscal crises may undermine decentralization (Ribot, 2002:15; Dibete & Potokri, 2018). Nevertheless, they are assumed to benefit poverty alleviation, which may be achieved by empowering and serving the poor. However, their responsiveness to the poor is cited as rare and debatable (Ribot, 2002; Malik, 2007). In this regard, the World Bank (1997) and Bardhan and Mookherjee (2000) note a leakage of funds in systems without well-functioning democratic mechanisms for participation. On account of this, the chances of increased "local capture" of decision-making systems by local elite is possible as decisions may reflect their private preferences (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Malik, 2007).

Improved participation by local stakeholders is another argument for decentralization (Fiske & Ladd, 2000; Carmody, 2004; Van Wyk, 2004; Watson, 2005; Chikoko, 2008; Mncube, 2008; 2009; Nswana, 2021). Representation of diverse groups through local governments is one of the goals of democratic decentralization. This for me is of paramount interest, knowing that the scope of this prospective study is limited to the grassroots or local setting and likely comprises diverse groups. While this remains, I am aware that the successful implementation of decentralization requires the transfer of resources to local government and increased public participation at a local level. Therefore, my view in relation to secondary schools, mainly in rural areas, in the Southern Province of Zambia, aligns with the views of these authors. To this end, the view of Malik (2007) that decentralization limits political instability that arises from domestic interest groups' demands for greater power becomes relevant for consideration. For

this reason, the use of decentralization to strengthen or create legitimacy for a regime (ibid. 15), as well as democracy, is logical.

3.5 SUMMARY

The present chapter has contributed by identifying the key concepts that guide the functioning of SGBs. The main thrust of the chapter was to help in locating appropriate conceptual perspectives for the democratic functioning of SGBs in Zambia in order to determine whether or not they enable democracy. While many concepts could be considered for this study, the selected concepts were found to be useful and consistent with the objectives of the study. This is because they help to understand why decentralization and democratic principles are necessary in SGBs. In the next chapter, the researcher examines the research methodology that was used in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1   OVERVIEW

The previous chapter presented a review of available research works related to the current study. It examined the conceptual definition of decentralization followed by a discussion on educational decentralization and democratic school governance as they apply to Zambia and other parts of the world. The roles of school governing bodies (SGBs) and PTAs were also discussed, after which the aspect of SGBs as legal entities was examined. The last section of the reviewed literature addressed the factors influencing the operations of SGBs. It was important to review these studies in order to place the present study into context with the existing body of knowledge and set it apart from others conducted already.

The present chapter details the methodology utilized in achieving the research purpose. First, based on the preceding literature review, the research approaches and objectives are presented. Next, based on the research objectives, the case study background is provided to explain the choice of site for the research along with some critical issues relevant to this project. Then, the options for data collection and sampling methods are examined followed by the development and execution of the chosen data collection methods. Finally, the administration of the empirical research is explained, the analytical techniques are touched on and issues related to research ethics are stated.

4.2   RESEARCH DESIGN AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING

4.2.1   Research Design and Research Paradigm(s)

A paradigm is a "worldview" or a set of assumptions about how things work (Rossman & Rolis, in Hardina, 2008). In other words, a paradigm presents a shared understanding of reality. Clarke (1999) defined a research paradigm as that which guides the process of inquiry. Clarke, further explains it as that which forms the basis for the practice of science by directing the researcher towards appropriate research methods and methodologies, depending on the nature of the phenomenon being investigated (ibid. 89). It is worth noting here that qualitative and quantitative researchers hold different assumptions about how research should be conducted

and the role of the researcher. An understanding of the link between the research paradigms and research methods is therefore necessary and is given below.

Rossman and Rolis (2008) talk about two main research paradigms, namely positivism and interpretivism. On the one hand, Rossman and Rolis (2008) describe positivism as a research paradigm which is usually associated with quantitative research in that it involved hypothesis testing in order to obtain "objective truth". In applying this paradigm, a researcher may also use a positivist research paradigm to "predict" what may happen at a future date. Related to the latter paradigm is critical realism which, according to Hardina (2008), is a subtype of positivism which incorporates some value assumptions on the part of the researcher. On the other hand, Rossman and Rolis (2008) describe interpretivism as a research paradigm associated with qualitative research that is used to obtain an understanding of the world from an individual perspective. Critical humanism is a subtype of the interpretivist paradigm and in this approach, the researcher involves people for study within the research process and the data obtained are used for social change.

As the researcher for this particular study, I am positioned within the interpretive/constructivist research paradigm in that my study is mainly exploratory in nature. Hardina (2008) contends that researchers whose studies are exploratory in nature obtain data mainly through observation, interviews and content analysis. I fit very well within this research paradigm in that these are the three research tools that I identified for my data collection process.

For this study, I am located within a qualitative paradigm but will employ three forms of research tools for triangulation purposes. For Cohen and Manion (1980), there is no absolute disparity between qualitative and quantitative research; instead there is a continuum between the two approaches. This, therefore, means that it is possible to use both approaches at the same time, if required; however, the researcher needs to be clear on which paradigm is being used and make claims appropriately and accordingly.

Qualitative researchers believe that the task of a qualitative researcher is to acquire insight and develop understanding by getting close to the data in order to understand participants' points of view and to obtain social knowledge (Clarke, 1999). This implies that it is the researcher's responsibility to make sense of the data provided by participants. In the light of the above, I employed observation, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and content analysis research methods in order to obtain rich data for this qualitative study.

The research paradigm I employed was primarily interpretive, but also participative. The reason why the two designs were combined is because research questions used for this study were exploratory and descriptive in nature. This qualitative method enabled me to explore the perspectives of the actors, in this case the school governors.

4.2.2   Qualitative Research Approaches

Qualitative and quantitative research approaches are contested concepts. Researchers like Bryman (2008); Denzin and Lincoln (2008) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) maintain that quantitative research as a research strategy amounts to the quantification of numbers and/or the generalization of statistical data; it views the world as an objective reality, it is based on the positivist and deductive schools of thought, and is value free and structured. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is a research strategy that relates to a tradition of words rather than numbers and that the world is subjective reality, and in order to understand the world you have to explore people's lives, experiences and everyday behaviour. Such research is value laden, is flexible and allows the researcher to be innovative as they try to understand the world of the subjects under study (Franekel & Wallen, 2008; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

Bryman (2001:208) observes that qualitative research is a research strategy that emphasises words rather than quantification as it explores the phenomena of the study, and that as a research strategy it is inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist; unlike quantitative research which is deductive and emphasises quantification and/or a statistical data collection approach. For Franekel and Wallen (2008), qualitative research is a research strategy that investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials with a greater emphasis on obtaining holistic and quality information that describes the details of what goes on in a particular activity or situation in the world of the object under study, and in the view of the informant. Although there are many definitions of qualitative research (Bogden & Biklen, 1992; Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Nswana, 2021), this study will adopt the following definition: qualitative research is a research strategy that emphasises words rather than statistical data in obtaining holistic and quality information from the informant's point of view (Franekel & Wallen, 2008), as knowledge is a product of social interactions.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) argue that qualitative research goes beyond mechanical rules, resting on the interviewer's personality and skills of judgement for the quality of the data

produced. Accordingly, it depends on the quality of the interviewers, their skills and their knowledge of the subject (ibid. 82). It is further, argued that:

> Knowledge in humanities cannot be reduced to a method, for we can only know the social and historical world through understanding and interpretation, which ultimately rest on pre-understandings and pre-judges that cannot be codified into methodological rules (Gadamer, 1975 cited in Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:83).

The argument here is that, in qualitative research, there are no specific rules or what are called mechanical rules such as those used for the survey research, where you have a set theory to test and to prove whether it is right or wrong. In qualitative research the researcher is works among the people he or she is researching and has no specific theory to apply, but rather has to generate theory. In qualitative research there is no right or wrong; as Silverman (2000) states "techniques are not true or false" (ibid. 79). Based on this argument, this study applied qualitative research methods.

To elaborate, this research inquiry did not focus on a social survey which concerns statistics. The reasons for the researcher's choice of a qualitative research method/approach was based on the fact that qualitative research is value laden and seeks answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. Accordingly, this research inquiry focused on exploring people's lives as they pertain to SGBs and their everyday behaviour. Such a method is flexible and it allows the researcher to be innovative; it is inductive as theory is generated from the findings and it places the researcher into the social setting to experience the life-world of the subjects under study. In addition, the researcher observes what is happening and explores the meaning of the lived world. This enables the researcher to interpret the informants' viewpoint subjectively. Having made a decision on the choice of qualitative research for this study the next thing the researcher did in the field was to identify the mode of study.

4.2.3 Case Study

This study adopted a case study design. A case study is defined as "a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyse or evaluate specific phenomenon or instance" (Anderson, 1998:152). Its focus is to dig out the characteristics of a particular entity. Its distinguishable attributes include focus on a single unit, in-depth description of phenomenon, anchored on real life scenarios and uses multiple data collection methods. In Stake (2000)'s

view, a case study is a common framework for conduction qualitative research. Yin (2003) offered a more detailed and technical definition of case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are clearly evident.

Heartley (2004) states that case study research consists of a detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time; of phenomenon, within their context with the aim to provide an analysis of the context and process which illuminate the theoretical issues being studied. The purpose of using a case study is to get in-depth details as much as possible about the event, the person or the process. Data collected when systematically analysed, it yields a valuable understanding and explanation of a process. Inquiries that require the understanding of certain phenomenon and events, especially when processes are involved benefit more from using the qualitative research methods in general and the case study in particular to arrive at results that are exhaustive, rich in depth and informative.

The case study therefore does a holistic inquiry by looking at the process or practice, the interaction for a more generic understanding of the case under study. According to Yin (2003) the distinctive need for case studies arises out the desire to understand complex social phenomena for the reason that the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristic of real life events. In this case, real life events refers to the operations of the SGBs. In Yin (2003)'s description, the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more valuables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulation fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

On the basis of the above definitions and analysis, the researcher chose a case study design as it would allow an in-depth study of the case in its natural setting. The study was conducted in the Southern Province of Zambia.

This study, which was mainly qualitative in nature, adopted an eclectic approach to data collection. In this regard, four instruments were considered for data collection; namely, unstructured interview guides, FGD guides, document review and observation. These instruments were used to collect data in order to answer the four major research questions. The FGD and the interview guides were used to obtain background information and to answer

questions raised on each objective of the study. Observation schedules were arranged for triangulation purposes to supplement the information given in the reviewed documents as well as in the interviews on the operations of the SGBs.

4.3 POPULATION, PARTICIPANT SELECTION AND SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS

4.3.1 Target Population

For the purposes of this study, the selected participants were SGB members. The target population therefore, comprised all secondary school governing board members in the Southern Province of Zambia. These were selected by virtue of their status as school governing board members in the sampled secondary schools. The characteristic features of this kind of sampling are that it is usually more convenient and economical whilst allowing the researcher to hand pick the sample, based on his/her knowledge of the area or phenomenon being studied. According to Brink (1996), this sampling uses the judgement of the researcher to select those subjects who, in the researcher's view, know the most about the phenomenon and who are able to articulate and explain the nuances to the researcher.

4.3.2 Participant Selection and Sampling procedures

In a qualitative research the notion of sampling is determined by the type of information the researcher wishes to obtain and which category of people and documents or which area(s) would be most suited to obtain it from. According to Schreiber and Asner-self (2011) the size of the sample is not an important issue. It is the richness in unearthing clearer views of a particular situation or process which is considered more than the numbers. Schreiber and Asner-self (2011) further contend that in a qualitative research the focus is on a sample that gives the best and most in-depth information that the researcher seeks and hence a careful selection of where information is best gotten often is considered.

When identifying and selecting participants, a number of factors had to be considered; to begin with, my study focus was on investigating whether or not SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in Zambian public secondary schools. Bearing in mind that the researcher was operating in a qualitative research paradigm, she adopted a case study design. In line with this design, two secondary schools were selected in the Southern Province of Zambia using expert purposive sampling procedure. This technique, according to Mtica (2008) and, is suitable for

use in qualitative investigations because it considers mainly the characteristics of the individuals to be used. Hence, what mattered most when selecting the participants was their ability to provide information on the subject of study.

With that in mind, the sampling of participants by the researcher considered issues that directly involved school leaders at secondary school level, as well as other stakeholders who take a keen interest in education by participating in the school governing boards in Zambia. The *Principles of Education Boards* (2002) document gave the researcher some insights into who actually participates on the school governing board. Going by what obtains in this document, the sample for the case studies in this study was made up of head teachers, learner governors, teacher governors, parent governors, district education officials, local councillors, teacher union officials and religious representatives. These fell into three categories (educator governors, parent governors and learner governors).

Since purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator (myself) wants to discover, understand and gain insights from the participants, the researcher selected a sample from which most (knowledge) could be learnt. I justify my selection criteria based on Cohen and his colleagues' words that "purposive sampling means the researcher hand picks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of his/her judgement of their typicality" (Cohen et al., 2000:103). I thus believe that the selected sample gives a good representation of participants in my case study design.

The characteristics of individuals are used as the basis for the selection of the research participants. Merriam (1998) suggests that "purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore, must select a sample from which most can be learned' (ibid. 61). In Cohen et al.'s (2000:103) view, purposive sampling means that the "researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of his/her judgment of their typicality".

4.3.3   Sample Size

The sample comprised school governors who included the following:

The head teacher: The head teacher of each sampled school in the Southern Province was interviewed, hence two head teachers in total.

Learner governors: A focus group of four Grade 12 learners (approximately 18 years old and above) was used in each school for each sample. These learners, as members of the SGBs, were interviewed together with some members of the prefect body in the sampled schools. In total, four learner governors in each school were interviewed from two schools in Southern Province, hence a total of eight learners in this category.

Teacher governors: A sample of two teachers per school who serve on various committees (finance and discipline) of the SGBs were interviewed. In total, four teachers were interviewed in the province.

Parent school governors: Two SGB parent representatives (and the PTA chairperson for each school) were interviewed. In total four parents were interviewed in the province.

District resident representative: Two members who were residents of the two districts and formed part of the SGB of each school were interviewed. In total there were two district resident representatives interviewed in this province.

District education board official/MoE representative: Two MoE representatives for each district form part of the SGB, were interviewed. In total there were two district education board officials, that is, one district education official from each participating school was chosen by virtue of their position as nominated members of each SGB of this study.

Teacher union representatives: One union representative per school who serve on each SGB was interviewed, giving a total of two who were interviewed in this province.

Church representative: One church member chosen by the PTA during PTA meetings who forms part of the SGB was interviewed. In total, two church representatives were interviewed in this province.

Local councillor: one local councillor chosen by the PTA during PTA meetings as part of the SGB was interviewed for each school. In total, two local councillors were interviewed in this province.

The above sampled figures meant that in total 26 interviewees were included. Relevant interview schedules were arranged for each category of participants while taking care of issues of consistency.

4.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION TOOL

4.4.1 Interviews

This study focused on the experiences, perceptions, interpretations and insights of the school governors, which is the main reason for focusing on qualitative approaches. Interviews were used to "get under the skin" of the organisations or individuals concerned. A qualitative approach using unstructured interviews was applied since perceptions and opinions were sought. Unstructured interviews were conducted to gather the views and perceptions of participants on whether SGBs can be used as tools for addressing issues of democracy in Zambian secondary schools. Arskey and Knight (1999:33) suggest that unstructured interviews are a way of uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin people's lives, routines, behaviours and feelings. Mertens (1998) explains that interviews allow the intimate, repeated and prolonged involvement of the researcher and the participant, which enables the researcher to get to the root of what is being investigated.

The interviews followed unstructured schedule and included the following lines of questioning: demographic information about the school; governance structure of the school; composition of SGBs; SGB meetings; roles of school governors, school fees; entertainment; admission policy; governance and professional management of the school. Interviews for adult governors were scheduled for a duration of one hour.

4.4.2 Observations

Observations as a research tool were used to determine what was going on in the school settings in terms of SGBs and to observe the kind of interaction that goes on when the governing body meets. The SGBs of the two sampled schools in the province were observed twice in six months; that is, once per term, making a total of four observations. When doing observations, I listened to what participants said, watched what they did and took extensive notes. The following was included in the note-taking: what was said; who chaired the meeting; the details of who was speaking; the time taken by each participant; how long the conversation took; the seating plan of the members in the meeting; the speaking turns; and the contribution by each member of the SGB. Further, the researcher observed the following: participation by each stakeholder member; representation of stakeholders in such meetings; and the prevalence of issues of democracy in such meetings (observing whether the following issues were taken into

consideration: gender, religion, equality, inclusiveness, rights of learners and teachers, freedom of expression, equity, sexual orientation, authoritarian or democratic principles, etc).

In addition, I observed the extent to which parents and learners participated in meetings. Robson (2002), Mncube (2009) and Ngwira and Potokri (2019) contend that by using observation, a researcher gets real-life experience in the real world. The researcher was, however, fully aware of problems with regard to observations. For example, the observer may possibly affect the situation being observed, there could be artificiality in the actions of those observed and it is time-consuming (Patton, 2002). In order to deal with these observation issues, strict measures were employed to ensure that the situation remained as natural as possible. Additionally, during observations time was saved by paying attention only to those issues related to school governance. The researcher also considered the protection of research subjects as paramount by not doing covert observation. While certain problems with observation may have been noted, the advantages of observation far outweighed the disadvantages. Observation has a great advantage in the sense that it is a direct technique, and the researcher is not required to speak directly to participants, but rather listens to what they say and watches what they do (Robson, 2002; Patton, 2002; Mncube, 2008). In a nutshell, observation uses what can be referred to as an "ear–eye technique".

4.4.3   Focus Group Discussions

Different researchers define FGDs in different ways. According to Parasuraman (2004:197), a focus group "is a research technique that relies on an objective discussion with a leader or moderator who introduces a topic to a group of respondents and directs their discussion of that topic in a non-structured and natural fashion". In Potokri's (2011:121) view, a focus group interview provides a basis for interpreting statistically significant findings from a parallel qualitative study. A focus group is the most important qualitative research procedure and can be applied in almost any situation requiring some preliminary insights (i.e. exploratory research).

In focus groups people are interviewed for at least two hours in an informal and relaxed manner (Parasuraman, 2004; Nswana, 2021). In general, a focus group includes up to eight to twelve people or more, lasts from one to three hours and takes place in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. In this study, the researcher established rapport with the participants, explored their beliefs, feelings, ideas, attitudes and insights regarding the operations of SGBs and kept

the discussion moving forward. A well-conducted focus group can generate more important insights than a series of one-to-one depth interviews, as a comment made by one participant may trigger a stream of new comments from other group members. In this study, FGDs helped to develop an understanding of the head teacher governors', teacher governors', parent governors' and student governors' attitudes to the operations of SGBs. Their perceptions and were additionally helpful in data analysis.

In this particular research, centred on SGBs, the use of focus groups when dealing with learner governors was helpful in generating responses regarding the democratization of SGBs in the Southern Province of Zambia. However, Parasuraman (2004) and Malhotra and Birks (2000) warn about the complexities involved when organising a FGD. For example, organising a focus group when dealing with SGBs with members with diverse professions and different home settings is difficult. At the same time, it would be difficult to set a convenient schedule for eight to 12 or more adult school governors for any particular sampled school, owing to the nature of their routine work and their diverse schedules. Additionally, focus groups are difficult to moderate and the unstructured nature of the responses makes coding, analysis and interpretation difficult (Malhotra & Birks, 2000). Being aware of the complexities involved when dealing with a focus group, as well as adult governors in a secondary school set-up, the researcher considered using this method to deal with learner governors. This method helped the researcher develop an understanding of the learner governors' attitudes and beliefs regarding the operations of SGBs in the sampled schools. Focus groups interviews for each school lasted for one and half hours. The management team from the two sampled schools provided us with the venues from which the focus group discussions were held. In each case, a free classroom was used to conduct the FGD interviews. The learner governors were few and hence free to express themselves in their learning environment.

4.4.4   Document Review

Data collected mainly by others are known as secondary data and that which are collected by researchers in person are known as primary data. Secondary data can be obtained from various sources, such as previous research findings, official statistics, statutory instruments, policy documents and brochures. Examining appropriate secondary data is a fast and inexpensive way of conducting exploratory research that can generate valuable insights (Parasuraman, 2004:68).

Both secondary and primary data were collected for use in this research. Secondary data were obtained from various sources such as previous research findings, minutes of SGBs and government documents. In the collection of secondary data a number of research studies that focus on school governance and the democratization of education were consulted. To this end, an in-depth literature review was carried out alongside the analysis of documents such as education policy documents, statutory instruments, previous research findings, official statistics, minutes of SGBs in the sampled schools and brochures.

Table 4.1: Methods for Answering Research Questions

Question	Methodology/Data Collection Instrument
1. How do SGBs enable or disenable democracy in secondary schools in Zambia?	Observations, unstructured interviews and FGDs
2. To what extent do SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in Zambian secondary schools?	FGDs, unstructured interviews, observations, and document study
3. How are school governing board members prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools?	Observations, unstructured interviews and FGDs
4. In what ways can SGBs be used to promote democracy in the wider Zambian society?	Interview guides and FGDs

Source: Field data, 2018

4.5   INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

4.5.1   Document Analysis

4.5.1.1   Type(s) of Document

Secondary data were obtained from various sources such as previous research findings, minutes of SGB meetings and government documents. In the collection of secondary data a number of research studies that focus on school governance and the democratization of education were consulted. To this end, the researcher conducted an in-depth literature review as well as

analysing documents such as education policy documents, statutory instruments, previous research findings, official statistics and brochures.

The statutory instruments on education boards in Zambia were obtained from the Zambian government printing agency, commonly referred to as the government stores, at a small cost. Previous research findings on SGBs were available in both hard copy (in local libraries) and soft copy (online and from the Unisa library). Official statistics and brochures on decentralization in Zambia were obtained from the MoE headquarters, in Lusaka and from the case study schools. In addition, the minutes of previous meetings of school governing boards and other structures were obtained from the selected schools.

4.5.1.2 Interviews

Unstructured, face-to-face interview technique was the main means used to collect data for this study. The unstructured interview procedure was chosen because this technique allowed the researcher to pose open-ended questions. According to other researchers (Seidman, 1991; Naidoo et al., 2015; Simuyaba & Kapembwa, 2021), in-depth, unstructured interviews are generally regarded as appropriate tools with which to gain entry to the participants' life-world, and to make meaning of that world through dialogue. Furthermore, the researcher focused on semi-structured interviews to allow participants to elaborate freely; probing was also used to guide them to open up about their experiences and feelings. Brink (1996:158) supports this procedure because of its usefulness in encouraging open communication as well as remaining with the concrete. In Dibete and Potokri's (2018) view, in-depth interviews are a feature for both qualitative research and case study research design and hence the researcher's choice to adopt them.

The 60-minute interviews were spread over eight weeks (four weeks per district) and were tape-recorded and transcribed. Ten members of the school governing board were interviewed from each school; i.e. school head teachers (2), teachers (2), district education board official/MoE representative (2), teacher union representatives (2) and parent representatives who are also chairpersons of the governing boards, and the chairpersons of the PTAs (two for each case). These were selected because of their ability to provide detailed information on the subject. The first interview sessions explored issues in detail and followed the semi-structured interview schedules. They included the following areas of questioning: demographic information about the school; governance structure of the school; composition of SGBs; SGB

meetings; roles of school governors; school fees; entertainment; admission policy; democracy/governance issues and professional management of the school. Each interview lasted a maximum of an hour and a half.

- Follow-up interviews

Follow-up interviews were done using cellphone conversations. These were meant to seek clarity on issues that were not clear during fieldwork. Interview question(s) have been attached as Appendix: O

4.5.1.3   Observation: Participant Observation

In order to yield detailed first-hand descriptions of the actual functioning of the school governing boards, the researcher employed an observation schedule for each school in the sample. Direct observations contributed profoundly to qualitative data, as certain information such as that which had to do with the characteristics of the school governing boards under study were better obtained through observations. This also allowed the researcher to cross-check the information gathered from the three other data gathering methods mentioned above.

Observations as a research tool were used to determine what goes on in school settings in terms of school governing board meetings. The researcher used this method to observe the kind of interaction that goes on when the governing board members meet. Each school governing board of the two sampled schools in the province was observed twice in six months; that is, once a term, making a total of four observations in the province. When doing observations the researcher listened to what the participants were saying and watched what they were doing and took extensive notes. The notes taken included what was said; who chaired the meeting; the details of who was speaking; the time taken by each participant; how long the conversation took; the seating plan of the members in the meeting; the speaking turns; and the contribution made by each member of the school governing board.

Further, the researcher observed the following: participation by each stakeholder member; representation of stakeholders in such meetings; prevalence of issues of democracy in such meetings (observing whether the following issues were taken into consideration: gender, religion, equality, inclusiveness, rights of learners and teachers, freedom of expression, equity, sexual orientation, authoritarian or democratic principles, etc.). In addition, the researcher observed the extent to which parents and learners participated in meetings. By observing these

meetings the researcher wanted to become aware of the real-life experience of the school governing board meeting in the real world. This view is supported by earlier researchers who used this method (Bush, 2017; Ngwira & Potokri, 2019)

The researcher was, however, fully aware of problems with regard to observations. For example, as an observer the researcher may firstly have possibly affected the situation being observed; secondly, there could have been artificiality in the actions of those observed; and thirdly, this method was time-consuming (Patton, 2002). In order to deal with the above issues that go with observations, strict measures were employed to ensure that the situation remained as natural as possible. Additionally, time was saved by paying particular attention to only issues relates to school governance during the observation. The researcher also considered the protection of research participants as paramount by not doing covert observation. While the problems with observation were noted, their advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Observation has one great advantage in the sense that it is a direct technique, and the researcher is not required to ask people questions, but rather listens to what participants say and watches what they do (Robson, 2002; Patton, 2002; Ngwira & Potokri, 2019). In a nutshell, observation uses what can be referred to as an "ear–eye" technique (Mncube, 2008). The observation checklist is attached as Appendix Q.

4.5.1.4   Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

An FGD is a type of interview in which more than one person is involved (Bryman, 2008). In this particular study, FGDs were conducted with pupils so as to obtain their views on their schools' SGBs in relation to democracy as well as their parents' involvement in their school governance. While Wellington (2000) recommends a small group of six to ten participants per session, this study considered a smaller number of four pupils per session for the purpose of capturing the views of learner governors who sit on the school governing board and their deputies. The study ultimately fulfilled its aim of achieving a complete picture of the climate obtaining in the sampled SGBs.

Two sessions were arranged in two different schools and each session lasted about one and a half hours. During these sessions, the researcher ensured that she formed a good rapport with the participants before commencing the discussions. In each of the sampled schools, the FGDs were held in the afternoons after classes. Throughout the discussions, the participants who were Grade 12 pupils, shared their thoughts freely without feeling intimidated or ashamed. It was

assumed that these secondary school final year students (the head boy and head girl and their deputies) would have been at their schools longer and were mature enough to fully understand the operations of SGBs. The focus group questions are attached as Appendix O.

4.6   SELECTION OF SCHOOLS

In this study, two high schools were purposely selected on the basis that they resembled other government secondary schools in the province. Both schools were coeducation secondary school and had other common characteristics which included

- being relatively old schools, that is, began operating in the 1970s and earlier
- being originally boys' schools only and later changed to co-education schools
- having limited resources (few lab facilities and other necessary school equipment)
- learners coming from nearby basic schools and other schools from across the province at provincial selection
- most parents being of lower socioeconomic background as they were either subsistence farmers or small-scale traders in the urban area
- having some learners who were unable to pay the full school fees.

The selected schools were both established after Zambia's independence between 1970 and 1974 as single sex secondary schools. Prior to the study, the researcher visited the schools to make appointments in advance for interviews with head teachers, educationists, learners and parents who were members of the school governing boards. It was easy to network with the schools because prior to that visit, the researcher visited the schools as a lecturer when monitoring students who had gone there for teaching practice experience. Some of these students had since become teachers in those schools and were hence able to assist in identifying school governors who were required to participate in the study. Further, some of the teachers who served in the governing boards cooperated and showed willingness to participate in the study by answering the questions.

4.6.1   Arrival on First Visit to the Schools in the Southern Province, Zambia.

On the first visit to the schools, the head teachers introduced the staff and school governing board members of the respective schools to the researcher, and she was thereafter able to explain the purpose of the research to them. The conditions for the interview were negotiated and it was agreed that interviews would be conducted early in the morning before

exams/classes started and in the afternoon after class sessions. Membership of school governing boards ranged between 14 and 16 members, comprising the representation of parents, educators and learners. Among the educator category, each school had at least two teachers serving as teacher representatives. One category of teachers represented the union and were selected by the union representatives at school level. All the names and positions of the school governing board members were made available to the researcher and both the parent component and the educator component of the school governors agreed to take part in the interviews. Similarly, all the learner governors agreed to participate in the FGD. Prior to leaving the schools, a programme for conducting the interviews was worked out and suitable dates for each school were agreed.

4.7   DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOLS

The schools selected for the research were labelled School A and School B. School A was a township school while School B was a rural school. Pseudonyms were chosen for the schools to ensure anonymity. The two schools were comparable in that they were both public coeducation secondary schools. Additionally, they began their operations as boys schools only and were later transformed into co-education secondary boarding schools.

Table 4 2: Demographic Characteristics of Selected Schools

S#	Characteristic	School A	School B
1.	Location	Urban	Rural
2.	No. of learners	829	1100
3.	No. of teachers	67	57
4.	No. of classrooms	19	21
5.	Principal has office	Yes	Yes
6.	No. of HODs	7	7
7.	No. of auxiliary staff	21	17
8.	Availability of boarding facility	Yes	Yes
9.	Availability of Electricity	Yes	Yes
10.	Availability of photocopier	Yes	Yes
11.	Availability of library	Yes	Yes
12.	Availability of computers	Yes	Yes
13.	Availability of tuckshop	Yes	No

14.	No of SGB members	15	14
15.	Availability of laboratory	Yes	Yes
16.	Availability of computer room	Yes	Yes
17.	Established as a secondary school	1970	1974

4.8   SCHOOL A: CONTEXTUAL DETAILS

The school is located on a former farm about two kilometres from town. It began operating in 1962 when Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) was still under British colonial rule and it celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2012. It began as an induction class of Zambian "Black" pupils (School A profile, 2017). Because of the colour bar at that time, there were other separate schools located in town. Notable among them was a school for Asians (mainly Indians) and separate schools for Britons, Dutch and "Coloureds" in a strictly segregated pattern of location (School A profile, 2017). At that stage, the school had a boarding unit comprising a kitchen and a dormitory. From 1964 onwards, that is, after Zambia gained political independence from the British, the construction of major infrastructure and the erection of key installations of the school plant including boreholes, staff houses, dormitories, a thermal power system and sewer ponds were affected under the auspices of the MoE of the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ).

In 1970, the school transformed from a standards system of education to forms, thereby running from Form one to Form five. In 1995, it gained its co-education status with boys as boarders while girls maintained day school status. The girls were incorporated in boarding for the first time in the school in 2000.

The school provides boarding facilities for more than 500 learners and at the time of carrying out the fieldwork in 2017, it had a total enrolment of 829 learners, 659 of which were boys and 170 were girls. The pupils are drawn from the local community around the school which consists of both working and middle-class families. Due to the financial status of the community, which was relatively better than that of School B, about 70% of learners could afford to pay school fees at once.

Of the 67 teachers employed at the school, 51 were university graduates while 16 held Secondary School Teacher's Diplomas and all the teachers were employed by the MoE. The

school was dominated by male teachers numbering 41, with only 26 female teachers. Apart from the teachers, there was 21 support staff. With that level of staffing and in accordance with the proscribed school establishment, the school was considered relatively well staffed.

The academic performance of the school is improving, with a Grade 12 pass rate of 68% in 2017, 65.5% in 2016, 53.5% in 2015, 63.5% in 2014 and 35% in 2013 (School profile, 2017). In general, the school is an average performer in comparison with other schools in the province.

4.9 SCHOOL B: CONTEXTUAL DETAILS

School B was built in 1974 and was officially opened on 7 June 1976. It is a rural school situated five kilometres from the Great North Road in the Southern Province of Zambia. The school was a boys school only until the year 2000 when it admitted girls to the school. At the time of fieldwork, the staffing level was at 57; 15 of whom were female teachers. Forty-two of them, constituting a majority, held bachelor's degrees while the rest were diploma holders. The School also had 17 auxiliary staff. Effectively, there were relatively fewer staffing gaps in the school when compared to school A

The school was initially built for only 600 pupils and the boarding enrolment was included in this number between 1974 and 1993. However, the number swelled to the current figure of 1100 in 1994 when the afternoon session, then called the Academic Production Unit, was introduced. The school is relatively disadvantaged in that the surrounding community comprise subsisstince farmers. About half the learners commute from the surrounding rural areas in search of better quality education. The head teacher of School B confirmed that only about 60% of parents could afford to pay school fees in full every term.

In 1991, 2001 and 2007, the school experienced a number of riots mainly due to food-related issues (School profile, 2007). The 1991 riot left the school bare as shutters were broken which proved expensive to replace. The school administration then decided to remove the shutters and replaced them with bricks to save pupils from the numbing cold in the area. According to the chairperson of the school governing board the vandalised and dilapidated state of the school could not be repaired due to financial constraints. To neutralize the riotous behaviour of the learners and to avert further damage to the school, the administration, from the year 2000 onwards, started enrolling girls and since then the school has been a co-education institution (School profile, 2007).

Though located in a rural area, the school has electricity and the performance for this school in successive years has been relatively good. For example, in 2016, the Grade 12 pass rate was at 68% (School profile, 2018).

4.10   HOW DATA WERE ANALYSED

Data analysis for this study was guided by the research questions that my research hopes to answer. The data analysis process involves various decisions and activities. According to earlier studies (Peshkin, 1993; Luchembe, 2020), qualitative data analysis is best pursued as an iterative process in which the researcher constantly moves between data collection and data analysis. Iteration also means that the researcher does not follow a structured or sequential process but moves back and forth between the various stages of analysis. Other scholars also describe data analysis as a flexible, intuitive, particular, and creative undertaking that helps to reduce the messiness of the research process by making sense out of the data (Cooley, 2013; Patton, 2015; Talmy, 2011; Mwase, et.al 2020). Therefore, in this study the researcher engaged in a process of ongoing data analysis which commenced in the field while collecting the data. Charmaz (2000) describes such an approach to data analysis as grounded theory. In this systematic approach, the researcher uses inductive methods to create theory whilst in the process of collecting the data. Therefore, data collection and data analysis become two complementary aspects of the same process. Patton (2015) notes that such a process is necessary in order to add rigour and standardization to qualitative research.

Once the researcher completed data collection in the field, she continued with the process of data analysis using conventional qualitative techniques and analyses. The overarching purpose of data analysis is to reorganise and reduce the chunks of data so that they make empirical and conceptual sense (Cooley, 2013).

Consequently, in this study the researcher undertook three basic processes recommended for reduction and reorganisation of data. The first of these was codification, which Strauss and Corbin (2015) define as the act of ascribing labels to data as an illustration of more general phenomena. Second, was categorization, which, according to Patton (2015) means classifying empirical data in terms of concepts in order to construct a thematic structure to explain the observed phenomena. Thirdly, the researcher compared and contrasted the data in order to integrate theory into the observed processes and events.

Following the above process, qualitative data from open-ended questions on the questionnaire and from interviews was analysed by means of thematic extraction and the use of grounded theories to saturate categories. Observational data was progressively focused, particularly grouping it according to different categories in the study sample. On the other hand, the biographical quantitative data from the questionnaire survey were analysed manually to generate frequency tables. Through these interrelated processes of data collection, analysis and data management, the researcher was able to make a coherent interpretation of the data and to subsequently advance an explanation for the actual functioning of SGBs in Zambia.

4.11   TRUSTWORTHINESS

The acceptability of this study as a true and unique academic product was assessed using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria for trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and Confirmability, which are suitable for all qualitative studies. Shenton's definition, which conforms to Lincoln and Guba's analysis, states that trustworthiness is about ascertaining whether the research findings are consistent with reality (Shenton, 2004:64). Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria formed the basis for conducting this study.

It is also worth noting that the "epistemological foundation of qualitative research is not based on facts but on values and value judgements" (Boshoff, 2014:36). Henn (2006:176) also observes that there are many critical issues in qualitative research studies that those that practise qualitative research must address to enhance the trustworthiness of findings. These issues are in certain cases closely related to research. In respect of this study, the four trustworthy criteria are discussed as below:

4.11.1   Credibility

Credibility addresses the need to ensure that the data are interpreted appropriately (Lincoln et al., 2011). The aim of credibility is to provide a verifiable and straightforward account of the study process, including how the data were collected and analysed (Bengtsson, 2016:13). Several actions were performed to enhance the credibility of this study. These included triangulations, member checking, peer engagement and briefing the supervisor regularly during the research process. Both focus group and one-on-one interviews with the participants were also used and a clear record of the research findings was kept.

Credibility is an important step in qualitative research as it builds "confidence in the truth of the research findings" (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). It is about representing and interpreting the participants' original views in the most transparent, truthful and clear way. In the words of Dladla (2017:55), credibility is about "making the research findings believable". It should also be noted that credibility is upheld when the researcher demonstrates engagement and applies methods of observation and audit trails.

Triangulation as used in this study refers to the application of many data collection methods. Such data collection methods include observation, document reviews, interviews and FGDs. During the study, data collected from multiple sources were compared and verified for correctness.

Member checking as a way of enhancing credibility was used to obtain feedback from the various participants in the study in order to improve the trustworthiness of data. This was done because the researcher and the participant may view and interpret the same data differently (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). In this regard, participants were asked to confirm the correctness of the data and thus verify the accuracy of the interpretation of the data. Shenton (2004:68) and Sulistiyo et al. (2017:117) acknowledge member checking as a way of enhancing the credibility of a study during and on completion of data collection.

Peer review was also used in this study. This refers to colleagues in the same field being asked to examine the work done and make comments in order to enhance its credibility. Anney (2014:276) explains that it is important for a qualitative researcher to receive support from fellow professionals who may help the researcher to improve "the research findings". In this study, my workmates from the Department of Education helped to peer review this work.

The extensive use of quotations from the interview transcripts in the study was another strategy that was used to enhance its credibility. The researcher often used the actual words spoken by participants to respond to the research questions and to interpret the original findings. The researcher also used the verbatim transcripts of the interview to highlight the actual words of the study participants. This was helpful in understanding the participants' views and the underlying meaning of the issues in the study.

4.11.2 Transferability

Gunawa (2015) contends that transferability in qualitative research is the ability to transfer findings from the data to other settings, as well as a belief that all social/behavioural phenomena are context bound or context relevant. The study demonstrated transferability by employing a succinct description of the study and a purposive sampling strategy. Subsequently, using the above strategy, the results of the study were transferrable to other settings. According to Cope (2014), transferability is the application of the results of a given study to other settings and participants. In this case, the results obtained from one secondary school governing board could be applied to other settings with similar characteristics. Generally, the study on the functioning of SGBs in Zambia met the trustworthiness criterion, as the researcher endeavoured to provide generic results on the topic which would be acceptable worldwide.

4.11.3 Dependability

Dependability in a qualitative study addresses the issue of data remaining stable over time and in various conditions (Creswell, 2009). The determining factor for the data to remain dependable, as per the study carried out, is the method used to gather, analyse and interpret data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The data in this study were properly clarified by the participants and interpreted, examined and discussed with the study supervisor. The researcher also carried out purposive sampling, keeping a record of changes made, and conducting an audit trail and peer examination to enhance the dependability of the study. The term "dependability" in qualitative research is similar to "reliability" in a quantitative study. Dependability in this regard refers to the "stability of the data over time" (Bitsch, 2005:86). It is the degree to which changes are made over time, including the alterations a researcher makes during the course of analysing data (Bengtsson, 2016:13; Luchembe, 2020. Owing to the changes that may be made during the research process, the researcher must establish a reliable system of tracking changes at any given time.

In addition, an audit trail, which entails a proper system for storing research documents such as transcribed scripts and recorded interviews, as well as records that could be used for cross-checking whenever the need arose, was maintained. This helped the researcher not only to track such changes with ease but also to account for such changes during the presentation of the findings as well as in writing the report. Additionally, peer examination, which in principle is

not very different from member checks, was also used in this study. These methods contributed positively to the dependability of the study on the operations of SGBs in Zambia.

4.11.4   Confirmability

Confirmability is the process of data quality assurance, also referred to as the "objectivity or neutrality of the data" (Gunawa, 2015). Confirmability was established through an audit trail consisting of such records as interview transcripts, reflective records following interviews, notes on planned activities related to data analysis, and drafts of reports. It is closely linked to dependability as the processes for establishing both are similar (Houghton et al., 2013:13). Anney (2014:279) proposes the use of a reflexive journal as an effective way for the researcher to maintain neutrality and accuracy in data collection. This is a set of documents where the researcher keeps data which they reflect on later. Bowen (2009:307) adds that an audit trail is a reliable way of confirming that the report is based on evidence derived from the research process itself and not on the researcher's imagination, values and beliefs. In this study, the researcher made every attempt to collect and use the data accurately and without bias.

4.12   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

"It is difficult to conduct much research at all without running into ethical arguments" (Coolican, 1999:48). In this study, the ethics statement that was binding was as follows: the nature of the research and the name of the interviewer were given in the research; the interviewees were contacted at reasonable times, and if the time was not convenient, another time which was convenient for the interviewees was scheduled; interviewees were informed in advance of the recording of the interviews and the intended use of the recording; interviewees were allowed to freely express their views in the research; the interviewees' decision to participate in the study, answer specific questions, or discontinue the participation was respected without questioning sessions; interviewees' names, addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal information was not be disclosed to anyone outside the research without their permission and the privacy of interviewees' responses was respected and maintained. Based on the above, issues of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntarily participation, as Flick (2009) recommends for qualitative research, were addressed and adhered to.

In addition to the above ethical statement, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the Department of Education of the University of South Africa (see appendix K. Thereafter, the researcher designed an informed consent form, which the head teacher, teachers, Ministry of

General Education (MOGE) district officers and the chairperson and members of the school governing board signed to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. Prior to this, the researcher wrote letters to the MoE offices and to the sampled schools requesting permission to conduct case studies in their respective ministry/districts and schools (see permission letters in appendices L, M and N). In this letter, the purpose of the research, the time and the likely expectations/obligations of prospective participants were explained.

4.12.1   Data Storage

As a measure of security and to assure the confidentiality of my respondents, the researcher retained only electronic formats of both the audio recordings of the interview and the typed interview transcript. The researcher subsequently printed out the transcripts and gave them to willing participants to verify their accuracy and completeness. Following this process, the researcher destroyed the paper copies and retained only the electronic versions in order to safeguard the anonymity of the participants and the confidentiality of the information. All electronic files, including the researcher's ethnographic field notes, were securely encrypted and kept on a password-protected external hard drive.

4.13   SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the main methodological aspects of this study, detailing the research methodology, design, procedures and techniques that were adopted. The study was conducted in two districts of the Southern Province of Zambia, using qualitative research design. Through a combination of research instruments, the design yielded a complete understanding of the actual functioning of the school governing boards. The targeted population included all school governing board members in the selected schools and comprised 28 participants. Data were collected using interview schedules, FGDs, observation checklists and document reviews. Qualitative data were analysed thematically to generate themes and sub-themes. Permission and informed consent were sought prior to data collection, ethical issues were adhered to from the point of data collection to the report writing stage, and the names of participants and their schools were kept strictly confidential. The next chapter presents, interprets and discusses the findings based on the analysis of the two case studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 OVERVIEW

The previous chapter detailed the methodology utilized in achieving the research purpose. In the current chapter, data will be presented and interpreted, and the findings discussed. As earlier stated, the sample of this study was drawn from two secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia and comprised of all school governing board members from the sampled schools. Data are presented according to the four research objectives together with the associated research questions. The research questions are restated as follows:

a. How do school governing bodies (SGBs) enable or disenable democracy in secondary schools in Zambia?

b. To what extent do SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in Zambian secondary schools?

c. How are SGB members prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools?

d. In what ways can the SGBs be used in promoting democracy in the wider Zambian society?

Data collected and used were gleaned from the interviews conducted with adult governors and the focus group discussions (FGDs) held with learners. Other tools used to collect data were document review and on-site observations.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS – SCHOOL A AND SCHOOL B

The participants in this research were made up of secondary school governing board members (governors) categorised as follows: 14 educators (head teachers, teachers, District Education Board Secretary (DEBs) representatives and union representatives, i.e. 7 from each school); 14 parents (i.e. PTA chairpersons and chairpersons of school governing boards and other parent representatives (i.e. 7 parents from each school governing board); and eight learner governors (4 from each school). Note that the official figure for each school governing board was fifteen governors; that is, 13 adults and two learner governors. It was, however, established that in their school-based arrangement, each sampled schools had an additional educator governor drawn from the two different unions within their schools. The researcher learnt that the government had legalised the inclusion of representatives from all unions found in each school.

In this case, there was a representative of the Secondary School Teacher's Union of Zambia (SESTUZ) and a representative from the Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT). Hence, each school had two union representatives. Regarding learner governor representatives, only two learners were included in the structure, that is, the head boy and the head girl. For the purpose of this research, both the vice head boy and vice head girl took part in the study on the understanding that they were members of the prefect body and formed part of the disciplinary committee in the secondary school. They were included in the study because of the wealth of information they had concerning the school administration.

Table 5.1: Profile of the Parent Component of the School Governing Board of School A

Code	PGA1	PGA2	PGA3	PGA4	PGA5	PGA6	PGA7
Gender	M	F	F	M	M	M	M
Age	50	48	62	68	48	46	50
Education level	Master's degree	BA	BA Ed	BA Ed	Master's degree	BA	Diploma
Employment status	Religious leader	Business /NGO	Retired teacher	Manager	Lecturer	Manager	Trader
Position on SGB	Chairperson	Treasurer	Deputy chairperson	Member	PTA chair	Member	Member
Years on SGB	More than 10 years Re-elected	8 Re-elected	7 Re-elected	10 re-elected	5 Re-elected	2 First term	5 Re-elected

Source: Field Data at School A, 2018

The table above shows that seven parent representatives sat on the school governing board at School A; two of these parents were female while the other five were male. This therefore means that there were more male than female parents on the school governing board for this school. Of the parents who took part in the study, two had completed a master's degree, four parents had bachelor's degrees in different fields, and one parent had a diploma qualification. These qualifications were obtained from various institutions in different fields of study. The age of the representatives ranged between 46 and 68. They held different positions on the SGB and the longest serving member had served for 10 years.

Table 5.2: Profile of the Educator Component of School Governing Board of School A

Code	EGA1	EDGA2	EGA3	EGA4	EGA5	EGA6	EGA7
Gender	M	M	F	M	F	M	M
Age	48	38	42	36	40	44	46
Education level	Master's	BA Ed	Secondary diploma	BSc Ed	BA Ed	BSC Ed	BA Ed
Employment status	Head Tr	Educationist	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Deputy H/Tr
Position on SGB	Secretary	DEBs rep.	Teacher rep.	Union rep. (ZNUT)	Union rep. (SEST UZ)	Teacher rep.	Deputy secretary
Years on SGB	4 Re-elected	2 First term	4 Re-elected	9 Re-elected	8 Re-elected	8 Re-elected	10 Re-elected

Source: Field Data at School A, 2018

The table above shows that seven educators sat on a school governing board for School A. Five of these were male while the other two were female. Five of the sampled educators on this governing board had a teaching qualification in the form of a bachelor's degree, one had a secondary teacher's diploma and one had additional qualification of a master's degree. These teachers had been members of the school governing boards for more than four years each, except for one who had been on the board for a period of two years only. Four (4) of these teachers had taught for more than 15 years in the same school and had been members of the school governing board for more than eight years. This means that this category of participants was information rich and well versed in issues of school governance.

Table 5.3: Profile of Parent Component of School Governing Board of School B

CODE	PGB1	PGB2	PGB3	PGB4	PGB5	PGB6	PGB7
Gender	M	M	M	F	M	M	M
Age	66	50	52	46	42	48	50
Education level	Bachelor's	Master's degree	Master's degree	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Diploma	Bachelor's

Employment status	Retired teacher	ESO	College principal	School teacher	Hospital administrator	Religious leader	Councillor
Position on SGB	Chairperson	District official	PTA chairperson	Member	Member	Member	member
Years on SGB	12 Re-elected	2 First term	10 Re-elected	6 Re-elected	4 Re-elected	8 Re-elected	3 First term

Source: Field Data at School B, 2018

The table above shows that seven parent representatives sat on the School B school governing board; one of these parents was a female while the other six were male. This therefore means that there were more male than female parents on the school governing board for this school. Of the parents who took part in this study, two had completed a master's degree, four had bachelor's degrees in different fields, and one parent had a diploma qualification. These qualifications were obtained from various institutions in different fields of study.

Table 5.4: Profile of the Educator Component of the School Governing Board of School B

CODE	EGB1	EGB2	EDB3	EGB4	EGB5	EGB6	EGB7
Gender	M	M	M	F	F	M	M
Age	48	44	42	45	40	38	49
Education level	Masters' Degree	BA. Ed	BA. Ed	BA. Ed	BA. Ed	BSC. Ed	BA. Ed
Employment status	Head/TR	Deputy head/TR	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	ESO
Position on SGB	Secretary	Deputy secretary	Member	Member	Union rep.	Union rep.	DEBS rep.
Years on SGB	10 Re-elected	8 Re-elected	8 Re-elected	6 Re-elected	7 Re-elected	3 First term	1 First term

Source: Field Data at School B, 2018

The table above shows that seven educators sat on a school governing board for School B. Five of these were male while the other two were female. Six of the sampled educators on this

governing board had a teaching qualification in the form of a bachelor's degree, while one of them had a master's degree. These teachers had been members of the school governing board for more than three years each, except for one who had been on the board for a period of one year only. Five of these teachers had taught for more than 12 years in the same school and had been sitting on the school governing board for more than six years. This means that this category of participants was information rich and well versed in issues of school governance.

Both head teachers who participated in this study had master's degree qualifications. The teacher category was made up of teachers professionally qualified to teach at secondary school level; some of them belonged to the "three-man committee" of the teacher unions in their respective schools. At School B, all educators lived within the area where the boarding school was located, while the educators from School A resided both in the school compound and the nearby town.

The two chairpersons of the sampled governing boards came from the parent category (one was a religious leader, and another was a retired teacher living in the community where this school is located). The two chairpersons and other respondents were fluent in English, the official language for Zambia, and hence it was easy to extract the necessary information from them for the study. Only one parent had difficulties in expressing himself in English but was able to answer the questions in the same language.

The last category of the participants was that of learner governors (head boy and head girl and their vices) as presented below.

Table 5. 5: Profile of the Learner Component of the School Governing Board of School A

CODE	LGA1	LGA2	LGA3	LGA4
Gender	M	F	M	F
Age	22	20	23	21
Education level	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 12
Position held	Head boy	Head girl	Vice-head boy	Vice-head Girl
Years on SGB	One	One	NIL	one
Position on SGB	Learner governor	Learner governor	N/A	N/A

Source: Field Data at School A, 2018

The table above shows that School A had four learners who participated in the FGDs. Two of these were female and the other two were male. All learner governors were in their final grade at this secondary school and were above the age of 18.

Table 5.6: Profile of the Learner Component of the School Governing Board of School B

CODE	LGB1	LGB2	LGB3	LGB4
Gender	M	F	M	F
Age	22	21	23	21
Education level	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 12	Grade 12
Position held	head boy	Head girl	Vice-head boy	Vice-head girl
Years on SGB	One	One	One	one
Position on SGB	Learner governor	Learner governor	N/A	N/A

Source: Field Data at School B, 2018

The table above shows that School B had four learners who participated in the FGDs. Two of these were female while the other two were male. All learner governors were twelfth graders and were above 18 years of age.

It is clear from Tables 5.5 and 5.6 that the learner governors from the two sampled secondary school governing boards were all Grade 12 pupils. At the time of fieldwork, they were preparing to write their Grade 12 final examinations in three weeks' time. All eight learner governors who participated in the FGD were aged between 20 and 23 years. The learners were conversant in English language, the official language for Zambia.

5.3   ASSIGNING CODES

The researcher used codes to process and clean the data and present the findings. These codes helped to conceal identities in reporting the findings of the study, thus ensuring confidentiality. This section presents the details of the codes used to process data and to indicate the sources of the quotes or data extracts in the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings.

5.3.1 Codes for Participants

The researcher assigned codes to all participants. All parent governors were given the code PG. The seven parent governors from School A were given PGA and hence were assigned PGA1–7 (i.e. PGA1, PGA2, PGA3, PGA4, PGA5, PGA6 and PGA7). The parent governors from School B were coded PGB. Thus, the seven parent governors were coded PGB 1–7 (i.e. PGB1, PGB2, PGB3, PGB4, PGB5, PGB6 and PGB7).

All educator governors were given the Code EG. The seven educator governors at School A were coded EGA, and were coded EGA1–7 (i.e., EGA1, EGA2, EGA3, EGA4, EGA5, EGA6 and EGA7). The seven educator governors at School B were coded EGB; thus, EGB1–7 (i.e. EGB1, EGB2, EGB3, EGB4, EGB5, EGB6 and EDB7).

The learner governors for both schools were assigned the code LG. Thus, the four learner governors at School A were coded LGA; hence LGA1–4 (LGA1, LGA2, LGA3 and LGA4. On the other hand, the learner governors for School B were assigned the code LGB1–4 (i.e. (LGB1, LGB2, LGB3 and LGB4). These codes were useful during the coding process and data processing. The following table gives a summary of the codes used to process data from schools A and B.

Table 5.7: Summary of the codes used to indicate sources of data from schools A and B

Category of study participants	Number of participants by school	Codes/Symbol by school
Parent governors (PG)	School A = 7 parents	PGA1, PGA2, PGA3, PGA4, PGA5, PGA6 & PGA7
	School B = 7 parents	PGB1, PGB2, PGB3, PGB4, PGB5 & PGB6
Educator governors (EG)	School A = 7 educators	EGA1, EGA2, EGA3, EGA4, EGA5, EGA6 & EGA7)
	School B = 7 educators	EGB1, EGB2, EGB3, EGB4, EGB5, EGB6 & EGB7
Learner governors (LG)	School A = 4	LGA1, LGA2, LGA3 & LGA4
	School B = 4	LGB1, LGB2, LGB3 & LGB4

Source: Field Data, 2018

NB: See 5.3.1 above for interpretation of the codes found on table 5.7 above.

5.4 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

In presenting the data, it became prudent to arrange the data according to themes, drawing out key issues discussed by the participants. On analysing notes from my personal diary, audio recordings, transcripts of the interviews and FGDs, a number of common phrases emerged. Common phrases were identified that helped to gain a greater understanding of how school governing board members made meaning of the role of SGBs in democratizing secondary school education. The two major themes that emerged from the main research objective revolved around "enablers" and "disenablers" in democratic school governance. Ten sub-themes were identified: "participation", "stakeholder participation", "transparency and accountability", "equity/equality", "respect for one another", "freedom of expression", "collective decision-making", "gender representation". A summary of the findings for all the four research questions is presented in Table 5.8 below:

Table 5.8: Themes and Sub-themes of the Study

	THEMES AND SUB-THEMES		
S/N	**MAIN FOCUS**	**MAJOR THEME**	**SUB-THEMES**
1	How SGBs enable/disenable democracy in Zambian secondary schools	Enablers of democratic school governance	• Participation • Stakeholder participation • Collective decision-making • Freedom of expression • Gender representation • Accountability and transparency
		Disenablers of democratic school governance	• Undemocratic elections • Learner participation • Failure to schedule meetings • Inequalities
2	Extent to which SGBs contribute in addressing democracy in Zambian schools	Enabling environment	• State guidelines/policies • Institutional guidelines • Democratic structures
3	How SGBs were prepared to perform their duties	No training	• Lack of training
		Board packs/files	• State/institutional guidelines • Board reports • Verbal announcements
4		Acquired democratic values	• Democratic leadership style • Tolerance

	How SGBs could be used to promote democracy in the wider Zambian society		• Collective decision-making • Freedom of expression • Transparency and accountability • Respect for one another • Equity and equality

Source: Field Data, 2018

In the next section, the findings are organised according to the overarching themes that emerged from the data. In addition, sub-themes are used to illuminate the overarching themes of the study. Furthermore, quotations and detailed descriptions of the findings are used to achieve what Bechhufer and Peterson (2000:160) and Luchembe (2020:154) describe as remarkable and invisible interpretation. The detailed descriptions and interpretations of the findings are possible because the concepts of democracy and school governance can be used to scrutinise human activity by establishing the type of activity, participants in the activity, goals of the activity and rules and norms of the activity (Mudavanhu, 2014:15). The researcher has used an interpretive paradigm to understand issues pertaining to school governance from the perspectives of the participants. This is because participants are able to understand and interpret the social world in which they live (Cohen et al. 2007:21; Luchembe 2020:154). An interpretive paradigm allowed the researcher to provide detailed descriptions of the participants' views and their experiences in SGBs. The next section focuses on the findings pertaining to the first research question. Using the research questions as guides, the research findings are reported robustly, but truthfully, and the researcher used some verbatim participant responses to illustrate points.

5.5 HOW SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES ENABLE/DISENABLE DEMOCRACY IN ZAMBIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Understanding whether SGBs enable or disenable democracy in Zambian secondary schools was the central focus of this study. The conversations that the researcher had with school governors, namely, the chairpersons of school governing boards, the head teachers, the parent governors, the teacher governors and the learner governors, provided helpful feedback on how this concept was understood by the various participants. The responses were coded in order to generate themes, with two themes emerging: "enablers" of democratic school governance and "disenablers" of democratic school governance. On the topic of whether SGBs enabled democracy in a secondary school set-up, the phrases that were consistently repeated by almost

all the participants were as follows: that they did so through participation, stakeholder participation, collective decision-making, freedom of expression, gender representation, and through accountability and transparency. These phrases provided the sub-themes which the researcher adopted as sub-headings in the presentation of data as follows:

5.5.1   Participation

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Participation in this context meant the participation of school governing board members in the prescribed meetings of a school governing board. All participants were asked if the school governing boards in their respective secondary schools enabled democracy? The majority of school governors affirmed that their school governing boards indeed enabled democracy by ensuring that all board members participated in scheduled board meetings. At both schools, a "notice of meeting" memo" was issued two weeks before the meeting was held. As an illustration, the researcher was shown a sample of such a memo to the school governing board members for a prescribed scheduled of meeting. Further, the researcher learnt that according to the *2005 National Guidelines for the Implementation of Education Boards* in Zambia, a governing board of a school is supposed to have at least one meeting per term, information of which was given to all the board members. To demonstrate this, the head teacher from School B explained as follows:

> *It is a tradition of our school to ensure that the school governors are prepared well in advance so that they plan for the prescribed meetings. This information is given to the school governors at each end of year meeting. In addition to this, when our school is ready to host the board meeting, we send to the "Honourables" a "notice of meeting" two weeks before the set date. This is one way in which our governing board promote democracy.*

In addition to the gazetted meetings, it was established that school governing boards occasionally held unplanned meetings. These were called to address emergence issues. The board chairperson for School A described this aspect as follows:

> *Whether it is a prescribed meeting or an emergence meeting, no one is left out. We work hard to ensure that all members attend the meeting. At times we use the services of the school driver to locate the members and issue them with invitation memos. By so doing,*

I feel our school governing board has succeeded in enabling democracy at a secondary school level. (Board chairperson, School B)

The chairperson was asked a follow-up question to above to confirm whether the school governing board had experienced incidents where the management team made decisions without consulting the rest of the members of the school governing board. The chairperson confirmed that it was true that in very rare circumstances, the school management team (SMT) would meet and make decisions on emergency issues. The chairperson nevertheless stated that when such a meeting was held the SMT made sure that the chairperson was updated on the matter.

b. Data from the Focus Group Discussions

Opinions of learner governor participants were sought on whether or not the SGBs in their respective secondary schools enabled democracy? This was done in two different FGDs. One focus group comprising four learner governors was arranged for each school. These learners affirmed that their school governing boards indeed enabled democracy by ensuring that all board members participated in scheduled board meetings. All the learner governors who participated in the FGDs from the two sampled schools were in agreement with the aspect of individual participation in meetings as a democratic practice. The following extracts from learner governors responses during the FGD help to illustrate their arguments:

Our school governing board is democratic because, we participate in school governing board meetings … Yes, they always invite us to the governing board meeting. (Learner governor, School A)

Our governing board is democratic because every board member is allowed to participate whenever there is a board meeting. This involves both parents, teachers and us learners. By allowing everyone to participate, I feel there is democracy. (Learner governor, School B)

We are always informed to attend the meeting whenever there was one. We don't miss the meetings because it is our duty to represent the other learners in governing board meetings. (Learner governor, School A)

I see democracy in our governing board because I am allowed to participate in board meeting. Well I must say all of us participate in prescribed board meetings. (Learner governor, School B)

From the verbatim quotes given above, the findings seem to suggest that all learner governor participants felt that their school governing boards were democratic because all the board members were allowed to participate in the meetings. Individual participation was therefore viewed by learner governors as an enabler of democratic school governance.

c. Data from Observation and Reviewed Documents

Two sessions were arranged to observe the meetings of school governing board members for the two sampled schools. One of the variables that was assessed during the observation sessions was the aspect of participation. At this level, the researcher observed various participants representing various constituencies participating on the school governing boards. The researcher therefore was able to confirm the findings from interviews that various participants were allowed to participate on the governing board while representing various constituents, as stated in the *2005 guidelines for the implementation of school governing boards*. Furthermore, by reviewing the minutes of some school governing board meetings, the researcher used the attendance list to confirm that several individuals had indeed participated in these board meetings. It would therefore appear that all these forms of data confirm the aspect of individual participation as an enabler in democratic school governance. The conclusion therefore is that individual participation as an enabling factor was one of the democratic elements found in both schools.

5.5.2 Stakeholder Participation

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Another sub-theme that was identified was stakeholder participation in school governing boards. In attempting to identify the factors that enable democracy among SGBs, the aspect of stakeholder participation came up repeatedly in all the school governor categories. One of the teacher governors from School B who participated in the interviews stressed the importance of stakeholder participation as follows:

SGBs enable democratic practices by ensuring that all stakeholders participate in the activities of the school. By law, governing boards comprise of the 14-member composition. All these categories have representation. Whenever there was a governing board meeting, representatives came from the various categories of the constituents of school governors. (Teacher governor, school B)

It is clear from the above finding that the teacher governor was aware of the democratic practice of stakeholder participation in a school governing board. When stressing the importance of stakeholder participation as an enabling factor in democratic school governance, the head teacher for School B had this to say on the subject:

We do not leave out any category of participants in the operations of the school governing board. We invite the chairperson of the board; the parent representatives, the teacher representatives as well as union representatives to participate in school governing board operation. Above all, we do not forget the learner governors. They are an integral part of the school governing board. They do participate.

The above excerpt revealed that the head teacher was aware of the democratic practice of stakeholder participation in the school governing board. It is also clear that the head teacher governor was not simply aware of the several constituents who participated on the governing board but was also able to take action by making sure that every representative was represented on the governing board. The head teacher governor's opinion was echoed by other governors, stating that governing bodies enable democracy by promoting stakeholder participation. For example, the head teacher participant from School A had this to say:

SGBs promote democracy in that they promote participation of a wide range of stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners, government officials and union leaders in school activities. This composition is itself a democracy. (Head teacher, School A).

The above verbatim quotes reveal that the head teacher governor from School A, like his counterpart from School B, agreed on the factor of stakeholder participation in school governance as a democratic element among SGBs. The teacher governors were also in agreement on this aspect as noted by one teacher participant:

Our school governing board is democratic because the board follows state guidelines by making sure that all stakeholders from the grassroots take part in school governing board meetings. I have been a member of the board for more than six years now and I can confirm that stakeholder participation is there and the members are always present in governing boards whenever they are invited. (Teacher governor, School B).

A parent governor from School A explained as follows;

In the current arrangement, all members of the grassroots participate and say something on school matters, parents also say something on what could be done in the school, teachers are among the participants and of course not forgetting the learners. What I can say is that there is a wide array of stakeholder participation. (Parent governor and PTA chair, School A)

The "current arrangement" which is being referred to above is the phase that followed the implementation of education boards through the National Decentralization Act of 2002. It is clear from the findings gleaned from the interview data above that stakeholder participation was one of the enablers of democratic school governance. The SGBs understood stakeholder participation as a democratic arrangement which was all-embracing in school governance, and included a wide range of stakeholder, namely, parents, educators and learners, as prescribed in the document, *Guidelines for Implementation of Education Boards in Zambia* (MoE, 2005).

 b) Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

The responses from learners during the FGDs were noted as follows:

Boards brought about democracy because they allowed a lot of people to represent others in a board meeting, for example as pupils we represent other pupils, there are also parents who represent other parents, and the teachers represent other teachers. This is a democracy. (Learner governor, School B)

Another learner governor had this to say:

In our board, learners are represented by [us]. Our parents are represented too because I see parents coming to the governing board meeting. Even teachers are represented by fellow teachers. (Learner governor, School B)

The above verbatim quote indicates that learner governors were aware of the stakeholder representation in a school governing board meeting. They were also aware that the aspect of representation in school governing boards depicted democracy.

c) Data obtained from Observations and Document Review

During observation, the researcher established that various constituencies were represented on the school governing board. At the school governing board meetings, the researcher was allowed to attend, she was able to confirm the presence of learner governors, educator governors and parents. Similar representation in previous school governing board meetings was noted in the review of the minutes of a school governing board meeting during 2016 for both Schools A and B. The researcher established that school governing board members indicated their designation on the attendance list for each school meeting, that is, whether a parent, teacher or learner. Accordingly, these minutes revealed that all stakeholder constituencies did indeed participate in the meetings in 2016. These data confirm that there was a wide range of stakeholder representation on the school governing boards.

5.5.3   Collective Decision-making

a) Data obtained from the Interviews

Collective decision-making was another sub-theme that emerged during fieldwork and was found to be critical in enabling democracy among the participants from the sampled schools. In support of collective decision, the PTA chairperson from School A had this view on how the school governing board enabled democracy in the school that he represented:

> *Since I joined this school governing board, I have seen calm discussion about how schools are run; we have solved school problems together; we have made school decisions together; in this arrangement, all opinions of the school governing board members are respected. In this way I feel our governing board is democratic.*

This quote from the parent governor revealed that collective decision-making was viewed as an enabler of democratic school governance. Similar views were expressed by other school governors on the same aspect. For example, while commenting on enabling factors in school governing board meetings, a parent governor participant from School A had this to say:

We make important decisions together. Whenever an issue is brought for discussion, we all debate on that issue until we reach a conclusion. (Parent governor, School B)

The above parent governor response supports collective decision-making in school governance. Educator governors' views were also sought on the same aspect, eliciting the following response:

One breakthrough about the board meetings can be highlighted here; for example, all decisions are done by all stakeholders. They will debate on an issue until they reach a conclusion. To me, this is democratically done. (Teacher governor, School B)

It is clear from the above responses that the participants linked the collective decision-making in school board meetings to democracy. What this means is that the absence of collective decision-making would breed unpopular and retrogressive decisions that could lead to the downfall of the school.

b) Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

During the FGD sessions, Learner governor participants also made reference to collective decision-making as an enabler of democratic school governance. The extract from a learner governor below has been quoted to support this:

What I can say about democracy in boards is that there was collective decision-making among all board members. Yes, all decisions were made by all stakeholder, and they all agreed. (Learner governor, School A)

The response from the learner governor participant above supports collective decision-making in school governance. In the same vein, a learner governor participant from School B gave the following explanation:

… on what is democratic about school boards, I can say that all decisions are made by all people who are invited to the board meeting. The people will debate on an issue until they reach a conclusion. If they have different views, they vote, and the majority will win. (Learner governor, School B)

The verbatim quotes from the learner governor participants above revealed that learners supported collective decision-making in school governance, and they were able to link it to the concept of democratic school governance.

c) Data from Observation and Document Review

The researcher participated in two school governing meetings in 2018. While in these meetings, the researcher observed a cordial decision-making process which was characterised by debate and consensus. Although the researcher could find no direct data linked to decision-making processes in the reviewed documents, it was clear from the minutes of board meetings that resolutions were made in them and, hence, the researcher concluded that decision-making processes took place in board meetings.

5.5.4   Freedom of Expression

a). Data obtained from the Interviews

Freedom of expression in this context means SGB members' right to freedom of expression in school governing board meetings. Data obtained from the Interviews revealed that freedom of expression was viewed by participants as critical in enabling democracy among the sampled schools. In support of freedom of expression, a parent governor, from School A explained as follows:

> *We are free to speak especially when the results of our children are bad. This makes us ask the management team to explain the causes of poor results. We are there in the school governing boards to represent other parents on issues concerning poor performance of our children. Other issues may not be of concern to us* (Parent governor School A)

According to the above quote, the parent governor and indeed the other governors were free to express themselves during school governing board meetings. Among the issues they debated freely was the cause of poor results at School A. In the same vein, another parent governor from School B had this to say about enabling factors in school governance:

> *One thing which I see about our governing board is that we are all free to deliberate on issues that affect our learners. Everyone is free to talk, and the chairperson encourages all of us to say something in meetings.* (Parent governor, School B)

As the above excerpt indicates, parents are free to deliberate in governance issues that affect learners. When asked to explain such issues further, the parent governor made reference to the diet of the learners in the boarding school, school fees and poor performance by some learners. A number of parent governors' statements referred to freedom to express themselves in governance issues as one of the enabler of school governance. Similarly, participants from the educator component indicated that they were free to deliberate in school governing board meetings. A teacher governor from School B had the following to say in this regard:

> *Our governing board is democratic in that it provided a platform for all members to speak freely in the meetings. When board reports are presented by the chairperson of committees, both parents and the teachers are free to debate further on the content of those reports.* (Teacher governor, School B)

The above quote makes reference to parents and teachers being able to freely express themselves in governance issues. The teacher, however, left out the learner governors in the illustration above. When asked whether or not learner governors were also free to express themselves, the response was that the platform was available to learners to freely debate in meetings, but they do not do so because of a lack of skill. What this means is that much as parents and teachers debated freely, the parent governor omitted learner governors who did not participate in debates in governance meetings. It is, however, clear from the above responses that the parent and educator governor participants attached value to freedom of expression in school board meetings.

b). Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

In the FGDs, when asked to point out the enabling factors in school governance, freedom of expression was not mentioned by the learner governor participants. They did, however, refer to it as a lesson they were given while participating on the governing board. The following two extracts highlights how learners depicted freedom of expression:

> *One thing I learnt by participating on the school governing board was freedom of expression. I saw how our parents and the teachers debated freely in governance meetings while I watched on.* (Learner governor, School B)

By participating on the board, I saw how parents and teachers debate freely on issues that were raised from the board reports. I feel I will use this skill elsewhere when I am given leadership responsibilities. (Learner governor, School A)

The above extracts from learner governor make reference to freedom of expression as a lesson learnt by observing parents' debates in governing board meetings. Learners were asked a follow-up question as to why they themselves didn't debate freely in governance meetings. The response was that they were still new and hence were still observing how parents deliberate in meetings. What this means is that from the learner governors' perspectives, school governing board meetings are arenas in which they learn the value of freedom of expression. Hence, the learners did not freely debate in the meetings.

5.6   GENDER REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARDS

We are living in a gender-sensitive era. Generally, male dominance in decision-making in society and in various institutions has been criticised in the endeavour to promote gender balance. It is therefore imperative to be gender sensitive in school governance. In this regard, it is expected that school governing boards will enable democracy by ensuring a balance of male and female members.

a) Data obtained from the Interviews

Both schools alluded to the fact that their boards had a representation of both genders. This was highlighted by the board chairperson for School B:

Our governing bodies enable democracy partly by ensuring that the aspect of gender was considered during appointment of the governors. We may not have a 50:50 representation but consideration is given to make sure that a good representation comes from the female folk. (Chairperson, School B).

A teacher governor from School B had this to say about enabling factors in school governance:

My expectation in a democracy is to see representation of both genders on a school governing board. I am glad that I am sitting on this board as a female member representing my female folks. I take this as a democratic practice. (Teacher governor, School B)

A parent governor had the following to say on the subject:

> *In my opinion, democracy entails that both male and female members are represented on a school governing board. The practical reality is that our board has both genders represented. I feel this is democracy; what do you think?* (Parent governor, School A).

From the findings above, it seems that school governing board members view gender as an enabling factor in democratic school governance. Further, the above verbatim appear to suggest that a 50:50 representation was not what was meant by a good representation of both genders. Representation by both genders was good enough for democracy in the view of participants.

b) Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

On gender representation as an enabling factor among learner governors, a male learner governor from School B had this to say:

> *I see the aspect of gender representation as an enabling factor in the operations of the school governing board. I don't see this to be a problem because at our school, it is the head boy and the head girl who represent learners on the governing board. This entails that there is democracy as both genders are represented.* (Learner governor, School B).

The sentiments of the male learner governor above were echoed by a female learner governor from the same school who said:

> *We can't have the whole student body represent learners on the governing board. The choice of a head boy and a head girl entails that there is gender balance. We are happy with this. At least both the female and the male voices are taken care of in this arrangement.* (Learner governor, School B)

Similar sentiments were echoed by learner governors from School A concerning gender representation. The researcher further deduced that the practice of recognising both genders in school governance was viewed by learner governors as democratic. The researcher therefore concluded that learner governors were happy with the gender representation on the governing boards.

d. Data from Observation

During participant observation, the researcher noted that both male and female genders were represented in the school governing meetings. However, there were more males than females in the two samples schools. This did seem to worry the participants, however, as they indicated that they were fine with this arrangement as long as both genders were represented.

5.6.1 Accountability and Transparency

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Accountability and transparency was one of the sub-themes that emerged from this study. The participants viewed the concepts of accountability and transparency in financial and other issues as paramount in enabling democracy in the operations of secondary school SGBs. This was demonstrated in part by the two PTA chairperson participants, representing the two school governing boards, who hailed the democratic aspect of transparency through the operations of the SGBs. The PTA chairperson for School B provided vivid examples of the day-to-day experiences at the school level as follows:

Since I joined the governing board for this school in January 2008, my observation is that the SGBs enable democratic practices through transparency in financial and other issues. For example; when dealing with issues of finance, the budget is prepared by the financial committee of the governing board and then it is discussed in a transparent manner through the involvement of all governing board members. In this arrangement, learner governors are part of the discussion.

When asked the same question, the PTA chairperson from School A explicitly mentioned transparency in his response:

The issue of transparency is one positive thing that came with the operations of the school governing boards. As representatives of the parents on the governing boards, we ensure that all resources are utilized for the benefit of our children. Budgets are scrutinized by all governors to ensure that a large percentage of the school resources are used for the benefit of our children. By so doing, I feel our school governing board has upheld the democratic value of transparent.

On the subject of transparency in issues of budget and finances another parent from School B had this to say:

> *We determine what fees learners pay. It is the duty of the School governing board to approve fees that are proposed by the PTA. The budget cannot be finalized unless it is approved by the governors who sit on the board.* (Parent governor, School B).

With regard to finances and school projects, all parent governors agreed that they were involved in offering transparency and accountability on financial matters. They held the view that this occurred through the active participation of some of the parents on the finance committee of the school governing board. In addition to sitting on the finance committee of the governing board:

> *We are also involved in fundraising in projects for the school. Our committee on finance sets the tone and we make sure that parents outside the governing board are involved in fundraising for the school activities. In all these fundraising activities, there is proper accountability for the school monies.* (Parent governor, School, A).

Among the school projects that School A was engaged in was raising resources for procuring a school bus, the renovation of school toilets and the repainting of school buildings.

> *We also embarked on a long-term project of constructing a wall fence for the school. In all these projects, the democratic aspects of transparency and accountability were upheld. As parent governors, we have to ensure that all funds realised from these fundraising activities are used for the intended purpose. We are there for the betterment of the school.* (Parent governor, School A).

The head teachers' views were also sought on the aspect of transparency in SGBs. In response to this question, the head teacher from School A explained as follows:

> *Our school governing board upholds the value of transparency by ensuring that whatever we do is done in a transparent way. I can cite an example of school finances. All stakeholder representatives sit on the finance committee to discuss and plan well in advance on how school finances are spent. I feel this is helpful in the governance of a school.* (Head teacher, School A)

In addition, the two teacher representatives from both school governing boards stressed how both financial and other issues were deliberated in a transparent manner in the school board meetings. The teachers agreed that it was a good thing that school governing boards were operating, as issues of financial irregularities were no long common in the governance of the schools. A teacher governor from School B recalled past experiences as follows:

> *Before the commencement of school governing boards, issues of transparency in financial matters were a thorny issue in the PTA meetings. The parents had concerns on how finances were spent by school administrators. This issue had attracted a lot of interest as parents were not sure whether or not the resources they generated were all used for the benefits of their children. Through the coming of the School governing boards, discussions on these issues have been minimized. There is transparency now.*

Other teacher governors who were interviewed on the subject commended the government for coming up with school governing boards as they brought transparency in financial and other governance issues. They explained to the researcher that with the coming of the boards, the running of the school was done in a democratic and transparent way. Other teacher participants explained that it was good that they were part of the boards as this helped them to see how transparent the boards were in their operations.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

Learner governors were also aware of the democratic value of transparency in the operations of school governing boards. A learner governor from School B explained as follows:

> *The school governing boards are transparent in their operations in that as learner representatives, we are allowed to participate in financial discussions of our school. We are allowed to listen to the presentation of the budget by the accountant and we also listen when our parents discuss the budget with school administrators. If we have any questions concerning the budget, we are allowed to ask.*

Another learner governor had this to say:

> *Our board is democratic in that there is transparency and accountability of school money. I have seen budgets being prepared by a number of stakeholders and the same budgets are presented before the full house. Additionally, learners are incorporated in*

the budgeting committee of the board. This therefore means that there is transparency and democracy in our school governing board.

The opinions given by the parent, teachers and the learner governors above clearly demonstrate that transparency and accountability in financial and other issues were perceived to be an enabling element in democratic school governance.

c. Data from Observation and Document reviews

To supplement the data gleaned from the interviews and the FGDs, during participant observation the researcher noted that budgets were presented by a school accountant in both sampled schools. The school accountant in each case was a member of the financial and accounts committee of the school governing body. A review of the 2016 and 2017 minutes from both schools further confirmed accountability and transparency in regard to certain issues, as the minutes highlighted presentations made by the chairperson on finance and budgets in school governing board meetings. After presenting the financial report and budgets, there was a section in the minutes which highlighted reactions to the budget presentation by members of the school governing boards, who engaged the presenter on issues that emerged from the presentation. The researcher was further privileged to see the nature of this debate during the observation sessions. Both educator governors and parent governors were able to engage the presenter on issues that were not clear. However, none of the learner governors spoke about the financial presentation during the observation sessions that the researcher was part of.

5.7   PERCEPTIONS ON FACTORS THAT DISENABLE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AMONG SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA

Understanding disabling factors in democratic school governance was another area of focus for this study. While almost all the participants spoke positively of the various factors that enable democratic school governance, interviews with the school governing board members, participation in the activities of SGBs, reviewed documents and the FGD interviews in the two schools also revealed how SGBs disenabled democracy in a secondary school setting. The following discussion is based on the participants' views on elements that they perceived to have been undemocratic in relation to the school governing boards.

5.8 UNDEMOCRATIC ELECTION OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD CHAIRPERSON

a) Data obtained from the Interviews

In School A and School B one theme that came out repeatedly among the parent and educator category of school governing board members revolved around the election of the board chairperson. For example, some school governors felt that a number of practices by school governing boards disenabled democratic practices by not allowing all members of the boards to determine who the chairperson should be by voting for this particular officer. As an illustration, a parent governor from one of the schools had this to say about leadership in a school governing board:

> *It is not clear to me how a chairperson of the board is elected. What is strange to me is that we have had the same chairperson since I joined the school governing board several years ago. We did not vote for that person. I feel he has overstayed.* (Parent governor, School B)

It seems that the parent governor was not satisfied with the election of the chairperson. When asked what factors disenabled democratic school governance by SGBs, another parent governor from School B had the following sentiments:

> *For the past eighty years now, I have been observing and have picked some pertinent issues that I feel do not work with the democratic principles. For example; we [parents] are not involved in the selection of the school governors. We [parents] are not sure how this is done. It seems the school administrators have an upper hand in this. In my view, this is undemocratic.* (Parent governor, School B)

The view of the parent above seems to suggest that the parents felt that they were not part and parcel of the election process that ushered in the chairperson of the governing board. Interestingly, on the same subject some parent governors at School A felt that they had not been involved in the election of governing board members as the school had an upper hand in that issue. One parent governor from School A explained thus:

> *Undemocratic elements can be cited on the operations of the SGBs, for example, in a democracy, the electorates for the whole country participate in the elections of leaders*

at various levels, from the president to the lowest level at local government. This does not happen in the election of some positions of school governors. I feel this is not democratic because we were not involved when the chairperson was voted in. (Parent governor, School A)

The above quote seems to suggest that tension was building among some members of the school governing board. In the words of the parent governor above, the expectation was that all constituents sitting on the board should have participated in electing the chairperson of the governing board, but this was not the case. Reacting to the undemocratic elements found on the school governing board, one parent governor did not hide his frustration as noted in the following words:

Leaders overstay in the governing board management structure; for example in our board, we have had the same chairperson since boards started their operations in 2005. What this means is that some of us can't be leaders. We do not understand why same people are holding this position for so many years, besides this, we were not involved in electing him. (Parent governor from School A)

The above quote seems to suggest that the chairperson had overstayed his welcome on the governing board. When a follow-up question was asked on the number of years that a chairperson was supposed to serve on the board, the parent was aware that the term was three years, which could be renewed for another three years, thereby making it legally a maximum of six years. The above sentiments were echoed by another parent from the same school who said:

We have not changed the chairperson since boards started in 2005. It is not good to have same leader for several years. It brings distrust and crush of interest since those who aspire to become leaders or chairperson won't be happy. (Parent governor School A)

The parents voiced consistent views on the issue of the election of the Chairperson; for example the same sentiments revolving around leadership on a school governing board were uttered by another parent governor from School A, who said:

We have not changed the chairperson since I joined the board; I feel this problem is perpetuated by the SMT and not the School governing board. The SMT have the power

to decide who to be a chairperson but my view is that this one [Chairperson] has over stayed. In a democracy, we need to see change in leadership; For example; President Chiluba came and left, President Mwanawasa came and left. Rupiah Banda came and left, then came president Sata; now we have president Lungu; however, our school governing board has maintained the same Chairperson in all these years. We need to see change. (Female parent governor School A)

The findings above seem to suggest that the election of the school governing board chairperson was a contested issue in both School A and School B. The parent component of both schools voiced consistent opinions on this issue, implying that they felt that they were left out of the decision-making and participation when it came to the election of their governing board Chairpersons. They felt that the problem was perpetuated by the SMT. When asked why the chairperson School B had been there for such a long time, the response from the head teacher was as follows:

We have not changed the chairperson of the governing board that I found mainly because he is performing his duties diligently. He is a very committed member. He has never missed a meeting and he drives the board agenda quite well. We have not seen the need to change and bring in a different person who might be a disappointment. (Head teacher, School B)

A follow-up question was asked about how the school elects the board chairperson on their governing board? The response from the head teacher for School B was that it was done administratively by the SMT and thus the rest of the board members were simply informed about the SMT decision. Data obtained from the Interviews indicated that School A adopted the same practice for re-electing the chairperson who was said to have occupied this position since 2005. It was explained that other positions were different in that the stakeholders participated in their election. This was illustrated by the head teacher for School B as follows:

Some positions on the school governing board are elective while some are appointed positions. Offices of the union leaders as well as those for learner governors are recommended by their constituencies after the voting process at their levels. The same practice is true with the parent governor and teacher governor representatives. The parent representatives are chosen through elections during the PTA meetings. Thereafter, the names are recommended by the PTA component of our school and the

board would simply ratify the names and recommend them to the Minister of Education for formal appointment. The district representative is appointed by the District Education Board on request from the school. The office of the councillor is an obvious one because each school sits in a designated geographical area with a councillor. The same is true with the office of the head teacher. (Head Teacher, School B)

It is clear from the above examples that some positions were not contested by the participants because the constituencies participated in the election of their representative on the board prior to their assuming office. However, the office of the chairperson on both boards was a contested issue.

Further, the findings seem to suggest that SGBs from both schools had witnessed undemocratic processes relating to the selection of candidates to run the school governing board. In the narratives presented in the interviews and FGDs, no mention of the election itself, who voted and the degree to which members were involved in the selection or election of the chairperson. This omission had brought about some tension in that some stakeholders, especially the parent component, seem to have been left out.

b) Data from Observation and Document Review

The documents reviewed also confirmed the presence of the same chairperson for long periods of time, for example, the minutes of a board meeting held in 2008 for School B showed that the same chairperson who chaired the meeting on this date was still holding the same position in 2018. A similar picture obtained in School A. Interviews with head teachers from both School A and School B confirmed that they had not changed their chairpersons since the boards came into existence in 2005, thereby confirming an undemocratic element of the boards.

The tension which was building among the SGBs confirms that some undemocratic elements existed. In an ideal democratic practice, the nature of school-based participation relates to the specific functions and decision-making process that are assumed by parents, teachers, learners and the management team. The duties and functions of the above members of the school governing board members are illuminated in the *National Decentralization Policy* (MoE, 2002) and in the *Principles of Education Boards, Governance and Management Manual* (MoE, 2005). This is the reference point for issues that concern school governing board regulations. Much as this study established that democratic practices existed in the school governing boards under study, the research findings revealed that the election and renewal of chairpersons'

positions had become the prerogative of the management team, an issue which did not motivate other parent governors who had leadership aspirations, as one female Parent governor stated:

> *We all want to be leaders, but as it is now, all we see are the same people leading all the time. This is discouraging.* (Parent governor, School A)

The above sentiments reflect the negative feelings regarding the undemocratic practice adopted by the SMT. This is contrary to the notion of democracy held by the researcher, that is, that democracy is about common decision-making and action, about doing things together. This SMT practice lacked this aspect of democracy, hence the opposite of democracy prevailed in the sampled schools. The researcher therefore concluded that the democratic process operated within a domain that conflicted with the notion of mutual or consensual decision-making. In this case, failure to hold elections meant that members were simply presented with a faint accompli. Critically viewed, the researcher concluded that consensus was not upheld in the sampled schools. There was no general agreement among members of the school governing board on how board chairpersons should be selected and how long they should be in office. As such, this was a breeding ground for conflict in both schools. The conflict solving rule is, therefore, upholding consensus in as far as the election of chairpersons of school governing boards was concerned. It is apparent that consensus as a democratic principle is not only an integral part of democratic school governance, but that the system or school governing board cannot function meaningfully without it.

5.9 LIMITED LEARNER PARTICIPATION

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Limited learner participation was another sub-theme which emerged when discussing disabling factors of democratic school governance with the participants during the interviews conducted in the sampled schools. Learner participation in this context meant their participation in school governing boards. It appears that the members of the two school governing boards had mixed views regarding the participation of learners in this board. For example, some governors felt that school governing boards on a number of occasions disenabled democratic practices in that they perceived learner governors as:

> *... youngsters who could hardly contribute to debate on any given topic ... and as governors who were there purely to listen to the discussions on behalf of other learners* (Parent governor, School A)

This finding appears to suggest that the parent governor felt that learner governors were not necessary on a governing board because they were unlikely to contribute to debates. Similar sentiments were echoed by another parent governor from School B who stated that:

> *In my view, secondary school learners may not have all what it takes to be on a governing board. They lack experience and governance skills. I feel they are still young and their time is yet to come …*

This verbatim quote portrays a negative attitude toward learner participation on the board. The parent appears to think that learners lack skill in governance and hence are unnecessary on a governing board. In the same vein, a teacher governor from School B made the following remarks on the subject:

> *From my experience, representation among learner governors is inadequate. They simply sit and listen in governance meetings. I have not seen them deliberate on any issue. It can make sense including them in college boards; not at this level*!

The opinion of this teacher governor seems to suggest two things; that learners' representation in governance was inadequate and that it was too early to incorporate learners in school governance meetings at this level and that putting them in college boards would be the ideal, probably because learners at college level are old enough to engage fruitfully in matters that affect learners.

While discussing undemocratic elements found in the school governing boards, some of the parents unequivocally stated that learners did not engage fully in issues of school governance. According to these parents, learner participation was inadequate and hence SGBs were undemocratic in some respects. On this aspect, a parent governor from School B had this to say:

> *I noticed some unfairness and inequalities among learner governor's representatives. For example; when sensitive issues were discussed, learner governors were asked to leave the meeting or [sometimes] were not called to attend those meetings which*

involved discussion of [issues] relating to teachers or head teachers; in my view, such decisions were against the democratic issues of fairness or equity or equality.

A parent governor from School A echoed similar sentiments:

I have observed this in our dealings with school governors in school governing boards; when certain items were discussed, for example those that involved issues of discipline pertaining to teachers, that learner governors were asked to leave the meeting … in this way I feel school governing boards were not democratic.

The above excerpt seems to suggest that learner participation in school governing boards was limited. In practice, both governing boards did not allow learners to be part of the discussions on certain sensitive issues or issues that involved their teachers. While the SMT felt that it was unethical to allow learner governors to listen to discussions involving their teachers, the parent governors saw the absence of the learners during such discussions to have been an undemocratic practice obtaining in school governing boards.

It is clear from the above findings of the study that learner participation on a school governing board was met with mixed feelings. As indicated in the last part of this section, learners were physically excluded from participating in meetings when issues that adult governors felt were sensitive were discussed. We can deduce that both the parent and the educator governors felt that learner participation was inadequate; hence, this had become a contested issue. The researcher interpreted such perceptions and actions as undemocratic because a failure to incorporate learners in governance issues, either through direct action or through members' opinions, denied the learners a chance to participate fully in school governance.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

Learner governors were also invited to give their views with regard to their participation on the school governing board. This was done with a view to unearthing the enabling and disabling factors in school governance through the feelings of the participants. Data for this section were obtained from two separate FGDs at school level. In the FGDs, the researcher invited the learners to give their views on the level of participation in their respective boards. The learner governors from School B regarded themselves as too new to given an opinion on the governing boards:

> *We are still new and so we are still observing, hence we don't talk in the school governing board meetings ... Well, what I can say is that we are* [still observing]. (Female learner governor, School B).

> *Well, we do participate, only don't talk. We are still new. I feel it is important to watch first and learn how adults go about it. With time, it will be easy to participate fully.* (Male learner governor, School B)

These two extracts clearly suggest that in School B there was minimal learner participation in school governing board meetings. The learners' silence was attributed to their being new on the board and hence they felt that they had not acquired the skill required to engage fruitfully in debates.

Similarly, when asked about the level of participation in governing boards, a learner governor from School A highlighted that:

> *It was a challenge to discuss in school governing board meetings because we [learner governors] are new to this governance structure. What really happens is that they change learner governors every year, and yet they don't do the same to other categories [adult governors (teachers and parents)]. This makes us feel uncomfortable to speak. We just observe.*

It is clear from the above sentiments expressed by the two learners from the two different schools that learner participation in the governing boards was inadequate. They all felt that their views were not considered in school governing board meetings. In addition, as some parent governors and educator governors observed, learner participation was inadequate and their views and suggestion were often not considered, thereby suggesting certain undemocratic elements which could bring about some tension in school governance if left unchecked.

c. Data from Observation and Document Review

In addition to the participants' perspectives given above, the data obtained from the reviewed documents and the observation sessions revealed that learner participation was minimal in school governing board meetings. Furthermore, it was clear during my observation of board meetings that though the learners were consulted and informed and had participated in those meetings, they were not active in decision-making because adults dominated the debates and

discussions. With regard to this finding on learner participation in school governing board meetings, a review of the minutes and other documents did not reveal any form of presentation or debate by the learners. Similarly, observations made by the researcher during the school governing meeting witnessed a *"heavy cloud of silence"* on the part of learner governors. Specific reference to the exclusion of learners was made in the formulation of the code of conduct which two of the learner governors from School A and School B highlighted during the FGD session. They indicated that they were not consulted when the code of conduct was written. They felt that they should have been included because they had their own issues which they felt could have been incorporated instead of leaving it to the teachers alone. This practice, according to the learner governor, was undemocratic.

5.10   FAILURE TO IMPLEMENT SUGGESTIONS FROM THE LEARNER GOVERNORS

Another sub-theme that was apparent in this study was the failure to implement suggestions made by learner governors. This failure borders on preventing learner participation in the sense that learner governors were representing other learners at governance meetings.

a.   Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

During the FGDs, the researcher sought the learners' views regarding the undemocratic elements of the school governing boards of which they were members. The learners were able to single out a number of areas where the school governing boards were seen to be going against democratic principles. When reacting to the question, "What democratic elements have you seen in your school governing boards? One learner governor from School B responded with a personal connection to the matter, referring to a lack of participation in drafting the school code of conduct for learners as an undemocratic practice. The verbatim quote below illustrates the learner's response:

> *We are part the school governing board but sometimes we are left out on issues that directly affect us in school governance. For example; the code of conduct for learners (rules and regulations) was compiled by teachers. We were not involved. I feel this is undemocratic.* (Learner governor, School B)

The above finding seems to suggest that although learners had suggestions to incorporate in the code of conduct for learners, the process of drafting the code of conduct was done by the

teachers without their input. This finding appears to suggest that the learners' voices were ignored. Similarly, a male learner governor from School A explained how lack of involvement on issues that affect learners was a salient feature of the undemocratic practices among SGBs:

> *We were not consulted when they drafted and compiled the Code of Conduct for learners; we had no submission on things to be included yet we had our own issues to be included. I feel this is undemocratic.* (Learner governor, FGD).

The above finding highlights in part the failure of the SGBs to embrace the views of the learners when drafting the code of conduct which was meant to govern the learners at a school level. Grassroots participation in governance is an integral part of democracy. It is clear however that learner governors from both schools were left out when drafting the learners' code of conduct, thereby denying them the opportunity to incorporate their views into the code.

Other disabling factors were highlighted by learner governors during the FGDs. For example, when asked about factors that disenabled democratic school governance among SGBs, a learner governor from School A explicitly stated that:

> *We were not given a fair chance in school governance. Our opinions and concerns on issues presented before the governing boards were not considered. This made our school governing boards undemocratic.* (Male learner governor, School A)

When asked which opinions they were referring to in this case, the learner governor made reference to suggestions and a list of demands given by learners through the representative of the Learners' Representative Council found in each of the sampled schools. The learner governor further stated that:

> *The other way in which school governing boards were undemocratic is that reports generated by the president of the Learners' Representative Council were presented to the school governing board by the head teachers and not us. It could have been nice if learner governors presented these reports in board meetings. In my opinion, this action undermines the democratic principles because we are not given the chance to make our own presentations in school governing board meetings.* (Male learner governor, School A).

As evidenced in the above quote, the governing boards did not accord learner governors a chance to present their reports to the board members. Instead, the head teacher did it on behalf of the learner governor representatives. Learner governors felt that this was undemocratic because it denied learners a chance to make their voices heard directly in school governance. A male learner governor from School B also said:

> When "we" have serious issues to present, the head teacher presents for us ... after they present the list of our demands, they do nothing about it. I feel this is unfair because some of our issues are not given serious consideration in these governing boards.

The above finding seems to suggest that the learner governors in School B, as in School A, were not given a fair share in governance because they were not allowed to make presentations. Another point of contention we deduce from the above finding is that when issues were presented by a board agent, a head teacher in this case, some of the demands by the learners were not given serious consideration. This undemocratic element too had brought about mistrust and tension among the learners who participate on a governing board.

b. Data from Observation and Document Review

Going by what was gleaned from the school governing board meetings in the sampled schools where the researcher was a participant observer, it was established that learner governors were not active in the meetings. Additionally, the researcher observed that the report of the Learners' Representative Council was presented to the board by the head teacher; this was found to be common practice in both School A and School B. This therefore confirms what learners highlighted during the FGD sessions when they indicated that they were not given the chance to make their own presentations in school governing board meetings.

5.11   INEQUALITIES IN PAYMENT OF SITTING ALLOWANCES

a. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

Non-payment of allowances to learner governors was another undemocratic practice among SGBs in the sampled schools. Learner governor representatives from both School A and School B highlighted the issues related to the non-payment of allowance for their respective constituency. This came to light during the FGD when the learners were reflecting on the

undemocratic elements found in their respective governing board meetings. One learner governor from School A stated this:

When we talk about democracy, I expect fairness to every member who participates on the board. This is not so because when it comes to board allowances, we [learner governors] are not given while our parents and teachers are given. We just hear stories that they are given some allowances.

Another learner governor from the same school had the following to say:

We are told that our parents and teachers get allowances. We are however not given this money. I don't know how much they give them but madam, this is very unfair because we spend the same time with them in governing meetings and they do not give us. Beside this we miss lessons!

Data from School B revealed similar sentiments about allowances:

Nevertheless, as learners, we have never been given transport or sitting allowances … we don't know whether or not [others] get it … if [they] are given, then that is very, very unfair because we do the same work, we sit all day long and [we] sometimes miss class during school governing board meetings. We should be treated like others [adult governors] on issues of allowances. (Learner governor, School B)

Echoing the sentiments of her fellow pupil, a female Learner governor from School B had this to say:

We are not given the allowances. There is however a strong rumour that the adults get some money for sitting on school governing board meetings. Denying us this money is very unfair. We spend the same amount of time with the adults in these meetings. I think we should be paid as well. (Female governor, School B)

In both FGDs, there were strong feelings of unfairness emanating from the SMTs' failure to pay either transport or sitting allowances to learner governors, despite adult governors receiving them, prompting feelings of inequality among the learner governors. This aspect did not arise in the interviews with adult governors. This might be interpreted as feelings of satisfaction on their part that they were given something for attending meetings.

b. Data from Observation and the Document Review

The issue of non-payment of allowances to learner governors was also noted by the researcher during a participant observation session held at School B. After the school governing board meeting, all adult governors were made to sign for their transport allowances/sitting allowances while the learner governors were excluded. When the researcher sought an explanation for this, the following response was received:

> *We do not give sitting allowances to school governing board members. We only give transport allowances to all adult governors regardless of whether they live within campus or not. This is one way of attracting them to attend meetings.* (Head teacher, School B)

When asked the same question, the head teacher of School A explained thus:

> *Yes, small tokens of appreciations are given to the parent governors in the form of transport allowances. We give this to both parents and teachers regardless of whether they are in school or they live outside the school campus.* (Head teacher, School A)

It is clear from the above findings that the learners were denied sitting/transport allowances which was an entitlement received by all other members of the school governing board. Accordingly, there was no equity in the manner in which the payment of allowances was handled by the school governing board. As a result, there was some tension on the part of learners who were excluded from the benefits enjoyed by other board members.

5.11.1 State/Government Interference

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

In investigating the undemocratic elements found in the school governing boards, the study revealed that government interference in school activities was another disabling factor. A number of participants alluded to this, as illustrated in their verbatim quotes which follow. The chairperson for School A had this to say about government interference in the aspect of school fees:

> *Though we determine school fees, more often than not, government interference is there. For example, government through the office of the Permanent Secretary issues*

directives that no learner should be sent back home for failure to pay school fees. This makes our work difficult as a school governing board because parents become reluctant to pay. There is a lot of government interference which sometimes waters down our school based policies at a school level. Chairperson, School A)

In line with the above view of the parent governor participant, the head teacher had this to say:

Whenever the government issues a statement that no learners should be sent back for failure to pay school fees; most parents relax to pay. As such the school is owed a lot of money by the learners. We however, make sure that no learner gets their school certificate before they clear the school fees. The point here is that democratic practices have been disturbed by the interference of the government in the operations of school governing boards. (Head teacher School A)

Emphasizing the aspect of government interference in policy development by the SGBs, the chairperson of the school governing board expressed his frustration as follows:

Though we are responsible for developing school-based policies, we are somewhat limited in that when it comes to admission policies, we are not fully responsible for this. Admission of learners is done at district level. Teachers or head teacher representatives go. But us parents we do not have any say on this. We are just on the receiving end. (Chairperson, School B)

In agreement with the chairperson for School B in relation to the admission policy, the head teacher stated that:

We participate in admission at district levels. We determine the numbers to admit which match the infrastructure that we have. We are also guided by the Ministry that we use location factor in admitting pupils to our school, that is, we begin by recruiting learners who attended our own school from grade 8–9 and later consider learners from the Zonal schools within our zone or learners from nearby catchment areas once we have exhausted the recruitment of pupils from our school. This way, pupils are guaranteed access to schools nearest to their homes.

It was also noted by the head teachers that the reviewed admission policy had elements of government interference in that the central government still held certain strings with regard to

the school. The head teacher participants revealed that the governing boards experienced disabling factors in the implementation of democratic values. For example; the Central government still held the strings at school level. It was further established that the Central government still provided some samples for lower levels to follow, as evidenced in the current budgeting process where thresholds were provided and lower levels acted on what was already tailored. The MoE also still had control of the operations of the schools. The Data obtained from the Interviews revealed this as some of the disabling factors in democratic school governance.

5.11.2 Failure to hold Scheduled Meetings for School Governing Boards

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Failure to call meetings is another disabling factor in the sampled school governing boards. During the period of fieldwork, the researcher noted that SMTs failed to call for scheduled meetings for both the school governing boards under study. The failure to call for scheduled meetings was also identified by one of the parent governors as one of the disabling factors in the democratic governance of secondary school education at the school level. In this vein, a parent governor from School A had this to say about meetings:

> *I recall that in some school terms, scheduled meetings fail to take off. What has been happening is that the SMT will simply not call for a scheduled meeting for a particular term. I feel uncomfortable with this because meetings are supposed to occur as programmed. It is in these meetings where decisions are made.*

An educator governor explained this as follows:

> *School governing board meetings are supposed to take place as planned. I note that at times, meetings are not held for the whole term. When such a thing happen, decisions which are supposed to be made by the board are approved by the management team. This denies other board members, including the parents, some decision-making powers.* (Teacher governor, School A)

Another parent governor from School B explained as follows:

> *The school governing board meetings are meant to facilitate decision-making processes. However, the planned meetings do not happen sometimes. This occurs when the SMTs fail*

to host the meetings sometimes for the whole term. This has happened before in our school board. When this fails, it means one or two categories of the school governing members are denied the chance to participate in decision-making. (Parent governor, School B)

b. Data from Focus Group Discussion

The FGDs revealed that learner governors were not aware of the fact that scheduled meetings did not take place. This is probably because they were considered to be new on the board, as their tenure of office is for one year one. During this year, they reported that all scheduled meetings had taken place.

c. Data from Observation and Reviewed Documents

Observations and the data obtained from the reviewed documents did not show any evidence of management failure to call for meetings. Nevertheless, the researcher did ask the head teachers to explain this. It was explained that when meetings did not take place, it was probably because of other engagements; however, the head teachers also explained that when this happened, pertinent issues are handled by the SMT in consultation with the chairperson of the board.

> *In situations where board meetings fail to take place due to other engagements, the management teams make decisions on behalf of the board. This is done in consultation with the Chairperson of the board. We sometimes call the chairperson or just phone him. It all depends.* (Head teacher, School B)

The above findings highlight factors that hinder school governing boards from acting democratically. It is evident from the field data that undemocratic elements existed in the operations of the school governing boards. This, as a consequence, is contrary to the principles of liberal democracy which guide the operations of school governing boards.

In conclusion to this section, it is evident that in the sampled schools, enabling factors for democratic school governance existed. The school governing boards were thus democratic in many aspects and had somewhat implemented the principle of decentralization where all stakeholders at the grassroots participated in the school decision-making processes. Comparatively, participation by school governing board members in meetings and decision-making processes was more prevalent in the urban school than in the rural school.

Despite the general perspective that enabling factors existed in the democratic governance of schools, the study also revealed that in certain cases the school governing boards harboured factors that disenabled the implementation of democratic values. For example, the Central government MoE (HQ) still held the strings regarding schools, and learner governors did not actively participate in deliberations during meetings. Other undemocratic elements cited were inequalities in the payment of allowances, failure to implement suggestions from learners and failure to hold scheduled board meetings. Furthermore, the parent and learner governors did not take part in the election of the board chairpersons as this was perceived to be the preserve of the SMT. The results show that the autocratic appointment of the chairpersons of the school governing boards had engendered tension among adult governors. Failure to conduct democratic elections for the chairperson position on the school governing board was perceived to be a disabling factor for democratic school governance in the sampled schools.

5.12   THE EXTENT TO WHICH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES CONTRIBUTE TO ADDRESSING ISSUES OF DEMOCRACY IN ZAMBIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In Zambia, the MoE introduced governing boards at the school level by to, among other things, help address the issue of democracy. This process was done to restore and stimulate a sense of ownership that parents, pupils and the community needed to have in the delivery of services (Banda, 2009). The reasoning behind this was to take decision-making powers closer to the points of delivery (schools in this case) where the action is taking place. School governing boards were therefore expected to help improve the learning environment and assist in taking rapid action in regard to problems experienced in the decision-making processes that occur at the school level. These variables were meant to enhance the democratic governance of secondary school education in Zambia.

With this background in mind, the second major research question sought to explore whether the SGBs contributed to addressing issues of democracy in secondary school governance. The objective of this question was to enable participants to highlight the tools and democratic structures that the sampled school governing boards used to promote democracy in their areas of operations in order to establish the extent to which SGBs enabled democracy. One of the sub-questions asked was: What democratic structures are present and operating in your secondary schools? The participants identified various enabling apparatus and structures at the secondary school level, including the availability of education policies and institutional

guidelines which guided the operations of the school governing board members; the availability of democratic structures such as the governing board itself and others such as the PTA, the prefect body, departments, Learners' Representative Councils, and school committees, as well as the availability of the committees of governing boards. The responses to this question enabled the researcher come up with themes. These form the sub-headings in the following section.

5.12.1 Local (School-based) and State-generated Policies

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

When explaining the extent to which SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy, a head teacher explained it thus:

> *Our governing boards are guided by state and local generated policies; for example we have National Guidelines for the Implementation of Education Boards (2005) as well as the Principles of Educational Boards documents. Whenever we have issues that we do not understand, we refer to these documents.* (Head teacher, School A.)

Almost all parent governors made reference to the existence of state guidelines which they had access to in their files in the boardroom. This therefore implied that both the educator component and the parent component of the school governing boards were aware of the existence of state guidelines. These guidelines in turn helped them to obtain information regarding the operation of SGBs.

5.12.2 Use of Established Democratic Structures within the Schools

The use of democratic structures found in the schools was one way through which school governing boards enabled democracy. This view was taken by several educator and parent governor participants and one of the head teachers explained as follows:

> *Our secondary school has democratic structures such as the PTA, the prefect board, the Learner Representative Council, and other school committees. In these structures the members deliberate and engage each other and decisions are made. Thus our school governing board address issues of democracy by allowing other structures to work side by side with the main governing board.* (Head teacher, School A)

In agreement with the above sentiment, the head teacher from School B explained thus:

Well, one way in which our governing board addresses the issue of democracy is by allowing other decision-making structures such as the PTA and the Learners' Representative Council to operate within the school. What this means is that these entities are given decision-making responsibilities within the school.

The teacher governors were also conscious of these decision-making structures. For example, one teacher governor representative from School B explained as follows:

Our leaders have allowed other decision-making bodies to operate alongside other decisions. For example, we have a PTA executive, the prefect board, the Learners' Representative Councils and other school committees which are effective. Besides that, we also have meetings for heads of departments and section heads with the school. All these are ways of power-sharing at a school board management level.

A similar question was asked of the DEBS representative, who explained as follows:

The board that I attend has structures which are democratic in their operations. For example, each school has leadership at various levels starting with a class monitor, then we move to a board of prefects and a bigger council of learners' representatives. The teachers too have section heads' meetings, then departmental meetings which later turn into staff meetings. In all these segments decisions are made which in some instances are brought to the school governing board for their final say.

One of the educator governors gave the following account:

Our school is democratic to a large extent in that it has democratic leaders. These leaders allow other leaders to meet at different levels. The school has school governing board meetings, heads of department meetings, Council of Learners' Representatives meetings as well as disciplinary committee meetings. I actually sit on a disciplinary committee of our school. In this committee parents and learners have representatives.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

The learner governors were also conscious of the existence of democratic structures through which learners participated actively in school governance. One learner governor participant said:

> *Our school has a school governing board, the PTA, the Learner Representative Councils and the prefect board. In all these, learners are represented. In addition to these, learners also sit on some school committees such as the disciplinary committee in which learners are represented by the vice-head boy. Whenever there was a meeting for these bodies, the learners were in attendance.* (Learner governor, School A)

Another learner governor from the same school explained as follows:

> *I will speak about what concerns us pupils. In our school, we are allowed to hold meetings. We meet as a Council for Learners' Representatives, we also have learner governors who sit on the School governing board meetings. In addition to these, we do have a body of prefects. In all these meetings people are able to discuss and make decisions.* (Female learner governor, School A)

A learner governor from School B gave similar insights:

> *Our school enables democracy to such an extent that it allows us to meet and make decisions even without teachers. The leadership groups who meet without teachers are the Council of Learners' Representatives and the prefect body. These two bodies come up with resolutions which are submitted to the school managers if need be.*

5.12.3   Democratic School Leadership

Democratic school leadership was identified by the participants as one way in which SGBs contribute to addressing democracy in the sampled schools. One learner governor from School B commented on this as follows:

> *Let me comment on democracy within our school. Our school leaders came up with a number of forums where we make decisions. We have the Council of Learners' Representatives, the prefect body and sometimes we meet with our parents and teachers in the School governing board. This how we make decisions in our school. This makes me think we have a democracy within our school.*

Three conclusions can be made from the above: data from the FGDs confirm that learner governors were aware of democratic structures in their respective schools. The data further confirm that the learner governors were also aware that decisions were made in these structures, and finally, that the school leadership was democratic in the sense that different stakeholders were allowed to made decisions.

c. Data obtained from Observation and Document Review

With the second objective in mind, the researcher tried to cross-check the information given by participants in order to confirm the existence of school structures. Available documents at the two institutions where data collection took place were examined. Evidence of meetings were unearthed for the two sampled school governing boards because a number of folders containing the minutes of school governing board meetings were found in both School A and School B. In each case, the SMT secretary was in charge of the documents and had numbered the folders for ease of reference. In addition to the minutes of the school governing board meetings, school documents reviewed by the researcher included minutes of heads of department meetings, section head meetings, disciplinary committee meetings and Learners' Representative Council meetings in the two schools under study. However, the researcher was allowed to scan some of the old folders with such minutes but not the latest ones. The explanation given for this was that some minutes contained confidential records which affected present members of staff and hence could not be given to outsiders. What came out clearly from the accessed minutes in the two sampled schools was that meetings involving various stakeholders had indeed taken place at different levels. This therefore confirmed the view that the SMT and the school governing boards in general were democratic in that they allowed other stakeholders within the school to deliberate on various issues in meetings.

The lessons drawn from the above responses are that the MoE recognised the SGBs as legal entities aimed at facilitating stakeholder participation in education through democratic structures and by creating an enabling environment in which various stakeholders met to deliberate on issues of interest. Furthermore, the researcher learnt that the MoE had formulated the *2005 National Guidelines on the Implementation of Education Boards in Schools*. This policy document was available in both the sampled schools to guide administrators and the school governing board members on how to run the school governing boards. Furthermore, the participants identified a wide range of stakeholder participants on the governing boards, as

enshrined as an enabling factor in the National Decentralization Act of 2002. This legal parameter provided an environment in which democratic practices by SGBs were enabled.

Furthermore, the responses of the various school governing board members indicated the presence of democratic school leadership which facilitated stakeholder involvement at different levels; that is, school governing body's decision-making power was somewhat tolerated at different levels of school governance, and that Learner's voices were somewhat accepted at difference levels.

It is also clear from the findings from the sampled schools that discipline for learners took place through a democratic process involving disciplinary committees, and that the school governing boards had embraced a democratic school culture through power sharing at the school governing board, section head, head of department, prefect and Learner Representative Council, school governing board committee and other school committee levels. Evidence of meetings were unearthed from the school documents reviewed by the researcher, including departmental, Learner Representative Council and school governing board minutes in the two schools under study.

5.13   PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS FOR THEIR NEW ROLES ON SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARDS IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA

It is necessary to prepare school governors who take up certain leadership roles on a governing board if they are to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. The reviewed literature indicates that one major way in which school governors are prepared for leadership roles is through training which may be offered to them through organised induction programmes. Accordingly, the third objective of the study was "to investigate whether school governing board members are sufficiently prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools?" This objective was guided by the research question: How are the school governing board members prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools? A number of sub-questions were devised to help the researcher solicit responses on whether school governing board members were sufficiently trained to perform their roles. One prominent theme that emerged from this objective was "lack of training and induction" which resulted in some school governing board members failing to perform their roles effectively. Data obtained from the interviews and the FGDs further revealed that policy documents were given to board

members as a way of preparing them for meetings. The following data are presented on the findings based on the third objective:

5.13.1   Lack of Training

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

Understanding whether SGBs were sufficiently prepared to assume leadership roles on Zambian secondary school governing board was the third focus of this study. The conversations that the researcher had with school governors, namely, the chairpersons of school governing boards, head teachers, parent governors, teacher governors and learner governors, provided helpful feedback on how this concept was understood by various participants.

All school governing board members were asked to state whether or not they were trained when they assumed their leadership role on a school governing board? Most of the parents interviewed indicated that they had not received any form of training in the management of school governing boards. Those who had served on the board for more than 12 years, however recall having gone through some training when school governing boards were introduced. A number of responses were given by the school governors from both School A and B as follows:

> *Well, I have been on this board for more than six years now... unfortunately since I joined the board I was not given any form of training. The only thing I got was some policy documents which the board refer to from time to time on implementation of school governing boards. I still have those documents.* (Parent governor, School B)

Another parent from the same school had this to say:

> *We were not trained on how to run the affairs of the schools. Since I joined the board four years ago, no training took place for all of us in the school board. We were simply given some documents to read. I feel information in the policy documents need interpretation to us lay people, but unfortunately this has not taken place.* (Parent governor, School A)

Information gleaned from the verbatim quotes above revealed that the interviewed participants did not go through any training. What is clear, however, is that they were given certain policy documents to read in preparation for board meetings.

More views were solicited from other participants on the same subject. A parent governor from School A had this to say about preparation for the leadership position:

> *Lack of training made it difficult to deliberate on official issues during board meetings. In most cases, we are not sure if we are doing the correct things; so we even end up keeping quiet when the meeting is running.* (Parent governor, School A)

The above response seem to suggest that the parent governor was not trained when he/she assumed this leadership role. The other implication of this finding is that the lack of training had made it difficult for the parent to deliberate on official issues during the meeting. It is also clear that the lack of training made the parent keep quiet during meetings owing to a lack of confidence.

On the same subject, a parent governor from School B had this to say:

> *I was not trained on governance issues. In view of this, I only participate on issues that deal with school fees. This is mainly because I am not sure of how the management team would feel if I discussed things that I am not very conversant with. I simply keep quiet on other official matters. Examples of areas I keep quiet on are: curriculum matters, admission policies and the school budget.* (Parent governor, School B)

The implication of the issue voiced in the verbatim quote above is that failure to train the school governing board members means that they fail to engage constructively in school governance duties. As such, the parent governor remained mute in meetings for fear of debating on things that he/she did not understand. Similarly, on the subject of training for the school governing board members, the Chairperson for School A had this to say:

> *For more than ten years now, no training of school governing board members has taken place. In my view, training is essential if governing bodies are to achieve objectives set for them. I feel the government should not stop funding training activities which we enjoyed when I joined this governing board over ten years ago.*

Accordingly, the chairperson acknowledged the fact that no training programmes were going on at the school where he was a member of the board. He does, however, make reference to some training for school governors which used to take place when he joined the board.

A similar question regarding training for board members was posed to the teacher component of the study participants. One teacher governor representative echoed the sentiments of the parents on the undemocratic element of failure to provide training and induction programmes for new governors:

> *I strongly feel that it is necessary to train new members on issues of governance as they assume this new role on a governing board. Well, my training is mainly in pedagogy and not governance. I wouldn't say I am conversant with matters relating to school governance on the school governing board. If I was given an opportunity to go for a short workshop on school governance, I would be happy.* (Teacher governor, School A)

The above response from the teacher governor participant implies that training is necessary for all school governing board members before assuming their roles on the board. The teacher felt that the training that she underwent was mainly prepared them for teaching. When asked whether or not teachers who sat on the school governing board for School A were trained on assuming their duties on the school governing board, the teacher governor explained as follows:

> *Apparently, I have served the board for some time now. I have not been subjected to any form of induction or training. I feel this is an element which make most of the members be unsure of how to deliberate on issues of the board ... In my view, training is essential instead of giving us documents which most parents don't even read. Well, even if they read, interpretation of the content in those policy documents may not be easy for most of us who sit on a governing board.* (Teacher governor, School A).

Three things are clear from the above response: that training programmes were no longer conducted and this meant that some members were unsure when called on to deliberate on issues in meetings; secondly, that training, if provided, would enable members to take part in deliberations in school governing board meetings; and lastly, that the issuing of documents in board packs may not necessarily mean that the school governing board members read and interpret the content satisfactorily.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

When asked whether or not learner governors were trained in preparation for their roles in a governing board, all learner governors from the two sampled schools indicated that they were not trained:

> *The head boy and I have not been given any training since we assumed the role of school governors. But I feel training is important if we are to be sure of what is expected of us.* (Learner governor, School A)

The response from the learner governor participant above indicates that learner governors were not trained when they assumed leadership roles and that if training were given, the learner governors would be sure of what is expected of them. This response suggests that training is essential for learner governors if they are to perform their duties diligently. One learner governor from School B echoed the words of the learner governor from School A as follows:

> *No training was given to us since we assumed the role of governors in a school governing board ... Well I think training and orientation for new learners is necessary if they are to play their roles effectively. Unfortunately, we have not been trained.*

When asked whether learner governors were given the policy documents that the adult governors were given, all learner governor participants indicated that they had them and that they were told to return those documents at the end of their learning programmes in those schools.

The head teacher governors were subsequently invited to explain why no training and induction were given to the new governors. Both head teachers referred to a lack of commitment on the part of the powers above to offer that training that was common when boards began their operations. This view was expressed in as follows:

> *When boards began operations, funding was provided to all districts to train board members on school governance. This fund came from NGOs and from the parent MoE. Recently, there are no calls from the district for us to submit names of new board members who need training. This has died a natural death ... as such, all new members sitting on our board have not been trained ... I however, feel training was necessary for new members because this would help them settle down.* (Head teacher, School B).

The head teacher from School A echoed the views of the head teacher from School B on the failure of the District to provide training programmes for new board members:

> *When boards begun operations, all training activities for new board members were funded by the districts through MoE. Currently, we no longer receive calls for such training activities and hence all new members have not had any form of training since they joined the boards. I feel this is not good as new members may not understand their roles by simply reading the documents given to them. Interpretation of policy documents required experts to do that job.* (Head teacher, School A)

According to the responses of the two head teacher governors, training was once conducted in their respective schools and the funding for training was generated by NGOs and the parent ministry. In addition, the two head teacher governors felt that training was necessary if school governing board members were to understand their roles.

The question posed to the DEBs Representative, an ex-officio of the governing board for School A, was: Why have training activities been suspended for new governing board members in the district? The DEBs representative immediately responded:

> *Funding for training of both district and school governing board members was donor funded at the commencement of education boards in Zambia. This project went on for about five years. When the donors pulled out, the Ministry of General Education no longer had budget lines to fund training activities at the district and school levels.*

The DEBs representative further described the failure to train board members who were appointed to represent the various constituencies as unfortunate: "*I feel failure to train the members is very unfortunate because the training which was provided to all new governing board members helped them to settle down in their new appointments.*" The DEBs representative went on to suggest that in the event that districts are no longer able to offer such training activities, it would be prudent for schools to organise school-based training activities for newly appointed school governing board members. He asserted that school-based training would help new members to settle into their new appointments.

The above findings suggest that there was an absence of training for parent, educator and learner governors who joined the sampled school governing boards, especially in the recent past. It is also clear from the narratives that governors who had been on the governing boards

for more than ten years had been trained, as government and other partners in education were available to support training activities when education boards in Zambia were instituted. As time passed, these agencies stopped supporting such training activities, thus explaining why no training was available for school governing board members at the time of data collection in the sampled districts.

5.14 WAYS IN WHICH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES MAY BE USED TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY IN THE WIDER ZAMBIAN SOCIETY

The last objective of this study was, "To establish how secondary SGBs could be used in promoting democracy in Zambian society". This objective was intended to explore the perspectives of school governing board members on the ways in which SGBs could be used to promote democracy in the wider Zambian community. All participants were invited to give their views on this question. The main question used to gather information from the participants on this aspect was as follows: "In your opinion, how could SGBs be used to promote democracy in the wider Zambian society?" Other sub-questions raised were: "What experiences have you gained as a result of working with a school governing board? and "What are your thoughts and conclusions in relation to your work with a school governing board?"

Most of the participants' responses fell into the broad theme of "acquired democratic values". From the responses pertaining to this broad theme, seven sub-themes emerged: democratic leadership style; tolerance; collective decision-making; freedom of expression; transparency and accountability; respect for one another; and equity and equality for all members. The responses are explained below:

5.14.1 Democratic Leadership Style

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

School governing boards were perceived to have instilled a democratic leadership style which members apply in their respective communities. In reacting to the above questions, all participants made reference to a democratic leadership style as something that they would take home after serving on the school governing board. The illustrations below highlight their responses:

Having been a member of the school governing board has prepared me for higher leadership positions. By watching the way people participate, I have learnt how to lead democratically ... well, I have learnt a lot of things on this board and I believe I will be able to transfer these values when I am given another leadership position in future. (Parent governor, School A)

Another parent from the same school had this to say:

Many lessons can be drawn from participating on the school governing board; the major lesson I take is that this leadership challenge will not end here. I believe society will recognise me and hence the school governing board has prepared me for higher leadership positions in the society ... If happen to acquire one, I hope to lead democratically. (Parent governor, School A)

Similar sentiments were expressed by a teacher governor from School B in the following words:

I personally feel I have gained a lot of lessons which I will use in future leadership positions away from this school. I feel I will be more democratic when I get a higher leadership position be it be in church, or at the district office.

Another verbatim quote stated that:

When you are a board member, you learn many things, you learn how to govern, you learn how to listen to others and you do not leave it at this level, then you use it in other leadership positions elsewhere; I can take for example in the classroom or in church. (Teacher governor, School B)

The vice chairperson for School B had this to say:

The democratic arrangement which we use in the school governing board has a lot of lessons to draw from, for example, I am a church leader and so the democratic principles will be used in the governance of the church where I congregate. Leadership does not end here ... I still have higher leadership aspirations. I will share the knowledge gained from here when I acquired another leadership position.

A parent governor from School B noted that:

Sitting on the school governing board has helped me to watch various members of the society interact in meetings. I have learnt different leadership styles … above all I have learnt to be democratic as I saw how members tolerate other people's views.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

All learner governors who participated in the FGDs made reference to governance and leadership skills as learning points from school governing boards:

What I learnt in the school governing board is how to express myself as a leader. This has prepared me for higher leadership position when I graduate…well I hope to lead in a democratic way. (Learner governor, School B)

When asked on how school governing boards could prepare members for democracy in the wider Zambian society, learner governors from School A responded as follows:

… sitting on the board has prepared us to be democratic leaders in the society when we graduate.

Another learner governor from School A stated as follows:

Having watched democratic processes while on the school governing board, I feel I will be a democratic leader.

The above sentiments were echoed by learner governors from School B:

I learnt leadership skills, this will certainly make me a better leader who will govern with an informed vision.

Another learner governor from School B had his view in the following words:

I have been equipped with leadership skills which will make me a better future leader.

All the learner participants had similar sentiments on the aspect of democratic leadership. Their views pointing to the future, however. The learner governor participants look forward to leadership positions where they believe they will practise the democratic principles they learnt while on the school governing board.

5.14.2   Tolerance for One Another

Twenty-six participants made reference to the democratic value of "tolerance" for one another as a learning point from the interaction that they had in governing board meetings. The following illustrations highlight what the participants stated:

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

One parent governor participant was invited to give his view on what he had learnt by participating on the school governing board. His response is given below:

> *I have been a keen follower of the debates in the school governing board. Sometimes it gets hot in there. People speak a lot and I see a lot of divergent views. In the end, we still come to terms. What I pick from here is that members tolerate each other's views.* (Parent governor, School B)

Another parent from the same school stated:

> *School governing boards had different members representing different institutions. As such the members did not agree on everything at all times. In the end, they still tolerated each other's views. This is one of the things I learnt from the board.* (Parent governor, School A)

Another parent governor from School A had this to say:

> *Sitting on the board helped me to be tolerant. A lot of people had different opinions. I had to listen carefully and I could see at times people got emotional on heated debates. This really taught me to be tolerant, a skill that I will use in other situations.* (Parent governor, School B)

A teacher governor participant from School A stated as follows:

> *The composition of the board had members from different walks of society. Some are parents who came with their own agendas. Their debates were always controversial thereby dragging the pace of the meeting. We all had to tolerate their view until we come to an agreement. It's tough being there. All I can say is that I learnt to be tolerant.* (Teacher governor, School A)

b. Data From the Focus Group Discussions

Learner governor participants were also invited to indicate what lessons they had learnt by sitting on the board. A learner governor from School A had this to say on the subject:

From the way parents, teachers and administrators debated, I learnt to be tolerant. They did not always agree on all items. However, with a lot of debate, they would come to terms. Tolerance is one great lesson I learnt from the board and I hope to use it later in my future leadership positions.

Another learner participant in an FGD commented:

A lot of leadership lessons were learnt from participating on the board. One great lesson I learnt was tolerance. I saw how the chairperson of the board tolerated other people's views. I hope to use this when I become a leader in future.

5.14.3   Collective Decision-making

Twenty-seven participants made reference to decision-making as a skill that they had acquired by participating on the board. The following verbatim quote illustrates their arguments:

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

When reacting to the question, What have you learnt by participating on a governing board? one parent governor stated:

Well, one of the key roles of the board was taking and making decisions. I feel I learnt this skill and will use it in other leadership positions. (Parent governor, School A).

A teacher governor from School A had this to say about decision–making:

One lesson I learnt by sitting on the school management board was collective decision-making skill. A lot of issues were discussed in the board but later, a decision was arrived at. This I feel is a skill that I learnt and I will make use of it even in other community engagements where I am a leader. (Teacher governor, School A)

Reacting to the same question, a teacher governor participant from School B in a verbatim quote stated*:*

Like I said much earlier, I drew a lot of lessons from the board meetings. One such lesson was decision-making. The school governing board had a lot of issues to engage with. In the end, decisions were arrived at and those became resolutions of the board.

b. Data from the Focus Group Discussions

Learner governors also talked about the lessons they learnt linked to decision-making skills. The following section presents data from the FGDs held with learners. A learner governor from School B made the following comments in an FGD:

By watching the way adults debate and conclude on several agenda items, I have learnt decision-making skills. I hope to use these skills later in life. (Learner governor, School B)

Another learner said:

I have learnt how to make decisions from the school management board. I feel this is a life-long skill which I will use in my day to day leadership activities. (Learner governor, School B.

A learner governor from School A had this to say on the subject:

By sitting on the board, I learnt how to make decisions. I believe this skill is essential for I still aspire for leadership positions in my life. I hope to use this skill to solve problems. (Learner governor, School A).

Another learner governor stated:

I learnt how collective decision-making is done. I saw how parents argued on a number of issues and then conclude with one decision. (Learner governor, School A).

Data from the FGDs show that learner governors were unanimous in their belief that they learnt the skill of decision-making by participating in school governing board meetings.

5.14.4   Freedom of Expression in Meetings

The findings of the study revealed that 28 participants stated that the practice of freedom of expression was one of the lessons they learnt while sitting on a governing board. This section presents the findings on the subject.

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

When reacting to a question based on the fourth objective, "To establish how secondary school governing bodies could be used in promoting democracy in the wider Zambian society" a parent governor from School A had this to say:

The meetings that we had provided members with some room to talk; in this way, I have learnt how to express myself freely in public. I hope to use this skill elsewhere in the community. (Parent governor, School A).

Similar to the above sentiment, another parent had the following view:

We were free to express ourselves in governing board meetings. In a democracy, we also want to be free to speak and express ourselves. We do just that. This is what I learnt by sitting on a governing board. (Parent governor, School B).

Echoing the above sentiment, the chairperson for School B made the following remark:

Our members are free to speak in the meetings. We provide a platform where all members can speak freely. Well, I feel board meetings are democratic platforms.

Similar to the above sentiment, a teacher governor expressed the following view:

One thing I learnt from the deliberation in the board meetings was freedom of expression. I felt that I was in a democracy. This has to continue even in other fora because we are in a democratic country. (Teacher governor, School A).

b. Data from the Focus Group Discussions

A learner governor expressed the following in relation to freedom of expression:

By observing how parents deliberated in the meetings, I was able to tell that there was freedom of expression. The key players had an opportunity to speak on different aspects. They were able to speak on issues affecting the welfare of our school. I feel this is the lesson I learnt and I hope to tap from this and use it in my future endeavours. (Head boy, School A)

To demonstrate this trend, another learner governor had this to say:

Although I personally didn't speak, other members were free to speak freely. There was democracy in the board meeting. This is one lesson I learnt from the board and I hope to uphold freedom of expression in the community where I will be after my school term. I am hoping to graduate next month, I don't want to sit idle, I want to participate in civic issues affecting the community. Thanks to the board meetings. I have learnt a lot. (Learner governor, School B)

The findings gleaned from the above narratives show that learner governors appreciated the level of interaction among adult governors and they hope to imitate this in their future endeavours.

5.14.5   Transparency and Accountability

In attempting to discover the ways in which school governing board members had prepared members for democratic governance in the wider society, 18 participants indicated to the researcher that school governing boards had taught them the value of transparency and accountability in the manner in which they handled secondary school governance. The following illustrations support their views:

a. Data obtained from the Interviews

With regard to transparency and accountability, one parent governor reflected on the lesson learnt in the following verbatim quote:

One other lesson that I learnt from the governing board was the transparent way in which they handled the financial and the budgeting process. I saw how transparent financial issues were handled by bringing financial reports to the board meeting (Parent governor, School A).

In the same vein, a parent governor from School B explained thus:

School finances were always discussed openly in the board meetings in full view of the parents, teachers and learners. This is one lesson I got from the governing board where I participated. (Parent governor, School B)

A teacher from School A explained as follows:

Before the introduction of school governing boards, financial issues used to be controversial in school meetings; but with the introduction of the boards, the financial statement are presented and all members are happy with the results. There is transparency and accountability in as far as school funds are concerned. I feel I will adopt and adapt this skill to other institutions where I am in leadership. (Teacher governor, School A).

b. Data Obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

In line with the sentiments expressed in the interviews, a learner governor from School B had the following to say:

Although it was my first year to sit on the board, I saw how financial reports were presented before all members in the board. This practice was worth admiring because all stakeholders were satisfied on how school monies were accounted for. All I can say is that there was transparency in the manner in which finances were handled.

Another learner governor from the same school stated:

School governing boards have taught us the how to be transparent. This was seen how financial matters were debated upon in meetings. All monies coming to the school were to be accounted for. Watching this activity I feel this was a good lesson to us young people. (Learner governor, School B)

Only two learners made reference to the value of transparency and accountability. It is clear from the above findings that learner governors appreciated the way parents were transparent in the meetings and that they hope to use these lessons in their future endeavours.

5.14.6   Respect for one another

Twenty members explained that they appreciated the way members conducted themselves in the school governing board meeting. This was linked to the aspect of respect for one another. The findings on this aspect are presented below:

a. Data Obtained from the Interviews

When you are in a board meeting, you learn to listen to others and you learn to be listened to. Besides this, what we learn from boards, we give it to the grassroots. We

share resolutions of the boards and hence these democratic values do not remain in the board room, they get down to the community where we live. (Parent governor. School B).

Another participant had this to say:

I learnt from the board that opinions and view for all were respected regardless of one's social standing. Besides this, learners were also respected in the sense that they were incorporated in the board … committee on finance and budgeting had learners sitting on them. All I can say is that I appreciate the respect given to all members on the board. I believe this is something I take out of the board and use it in other avenues. (Teacher governor, School B)

Other parents and teachers interviewed had similar views on the aspect for respect for one another as a learning point from the meetings in the SGBs.

b. Data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions

Learner governor participants in the FGDs also made reference to the value of respect for one another's views in the school governing board. "*I learnt about respect for one another,*" a learner governor from School A stated, "*school management using education boards had brought about respect for learner governors … this time around, learners are allowed to join the board meetings, more so, learners are incorporated in the finance and budgeting committees, a sign that their ideas are respected.*"

The rest of the 16 participants also indicated that respect for one another's idea was the lesson they drew from participating on the management board. To avoid data saturation, the researcher withheld other verbatim.

5.14.7   Equity and Equality

The study established that the practice of equity and equality for all was one lesson that members learnt by sitting on the school governing board. Sixteen out of 36 participants made reference to this aspect. Some of the illustrations given in this regard are discussed in the following sections:

a. Data Obtained from the Interviews

Well, I can say, there was equity and equality as all member were given chance to contribute in school governing board meetings. It's a pity some members could not contribute because of personality problems. Otherwise, all of us were treated equally regardless of social status. (Parent governor, School A)

Another parent governor stated:

What I learnt was the democratic value of equity for all members. The chairperson of the school governing board meetings gave an opportunity for all of us to say something. There was equity. (Parent governor, School B)

A teacher governor from School B echoed similar sentiments:

We have equal opportunities, equal rights and rights to speak in board meetings. Learner are also given chance to say something. What I learnt from this is the principle of equality for all members. I hope to use this in my future endeavours.

Another teacher governor from the same school had the following explanation: "Boards help us embrace democratic practices which we hope to use in our communities." When asked which practices, the teacher explained that among democratic practices learnt were the "principles of equity and equality for all", as this was practised in the board meetings.

b.   Data Obtained from the Focus Group Discussion

Learner governors were of the view that school governing boards were arenas through which they learnt the principles of equity and equality. A female learner governor from School B explained as follows:

We learnt the practice of equity as chairpersons encouraged equal participation for all in the governing board. This made us get skills for responsible citizenship. Following what we learnt in school boards, I feel we shall treat other members of the society equally when we hold leadership positions in future. We had good learning points.

A Learner governor from School A had this to say as a learning point: *We learnt how to treat each other fairly in meetings and indeed in our society.* The two other learners who sit on the two governing boards had similar views. The implication of the findings is that learner

governors had the notion that they school governing bodies had the ability to impart some values of equity and equality among the learners.

It is clear from the above findings that all members of the two school governing boards saw the benefits of sitting on the board as enhancing democratic leadership skills in the communities where they live. This formed the major theme for this section. The study findings further revealed other democratic skills such as collective decision-making, tolerance and respect for one another's views, freedom of expression, the values of equity and transparency and accountability. In this way, the study concluded that school governing boards had prepared members for democratic governance in the wider society. Whether or not these democratic values will be transferred to real-life situations following their application in the school governing board is a matter for further conjecture.

5.15   DISCUSSION OF THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings in this study were derived from the data gleaned from interviews with parents and educators, FGDs with learners, participant observations and document review. The findings in this section are discussed in accordance with the literature reviewed and the conceptual framework that underpins this study. The findings are presented in terms of the research questions and in the order in which they were presented in chapter one, section 1.6. The discussion of the findings is accordingly presented (see sections 5.4–5.9) as follows:

5.15.1   Enabling Factors in Democratic School Governance

The first theme which emerged from the research was that SGBs enabled democracy. From this major theme, several sub-themes were generated which enabled participants to justify their claims regarding the factors that enabled democratic school governance. Almost all the school governing board members identified the following as enabling factors in democratic school governance: participation in meetings, stakeholder participation on the school governing boards, collective decision-making, freedom of expression, gender representation and accountability and transparency.

The data indicate that the practices of school governing boards took place in an enabling environment in which educators were free to participate or deliberate on issues that affect the education of their children (MoE, 1996). In this enabling environment, the Zambian education policy document (MoE, 1996) gives all education stakeholders (head teachers, parents, teachers

and learners) some level of authority to make decisions within the school environment. This practice is in line with the decentralization policy of 2002 implemented by Zambia, a reform which Bowasi (2007) identifies as a means to democratize the governance of secondary schools and colleges of education by involving stakeholders at grassroot level. Other writers (MoE, 1995; Changala et al., 2013; Mwase et al., 2020) regard this as a paradigm-shift reform which was informed by the belief that resources would be better used and the task of creating good quality and more equal education would effectively be addressed if the means and methods were chosen at the local level by stakeholders, rather than the central government. This argument is in line with concepts of decentralization and democratic school governance which advocate for the fair and equal participation by all in decision-making. In terms of the present study, the two concepts refer to participation by all SGBs in the governance of the schools; taking into consideration collective decision-making, freedom of expression, election of office bearers, and respect for one another, which both concepts advocate.

Other democratic principles identified by participants in the sampled schools were freedom of expression and a sense of justice and fairness. These democratic principles were noted during direct observation of the operations of the SGBs during fieldwork. It was observed that the governing boards promoted freedom of expression in that all members were encouraged to participate freely in school governing board meetings and this in turn allowed the nurturing of qualities such as participation, innovation, cooperation, autonomy and initiative in parents, learners and staff. This sits well with what Starkey (1991); Carmody (2004) and Moonga 2016 highlight as ideals necessary in any democratic dispensation. Participation in school decision-making was acknowledged by earlier writers like Moonga (2016) as empowering and professionalising teachers which in turn promoted democracy in schools. Furthermore, participation in governance has also been acknowledged by recent writers (Nswana and Simuyaba, 2020) who contended that participation in governance was every citizen's responsibility in any democratic country. Similarly, this study regards issues of participation as tenets of democracy.

The findings also revealed that school governing boards upheld the principle of equality in decision-making processes for all members of the governing board. This was noted in the way they deliberated in meetings on all pertinent issues affecting school governance. This is in line with Young (2000), who argues that when all members of an organisation are included equally in the decision-making process, the decisions will be considered by all as legitimate. By

accommodating the views of all stakeholders, the chairperson of the school governing boards promoted what Young (2000) termed inclusivity or inclusion. Once all members are included in a decision-making process, a sense of democracy is upheld (Mwase et al., 2020).

5.15.2   Disabling Factors in Democratic School Governance

The second theme which emerged from the research was that SGBs disenabled democracy. From this major theme, several sub-themes were generated which enabled participants to justify their claims regarding the practices that militated against democratic school governance; for example, the participants indicated that school governing boards were undemocratic in relation to the selection process for candidates running for the position of chairperson. However, the participants' narratives made no mention of the election itself, who voted or the degree to which members were involved in the selection or election of the chairperson.

> *We don't know what criteria are used by the SMT to elect the chairperson. For more than 10 years now, we have had the same person. I feel this is undemocratic* (Parent governor, School A)

In an ideal democratic practice, the nature of school-based participation relates to the specific functions and decision-making processes that are assumed by parents, teachers, learners and the SMT (Kapembwa & Simuyaba, 2021). The duties and functions of the school governing board members are explained in the *National Decentralization Policy* (2002) and the *Principles of Education Boards, Governance and Management Manual* (2005). These are the reference points for issues that concern school governing board regulations. This study established that many democratic practices existed in the schools under study, with the research findings revealing that the election and renewal of the chairperson position had become the prerogative of the SMT, an issue which did not motivate other parent governors who had leadership aspirations, as indicated by one female parent governor:

> *We all want to be leaders, but as it is now, all we see are same people leading all the time. This is discouraging.* (Parent governor School A)

These sentiments express a negative attitude to the undemocratic practice exercised by the SMT. This is contrary to the notion of democracy that Sayed (1999:10) talks about when he states that democracy is "about common decision-making and action, about doing things in common". This practice by the SMT lacks this concept of democracy, hence the opposite of

democracy prevailed. In this case, the researcher concluded that the process of democracy operated within a conflict domain where mutual decision-making was compromised. Accordingly, consensus came into play by forcing other governors to endorse the decisions the management team had arrived at. In Sayed's words, "consensus in decision-making and action somehow binds but in this case consensus was not upheld".(Ibid, p,10) There was no general agreement among members of the school governing board on how board chairpersons should be selected or for how long they were required to be in office. As such, this had become a breeding ground for conflict in both School A and School B. The conflict solving rule is, therefore, to uphold consensus in as far as the election of chairpersons to school governing boards is concerned. It is apparent that consensus as a democratic principle is not only an integral part of democratic school governance, but also that the education system or the school governing board cannot function meaningfully without it.

Another sub-theme identified by the participants in the study was the nature of participation of learner governors on the school governing boards. In this case, learners were included in the affairs of the school governing board by their participation but were somewhat excluded by being denied some privileges (see chapter 5, section 5.6.2). The practice of excluding learners from some activities, as highlighted in this section, are not in tandem with the views of Coleman and Earley (2005) on the democratization of education. In Coleman and Earley's view, "democratization of education entailed that stakeholders in education such as parents, teachers, and learners and other people must participate in the activities of the school" (ibid. 90). According to this view, the involvement of stakeholders in the governance and management of schools improves the quality of education. The exclusion of learners from some democratic activities has therefore been seen to be undemocratic.

The MoE *Guidelines for the Implementation of School Governing Boards in Zambia* (MoE, 2005:19) state that governing boards were, among other things, intended to "enable stakeholders to participate in educational planning and decision-making". Furthermore, earlier studies in other contexts have emphasised the need for stakeholders at secondary school level to engage fruitfully in deliberations dealing with school governance (Mncube, 2008; Dibete & Potokri, 2018). The exclusion of learners from some school governance activities, therefore, does not resonate well with the original idea regarding the purpose of school governing boards in Zambia, and runs counter to the principle of democracy where every voice should be heard. Furthermore, the exclusion of learners in school governance opposes the principle of the

decentralization of education which Zambia tried to promote through the National Decentralization Policy of 2002 and is indeed in opposition to the concept of democratic school governance which the study leans towards.

The above discussion indicates the inadequate participation of learners in school governance. The findings that learner governors lacked adequate participation are consistent with findings of other scholars. When writing about factors affecting participation in school governance, Mncube (2009) indicates that the factors that inhibit SGBs from acting democratically include language barriers, level of education of parents, lack of training, and fear of "academic victimization" of their children. Similar barriers to effective operations of SGBs were observed in South Sudan. For example, Kamba (2010) contends that the roles performed by SGBs were underperformed in South Sudan mainly as a result of a lack of training in managerial skills for board members. Lack of training of school governors has also been observed by participants in other sections of this study (See chapter 5, section 5.8).

Although democratic ideals were noted in both sampled schools, evidence from the fieldwork revealed that some undemocratic elements were found in sampled schools. For example, the learner governors indicated that although they attended school governing board meetings, they were not free to participate actively in board meetings. This was revealed in the words of a learner from School A:

> *We do not speak in governing boards. We are still new and hence we just go there to listen. We are not sure whether or not we shall offend the adult governors when we speak; and so we just listen.*

These sentiments expressed by a learner governor during interviews are in line with what Young (2000) refers to as "internal exclusion". This occurs when individuals that are normally included in the group are excluded in certain instances. In this case, learners were excluded by lack of interaction privileges in both sampled school governing boards. Although Young (2000) refers to language as a barrier to interaction, this was not the case with the sampled schools in Zambia. Other forms of internal exclusion which are peculiar to this study were the learners being told to leave meetings when discussing issues involving members of staff and minimal participation by learners in the deliberations of governing board meeting. In addition, members of the SGBs were also excluded from electing the chairpersons of SGBs. In this case, the

parents, teachers and learners were excluded, while the management team actively participated in appointing the chairperson of the school governing board.

The above presentation has highlighted factors that hinder school governing boards from acting democratically. Acting undemocratically is contrary to the principles of liberal democracy which guide the operations of school governing boards. The concept of liberal democracy which underpins the operations of secondary schools rests on the core values of rational and moral autonomy, community engagement, consensus, equality, fairness and liberty (MoE, 1996:1; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). Failure on the part of school governing boards to uphold these principles undermines the principles of democracy and brings the democratic function in disrepute as held by Makwaya (2009). The evidence from South Africa (Mncube 2009, Naidoo, Mncube and Potokri, 2015); Zambia (Bowasi, 2007; Makwaya, 2009; Mwanza, 2010; Mwase et.al 2020) and Namibia (Chombo and Mohabi, 2020) is that training is essential if governing boards are to achieve the objectives set for them. Other writers (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Chombo, 2020) emphasise that schools need to consistently empower stakeholders with knowledge in order for them to understand that involvement impacts positively on educational achievement. Therefore, SGBs need to be supported on how they can effectively engage and participate fully on school governing boards. The lack of democratic practices found in the sampled schools therefore supports the need for the training of school governors if they have to function effectively. Hence, efforts should be focused on ensuring that SGBs are aware of different ways they can involve themselves in meetings.

5.15.3 Extent to which School Governing Bodies Enable Democracy in Zambian Secondary Schools.

The themes that emerged included the existence of democratic structures and an enabling environment in school governing boards, which assisted them to act democratically. Accordingly, the findings of the study revealed that structures existed in both schools and that these structures assisted the SMT in the governance of schools. Among the structures identified by the study were PTAs, departments, section heads, school governing board committees, prefect bodies and the Learner's Representative Councils (details of these structures in chapter 5, section 5.7). The findings of this study are in line with studies by Banda (2009); Kandondo & Muleya (2012), and Chombo (2020) who state that the introduction of school governing boards through the process of educational decentralization was to provide a platform on which communities at a lower level could participate in decision-making. The findings also revealed

that both secondary schools had a PTA, departments, school governance board committees, prefect bodies and the Learner Representative Councils and that these structures helped to identify different types of needs in the school and brought them for discussion in the school governing board. The Learner's Representative Council in the schools enabled learners to meet and discuss issues pertaining to their welfare. All these highlighted structures held meetings at different intervals; some once a month, others fortnightly while others met once a term. Those that met frequently included the disciplinary committee that deals pupil discipline. Similar structures are also available in Zimbabwe (Chikoko, 2008:3) where SDCs and SDAs are in existence to govern the affairs of schools.

5.15.4   Preparation of School Governing Bodies for Their New Roles on the Boards

The third focus for this study was to establish ways in which school governing board members were prepared for their new roles on the boards. One major theme which emerged from the current study was that there was no training or induction was given to new members who had joined the school governing boards. The findings for this theme are presented and interpreted in chapter five, section 5.8 of this thesis. When reacting to the question which sought to establish whether or not school governing board members were adequately prepared to execute their duties on the school governing boards, most of the participants indicated that they were not trained. This unfortunate scenario was present in the sampled schools and probably elsewhere in Zambia, even though a number of studies have suggested the importance of training school governing board members if they are to perform their duties effectively. The Zambian national policy document, *Educating our Future* (1996) and the *Zambian National Guidelines on Implementation of Education Boards* (2003) as well as the South Africa Department of Education (1997b) contend that capacity building is a major requirement for the successful performance of members on school governing boards. Similarly, Tsotetsi et al. (2008) and Chombo & Mohabi (2020) emphasise the need for training of participants in SGBs in order for them to function efficiently. Lack of training for the school governing board members in this study affected their performance, as evidenced by the following remark:

> *I was not trained on governance issues. In view of this, I only participate on issues that deal with school fees. This is mainly because I am not sure of how the management team would feel if I discussed things that I am not very conversant with. I simply keep quiet on other official matters. Examples of areas I keep quiet on are: curriculum matters, admission policies and the school budget.* (Parent governor, School B)

Similar studies on SGBs in other regions (Quan- Baffour, 2006; Mncube, 2008; Kamba, 2010; Chombo, 2020, Chombo & Mohabi, 2020) have also acknowledged the lack of adequate preparation of school governing board members in their countries. These studies demonstrate that a lack of training has a negative impact on the effective performance of the school governing board members in meetings. The studies further indicate that student governors have difficulties in engaging in any constructive discussions which are dominated by adult governors. The inability to participate in debates and solid discussions was also identified among some parent with a poor educational background. The aspect of poor quality debate resulting from a poor education background is in contrast to the findings from Zambia in the current study, where all elected parent governors were conversant in English, the official language of Zambia (see also chapter 5, tables 5.1, and 5.5). This might therefore mean that the election of school governing board members in Zambia was carefully considered.

The evidence from England (Mncube, 2009) and Zambia (Bowasi, 2007; Makwaya, 2009; Mwanza, 2010, Moonga, 2016) is that training is essential if governing bodies are to achieve the objectives set for them. In the same vein, recent studies in other contexts indicate that lack of training renders school governing board members unable to engage fruitfully in meetings (Singogo, 2017; Chombo, 2020, Mwase et al., 2020). Lack of the democratic practice of empowering the governing board, members with the knowledge and skills required of them to engage actively in debates therefore, seems to suggest that certain undemocratic values were embedded in the practices of school governing boards in the sampled schools. This is the case, because the research evidence has clearly demonstrated that training empowers school governors to engage fruitfully in the debates during school governing board meetings. The foregoing discussion therefore clearly demonstrates that the SGBs were not adequately prepared to perform their duties on the school governing boards in Zambia and this finding is in line with the reviewed literature. The only difference lies in the educational background of school governing board members.

5.15.5 Ways in which School Governing Boards may be used to Promote Democracy in the Wider Zambian Society.

When reacting the question, "in which ways has your participation in the school governing board enhanced democracy in the wider Zambian society?", the Major theme that emerged was that the participants had acquired democratic leadership skills and certain other democratic values which they felt they could use in their communities. Among the values participants

claimed to have acquired were democratic leadership styles, collective decision-making skills, tolerance, respect for one another's views, freedom of expression, and equity and equality principles (for details see chapter 5, section 5.9 of this study). This means that the participants felt that what was learnt when serving on the school governing boards was useful for their lives and personal development in the community.

The study findings are in line with studies by Ball (2013), Loflin (2008) and Moonga (2016) on the democratic practices of schools that could influence democracy in the wider community. Ball (2013) argues that schools have a responsibility to develop the capacity of parents, learners, teachers and other local stakeholders to participate, to discuss, to challenge and to critique. It appears that school governing boards had provided platforms for the school governors to acquire the values of participation, discussion, tolerance, collective decision-making, transparency, as well as to challenge and critique, which are necessary for a democratic society. In line with the findings of this study, research evidence from the United States of America seems to demonstrate that a democratic school environment nurtures democratic values, dispositions, skills and behaviours (Loflin, 2008; Hepborn, 1984). Although carried out in different contexts, these studies indicate that democratic education is not only possible but also feasible in school bureaucratic structures and in shifting the attitudes of society. Furthermore, these studies support the evidence emanating from this study by stating that democratic experiences in schools contribute to participatory awareness, skills acquisition and collective decision-making skills which are fundamental to life in democratic societies.

The findings of this study also revealed that school governing boards had succeeded in nurturing debate, critical thinking and participation by various stakeholders in school governance. Parents and learners were encouraged to participate in and speak on school governance for the enhancement of democratic school governance and democracy in the wider Zambian society. In line with the theoretical perspective of decentralization, scholars like Moonga (2016) have argued that the school, as a microcosm of society, should have the characteristics of a democratic society. Some scholars have further argued that democracy is learnt by practicing it in all areas of life (Nswana and Simuyaba, 2021). The board members therefore, had a lot to learn by participating in school governing boards. This however is contrary to evidence from some studies done in South Africa, for example Matshe (2014) established that parents were involved in SGBs for the wrong reasons such as financial and personal gain. The significant difference between Matche's study and the current study is that

the participants in the current study supported participation and felt that they benefited by their participation on the school governing board.

However, Harber (1995) cautions that democracy is not just about the participation in school governing boards, but, more importantly, about how participation takes place in schools. In advancing his argument, Harber (1995) notes, for example, that participation rates can be high but this may not make participants democratic. This therefore implies that there are important procedural values underlying democracy which education must foster and encourage, such as collective decision-making skills, tolerance of diversity, freedom of expression and mutual respect between individuals and groups. In this current study, these values have been confirmed by participants as learning points acquired by their participating in school governance at the two sampled schools.

In conclusion to the section, the researcher argues that in spite of the difficulties and issues prevailing in school governing boards, the participation of all stakeholders in these boards is an important ingredient in building democracy in the school system as well as in the wider society. If well managed, SGBs are therefore the best platforms on which the practice of democracy can prevail in schools. This is because these legal entities make provision for interaction among the parents, educators and learner governors who take part in the governance of the school.

5.16 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented, interpreted and discussed the findings pertaining to an investigation of whether SGBs enable or disenable democracy in selected secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia. The research techniques used in this investigation consisted of interviews, FGDs, document review and observation. Accordingly, a combination of these techniques was used to assess whether or not SGBs enable or disenable democracy in Zambian secondary schools as well as in the wider Zambian society. The findings relating to the main research question were twofold: enablers and disenablers of democratic school governance were unearthed. Among the disabling factors were the undemocratic election of chairpersons, limited learner participation in school governance issues, failure by the management team to hold scheduled meetings, inequalities in the payment of allowances and occasional state interference in school governance affairs. The study concluded that these undemocratic elements could be minimized by conducting capacity building at different levels of the education system. Another

key finding from the study was that school governing boards in Zambia enabled democracy by promoting representation, stakeholder participation, debate, dialogue and collective decision-making on the part of all members of the school governing boards. The school governing boards further enabled democracy by promoting the equal rights of all stakeholders concerned in education as enshrined in the nation's National Education Policy Document of 1996. Furthermore, the two schools had established structures which served as vehicles for promoting democratic values. Lastly, the findings of this study revealed that school governing boards had succeeded in nurturing critical thinking, freedom of expression, collective decision-making skills, tolerance of diversity and citizen participation in that parents and pupils were encouraged to participate and speak on school governance for the enhancement of their democratic rights and citizenship development in the wider Zambian society. Whether or not the acquired democratic values and practices were transferred from the school governing board to real-life situations afterwards is a matter for conjecture.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented, interpreted and discussed the findings of the study. This chapter summarizes the study and makes a number of conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of this study, entitled "The role of school governing bodies in the democratization of secondary school education in Zambia". The main purpose of the study was to establish whether secondary school governing bodies (SGBs) enable or disenable democracy in the selected secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia. The main focus of this chapter is to demonstrate that the research questions outlined in chapter one have been addressed. This final chapter includes the following sections: introduction, summary of the main findings, comments on the suitability of the concepts of decentralization and the democratization of education; and the contribution and limitations of the study. The chapter closes with recommendations, suggestions for further research and a conclusion to the study.

Using a qualitative approach with multiple data collection methods, this study investigated the "The role of school governing bodies in the democratization of secondary school education in Zambia". The participants were purposely selected and comprised parent, educator and learner governors who were drawn from the school governing boards in two secondary schools in the Southern Province of Zambia. The study was anchored on the concepts of 'decentralization' and 'democratic school governance' to analyse the opinions of the participants about their experiences on their respective governing boards. The main research question was: What are the deliberations about enablers/disenablers of democratic school governance in the selected secondary schools of the Southern Province of Zambia. To address the main research question and guide the investigation, the following sub-questions were formulated:

- How do SGBs enable or disenable democracy in secondary schools in Zambia?
- To what extent do SGBs contribute to addressing issues of democracy in Zambian secondary schools?
- How are school governing board members prepared to perform their duties in Zambian secondary schools?

- In what ways can the SGBs be used in promoting democracy in the wider Zambian society?

6.2   SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

6.2.1   a) Participants' Opinion on How School Governing Bodies Enable Democracy

The findings of the study have revealed that enabling factors in democratic school governance existed in the sampled schools. The factors identified by the participants through which the SGBs enabled democracy included individual participation, stakeholder participation, collective decision-making in school governing board meetings, freedom of expression in meetings, representation of both genders on the sampled school governing boards as well as elements of accountability and transparency which were apparent during the proceedings of the board meetings observed. The researcher therefore concluded that the school governing boards were democratic in many aspects and that the SGBs had somewhat implemented the principle of decentralization in that representatives of all eligible stakeholders at the grassroots level had to some extent been included in the decision-making process in their respective school governing boards. The study further established that although certain democratic features were identified by the participants in their respective governing boards, some undemocratic elements were also noted. The next section deals with disenabling factors in school governance.

6.2.1. b) Participants' Opinion on How School Governing Bodies Disenable Democracy

Despite the general perspective among the participants that enabling factors existed for democratic governance of the selected schools, the study also revealed that in certain cases the school governing boards had disenabling factors in their proceedings. Among the disenabling factors identified by participants were that the Central Government MoE (HQ) still held the strings in regard to the schools in that they gave directives from time to time as discussed in chapter five. Furthermore, learner governors did not actively participate in deliberations during meetings. In cases where learner governors had a list of demands emanating from the Learner's Representative Council, the demands were presented by the head teachers on behalf of the learner governors. This practice was common in both sampled schools. Other undemocratic elements cited were inequalities in the payment of allowances, failure to implement suggestions from learners and failure to hold scheduled board meetings. Furthermore, the parent and learner

governors did not take part in the election of the board chairpersons as this was perceived to be the preserve of the school management team (SMT). The results show that the autocratic appointment of the chairpersons of the school governing boards had created tension among adult governors in the sampled school governing boards. Therefore, failure to conduct elections for the office of chairperson was perceived to be a disenabling factor for democratic school governance in the sampled schools.

6.2.2   How School Governing Bodies Promote Democracy in Their Schools

The second major research question sought to explore how the SGBs contributed to addressing issues of democracy in secondary school governance. The essence of this question was to enable participants to highlight the tools and democratic structures that the sampled school governing boards used to promote democracy in their areas of operations. This was done in order to establish the extent to which SGBs enabled democracy. One of the sub-questions asked was: What democratic structures are present and operating in your secondary schools? The participants identified various enabling apparatus and structures found at the secondary school level. Among such enablers highlighted was the availability of education policies and institutional guidelines which guided the operations of school governing board members; the availability of democratic structures such as the governing board itself and other structures such as the PTA, prefect body, departments, Learner's Representative Council, and school committees, as well as the committees of the governing boards.

The lessons drawn from the above responses were that the MoE recognized the SGBs as legal entities aimed at facilitating stakeholder participation in education through the democratic structures found in the schools. Furthermore, the secondary school SGBs had promoted democracy by creating an enabling environment in which different stakeholders could meet to deliberate on issues of interest in the various structures found in their respective schools. Importantly, the researcher established that the MoE had published *The 2005 National Guidelines on the Implementation of Education Boards in Schools.* This policy document was available in both the sampled schools and is intended to guide administrators and the school governing board members on how to run school governing boards. The participants in the study also highlighted a wide range of stakeholder participants on the governing boards, as enshrined in the National Decentralization Act of 2002, as an enabling factor. The legal parameters provided by these policies therefore afforded an enabling environment within which SGBs enabled democracy.

Furthermore, the responses from the various school governing board members indicated that democratic school leadership existed, and that this facilitated stakeholder involvement at different levels; that is, decision-making power was in different levels of school governance. In addition, learners' voices were heard and accepted at difference levels through participation in governance boards, school committees such as the disciplinary committee on which the Vice head boy participated, and the Learner's Representative Council where learners discussed issues and came up with resolutions to present to governing board meetings.

It is also clear from the findings gleaned from the sampled schools that there was a democratic form of discipline for learners through disciplinary committees, and that the school governing boards embraced a democratic school culture through power sharing at the school governing board, section head and head of department level, as well as through prefect body meetings, the Learner's Representative Council, the school governing board committees and other school committees. Evidence of meetings was unearthed from the school documents reviewed by the researcher including minutes of departmental meetings, minutes of Learner's Representative Council meetings and minutes of school governing board meetings at the two schools under study.

6.2.3   Preparation of Members of School Governing Bodies for their Roles in School Governance

Preparation of school governors who take up leadership roles on a governing board is necessary if they are to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. The study established that the majority of school governing board members were not adequately prepared to play their part on the school governing board. Lack of training was confirmed by both the parents and the learner component of the school governors, while some educator governors also expressed a similar view. The findings further revealed that board packs were given to adult governors to prepare them for meetings, including the parent component and the educator component of the school governing board. However, the learner component of the school governing board was sometimes not given the board packs.

Similar studies on SGBs in other regions and countries (Quan-Baffour, 2006; Mncube, 2008; Kamba, 2010, Moonga, 2016; Chombo, 2020, Mwase et al. 2020) have also acknowledged a lack of adequate preparation for school governing board members. A lack of training has a negative impact on school governing board members' performance in meetings. In addition,

learner governors had difficulties in engaging in any constructive discussions which were dominated by adult governors.

The study therefore concluded that there was an absence of training for parent, educator and learner governors who were serving on the school governing boards, especially those who had joined in the recent past. It was, however, explained that the adult governors who had been on the governing boards for more than ten years had been trained. This was because, when education boards were first implemented in Zambia, government and other cooperating partners in education were available to support training activities. The researcher further learnt that as time passed, these agencies stopped supporting training activities for school governors. This explains why no training activities were available for school governing board members at the time of data collection in the sampled districts.

6.2.4 How School Governing Bodies Contribute to Democracy in the wider Zambian Society

The last objective of this study was, "To establish how secondary SGBs could be used in promoting democracy in the Zambian society". This objective was intended to explore the perspectives of school governing board members on the ways through which SGBs could be used to promote democracy in the wider Zambian community. One major finding of the study was that school governing boards prepared their members for future leadership roles. The study findings revealed that all members of the two school governing boards saw the benefits of sitting on the board in terms of enhancing democratic leadership skills in the communities in which they live.

The study findings further revealed other democratic skills which the participants claim to have acquired as a result of sitting on the governing board. These include collective decision-making, tolerance and respect for one another's views, freedom of expression, the values of equity and transparency and accountability. In this way, the researcher concluded that school governing boards had prepared members for democratic governance in the wider society. Whether or not these democratic values will be transferred to real-life situations after their practice on the school governing board is a matter for further conjecture. The researcher therefore concluded that school governing boards had succeeded in nurturing decision-making skills and citizen participation in that parents and pupils were encouraged to participate and speak in school governance for the enhancement of their democratic rights and citizenship

development, which was useful in the wider Zambian society. The researcher could not, however, confirm whether the acquired democratic values were transferred to real-life situations after having practised them on the school governing board. This is a matter for further empirical investigation.

6.3   THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

The researcher utilized the concepts of decentralization and democratic school governance to understand the government policies pertaining to school level actors, the school governors and the actual operations of SGBs. In conceptualising the findings so as to ascertain the conceptual basis of the study, the researcher considered policy statements, government efforts to enhance the implementation of the school governing boards, and the extensive qualitative data collected from school governing board members to confirm or validate what is contained in the utilized concepts.

Democratic school governance and the concept of decentralization cannot be divorced from one another, particularly when deliberating on participation and representation. Democracy, just like decentralization, advocates for fair and full participation of all in decision-making. In terms of the present study, such concepts refer to participation by all school governing board members in the governance of the schools, taking into consideration collective decision-making, freedom of expression, election of office bearers, and respect for one another, which both theories advocate. The findings of the study revealed these democratic features (see chapter 5, section 5.4) as well as the absence of the same (see chapter 5. section 5.6) when critically viewed.

Additionally, the concepts of decentralization and democratic school governance were found to be suitable for arranging and analysing data related to participants' opinions about their experiences in school governing boards in Zambia. The concept of decentralization emphasizes the need to take power to the grassroots (see chapter 1, section 1.1). Zambia responded to this by implementing school governing boards at different levels (MoE, 1996:20 & Bowasi, 2007:3), secondary schools included. In these secondary school SGBs, various school governors representing different constituents were found to be part of the decision-making process at the school level, among them parent governor, learner governor and educator governor representatives.

Democracy implies that all members of an organisation are included equally in the decision-making process and as such these decisions would be considered by all as legitimate. Despite this call for democracy, SGB members such as parents and educator were diverted from this norm in that certain undemocratic elements were found among the SGBs (see Chapter 5, section 5.6). This suggests following the interpretation of the researcher that democratic school governance might not have been fully understood by some members of the school governing boards, hence the departure from the expected norms. This therefore calls for training of the school governing board members to enable them to be aware of their roles and responsibilities. By so doing, democratic school governance and decentralized school governance will be realised and eventually greater democracy will be result.

The need for greater democracy in education has been supported by many researchers internationally (Harber & Davies, 1997; Mncube, 2008; Mncube, 2009; Chombo, 2020; Nswana & Simuyaba, 2021). The central argument of this thesis is that schools must be organised along democratic lines, taking into account that democracy is best learnt in a democratic setting in which participation is encouraged, where there is freedom of expression, a sense of fairness prevails for all and respect for one another's views. It was established in this study that a sense of fairness was lacking in some instances among SGBs, for example where learner governors were excluded from direct participation by not being allowed to present their reports and when they were denied the sitting allowance which adult governors enjoyed. The researcher therefore calls for the strengthening of structures within school governing boards if greater democracy is to be realised.

In line with the concept of democratic school governance and what other researchers (e.g. Starkey, 1991; Mncube 2009; Chombo, 2020) in earlier studies observed, this study calls for democratic approaches which allow for the nurturing of qualities such as participation, innovation, cooperation, autonomy and initiative in learners and staff. This can be done through adequate preparation of school governing board members. Training is therefore advocated by the researcher and supported by two concepts for by all categories of the participants of this study (see chapter 5, section 5.8) in order to strengthen democratic values.

A leading scholar on school governance (Young, 2000) in contexts that differ from that of this study contends that democratic norms mandate inclusion as a criterion for political legitimacy, and that democracy implies that all members of the polity are included in the decision-making process and these decisions would be considered by all as legitimate. Young (2000) speaks of

two types of inclusion. External inclusion – where some individuals are kept out of the forums for debates or decision-making processes – and internal inclusion – where some individuals are normally included in the group but still excluded – for example through interaction privileges, language issues, and the participation of others who are dismissed as irrelevant. The preceding discussion, in the light of the two concepts of democratic school governance and decentralization, provided the conceptual framework for a qualitative inquiry which explored the forms of exclusion prevailing in the two school governing boards in the Southern Province of Zambia. The findings of the study revealed elements of both internal and external exclusion of the school governing board members, thereby deviating from the concept of democratic school governance. In view of the findings of this study, the researcher advocates for the SGBs to be more democratic in their activities.

It is clear from the discussion above that the two concepts (i.e. democratic school governance and decentralization) sit well in the study in that the findings confirm certain elements found in the components of the two concepts. In addition, the findings indicate areas where SGBs lack democratic values. This has been attributed to the inadequate preparation of school governing board members.

6.4   CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher believes that this study has made four important contributions.

6.4.1   How School Governing Bodies can Act More Democratically

Firstly, the study has made an attempt to highlight enablers and disenablers in the operations of school governing boards. Unearthing the undemocratic elements has helped to narrow the gap that exists in school governing boards. School governing boards were meant to enhance democracy through participation and debates and to practise collective decision-making processes and other democratic values found in the notion of the study's underpinning of democratic school governance. This study has revealed that to a certain extent this was not happening. The results obtained from the school-level actors, the school governors, reflected policy violations and violation of school governance regulations. For example, in the actual functioning of SGBs, the study established that school governance and participation are defined in very narrow terms that emphasise physical participation for accountability reasons rather than for democratic purposes. Furthermore, parental participation is framed by what head teachers view as appropriate within the boundaries of supporting the efficiency of governing

the schools, while learner participation was defined in terms of physical attendance of meetings. It is hoped that awareness of these undemocratic acts in school governance can help reduce the apparent gap between and among stakeholders in the school governing boards.

6.4.2   Strengthening Democratic Values through Democratic Structures

The study revealed that democratic structures that SGBs could use to enhance democracy existed. It was, however, established that the democratic values of participation, efficiency, collective decision-making, equity, freedom of expression and dialogue were only implemented in piece-meal. Lack of training rendered the actors' participation inadequate. In addition, the guidelines for operationalizing these governing boards should spell out clearly the role of all school governing board members. This would help them to execute their duties in a professional and standardized manner.

The inclusion of the parent, educator and learner governors on the school governing board was a positive response to grassroots' participation which was in line with Zambian Decentralization Policy of 1992 as well as the theory of decentralization of education. This is because all constituents at the school level were represented. If well managed this can lead to greater democracy at a school level.

In this study, the findings have indicated that parent and learner governors had a different focus during the school governing meetings and that these constituents indicated that they were not free to speak in the school governing board meetings. What was lacking among the two school governing boards were strategies to make parent and learner governors more aware of their roles. The researcher therefore contends that SGBs should come up with strategies which would assist both constituents to engage fully in school governing board meetings.

The study proposes that since the MoE is the main player in the formulation of policy guidelines which affect the entire country, it should take a keen interest in the training process for school governing boards, particularly training new school governing board members once appointed by the Minister of Education. The involvement of the Ministry is likely to influence the way SGBs implement democratic values at the lower level. If carefully planned, this programme could be scaled down to all schools along with manuals for use at lower levels in Zambian secondary schools. This should eventually be given to the SMT to take up the challenge to train new members on their governing boards.

To conclude, it is envisaged that the proposed improved guidelines from the Ministry will enhance greater democratization in the operations of the school governing boards. It is also hoped that if the proposals made by the researcher are successfully implemented, this will lead to the enhancement of democracy in the operations of the school governing boards especially if put into practice by all role players.

6.4.3   School Governing Bodies as Platforms for the "Voiceless"

The study has contributed to the international debate on democratic school governance and in highlighting the practices obtaining in SGBs. The contribution made here pertains to learner governors who are considered to be "voiceless" even in matters in which they are directly involved, such as drafting the code of conduct for learners, the food budget for learners, and curriculum matters. The researcher's argument is that learners should be given a platform to air their views and not a platform to merely participate in meetings. It was common to see learners "excluded" during meetings either implicitly or explicitly. In this regard suggestions from learners were ignored and reports from the Learner's Representative Council were managed by the head teachers. The implication of this action is that although learner governors attended the meetings, their voices were suppressed explicitly by giving head teachers the tasks which learners could easily manage. Therefore, the researcher reasons that learner governors will be able to contribute significantly to the debates in school governing meetings if they are given a chance to participate in drafting and presenting their reports, and if the atmosphere is made conducive for them to engage with adult governors.

6.4.4   Generation of Information to the Existing Literature

As stated in chapter one, school governing boards and democracy are an area that is under-researched in Zambia and indeed other countries. This has been acknowledged by earlier scholars (Bowasi, 2007; Quan-Baffour, 2006; Chikoko, 2008; Kamba, 2010; Moonga, 2016). This study therefore contributes to reducing the gap that exists in the literature on the role of SGBs in addressing democracy. This is important considering that the literature reviewed for the study comprised only two relevant studies from Zambia, Bowasi (2007) and Moonga (2016). In this regard, the findings of the study are important as they build on earlier research which investigated other aspects of school governing boards. This current study has provided more insights into and has made a contribution to the growth in knowledge about,

decentralization in education and democratic school governance in Zambia. Despite the positive contribution, the study had some limitations.

6.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite the positive contributions as shown in above section, the study had some limitations. This study exhibits both strengths and limitations as an exploratory investigation. The limitations which are related to the methodology of the study are highlighted below. The first limitation is that only a small number of SGBs from two secondary schools were involved in the study, considering that there were others that could have been included in the Southern Province. However, the small number sufficed for the study, as it was a qualitative study which required only participants whose extensive knowledge and experience in the SGBs would enable the researcher to collect data that would address the research question. This position is consistent with many researchers who have argued that there is a tendency to base their research on fewer cases in qualitative designs (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008:14; Gray, 2009:180, Merriam 2009:16; Sorensen, 2014:132; Manyasi, 2014:55). This is because qualitative data is often detailed (O'Leary, 2010:164), as was the case in this study.

As an exploratory study using a qualitative research approach, in-depth individual interviews, observation, document review and focus group discussions were used to obtain the findings. These research tools were descriptive and not quantified; they nevertheless sufficed because the main focus was on getting the views and experiences of the participants, which qualitative research focuses on (Cohen, et al. 2007:29).

In addition, to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, the researcher used methodological triangulation and made conclusions based on data collected from multiple sources (Bowen, 2009:28; Yin, 2011:9; Luchembe, 2020). Further, similar responses were found within and across groups to similar questions, which not only validated the instruments used in this study but also enhanced its credibility. This is in line with Tracy's (2013:168) argument that through group interactions, "participant's experiences are validated". Therefore, the use of interviews with different groups of participants not only yielded rich information but helped the researcher to discover the "construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting" (Cohen et al., 2007:29). It also enabled the researcher to obtain the participants' perspectives on the issue being investigated more effectively (Hatch & Coleman-King, 2015:452).

The third limitation is that the study was confined to the Southern Province of Zambia. Considering this, the information cannot be generalised to other provinces. According to Thomas (2015:150), the aim of a case study is to have a deeper and clearer understanding of the issue being investigated. This is exactly what this study aimed at achieving. Therefore, the findings of this study have generated further insights into the functioning of the SGBs in Zambia, which scholars can learn about and/or probe further. Having presented the limitations of the study, the next section outlines the recommendations in line with the findings and conclusions of the study.

6.6   RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

In view of the preceding findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

- The researcher proposes practices related to equity, deliberation, concern for one another, collective decision-making, freedom of expression, recognition of unheard voices, and inclusion at all levels of participation by all school governing bodies.
- The need for clear policy guidelines on governance for school governing boards. Unless policy on governance in school governing boards is drafted to guide school governing board members, there will be little chance of realising democratic governance among school governing boards in Zambia.
- Further, the researcher recommends a serious commitment to nurturing school governing board members' innate capabilities to enable them deliberate effectively in meetings. This can be done through induction programmes. Without serious commitment, democratic school governance has little chance of being realised in the school governing boards of Zambian secondary schools.
- The researcher recommends the formation of an "Association of Retired Education Administrators" which could be used to conduct capacity building programmes for school governing board members. The skills in governance and knowledge of such administrators would go a long way in nurturing school governing board members' innate capabilities to enable them deliberate effectively in meetings.
- The researcher further recommends the need for the MoE to redefine the roles of SGBs. If SGBs are to allow for the authentic participation of all school governors in school governance, this will require addressing power structures and contentious issues raised by school governors. This in turn will lead to democratic school governance.

- SGBs should conduct open and fair elections for chairpersons. This has to be done in line with what is provided for in the national guidelines for the implementation of governing boards in Zambia.

- The SGBs need to address unfair practices such as the payment of allowances to school governors, which were found to be inconsistent in this study. Learner governors should therefore be considered in this because they form part of the meetings.

- All school governing board members should be remunerated by the Ministry of General Education for the services they render to the schools. If they are remunerated, SGBs will be more committed to their work and would be more available to assist the school.

- To enable learners do their work as governors efficiently and dedicatedly, they should be given basic training by the SMT and members of the proposed Association for Retired Education Administrators once it begins its operations.

- SGBs should treat learner governors as fellow administrators by giving them more powers on the governing board. All reports from the Learner's Representative Council should be read by learner governors in meetings and not by the head teacher. This will in turn instil more confidence in learner governors enabling effective deliberations in school boards and later in the wider Zambian society when they graduate.

- The SMT should always schedule meetings as planned. This will remove suspicions by other members regarding the operations of the schools in the absence of other school governing board members.

- The head teachers should be communicating the unintended benefits to learners to attract them to be part of the board. For example, learner governors should be made to understand that they will learn various skills such as budgeting, fundraising, decision-making and leadership, which will be helpful to the learners when they leave school.

- Lastly, the researcher recommends that SGBs should be more democratic in their operations. This can be achieved by distributing tasks among all members, which would compel everyone to speak in school governing meetings. This in turn will lead to deliberative democracy whereby governing bodies operate democratically. This will form part of the researcher's notion of "democratic school governance", whereby all school governing board members are trained, and are guided by the principles of equity, deliberation, concern for one another, collective decision-making, freedom of expression, recognition of unheard voices, and inclusion at all levels of participation on the school governing board.

6.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this study suggest some avenues for further research. The suggested areas may not only augment the findings of this study but may also clarify those that seem inconclusive.

The researcher proposes that a study of a similar nature, in which the focus is on how SGBs enhance democracy in the wider community, may enhance our understanding of the extent to which SGBs enhance democracy in Zambian society.

Another area of research could be a quantitative research study evaluating the relevance of learner governors' participation in SGBs in Zambian Secondary Schools. Quantitative research of this sort will help evaluate the relevance of learners in school governing meetings. This will further give an understanding of the extent to which learner participation contributes to governance affairs at the secondary school level.

A comparative study investigating the role of SGBs in enabling/disenabling democratic school governance should be done between two different country contexts in the Southern African region. This should compare implementation strategies as well as factors affecting the functioning of SGBs in different contexts.

6.8 CONCLUSION

The intention of creating the school governing boards in Zambia was in essence to promote broad participation in decision-making through local governance structures in which parents serve as the majority members. At the implementation stage, all stakeholders thought that policy would turn out as intended. But this study established that some practices and local policies are inconsistent with the original intentions. This is so because scrutiny of the effects of implementation of SGBs has proved otherwise, as payment of allowances to school governors was inconsistent; meetings were not held as recommended by the Act; tenure of office was extended to eight and in some instances more than ten years as opposed to maximum six years required by law; failure to conduct democratic elections of office bearers; and learner governors were not accorded the chance to air their views or their views were not taken in account by implementing their recommendations arising from the Learner's Representative Councils. Accordingly, it is clear that the school governors have altered the content of the guidelines for the operations of the SGBs. Even the thinking of the SMTs has changed, thereby

legalizing incorrect school-based policies in school governance which do not promote democratic school governance.

There were, however, more democratic elements than undemocratic ones. The undemocratic elements have been attributed partly to a lack of adequate preparation of school governing board members for their new assignments and partly to inadequate operational guidelines. The study further established that the factors hindering operations of the school governing boards were in line with the reviewed literature. For example, earlier studies alluded to poor functioning of SGBs owing to the poor preparation of school governors.

The study established that there was no consensus or clarity on who should elect/appoint the chairperson of the school governing board. This came about mainly because the participants were not clear about their roles on the governing board. Therefore, as part of the strategy to enhance democratic school governance, training of school governing board members was suggested. Once training was provided, tension and role confusion would be avoided among school governing board members, and they would all operate within what is provided for in the guidelines for the operation of school governing boards.

The study has identified that there is a need for coordination between school governing boards and the MoE. This will eliminate feelings of role confusion which the school governing board members had in relation to ministerial statements and state guidelines, which resulted in school governing board members feeling that there was state interference in their governance. Knowledge of what is for the state and what is for the school will enable SGBs to operate democratically. As argued repeatedly in this thesis, SGBs require adequate training if they are to function more effectively and democratically.

The findings suggest that all the members of the school governing board would participate adequately if the SGBs were to address democracy. However, for participants to play a pivotal role in a democratic school, they should engage fruitfully and should be knowledgeable about their roles.

The study further established that democratic structures existed within the SGBs. Among these structures were the school governing boards themselves, the PTAs, the staff meetings, the heads of department meetings, the section heads meetings, the prefect body and the Learner Representative Council. It was further established that SGBs promoted democratic values using the established structures in that all constituents were allowed to operate within the school

governing boards. It was also established that there is a need to strengthen these structures if SGBs are to act more democratically.

Furthermore, the researcher recommends that SGBs should act more democratically by having all key players interact in school governing board meetings. Once that happens, the governing bodies would operate within the researcher's notion of "democratic school governance", one in which school governing board members are trained and are living by the principles of equity, deliberation, concern for one another, collective decision-making, freedom of expression, recognition of unheard voices, and inclusion at all levels of participation on the governing board. By embracing these democratic values, the school governing boards will be operating within the desired policy framework governing democratic school governance that is recommended worldwide.

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Zambia 2020.Country Human Rights Reports. https://www.state.gov>uploads.

APPENDIX A: PROOF OF STUDENT REGISTRATION AT UNISA

UNISA | university of south africa

1637 M1RST

SIMUYABA E MS   STUDENT NUMBER : 5331-501-4
UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION   ENQUIRIES NAME : MALEFO SP
EAPS DEPARTMENT   ENQUIRIES TEL : 0124415702
P O BOX 32379
LUSAKA
ZAMBIA   DATE : 2021-04-14

Dear Student

I wish to inform you that your registration has been accepted for the academic year indicated below. Kindly
activate your Unisa mylife (https://myunisa.ac.za/portal) account for future communication purposes and access to
research resources.

DEGREE :   PHD (EDUCATION)   (90019)

TITLE :   The role of school governance in the democratization of secondary school
                    education in Zambia: A case study

SUPERVISOR :   Dr C POTOKRI (cnuvie@gmail.com)

ACADEMIC YEAR :   2021

TYPE: THESIS

SUBJECTS REGISTERED: TFPEM01 PhD - Education (Education Management)

A statement of account will be sent to you shortly.

You must re-register online and pay every academic year until such time that you can submit your dissertation/thesis
for examination.

If you intend submitting your dissertation/thesis for examination you have to submit an Intention to submit
form (available on the website www.unisa.ac.za) at least two months before the date of submission. If
submission takes place after 15 November, but before the end of January of the following year, you do need
not to re-register and pay registration fees for the next academic year. Should you submit after the end
of January, you must formally reregister online and pay the full fees.

Please access the information with regard to your personal librarian on the following link:
https://bit.ly/3hxNqVr

Yours faithfully,

Prof M S Mothata
Registrar

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/07/12

Ref#: **2017/07/12/53315014/20/MC**
Name: Ms E Simuyaba
Student#: 53315014

Dear Ms Simuyaba

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2017/07/12 to 2022/07/12

_____

Researcher:

Name: Ms E Simuyaba
Email: esimuyaba@yahoo.com
Telephone#: +260955993170

Supervisor:

Name: Dr OC Potokri
Email: cnuvie@gmail.com
Telephone#: 0842671740

Title of research:

The role of School Governing Bodies in the democratization of Secondary School education in Zambia: A case study

---

Qualification: D Ed in Education 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 2017/07/12 to 2022/07/12.

The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/07/12 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:

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

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1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
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 2022/07/12. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.
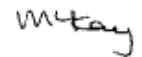
Note:

The reference number **2017/07/12/53315014/20/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
mcdtc@netactive.co.za

Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

APPENDIX C: PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Alexa Barnby
Language Specialist

Editing, copywriting, formatting, translation

BA Hons Translation Studies; APEd (SATI) Accredited Professional Text Editor, SATI
Mobile: 071 872 1334   alexabarnby@gmail.com

28 January 2022

DECLARATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDIT

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ZAMBIA: A CASE STUDY

by

Eunifridah Simuyaba

I declare that I have edited the above doctoral thesis, ensuring that the work follows the conventions of grammar and syntax, correcting misspelling and incorrect punctuation, changing any misused words and querying if the word used is what is intended, ensuring consistency in terms of spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and other aspects of style, as well as checking referencing style.

The onus is on the author, however, to make the changes and address the comments made.

AK BARNBY

Professional EDITORS' Guild

Alexa Barnby
Full Member
Membership number: 1548001
Membership year: March 2021 to February 2022
Accredited professional of Text editor, English (SATI)
071 872 1334
alexabarnby@gmail.com
www.editors.org.za

SATI
SOUTH AFRICAN
TRANSLATORS' INSTITUTE

APPENDIX D: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH TO MOE

Date: 28.04.2017.
The Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of General Education,
Ministry Headquarters,
P.O. Box 50093
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA.

Dear Sir/Madam,

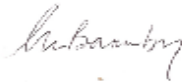RE: **Request for permission to conduct research in the Ministry of General Education on a study entitled: The Role of School Governing Bodies in the Democratization of Secondary School Education in Zambia: A Case Study.**

I am Eunifridah Simuyaba, doing research under supervision of Dr. O.C. Potokri, a Lecturer, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Doctor of Education Degree at the University of South Africa.

The aim of the study is to investigate the actual functioning of School Governing Board Members in order to establish whether or not School Boards promote democratic principles in their operations. Your Ministry has been selected because it houses the two (2) co-education Public Secondary Schools which I identified as case studies in the Southern province. The study will entail interviewing the School Governing Board members in the two (2) sampled schools.
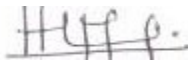
The benefits of this study are that the information obtained from this study will help understand or enhance the democratic process in both public and private schools and the information collected will be useful for training the future board members.

Participation of participants in this study is voluntary. For some respondents, It will involve an interview of approximately 60 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to them. Participants are free to decline to answer any of the interview questions if they so wish. Furthermore, they may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

Note that there are no risks involved in this study as the target sample of participants is that of School Governing Board members. Note that this study is purely academic in nature as such there will be no incentives for participation in the research.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me on +260979418820 or email esimuyaba@yahoo.com. If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about approval, please contact me on +260979418820; email esimuyaba@yahoo.com or my supervisor, Dr OC Potokri on +27842671740 or cnuvie@gmail.com

Yours sincerely

Simuyaba Eunifridah

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE FROM PERMANENT SECRETARY (P/S).

All communications should be addressed to:
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of General Education
Note to any individual by name

Telephone: 250855/251315/251283
251293/211318/251291
251003/251319

In Reply Please Quote
No.................................

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

P.O BOX 50093
LUSAKA

16th October, 2017

Simuyaba Eunifridah
Lecture
University of Zambia
LUSAKA

Dear Eunifridah

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

Reference is made to the above subject.
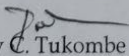
I write to inform you that the permission has been granted for you to conduct your research in Southern Province.

"The role of School governing bodies in the democratization of Secondary School education in Zambia".

The research should not interfere with the teaching and learning in the selected Schools.

By copy of this minute the Provincial Education Officer is informed accordingly.

I wish you well in your research.

Henry C. Tukombe
Permanent Secretary
MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

CC :   The Provincial Education Officer
        Southern Province

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DISTRICTS FROM PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICE (PEO)

All communications should be addressed
to the Provincial Education Officer and
not to any individual by name
Telefax: 021-3-221430

In reply please quote

No:............................

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
P.O. BOX 630477
CHOMA

23rd October, 2017

TO : District Education Board Secretaries

Att : **Headteachers**

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE
MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION**

Reference is made to the above subject.

I write to inform you that Mrs. Simuyaba Eunifridah has been granted permission to conduct research in your districts.

Kindly note that the research should not interfere with the teaching and learning in the selected schools.

Kindly welcome her accordingly.

Florence M. Chikalekale (AEO)
Provincial Education Officer
SOUTHERN PROVINCE

mnc.....

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SGB

THE INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THIS INTERVIEW IS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES ONLY AND WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT THE RESPONDENT'S PERMISSION.

1. Will you please share with me the demographic features of your school: Governance structure? Composition of the board? Number of meetings of the board per term/year? Roles of the governors? Admission policy? Any sort of entertainment?

2. What are your views about the changes in school governance since the introduction of school governing boards?

3. How does the introduction of school boards affect your work as a head teacher/ board chairperson?

4. In what ways does the school governing board contribute to the promotion of democracy in your school?

5. How do school board members in your school understand, interpret and explain education policies?

6. In your view, does the school governing board assist in promoting democracy in the school? Explain?

7. What changes in your school can be attributed to operations of school governing board?

8. What type of training have you been offered by the Ministry to enhance your work as school governor and Ex-officio of the school board?

9. In your view, how does the government policy on school boards help improve democracy?

10. What do you see as the role of school governing boards in assisting improve participation and democracy in education?

11. In what ways do school governing boards help improve accountability?

12. What do you see as the role of the learner in the era of school governing boards?

13. What further training have you received in school governance?

14. How does your school empower SGB members to perform their tasks efficiently?

15. How do you appoint school governors? Are they appointed based on their skills, and is it easy to find board members with the necessary school governance skills? How will this be improved?

16. What are some of the areas that need improvement in school governance, e.g are we properly engaged with our community or the wider school sector? If not, how can this be improved?

17. What experiences can you share as a result of working with school governing boards at your school?

18. Do school boards prepare members for democracy in the wider Zambian society?

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE FGD FOR LEARNER GOVERNORS

THE INFORMATION OBTAINED IN THIS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION IS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES ONLY AND WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT THE RESPONDENT'S PERMISSION.

1. Name of School: ……………………………………………………………
2. Interviewer:
   …..………………………………………..…………………………………
3. Nature of Meeting: …………………………………………………………
4. Number of Learners………………………...…………………………………
5. Comment on your ratio of gender representation on the board. i.e. 1:1
6. Comment on your relationship with other members of the school governing board.
7. Share your experiences as Learner representatives on School Governing Boards.
8. Comment on your representation on specific issues e.g.

   a) Finance and budgeting?

   b) School infrastructure?

   c) Entertainment?

   d) Disciplinary committee? Of pupils? Of Teachers? Of other members the school?

9. Comment on your participation on disciplinary process affecting fellow students.
10. Comment on whether or not you are given daily subsistence allowance/sitting allowance when sitting on board meeting or when doing board work?
11. Comment on whether issues of finances were handled on an accurate and transparent manner on your school board.
12. Comment on your involvement in formulation of school policies/guidelines.
13. Give your view on why school governing boards were created. Are they necessary?
14. Give your views on why you were included in school governing board?
15. Comment on whether or not they were involved in organizing school activities, e.g. Budgeting, recruitment of staff, etc.?

16. Comment on problems faced by learner representatives on boards.

17. Explain on the kind of training (if any) given to you as a board member?

18. Suggest on how the problems faced by learners on the board could be overcome?

19. Comment on achievement of the learner representatives on school boards.

20. Comment on what fellow pupils feel about the idea of removing student representatives from the because of the view that "that their participation is a waste of time"?

21. What other things would you like to share about learner representation on school boards?

22. Comment on issue of democracy on your board (equity, equality, freedom of expression, etc).

23. What are your conclusions about learner representation on school boards?

24. Other than Learner governors; what are your conclusions about participation of other stakeholders on the board?

25. Explain how the government policy on school governing boards may/may not promote democracy?

26. In your view, do school boards sufficiently prepare learners for democracy in the wider Zambian society?

APPENDIX 1: DOCUMENT CHECKLIST FOR DOCUMENT REVIEW

APPENDIX J: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

THE INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING THIS OBSERVATION IS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES ONLY AND WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT YOUR INSTITUTION'S PERMISSION.

1. School; …………………………..……………………………………………….

2. Observer: …………………………………………………………..

3. Nature of Meeting: …………………………………………………………..

4. Number of: [   ] Teachers   [   ] Parents   [   ] Learners   [   ] Ex-officio(s)   [   ] others.

5. Comments.………………………………………………….…………
   ……………………………………………………………………..……
   …………………………………………………………………………

6. How is the sitting arrangement?
   ……………………………………………………………….…………
   …………………………………………………………………………

7. Chairperson…………………………………… [   ] Male   [   ] female
   Comment:…………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………..

8. Who speaks most?   [   ] males   [   ] females
   [   ]All gender

9. Do pupils speak?   [   ] YES   [   ] NO

10. Are pupils given chance to present something? [   ] YES   [   ] NO

11. Comments on conversation of School governing board members:………………….
    …………………………………………………………………………
    …………………………………………………………………………
    …………………………………………………………………………

12. Topic of discussion: …………………………………………………

13. Speaking turns of board members:…………………………………………….

14. Time taken by each participant speaking: …………………………………….

15. How long did the meeting take?
    …………………………………………………………………………

16. Does chairperson encourage pupils to say something?   [   ] YES   [   ] NO

17. Participation by each school governing board member; check for the following;

    a) Representation of stakeholder in board meetings.

    b) Prevalence of democracy in such meetings.

    c) Respect for the views of all members

    d) Speaking turns and contribution by each member of the school governing board.

    e) Extent to which parents, union leaders and local authorities speak in a board meeting.

18. Presence of Issues of Democracy in Board Meetings; check aspects of :

    a) Gender……………………………………………………………………………

    b) Equality…………………………………………………………………………

    c) Equity:………………………………………………………………………….

    d) Religion…………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………..……….

    e) Inclusiveness……………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………..

    f) Sexual orientation…………………………………………………………………

    g) Freedom of expression:…………………………………………………………

    h) Rights of Learner Governors……………………………………………………

    i) Authoritarian Principles………………………………………………………………….

    j) Democratic principles:……………………………………………………………

About Learner Governors

19. Are they active? [ ] YES   [ ] NO   Did they actually speak? [ ] YES [ ] NO

Comments:………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………

20. Which topics do they speak most on?

…………………………………………….……………..…………..…..…

………………………………………………………………………………….…

…………………………………………………..……

21.   Are they intimidated?

……………………………………………………………..…………………………

…..……..……..

22.   Comment on representation of other learners:

…………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………….……

23.   General observation about the meeting:

………………………………………………….….….

……..………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………..…

APPENDIX K: LETTER OF CONSENT OF PROSPECTIVE ADULT PARTICIPANTS

Date: 04th May, 2017.

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Simuyaba Eunifridah, a lecturer at the University of Zambia. I am doing research under the supervision of Dr. OC. Potokri, a Lecturer, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Doctor of Education Degree at the University of South Africa. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled: "The Role of School Governing bodies in the Democratization of Secondary School Education in Zambia: A case study".

This study is expected to collect important information that could be useful for training of future School Governing Board members. You are invited to participate in this study because you are one of the members of the governing board of the secondary school.

I obtained your contact details from the Head Teacher of the sampled secondary school. There are approximately twenty-six people that will participate in this study and all of the participants have been identified on the bases of their involvement/contribution to the governance in a secondary school set up.

The study involves completing a questionnaire survey as well as audio recording of your interview responses to some questions on your thoughts on the governance of the secondary school board. Completing the questionnaire survey will take 10-20 minutes while the oral interview will last between 30 and 60 minutes.

Furthermore I wish to assure you that your name and the name of the school will remain confidential and it will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research. Other participants will be made to sign confidentiality form to ensure that they do not disclose any participant identity. When compiling the final report, 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 a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings and articles.

The information I will collect will be kept safe for five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in my office at the University of Zambia; while the 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 through the use of a relevant software programme. Note that this study is purely for academic purposes as such there will be no incentive for participating in this study.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of South Africa (Unisa). A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from me if you so wish.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Simuyaba Eunifridah on +260979418820 or email esimuyaba@yahoo.com. The findings are accessible for a period of five years.
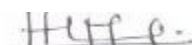Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact me with the details above.
Should you have concerns about the way in which the research will be conducted, you may contact my supervisor Dr. O.C. Potokri, email:cnuvie@gmail.com or +27842671740.

Note that participation in this study is voluntary and that participant(s) may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study. Thank you.

Simuyaba Eunifrida

APPENDIX L: LETTER TO REQUEST FOR PARENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEWS

Dear Parent,

My name is Simuyaba Eunifridah. This letter is an invitation to you to consider participating in a study that I am conducting. This study entitled "*The Role of School Governing Bodies in the Democratization of Secondary School Education in Zambia: A Case Study*" is part of my doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. Permission for the study has been given by Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic.

I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail should agree to take part. The importance of participation of various stakeholders in the governance of Education Boards is substantial and well documented. In this interview I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve the governance of school boards in both public and private schools.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately 30 to60 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password protected computer for 5 years in my office.

The benefits of this study are that the report might be useful to train new school governors in other schools. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study. This being an academic research, you will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Ms Simuyaba Eunifridah on +260979418820 or email esimuyaba@yahoo.com. The findings are accessible fora period of five years from the date of publication.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me on+260979418820 or by e-

mail at esimuyaba@yahoo.com. You could as well contact my supervisor, Dr O.C Potokri on +27842671740 or email: cnuvie@gmail.com

I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form below.

Yours sincerely

Simuyaba Eunifridah   5th May, 2017
Researcher's name (print)   Researcher's signature: Date:
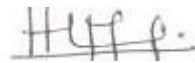

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study in education. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (Please print) : _____

Participant Signature and date : _____

Researcher's Name: SIMUYABA EUNIFRIDAH

Researcher Signature:
Date: O5/05/2017.

APPENDIX M: LETTER TO REQUEST FOR LEARNER GOVERNMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEWS

Date: 04th May, 2017.

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is   Simuyaba Eunifridah, a lecturer at the University of Zambia. I am doing research under the supervision of Dr. OC. Potokri, a Lecturer, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Doctor of Education Degree at the University of South Africa.

We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: "The Role of School Governing Bodies in the Democratization of Secondary School Education in Zambia: A case study". This study is expected to collect important information that could be useful for training of future School Governing Board members.

You are invited to participate in this focus group discussion because you are one of the members of the governing board of the secondary school. I obtained your contact details from the Head Teacher of your school. You are approximately twenty-six people that will participate in this study and all of the participants have been identified on the bases of their contribution to the governance of a secondary school. Your role in this study is to participate in a focus group discussion and to answer a questionnaire. I am requesting that I take an audio recording of your responses to some questions on your thoughts on the governance of the secondary school board. Answering the questionnaire will take 10-20 minutes while the focus group discussion will last an hour and a half.

Furthermore, I wish to assure you that your name and the name of the school will remain confidential, and it will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research. When compiling the final report, 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 a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

In this focus group discussion, I will be asking you a few question(s) in relation to your experience with the school governing boards. Note that all of you will be listening to what every member will say in this group meaning that the information you give will not be a secret.I will however make an effort to ensure that none of you will be connected to the information that you share during the focus group. However, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

The information I will collect in hard copies will be stored for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in my office at the University of Zambia for future research or academic purposes; while the electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After use, hard copies will be shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme. This study is purely for academic purposes as such there will be no incentive for participating in this study.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of South Africa (Unisa). A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.
If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Simuyaba Eunifridah on +260979418820 or email esimuyaba@yahoo.com. The findings are accessible for a period of five years.
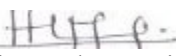
Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact me with the details above.
Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisor Dr. O.C. Potokri, email: cnuvie@gmail.com

Note that participation in this study is voluntary and that participants may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study. Please kindly complete the below consent/assent and confidentiality agreement.
Thank you.

Simuyaba Eunifridah

APPENDIX N: CONSENT FROM SGB MEMBERS

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 sufficient opportunity to ask questions and 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.
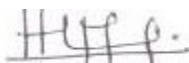
I agree to the recording of the Interview for a focus group discussion.

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

Participant Name & Surname (please print)   _____

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print)   _____

HYP.

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

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APPENDIX O: CONSENT FORM FOR LEARNER GOVERNERS

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT/ASSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I_____ grant consent/assent that the information I share during the focus group may be used by **Simuyaba Eunifridah** (researcher) for academic research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent 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 in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant 's Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature and date: _____

Researcher's Name: Simuyaba Eunifridah

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

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APPENDIX P: QUESTIONS FOR DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

1. Date for document review:………………………………………………………………………..

2. Name of school…………………………………………………………………………………

3. District where school is located……………………………………………………….…….

4. Type of document reviewed e.g school profile, minutes? Annual reports, etc.

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. Salient features of the Content eg.

   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

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6. Comments on school Governance and democracy

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7. General information extracted on school governance:

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8. Time activity ended…………………………………………………………....