THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN GAUTENG

PUBLIC SCHOOL

By

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this research essay to my mother, late father and late brother; Fatima, Moegamet Amien and Gafierloedien Davids for their inspiration which they provided in directing me through life.

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SYNOPSIS

Everyone in South Africa is keenly aware of and concerned about the massive educational changes. There is little doubt about the dominant role that change has played in our organisations and this has brought along many challenges of which education was the most distinctive.

The introduction of a democratic school governing system was implemented. The main idea or intention was that such a governing system should systematically improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools and that schools should be gradually be transformed.

Even though democratic elected governing bodies are in place, there is however a great lack of governor competence, especially amongst the parent component of the governing body. The Department of Education did not take cognisance of the important role of effective and sufficient training of members serving on school governing bodies. There is great concern that school governing bodies are not effective in executing their governance functions as prescribed by the South African Schools Act of 1996.

The aim of this study is thus to investigate the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools. The quantitative research method was used in order to engage the questionnaire as a research instrument. The sample consisted of primary and secondary schools in the Johannesburg North District (D10) of Gauteng.

A structured questionnaire consisting of 30 items in Section B and 10 items in Section C were designed to test the perceptions of educators with regard to the effectiveness of school governing bodies serving in their schools.

Successive first order factor analytic procedures were used to determine the construct validity of the questionnaire. The procedure used resulted in 30 items being reduced to two factors in Section B and 10 items being reduced to two factors in Section C, namely:

Section B:

- The effective execution of allocated governance functions (α=0.987) with 19 items.
- The effective execution of compulsory governance functions (α=0.975) with 11 items.

Section C:

- The school governing body support for educators (α=0.962) with 8 items.
- School governing body collaboration with educators (α=0.73) with 2 items.

The empirical findings resulted in the fact that school governing bodies are ineffective in executing their governance functions in Gauteng public schools.

In addition, another finding resulting in the research was that governor competence is a pre-requisite for an effective school. The implication is however that, all stakeholders in education have a moral obligation to create a collaborative environment in order to assure effective school governing bodies.

One of the recommendations resulting from the study is that effective training of parent members serving on school governing bodies should be regarded as a pre-requisite for the governance of effective school governing bodies in schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The democratisation of the educational system in South Africa allows the public to demand quality performance in schools and educational accountability from educational leaders, educators and governors. Because the education system as an organisation is also a social structure, it does not function in isolation, but is constantly influenced by various factors that determine its character and ethos (Van der Westhuizen, 2002:3).

Central to the research is the lack of criteria during the election of the school governing body. Once election has taken place the school governing body members also need to be trained and developed so they can fulfill their roles adequately to render the desired services to achieve educational objectives. As this researcher conceptualizes this research, it is important to note the concern by Squelch and Lemmer (1994:10) who point out that the only qualification to be a governor is to be a parent of a learner at the school.

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) requires all public schools to establish governing bodies and to make provision for both governance and professional management of public schools. This has resulted in the interpretation that school governance has to do with determining school policy and rules; and that professional management is related to the day-to-day administration and the management of teaching and learning at the school (School Governing Bodies Orientation and Induction, 2009:9). Hence, governing bodies are now legally responsible for the governance of the school.

Furthermore, Section 23(1) of the South African Schools Act stipulates that the membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school should be comprised of elected members, the principal, in his or her official capacity and co-opted members. The Act continues by stating that the elected members of the governing

body shall be comprised of a member or members of parents of learners at the school, educators at the school, and members of staff at the school who are not educators. The number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who having voting rights. This indicates that the parent component forms the majority of the governing body. The Act further states that the term of office of a member of a governing body other than a learner may not exceed three years (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The Act also presupposes that members of governing bodies are to be trained by the Provincial Department of Education, on how they should govern the school (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Whether this training is sufficient for governing bodies to carry out their duties, as stipulated in section 20 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a), is uncertain. Even if sufficient training is provided, the question still remains as to whether the governing body has sufficient knowledge and skills to render effective management before the end of their term of governance?

Squelch and Lemmer (1994:101) argue that school governors play an important role in the governance of the school and hence it is important for teachers to know who the governors are and what their responsibilities are, in order to support them. Squelch and Lemmer (1994:10) further state that school governors, parents and teachers need to form a relationship of trust and understanding so they can work as partners to the benefit of the school and the pupils.

The focus of this research is on the perceptions of educators with regard to the effectiveness of the governance of school governing bodies. Governing bodies have a key role to play in the development of an education system that is accountable, democratic and responsive. The governing body has a pivotal role to play, as schools have a special place in every community. The school governing body has to carry out duties as stipulated in the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

The South African Schools Act was passed almost two and a half years after the first democratic elections. The formal policy process began with the publication of the first White Paper on Education and Training. This resulted in the Act being signed in

1996, by the former president Nelson Mandela. At the core of the new Act were the establishment of school governing bodies, with considerable authority (Brahm, 2002:80).

However, most governing bodies do not appear to be functioning effectively. By 2002, Clive Roos noticed that despite the legislation, most school governing bodies had little authority and act as a rubber stamp on the principals authority (Brahm, 2002:83). School governing bodies often consist of parents who are not able to take a leading role in governance. Therefore, for schools to function effectively, school governing bodies must be able to carry out their functions as required by the South African Schools Act of 1996, and should play a pivotal role in the governance and accountability of schools.

1.2   DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES ACCORDING TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL'S ACT (Act 84 of 1996, Section 16)

The school governing body is allocated certain compulsory functions, as stipulated in the South African School Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a), when they become members of a school governing body. They are required to promote the best interest of the school and to strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. They are required to adopt a Constitution and to develop the mission statement of the school, which will refer to what the school want to achieve, as well as to adopt a code of conduct for the learners of the school. To support the school management team, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions, form part of the functions of the school governing body. They need to determine the times of the school day which should be consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of the staff of the school and to decide on the choice of subjects which is according to the provincial Curriculum Policy. They are also required to administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds that are occupied by the school. To encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school is also part of their function.

The school governing body is also required to carry out functions related to the finance of the school. A bank account for the school need to be opened and maintained. To administer the school funds of the school, and to ensure that school fees are collected according to the decisions made by the stakeholders, is part of their functions. They are also required to prepare an annual budget, that is, planning the school finances for the next year, as well as to keep the financial records of the school.

In light of the above, it is clear that we need members of school governing bodies that are capable of carrying various functions as stipulated by the South African Schools Act.

1.3   THE PRINCIPAL'S DUTY IS ONLY PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

The principal's duties as stipulated in the South African Schools Act of 1996 are to perform and carry out professional functions, as well as to administer and organise day-to-day teaching and learning at the school. The principal need to perform the departmental responsibilities prescribed by law and to organise all the activities which support teaching and learning at the school.

By merely looking at the duties of the school governing body, one realises that school governing bodies need to be capable of carrying out their duties. In taking responsibility for their duty as school governing body members, they must be aware of the commitment they have made in accepting to be elected as members. Traditionally the governance and management of the school rested on the principal's shoulders (Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance, 2006:10).
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1.4   THE DUTIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

The South African School Act of 1996 was amended in the Education Amendment Act of 2007, with regard to the duties and responsibilities of the principal of a public school. The principal of a public school represents the Head of Department in the governing body when acting in an official capacity. The principal must prepare and submit an annual report in respect of the academic performance of the school in

relation to the minimum outcomes, standards and procedures for assessments determined by the minister, and the effective use of available resource in the school. An academic performance improvement plan must be prepared by the principal at the beginning of the year. This plan must be presented to the Head of Department for approval and tabled at a governing body meeting. The Head of Department will return this plan to the principal, with recommendations. The principal must then present the improvement plan to the Head of Department and the governing body on the progress made in implementing this plan.

The principal must undertake to conduct the professional management of the school which includes all the educational programmes and curriculum activities; learning support material; the safekeeping of the financial records; the implementation of policy and legislation; support all staff; attend and participate in all meetings of the governing body; and to provide the governing body with information about the professional management of the school.

The principal also assist the Head of Department in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to educators and to support all staff employed. The principal assist the governing body in the performance of its functions and responsibilities and also provide accurate data to the Head of Department when requested.

Therefore, it is clear that the principal is accountable to the Head of Department of the Department of Education. Thus, the principal has to make sure the duties of the school governing body are carried out. Hence, the duties once again rest on the shoulders of the principal and staff.

1.5   MOTIVATION FOR THIS RESEARCH

The establishment of school governing bodies is not as simple as one may think. The gap between sporadic, generally ineffective ways which parents currently participate in taking decisions in education and the guidance available to this end constitutes a problem in schools. The South African Schools Act presupposes that members of governing bodies are to be trained by the Provincial Department of Education, on how they should manage governing bodies (Republic of South Africa,

1996a). Parents do not automatically have knowledge to manage their governing bodies effectively. Hence, no previous expertise or knowledge is required, only that one is a legal guardian of a learner of that school, to be elected.

The Committee on Teacher Education Policy (1994:11-23) proffers that school governing bodies lack of management and governance skills and they do not always have a clear idea of the roles that they need to fulfill. In line with this statement, Squelch (1994:3) argues that the continuous uncertainty of school governors with regard to their duties and responsibilities leaves one with no option but to question their competence to render quality and effective services in their school communities. Squelch (1994:3) further maintains that this lack of proper governance places extra responsibility on the school principal, the school management team and the educators.

It is important to note that governors form an essential part of the stakeholders of any school and should be well informed about their functions. They represent the parents of the school community. They are the link between the school and the parents, as well as being the voice of the parents. Creese (1995:4) argues that effective teams have common aims and if a partnership between governors and staff is to exist, both parties should be competent for they share the same fundamental aim, which is to provide the best possible education with the resources available to all learners in the school.

Effective school governance depends on effective members of school governing bodies. From my experience as an educator and conversations with colleagues at my school, we found that there is indeed a need to select capable members and to develop them in a more effective manner. Most of the members are passive at meetings and lack confidence, whereas they are actually the ones to play an active role to develop the school. In most instances the duties of school governing bodies are eventually carried out by members of the staff, as the governing bodies often do not have the capabilities to do so.

Brezinka (1987:10) asserts that if stakeholders lack a professional ethos then governor competence is difficult. Furthermore COTEP (1994:10) purports that

knowledge; skills and professional ethos are not mutually exclusive, but indeed interactive. Knowledge contributes to meaningful realization of skills, while the acceptability of knowledge and skills is screened by attitudes based upon a value system.

According to the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) the principal forms part of the school governing body. As it is not clear to exactly what the school governing body should be doing under governance, it will seem that the school principal does all the work because of the uncertainty of who is accountable and the principal is accountable to the Head of Education. Therefore, the research is aimed at obtaining the perceptions of educators and the senior management team regarding the parent component of the school governing body with respect to who serves on the school governing body, the training received whilst in office and whether this contributes to their effectiveness in school governance.

1.6   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem is, can governing bodies execute their roles and responsibilities in terms of section 20 of the South African Schools Act, given the context of their backgrounds. This is what prompted the researcher to try and investigate whether the present criteria used to elect members of the governing body and their training received, is related to the functions allocated to them. In light of the problem statement, it appears as if the problem can be epitomized by means of the following questions:

- What are the perceptions of the educators regarding:
    o the effectiveness of the present allocated and compulsory roles and responsibilities of the school governing body members;
    o the effectiveness of the training given to school governing body members.

- What recommendations can be provided:
    - in order to enable schools to select the right people to serve as members on the governing body;
    - in what governance content should the school governing body be trained so that they can fulfil their roles effectively?

Having motivated the necessity of this research study and stated the problem, attention will now be given to the aims and objectives.

1.7   AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study is to investigate educator perceptions with regard to the effectiveness of governance of parents who serve on the school governing body.

In order to realize the aim of the study, the following objectives are set:

- Investigate the meaning and purpose of the present allocated and compulsory functions that the school governing body should perform;

- To determine the perceptions of educators and senior management with regard to whether governing bodies are effective in carrying out their governance roles in terms of the effectiveness of the present allocated and compulsory functions and responsibilities as stipulated in section 20 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

- To provide guidelines to who is responsible for the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness in terms of the present allocated and compulsory functions of school governing bodies in schools.

In the next subsection the research design and methodology will be explored.

1.8   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Mason (1997:19) refers to the research design as techniques and procedures for the data generation, the selection of the data sources and samples of interest to the study. It is a plan indicating the structure of the procedure to be followed when the researcher gathers data that will attempt to answer the questions, or a basis for testing a hypothesis and finally the analysis of the results. Hopkins (1996:237) states that a research design should yield the most reliable and valid data and should be manageable, feasible and economical in both cost and time. Research methodology is, thus, the way in which the data are actually obtained. The research is determined by the nature of the problem and the research data needed to provide solutions to the question (Prinsloo, Sibiya & Mothunyane, 1996:286; De Vos & Fouche, 1998:82).

1.8.1   Research approach

The researcher intends to focus on a quantitative design. The researcher uses the quantitative design to collect information about the characteristics of a person, group, program or other educational entity (Vockell & Asher, 1995:21).

1.8.2   Quantitative research

The quantitative approach is that approach to research in the social sciences that is more highly formalized as well as more explicitly controlled with a range that is more exactly defined and which, in terms of the methods used, is relatively close to the physical sciences (De Vos, 1998:15). The quantitative method is based on positivism, which takes scientific explanation to be based on universal laws. Its main aim is to objectively measure the social world, to test hypothesis and to predict and control behaviour.

Quantitative methodologies manipulate variables and control natural phenomena. They construct hypothesis and "test" them against the hard facts of reality. Of all the quantitative hypothesis, the null hypothesis is perhaps the most often tested: "the researcher decides what factors or variables might cause certain results (cause and

effect) and carries out tests to either support or reject the null hypothesis at some level of probability (Leedy, 1993:143).

1.8.3 Elements of quantitative method

First, hypothesis contains concepts, which need to be measured in order for the hypothesis to be systematically tested. The measures are treated as variables, that is, attributes on which people, organizations or whatever exhibit variability. A second preconception is with the demonstration of causality, that is, in showing how things come to be the way they are. Many hypotheses contain implicit statement about causes and effects, and the ensuing research is frequently undertaken to demonstrate the validity of the hunches about causality. This preoccupation with the demonstration of casual effects is often mirrored in the widespread use of the terms independent variables and independent variables in quantitative organizational research. A dependant variable may be teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of parents on the school governing body and the independent variable are the independent group, that is, the male and female educator respondents. Random sampling will be used.

1.8.4 Research method

The researcher will distribute questionnaires to randomly selected educators and members of the senior management throughout schools in the Johannesburg North District of Gauteng. Participants will thereafter return the completed questionnaires to the researcher.

After collecting the data it will be submitted to STATKON who are the research consultants of the University where the data will be analysed using PASW 18.0.

1.8.5 Ethical consideration

The researcher shall by all means make sure that this study will be conducted in a highly acceptable ethical manner. Great consideration will be given to ensure a healthy and harmonious relationship between the researcher and the participants.

Participation in this research project will be voluntary and freedom of choice will be respected. Human rights will be observed at all times and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the research. The respondents' anonymity will be guaranteed. The purpose of this research will also be disclosed to the respondents and the researcher will prevail to avoid misconceptions during and after this research. General norms and values will be taken into consideration while conducting this research project. The outcomes of this research will be made available to the respondents as agree as part of sampling process between researcher and the sample schools.

1.9 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The limitations that accompany the choices on the method of conducting this study are readily acknowledged; particularly those that accompany the sample size (n), 10-15 schools. The study will be conducted in the Johannesburg North District of the Gauteng Province.

The researcher will be investigating the impressions of educators in public schools in the Johannesburg North District (D10) of the Gauteng Province regarding the effectiveness of the governance of school governing bodies or the lack there of.

Random sampling will be used which will include school management teams (SMT) and educators across all post levels.

1.10 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.10.1 school governance

Governance may be defined as a process or act by which scholars, teachers and managers, as well as members of the governing body, carry out the rules and regulations that minimise conflict and facilitate collaboration in the workplace (Van der Vyver, 1997:167).

For the purpose of this research, governance will refer to the responsibilities and accountabilities of the governing bodies with the underlying principles thereof, which are mainly consistent with the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

Subject to the functions of the governing body, school governance refers to the responsibilities to be carried out by the governing body, for example control and maintain school property, buildings, determining stated missions and goals, and determining policy (Republic of South Africa,1996a).

School governance means determining the policy and rules by which a school is organised and controlled. It includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelsh,1997:11).

School governance is a means of achieving stated missions and goals of the organisation (Legotlo, 1995:65).

The sphere of governing bodies is governance, by which is meant policy, determination in which democratic participation of the school's stakeholders are essential. Therefore school governance means participation of all stakeholders in ensuring that the goals of the school are carried out in an organised manner.

1.10.2 delegation

Delegation is closely associated with an organisation. It occurs when management grants certain management responsibilities and authority to persons on a lower level. These people in their turn fulfil certain management tasks on their particular level, because they now have the authority to do so. Set rules and procedures are laid down for them to report to top management on these management tasks (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:74).

1.10.3 accountability

Accountability is reporting on the control and use of resources by those accountable for their control and use, to those to whom they are accountable. Accountability in the school context involves confirming that the school's resources actually exist, that they have been used for legitimate and legal purposes and that assets and resources have been accounted for in a proper way (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:74).

Accountability follows the exercise of power, use of resources and implementation of policy. Accountability is linked to democratic management, participation, decentralisation, empowerment and transparency. The demands of both democracy and efficiency require some accountability in the school (Beckmann, 2000:8).

1.10.4 authority

Authority is the right that is allocated or delegated to a person by virtue of his or her qualities and capabilities. Authority must be reasonably applied to subordinates in the execution of their duties. The principal has authority delegated from the Head of Education of the provincial department of education. Authority at schools can be delegated and specific tasks can also be delegated and handled at another level (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:73).

1.11 PLANNING OF THE STUDY

In Chapter One, the statement of the problem and the aims of the study have been stated. The significance of this study has been highlighted. This was followed by the methodology to be implemented in this study, the area to be covered and the clarification of concepts that is important to this study.

Chapter Two focus primarily on the literature study and the effectiveness of the governance of governing bodies in public schools.

Chapter Three will be based on a discussion of the research design, and the development of a research instrument to be used.

In Chapter Four the findings will be tabulated, analysed and interpreted.

In Chapter Five a summary will be provided of this research essay and the findings shall be highlighted. Recommendations of the findings will also be made.

1.12 SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the governance of school governing bodies in public schools. However, the lack of criteria during the election process as well as the inadequate training and development of school governors hinder the process to render the desired services to achieve educational objectives.

The success of any education system, how noble its ideas might be, depends on the active involvement of all stakeholders (Reddy, 1999:113).

To be able to conduct this study, I chose to undertake the quantitative research method, using a questionnaire as a research tool. Random sampling will be used to determine the perceptions of educators, including the school management team, on the effectiveness of school governing bodies. A brief discussion on the design and methodology can be found in this chapter.

The following chapter focus on the literature review which is an in-depth explanation of the literature used to support my study on the effectiveness on school governing bodies.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the purpose of this study was discussed as well as a brief description of how the study will be conducted (research design and methodology). The motivation for the research, the statement of the problem, and the aims and objectives were also discussed.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the governance of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools, by probing the apparent lack of criteria during the election process, as well as the inadequate training and development of school governing bodies. It is essential for this purpose that a literature review needs to be conducted as it will form the basis for designing the questions to be taken up in a structured questionnaire.

In terms of Section 16(1) of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa 1996a), the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body. This requires the school governing body, especially parent members, to be sufficiently well-informed to perform their duties with the necessary competence.

Individuals, including parents, who agree to serve on the school governing body should do so with the understanding that there are responsibilities that accompany this position. School governing body members are expected to perform their governance roles with diligence by being fully aware of the duties and obligations of their positions and be able to devote the time necessary to fulfil their obligations. A school governing body position should be taken seriously (Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance, 2006:14).

An effective school governing body should enlist the collective wisdom of carefully elected members. In this way each member can effectively contribute their own unique knowledge, insight, skill and personal contacts. By bringing these qualities and working together, a synergism can take effect. Separate ideas blend together to

build a whole greater than the parts. In weighing alternatives, collective judgement brings community perspectives at hand. Lack of skills, incompetence and understanding of the position could lead to passive members. Therefore, it is imperative to revisit the election process, as well as the training and development received by school governing bodies.

The composition of parent members serving on the school governing is determined by the amount of learners enrolled in the school. This also varies between primary, secondary and comprehensive schools.

2.2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpinned by a systems theory approach. According to Bush (2003:41) systems approaches share objectives which have the support of its members. The institution is thought to develop policies in pursuit of these objectives and to assess the effectiveness of such policies. In this study school governing bodies form part of a system. Systems encourage interchanges with the environment, both responding to external influences and, in turn, seeking support for the objectives of the organization. In education, systems theory shows the relationship between the institution and external groups, such as parents (Bush, 2003:42).

The current transformation initiatives in the education system and the changes in school governance necessitated the transfer of power and sharing of responsibilities in the management and governance of schools (Maile, 2002:327).

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) is a tool by which education is democratized through the establishment of democratic structures of school governance in all public schools. Democratization includes the idea that all stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners and community members participate in the activities of the school.

2.3   THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNANCE MODEL

In 1994 the Department of Education had to decide upon a new educational dispensation for the country, the guiding principles were the Constitutional values and the Bill of Rights. The basic aim of the South African Schools Act was to reverse the results of the apartheid system that provides learners of all races and ethnicity, equal and fair opportunity to develop their talents (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

The Constitution envisages a society that will heal the divisions of the past and to establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Examples would be to improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; as well as to lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law; and to build a united democratic South Africa which is able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations (Republic of South Africa, 1996b).

At the time, a decision had to be taken about whether to adopt a centralised or decentralised model of school governance. South Africa followed models of Britain and Canada and a decentralised model was adopted at local level where parent voices can be considered.

The vision for a democratic and decentralised governance structure within the South African education system was articulated as follows by the African National Congress in 1994. It stated that the governance at all levels of the integrated national system of education and training will maximise democratic participation of stakeholders, including the broader community, and will be orientated towards equity, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability (African National Congress, 1994:22).

Although, a decentralised governance structure has been adopted, the governance of schools in South Africa still seems to be centralised, where the role of parents in decision making is minimal. The state makes key decisions, while other role players are expected to be passive participants. Thus stakeholders have to carry out policy

distributed by the policy makers and the department of education. One such policy is the composition of school governing bodies (Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance, 2006:14).

Parents and members of the community are viewed as being in the best position to decide what the school really needs, and what the problems are. Thus the number of members serving on the school governing body is determined by the number of learners enrolled in the school with the provision that the number of parent members must be one more than the combined total of the other members serving in the school governing body.

2.4   NOMINATIONS OF PARENTS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

A parent may be nominated or seconded as a parent member only by parents who are themselves eligible to serve on the school governing body in terms of regulation 16(1) of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). A parent member shall be a parent of a learner officially enrolled at the school and who is not employed at the school.
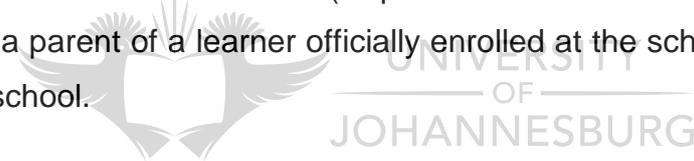
Nominations may be made by lodging a nomination form duly completed by the proposer, seconder and candidate with the election officer not more than seven days and not less than one day before the nomination meeting (Republic of South Africa 1996a).

After the allotted time, the election officer shall consider all nominations and reject those who do not comply with the requirements of this regulation. If the total number of valid nominations is less than the required number of parent members, the election officer shall dissolve the nomination meeting and convene a new nomination meeting within 14 days. If the total number of valid nominations is equal to the required number of parent members, the election officer shall declare the nominated candidates to be duly elected. If the total number of valid nominations is more than the required number of parent members, the election officer shall hold a poll in accordance with regulation (Republic of South Africa 1996a).

There is no other requirement required or any interview process or any form of competence taken into consideration.

2.5   THE COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

In electing school governing bodies, considerations shall be given to addressing the imbalances of the past, by the election of school governing bodies whose racial and gender mix reflect that of the school community. State involvement in school governance should be limited to the minimum level required for legal accountability. The powers of governing bodies should reflect their capacity to render effective service. The function of the governing body of a school shall be to enhance the quality of education for all learners, within the parameters of policy established by the national and provincial departments of education in terms of their legal responsibilities and competencies (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

According to the South African Schools Act membership of school governing bodies comprises of elected members, the school principal and co-opted members. Elected members of the governing body comprise individuals from the following categories: parents or guardians of learners at the school, educators at the school, members of staff who are not educators, and learners in the eighth grade or higher in secondary schools (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Regardless of the size of the school, parents always hold a majority in the representation of the school governing body. The term of membership of the school governing body is three years, except for learners in secondary schools who serve a one-year period and election occurs in the same year in all schools nationwide (Tsotetsi, Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2008:386).

Subject to sections 20 and 21 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a), the governing body of a public school must develop the mission statement of the school, adopt a code of conduct for learners of the school and determine the admission and language policy of the school. A school governing body may suspend learners found guilty of misconduct from attending the school as a correctional measure for a period not exceeding one week. School governing bodies may also recommend the appointment of teaching staff at the school and deal with the disciplinary hearings of educators. The school governing body should also

support the principal, educators and other staff members in the performance of their professional functions. School governing bodies are also tasked with supplementing the resources supplied by the state to improve the quality of education provided by the school. In this regard parents may be asked to pay school fees. Such funds are administered by the governing body (Tsotetsi, Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2008:387).

From the Schools Act of 1996 it would appear that the governing bodies have two main functions in school governance, namely:

- Developing and implementing school policies; and
- Managing school finances.

2.5.1 Developing and implementing school policies

The development and implementation of school policies include policies such as learner code of conduct, admissions policy and language policy.

2.5.1.1 Learner code of conduct

The signing into the law of the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) and the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) has impacted radically on the management of learner discipline in schools. Although the principal, the school management team and educators normally form the most visible front in the disciplinary process, the school governing body has a statutory or legal duty to ensure that correct structures and procedures are put in place so that disciplinary measures taken against ill-disciplined learners are administered fairly and reasonably in accordance with the above-mentioned laws.

Both sections 8 and Section 20 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) make it mandatory for all school governing bodies to develop and adopt a code of conduct for learners which is aimed at establishing a discipline and purposeful school environment, dedicated to improving the quality of the learning process. The code of conduct must include appropriate disciplinary processes for

disciplinary learners, and measures that will be followed in disciplinary processes. This will ensure that school governing bodies manage learner discipline fairly and justly in line with the provisions of Section 12(1) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996b), which provide for the right of everyone to freedom of security of the person, including the right not to be tortured in any way, not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way.

The basic approach in the formulation of a code of conduct should be positive and preventive, in order to facilitate constructive learning (Rossouw, 2007:80). Rossouw (2007:80) also maintains that what should be promoted is positive discipline and self-discipline, and that exemplary conduct should be rewarded to the same or a greater extent as the reaction to or punishment of misconduct. Furthermore, in the formulation of the code of conduct the development level of the learners should be kept in mind, and the language used must be easily comprehensible to make the content accessible. According to Joubert and Bray (2007:80), the code of conduct should contain a set of moral values, norms and principles in accordance with the ethos of the school and that of the wider community.

The design and enforcement of the learner code of conduct should be underpinned by Curwin and Mendler's (1980:33) three-dimensional approach to managing learner discipline. Firstly, the prevention dimension entails that school governing bodies adopt strategies to actively prevent disciplinary problems and deal with stress associated with classroom discipline. Secondly, the action dimension refers to what action school governing bodies can take when, in spite of all the steps taken to prevent disciplinary problems, they still occur. This includes keeping simple records and having strategies to avoid escalating minor problems into major ones. Thirdly, the resolution dimension implies that school governing bodies develop strategies to resolve problems with the chronic rule-breaker and the more extreme out-of-control learner. In this regard, the school governing body is provided with Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners (Republic of South Africa, 1998), which deals with serious transgressions such as, conduct which endangers and violates the safety of others; possession or use of dangerous weapons; possession or use of unauthorised drugs or alcohol; fighting;

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assault or battery; immoral behaviour or profanity; theft or possession of stolen property; criminal behaviour such rape, bullying and intimidation of other learners.

It should be borne in mind that discipline at a school is not only measured against a well-drafted code of conduct, but to a greater extent against the proper enforcement thereof. As alluded to earlier, the enforcement of the code of conduct is a delegated task, especially because the school governing body members (parent-governors in particular) cannot all be at a school operational level to do so. Thus, the school management team, educators and the disciplinary committee are primarily responsible for carrying out the prevention, action and resolution measures of the code of conduct.

School governing bodies are still grappling with the proper design of learner codes of conducts. In fact, it is apparent that while schools may have codes of conduct designed by principals, their school management team and educators, these are not properly designed to address the discipline problems in terms of action, strategies and resolution and are thus unenforceable. Furthermore, the lack of adequate knowledge of legislation and training militates against the ability of school governing bodies to perform functions such as the adoption of a learner code of conduct and its effective implementation. Moreover, educators seemed not to have confidence in the effectiveness of their schools codes of conduct and enforceability of strategies to deal with learner discipline. The proper design and effective enforcement of the code of conduct may address learner discipline problems and make the school a conducive environment for teaching and learning (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:109).

2.5.1.2 Admissions policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to all provincial departs and school governing bodies of public schools for the developing the admissions policy of the school. The admissions policy of a public school is determined by the governing body of the school in terms of section 5(5) of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The policy must be consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of South Arica (Republic of South Africa, 1996b), the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) and applicable provincial law (Barry, 2006:208).

The governing body of a public school must make a copy of the school's admission policy available to the Head of Department. The Head of Department must co-ordinate the provision of schools and the administration of admissions of learners to ordinary public schools with governing bodies to ensure that all eligible learners are suitably accommodated in terms of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Subject to this policy, it is particularly important that all eligible learners of compulsory school going age are accommodated in public schools (Barry, 2006:209).

2.5.1.3 Language policy

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) provides that the language policy of a public school is determined by the governing body of that school subject to the Act, the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) and any other applicable provincial law. The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) specifically prohibits any form of racial discrimination being practiced in implementing the language policy of the school.

The Minister of Education has determined norms and standards for language policy in public schools under the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The norms and standards require school governing bodies, in determining the language policy of schools, to stipulate how the schools will promote multilingualism by using more than one language of learning and teaching; offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects; applying special immersion or language maintenance programs; and applying any other means provided by the provincial Head of Department. The norms and standards provide a measure of reasonable practicability, stipulating that it is reasonable to provide education in a particular language at a school.

A provincial law stated in Section 6(2), of the South African Schools Act (1996a) can have a profound effect on a governing body's powers to determine language policy. The Northern Cape School Education Act 6 of 1996 for instance, requires that the school governing body may only determine language policy after consulting the

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provincial department of education and approval MEC (member of executive council responsible for education in a province). This therefore reduces and restricts the responsibilities of school governing bodies with regard to determining the language policy of a public school (Barry, 2006:52).

2.5.2 Managing school finances

According to the Ministerial Committee (2004:104), the school finance occupied most of the school governing body's time. Financial management was ranked as the most important of the school governing body's functions. In terms of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) school governing bodies have been mandated to perform financial responsibilities such as developing a financial policy, financial school management and preparing a school budget.

2.5.2.1 Developing a financial policy

A financial policy can be seen as an important tool clearly outlining how funds such as school fees, donations, sponsorships, other generated funds government grants and subsidies and the school's expenditure, are to be managed in a specific school. An effective financial policy will guide school managers to control and regulate the process of managing the funds of a school with regard to receipting, withdrawing and expending funds and every aspect of the policy should fall within legislation and policies of the national and provincial departments of education (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:39).

The policy should provide a clear understanding of the responsibilities of the school governing body, various committees responsible for school finances, the treasurer, finance officer, school management teams and other persons delegated for specific tasks. Each school has its own needs and the policy should be formulated in that particular school's context (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:39).

Although the governing body is responsible for drafting the policy, it is perfectly acceptable for them to delegate this function to any person who may have the necessary qualification or experience in formulating policies. However, whoever is

tasked to draft the budget has an obligation to consult the various stakeholders who will be responsible for the implementation of the policy (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:39).

2.5.2.2 Financial school management

Financial school management can only be successful if it is done in an organised manner. This implies that organisational structures should be set in place to handle the various financial management tasks, whether in the field of administration or accounting (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:76).

In the creation of an organisational structure for school financial management, the requirements of the Schools Act must be considered. The governing body of the school (according to the Act) is responsible for the management of the school funds and sets up a financial committee. This committee should be democratically voted in to ensure legitimacy, but should also include members with some financial or accounting background, either in terms of experience or qualifications. The chairperson of this committee should act in collaboration with the principal as manager of the school to handle the day-to-day financial matters of the school (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:76).

2.5.2.3 Preparing a school budget

The schools budget is an important financial management tool and is a mechanism for setting goals and objectives, measuring progress towards objectives, identifying weaknesses or inadequacies and controlling and integrating the diverse activities carried out by numerous sections or departments within a school. The budget is not a once-off activity or one-time plan; it is a dynamic document that requires planning and continuous monitoring to maintain control and provide feedback for the flexibility necessary in a school (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:98).

Each budget should be adapted to suite the unique character of a particular school. The school budget is the very heart of financial management and it is more than the presentation in figures of anticipated expenditure and revenues for a given financial

period. It is the financial interpretation of the educational programmes of a school (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:99).

The school governing body should start preparing the next year's budget during the third quarter of the school year. Once the governing body agrees on it, the budget will be presented to the parents at a meeting during the fourth quarter for approval (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:76).

In budgeting, the manner of spending the funds of a school is only one side of the equation. A school also needs to plan how to generate funds, or make money. The state provides some funds for public schools (mainly staff salaries), but additional funds need to be obtained to supplement these funds. The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 provides for school fees as one source of additional income, but all possible sources of financing should be investigated, such as donations from the private sector, local government, communities (as the entire community benefits from education) and private households (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:102).

Financing, in the school context, means the acquisition of income to provide for capital expenses, such as such as equipment and the costs of running the school. The governing body is therefore responsible for making plans to generate income to cover the difference between the contribution by the state and the school's actual income expenditure (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:76).

A school that has the capacity to manage its school funds may apply for additional functions as outlined in section 21 of the South African Schools Act. The state will transfer the resource allocation to the school's bank account and give school governing body's financial freedom in spending the funds. Section 20 of the South African Schools Act has compulsory functions for all public schools. However, section 21 schools are obliged to spend these funds as prescribed by the Head of Education. These sections therefore have financial implications for schools (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:76).

In a survey conducted about the functionality of school governing bodies, Van Wyk (2004:53) identified concerns that many school governing bodies are not well trained

and as such, they do not know what is expected of them with regard to school finances. "They only sign cheques and do not work according to the budget."

The problem of capacity is more pronounced in rural areas, where schools are less able to recruit governors with the necessary skills and expertise. Another factor contributing to this situation is the fact that in rural schools, the illiteracy level of parents is high, so that the parent members of school governing bodies are not well equipped for their expected governance functions (Creese & Early, 1999:2).

The Government is committed to develop a democratic system that provides for participation of all stakeholders with a vested interest in education (Van Wyk, 2004:49). This delegation of power calls for particular capacities from school governing bodies which must exercise power on a day-to-day basis. Because the delegation involves the management of funds both from parents and the state, it is important that school governing bodies possess financial management skills. Lazarus & Davidoff (1997:107) indicate that members of the school community need to be equipped to analyse budgets and financial statements and where appropriate, to manage finances. Nyambi (2004:10) expands this further in suggesting that school governing bodies should have the capacity not only to manage the finances well, but also to translate these financial resources to promote quality education on a cost-effective basis.

The school governing body may employ educators additional to those allocated and salaried by the provincial departments of education as long as the school raises funds for these additional teachers. The school governing body may also oversee the maintenance of school property and buildings. These are extensive and complicated tasks and it has been observed with concern that some functions of school governing bodies are contingent on the social conditions of schools as well as the capacity differential of some school governing bodies (Karlsson, 2002:331). This appears to entrench existing social inequalities at schools. It can therefore be argued that unless all governance functions and responsibilities are equally accessible and practised in schools, the democratisation of schooling in South Africa is tenuous and nothing more than policy rhetoric (Karlsson, 2002:132).

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Each public school is a juristic person with legal capacity to perform its functions. A juristic person may be a natural person or an association of persons, such as a body or organisation that has the same legal rights and obligations as a natural person. This means that the school may buy, sell, hire or own property. The school may also enter into contracts, make investments, and sue or be sued. The school performs all such actions through its governing body, that is, the governing body acts on behalf of the school. The governing body has decision-making powers concerning the school and it may bind the school legally in the form of contracts (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:75). These functions are exercised on behalf of the school by the school governing body on a basis of trust.

2.6   FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

School principals are the linchpins for the successful functioning of schools. Lemmer and Badenhorst (1997:343) are supportive of this view when they argue: "The principal is the most important and influential individual in the school. This decisive position encompasses a wide spectrum of complex functions pertaining to management and leadership. In this capacity, the principal sets the tone of the school, the climate for learning, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become."

Carubo and Rothstein (1998:13) give the job description of the principal internally as being responsible for (1) professional and classified staffing or organisational positions (2) instructional leadership and improvement (3) curriculum development and materials (4) learner services (5) resource procurement (6) budgeting and (7) building utilisation and maintenance. The responsibility of the principal outside of the school revolves around his or her associations and communications with community groups and district administrators.

The Schools Act stipulates that the principal, under the authority of the Head of Department, must undertake the professional management of a public school. This means that the principal has delegated powers to organise and control teaching and learning at the school effectively (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:78).

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The responsibilities of the principal who must attend to the professional management of the school, under the authority of the provincial Head of Department, are to perform and carry out professional management functions. The day-to-day administration and organisation of teaching and learning at the schools form part of the principal's responsibility. To perform the departmental responsibilities prescribed by law. Other responsibilities include the management of personnel and finances, to decide on the intramural curriculum, that is, all the activities to assist with teaching and learning during school hours, as well as to decide on textbooks, educational materials and equipment to be bought (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:79).

In view of the new legislation the role of the principal has changed. The Provincial Department of Education has provided them with more responsibilities. The principal has a dual role which is ex-officio of the school governing body and responsible for the management of the school. The principal is an ex-officio member of the school governing body and is required to render all the necessary assistance to the school governing body in the performance of their functions in terms of South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). In addition the school principal is obliged to liaise with the Department of Education regarding all matters pertaining to the well-being of the school (Maile, 2002:326).

Section 16 of the Schools Act has been amended to clearly describe the functions and responsibilities of principals in public schools. These include amongst others, that the principal represents the Head of Department in the governing body when acting in an official capacity. The amended Act is requires the principal to prepare and submit to the Head of Department an annual report in respect of the academic performance of that school in relation to minimum outcomes and standards and procedures for assessment determined by the Minister of Education; and the effective use of available resources. The Amendment Act also requires that the principal should undertake professional management of a public school and carry out the following duties which include, but are not limited to the implementation of all educational programmes and curriculum activities; the management of the use of learning support material and other equipment; the safekeeping of school records; the implementation of policy and legislation; and the performance of functions delegated to the principal by the Head of Department. The principal is also required

to attend and participate in all school governing body meetings; to inform the school governing body about policy and legislation; and to provide accurate information to the Head of Education when requested to do so. The principal must also assist the school governing body in the performance of its functions and responsibilities, but such assistance must not be in conflict with instructions of the Head of Department; legislation or policy; an obligation towards the Head of Education or the Member of the Executive Council; or a provision of the Employment of Educators Act, and the Personnel Administration Measures determined in terms thereof (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

These amendments imply that the principal is accountable to the Head of Education for ensuring the effective use of available resources; managing the use of teaching and learning support materials; safekeeping of all school records; informing the school governing body on policy and legislation and implementing it accordingly; and providing accurate information when requested by the Head of Department, and assisting the school governing body in the performance of its functions and responsibilities (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:81).

The role of the school principal is crucial and pivotal in the successful management of the school. The principal effects professional management and administration democratically informed and assisted by the staff and the school governing body of the school. Overall the school governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the school delivers a quality education to all learners enrolled at the school. The principal and school governing body therefore have complementary roles and should be in a cooperative relationship. However, it is often not easy to maintain this and conflict can arise and sometimes do. One of the main challenges for maintaining healthy relationships between the principal and the school governing body is the vast differences between the capabilities of school governing bodies at different schools. While some school governing bodies are composed of professionals with financial, legal and managerial skills and experience, others are weak in the skills which would allow them to be effective (Naidoo, 2005:83).

2.7   ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Beckmann (2000:8) (cited in Maile, 2002:328) points out that accountability is the exercise of power, use of resources and implementation of policy. Accountability is inextricably linked to democratic management and other related concepts such as participation, decentralisation, empowerment and transparency.

The notion of accountability powers up power struggles that plague schools. Where decisions were taken by the principal in the past, is no longer possible. Principals may no longer be able to take decisions unilaterally because parents have more power within the school and especially within the school governing body (Maile, 2002:326).

Parents serving on the school governing body have become used to hearing of their increased "powers" while finding that the means by which these powers are to be exercised are dubious and ineffective. This is the case with sections 16(1) and (3) of the South African Schools Act which provides that subject to this Act, the governing body of every school is vested in its governing body; and subject to the Act and any applicable provincial law, the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal under the authority of the Head of Department (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

Therefore, it may seem that there is no aspect of accountability foreseen for the governing body of a public school, and that the distribution of power to parents serving in the school governing body may give rise to conflicts between the governing body and the principal of the school. It may be assumed there will be clashes on the views regarding the implementation of departmental policy (Davies, 1999:60).

2.8   PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

School governance in South Africa is the single most important factor in education that seems to experience insurmountable challenges. Considering that more than a decade has passed since the enactment of the South African Schools Act, it seems

that efforts to have effective school governance fall far short of the intended outcomes. Despite various attempts aimed at training and capacity building of school governors, including financial resources having been expended for this purpose, the governance of schools in South Africa still face numerous challenges (Xaba, 2011:201).

Chapman, Froumin and Aspin (1995) (cited in Mncube (2009:85) suggest that policies and actions are based on decisions and are not arbitrary; and that the will of the majority prevails whilst the rights of minorities are preserved and respected. In a school situation, this implies that powers and responsibilities should be distributed among all the stakeholders in the school in accordance with the law and that policies should be formulated after rigorous deliberations. Section 16 of the South African Schools Act states clearly that the day-to-day professional management of the school should be the responsibility of the principal and the governance of the school remains the responsibility of the school governing bodies. In practice, parent governors are all not participating fully yet since many of them lack the necessary skills to perform the duties assigned to them. In such situations, the principal continues to perform the functions now supposed to be the responsibility of the school governing bodies (Mncube, 2009:85).

Clearly the South African Schools Act represents a sophisticated form of democratic school governance and it can only be successful if school governing bodies possess the required competences. The ability of parent members on school governing bodies to govern schools depends on their skills, knowledge and experience of governance, including financial skills. Moreover, school governing bodies require training in participatory decision-making. However, neither parents nor educators have had much experience of participatory decision-making since, in the past, principals were considered to be the only people with the knowledge and authority to make decisions (Heystek & Paquette, 1999:191). These abilities required by school governing bodies are determined, among other things, by educational background, especially literacy level, of school governing bodies (Heystek, 2006:478).

Basic among the school governance challenges, is the capacity to govern. While the provincial departments of education, through functional units at head offices and at

district levels, have engaged in the training of school governing bodies, the actual enactment of these roles is often less than ideal (Tsotetsi, Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2008:385). The very essence and effectiveness of the training that school governors receive are often questionable. Among other training constraints, Mabasa and Themane (2002:112) report that school governing bodies are not trained before they start their work and this manifests in problems such as unfamiliarity with meeting procedures, problems with the specialist language used in meetings, difficulties in managing large volumes of paper, not knowing how to make a contribution, not knowing appropriate legislation, feeling intimidated by the presence of other members who seem knowledgeable and perceiving their roles as simply endorsing what others have already decided upon. This can be attributed to irrelevant and inadequate training of school governing body members, which does not really address the core functions of school governance.

Mestry (2004:126) highlights an important challenge in school governing bodies, namely, the lack of necessary knowledge and skills for financial management and, consequently, the inability to work out practical solutions to practical problems. Mestry (2006,133) also points out the lack of collaboration between the principal and other school governing body members with principals being unwilling to share responsibility for school governance for fear of losing power. Another challenge, articulated by Van Wyk (2004:51) relates to educators in school governing bodies feeling that other school governing body members, especially the parent members of school governing bodies, lack confidence and is not sure of their duties. In this regard, Maile (2002:239) contends that illiteracy among school governing body members, especially parents members of the school governing body, may contribute to their own inefficiency and argues that this is possible because illiteracy precludes parents from accessing relevant information. In relation to the problem of illiteracy, Van Wyk (2004:50) points out that many school governing bodies, particularly in less advantaged areas, do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their powers.

Undemocratic features are also present in the system of school governance. Systematic weaknesses of the traditional models of democracy are evident in the education system. The former Model C schools, which are generally well resourced

and previously advantaged, are functioning well with the present model of state-aided school governance, whereas most of the previously disadvantaged schools are dysfunctional (Smit & Oosthuizen, 2011:61). Thus liberal democratic features in our system inherently favour our previously advantaged schools.

Therefore, the training of school governing bodies remains a priority for the successful functioning of school governing bodies. It is therefore the state's responsibility, in partnership with other stakeholders, to develop capacity for governing bodies, which will ensure that school governing bodies perform their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently (Tsotetsi, Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2008:387). Adams and Waghid (2003:2) further argue that training for school governing bodies must be seen in terms of both introductory training for newly elected governing body members to enable them to perform their functions and continuous training for governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or enable them to assume additional functions.

These factors contribute to the functional ability of school governing body members as responsible for the failure of school governing bodies to govern schools effectively and execute their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the South African Schools Act (Xaba, 2011:202).

2.9   THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Van Wyk (2004:50) points to six features of effective governing bodies. These are: working together, good relationship with principals, effective time management and delegation, effective meetings, knowledge of school and the training and development of school governors. Bush and Heystek (2003:129) report empirical research that indicates that there is considerable variation in the level of school governing body involvement and the anticipated role that school governing bodies play in school development. Karlsson (2002:331) adds that school governing body decisions tend to be peripheral and that their influence rarely impacts upon teaching and learning. Beckmann (2002:157) questions whether school governing body influence can have any real effect within systems that, while relying on devolved power, are subject to stringent guidance.

Karlsson (2002:332) also argues that from a legal perspective that governing bodies often act outside their contractual capacity as they are not empowered when decision-making is taken in a large group. There should be a balance between the school governing body and the principal to accomplish quality education service delivery. Challenges include issues of accountability, lack of shared vision, the composition and structure of school governing bodies and lack of clear defined goals.

The issue of language competency and parents' lack of communication in other languages makes them dependent on the principal. This is a great problem in rural areas. There is also still uncertainty about the divide between management and governance. Parents want to be involved in school activities but this uncertainty creates conflict. Training is important to guide the positive involvement of parents (Karlsson, 2002:330).

School governing bodies do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their powers. The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) obliges provincial departments to provide training for governing bodies. The school governing bodies were enthusiastic but lacked skills due to haphazard training by the Department of Education. Van Wyk (2004:22) argues that the training and development of principals and school governing bodies can be considered as the strategically most important process necessary to transform education successfully and for school governing bodies to be effective in schools.

It is apparent that school governing bodies in South Africa have a statutory responsibility for many critical functions within schools which could make a valuable contribution to ensuring a school's effectiveness and continuing improvement. However, how decisions are made does not guarantee better, more efficient or effective school practices.

The impressive electoral process requires considerable investment of time and money in publicity to ensure that the parents and communities understand their roles and participate in the election process. However, one of the main concerns is the relatively low levels of real community participation in the elections. It is important to

keep in sight of the fact that school governing bodies are volunteers. They are often highly motivated, but the trend of government to devolve original responsibilities and decision-making to school governing bodies leads to disillusionment (Karlsson, 2002:332).

The school governance model is structured for representative democracy through the tri-annual electoral process and inclusion of relevant stakeholders. Although the school governing bodies participation in school affairs is far reaching it falls short in terms of the full participation in the allocated functions. In principal, governance partnerships lay a foundation for democracy. However, participation on its own does not guarantee that disadvantaged communities are able to change their conditions or contribute to providing quality education. School governance was a new territory for the majority of South African communities. Being a school governing places parents in a new role with newly acquired powers. Key characteristics and skills required for effective participation and exercising the powers and functions given to school governing bodies are those of debate, argument, compromise, decision-making and accountability. These skills are not automatically acquired when parents are elected to serve on the school governing body (Karlsson, 2002:333).

Karlsson (2002:334) notes that, while aiming at building a partnership between the state and the parent community the school governing body system also represents the state's diminution of its involvement in schools, passing it over to the school governing body. Ensuring that school governing bodies promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school requires specialized knowledge and skills in the field of school governance. School governing bodies need to understand that their terrain is not that of the corporate world, not the world of political negotiations and power play, not the world of cultural production, not the world of collective bargaining and struggle, but the world of teaching and learning and protecting the best interests of their children. In this regard Karlsson (2002:334) also explains that school governing bodies are the structures through which parents, educators, non-educators and learners (in secondary schools) are brought into partnership to govern public schools. To this end governing bodies are given extensive powers on a wide

range of matters in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in these schools.

Social and economic conditions impact on a poor community's ability to participate in democratic structures. Poor communities have less energy to become direct participants in democratic school governing body structures. They tend to shy away from participation simply because their energies are geared towards making a daily existence. Participation does not necessarily translate into engagement, meaning that one participate in a process without actually engaging its participants. Parent and learner representatives serving on the school governing bodies may participate, while their "voices" are seldom heard. They often participate without having the opportunity to influence decisions, meaning they are actually excluded from the process (Karlsson, 2002:335).

Despite the best interest, establishing school governing bodies in South Africa may have unintended social outcomes and fall short of their goal of decentralization, shared responsibility, and democratic decision making in schools. The "unintentional perpetuation of inequalities rendered by the practice of school governance" needs some revision of the South African Schools Act. Governance reforms cannot achieve the transformation vision for education because the government's instrumentalist approach and unrealistic deliberative democratic ideals are insufficient to achieve the set goals. In the South African context, with its imbalances in resources, capacity and experience, deliberate democracy and decentralisation remain a challenge. Unless policy on governance is implemented together with serious commitment to nurturing the innate capacities of school governing body members, democratic governance has little chance of being realised in post- apartheid disadvantaged schools and the effectiveness of school governing bodies in schools will remain to be questioned (Karlsson, 2002:335).

2.10   SUMMARY

This literature survey, despite the introductions of capacity building training programmes for school governing bodies, there is evidence that school governing bodies lack the basic skills and knowledge to govern schools effectively.

The accrual of harmony depends on whether the parent section of the school governing body is able to function efficiently and effectively. In addition to their functions spelt out in the South African Schools Act, sections 20 and 21 the school governing bodies, as stewards of public schools, should, according to the auditor-general (1998:B2) (cited in Maile, 2002:326) have the knowledge, ability and commitment to fulfil their responsibilities; understand their purpose and value the interest of other stakeholders; understand the objectives and strategies of the institutions they govern; have the knowledge of and access to information required to exercise their responsibilities; ensure that the institution's objectives are met and that performance is satisfactory; and fulfil accountability obligations to those whose interest they represent, by reporting periodically on their institutions performance.

In the next chapter the research instrument and methodology will be discussed in greater detail.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter two a theoretical framework was presented on how the school governing body is expected to perform various functions stipulated in the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

It is evident that for the governing body to effectively carry out their functions, a thorough knowledge of the school is required as well as of the functions related to their duties.

In this chapter the research design will be discussed. This is done with the aim of presenting the plans and procedures of the proposed inquiry so that the validity of the research findings can be enhanced. Thus, an attempt will also be made to outline the methodology the researcher used to collect data on the effectiveness of the governance of school governing bodies. This chapter will be organised in the following manner:

- The purpose of quantitative research
- The relationship between the research and the subject
- The structured questionnaire as an instrument of research

3.2   THE PURPOSE OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

A quantitative research approach is an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedure in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory are reliable (Cresswell, 1993:117). The purpose of a quantitative survey approach is to generalise from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristics, attitude or behaviour about the population (Cresswell, 1993:118).

Data obtained from respondents will be transcribed in the form of scores that can be tabulated and analysed. Quantitative research is to make objective descriptions of a limited set of phenomena and also to determine whether the phenomena can be controlled through certain interventions. Thus, initial quantitative studies of a research problem typically involve a precise description of the phenomena and a research for pertinent variables and their interrelationships. Ultimately, a theory is formulated to account for the empirical findings (Borg, Gall & Gall, 1993: 195-196). In relation to this notion, the quantitative research method was used to determine the perceptions of educators, including the school management team, with regard to the effectiveness of school governing bodies.

Deductive reasoning is an aspect that is fundamental to quantitative research. It assumes that a researcher should be able to move from general kinds of statements to particular ones. For example, all mammals have lungs (general statement); all dogs are mammals; therefore all dogs have lungs (specific statement). These statements are regarded as objective and independent of human experience and it is a means of linking theory with observations made.

According to Borg, Gall & Gall (1993:195) quantitative researchers make the assumption that they can discover "laws" that lead to reliable prediction and control of educational phenomena. They view their task as the discovery of these laws by searching for irregularities in the behaviour of samples of individuals. This search is supported by statistical analysis, which reveals trends in the behaviour of the respondents. Quantitative researchers believe that such trends or laws are sufficient and have practical value, even though they do not allow for perfect prediction or control.

The purpose of this study is to understand and report on the perceptions of a sample of educators on the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools. The findings from the sample will be used to make inferences about the population of schools in Gauteng.

3.2.1 The relationship between the research and the subject

In quantitative research, the investigator's goal is objectivity. That is, investigators seek to keep their personal values and beliefs from influencing tests involving minimal personal interaction between them and the respondents. If interaction is necessary, as when conducting an interview, an attempt is made to standardize the interaction process so that it is identical for every individual in the sample.

To guide the empirical study of this research, a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. A questionnaire is defined by De Vos (1998:152) as a set of questions in a form to be completed by respondents in respect of a research project. The aim of this questionnaire was to gauge the perceptions that educators have in relation to the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools.

3.3   THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE AS INSTRUMENT OF RESEARCH

The structured questionnaire used in this research consisted of closed-ended items to determine the views of the participants. The questions were designed to obtain the perceptions of members of the education profession regarding the effectiveness of governance of governing body members in their schools, in the Johannesburg North District (D10) of Gauteng.

Each statement was scored on a six point scale which indicated the extent of agreement of the participants with the statements as follows:

In Section B the following six point scale was used:

1   -   Not effective at all
2   -   Mostly ineffective
3   -   Reasonably ineffective
4   -   Reasonably effective
5   -   Mostly effective
6   -   Very effective

In Section C the following six point scale was used:

1   -   Strongly disagree
2   -   Disagree
3   -   Partially disagree
4   -   Partially agree
5   -   Agree
6   -   Strongly agree

The structured questionnaire consisted of Section B, relating to the effectiveness of school governing bodies which consisted of 30 closed-ended items. Section C contained 10 items related to the involvement of school governing bodies within their school. The questions were designed to obtain the perceptions of members of the education profession regarding the effectiveness of governance of governing body members in their school, in the Johannesburg North District (D10) of Gauteng.

A factor analytic procedure on the items in Section B resulted in two first order factors. These factors were named as follows:

FB1.1- Effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school governing body.

FB1.2- Effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body.

In order to facilitate a discussion of the mean scores, the items, their mean scores and their rank order are provided in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

TABLE 3.1: ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTION OF ALLOCATED FUNCTIONS BY THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN GAUTENG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION:	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER	FACTOR
B13	Determining the extra-mural curriculum of your school	2.26	16	1
B26	Creating sub-committees of the school governing body to work with the staff on reviewing specific aspects of the school policy and practice	2.27	15	1
B27	Operating in a consultative manner to obtain feedback from all staff members	2.27	14	1
B9	Raising funds to employ additional educators, where needed, that are not paid by the state	2.28	13	1
B7	Encouraging parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school	2.52	8	1
B22	Establishing regular meetings with educators and other staff at the school	2.45	11	1
B6	Supporting the educators of the school in the performance of their professional functions	2.59	6	1
B14	Supplementing the resources supplied by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school	2.47	10	1

B11*	Maintaining the property occupied by the school	2.63	2	1
B28	Establishing an admissions policy for the learners of the school, whereby classes are not overcrowded	2.42	12	1
B12	Improving the buildings occupied by the school, when needed	2.61	4	1
B25	Acquainting themselves with the internal workings of the school	2.52	8	1
B23	Providing regular feedback of its activities to educators	2.55	7	1
B5*	Ensuring that improved learner performance is the focus of the school	2.73	1	1
B8	Building relationships with the community through effective communication	2.60	5	1
B10*	Purchasing educational materials or equipment for the school	2.62	3	1
B30	Making procedurally fair decisions in all aspects of their governance	2.61	4	1
B29*	Implementing protection measures for the property of the school, whereby school property is protected from theft and vandalism	2.63	2	1
B24	Providing for parents to take part in school-based decisions, giving a platform for previously unheard voices	2.50	9	1

*= items to be discussed

TABLE 3.2: ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTION OF COMPULSORY GOVERNANCE FUNCTIONS BY THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN GAUTENG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION:	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER	FACTOR
B16*	Preparing a budget each year which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year	3.17	2	2
B17*	Presenting the budget to a general meeting of parents for consideration and approval	3.38	1	2
B19*	Keeping records of funds received and spent by the school	3.17	2	2
B20*	Keeping records of assets, liabilities and financial transactions of the school	3.03	3	2
B21	Making financial records available for inspection, when requested by an interested person	2.89	8	2
B15	Administering the funds of the school it in accordance with the directions issued by the Head of Department	2.94	7	2
B2	Developing the mission statement for the school	2.98	5	2
B1	Adopting a constitution for your school	3.01	4	2
B3	Establishing a code of conduct for the learners of your school	2.96	6	2
B4	Creating structures that enable a learning environment in your school	2.96	6	2

| B18 | Enforcing the payment of school fees by parents who are liable to pay in terms of section 40 | 2.48 | 9 | 2 |

*= items to be discussed

A factor analytic procedure on the items in Section resulted in two first order factors. These factors were named as follows:

FC1.1- School governing body support for educators.

FC1.2- Collaboration between school governing bodies and educators.

In order to facilitate a discussion of the mean scores, the items, their mean scores and their rank order are provided in Tables 3.3 and 3.4.

TABLE 3.3: ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS IN GAUTENG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER	FACTOR
C1*	Our school governing body is accessible to educators	2.83	1	1
C4*	Our school governing body allows educators to express their opinions on issues of school governance	2.78	2	1
C5*	Our school governing body makes educators feel valuable	2.66	3	1
C6	Our school governing body is tactful when communicating with educators regarding complaints received about them	2.58	4	1
C7	Our school governing body supports educators through collaboration	2.48	5	1

C8	Our school governing body acknowledges the achievements of educators	2.46	6	1
C9	Our school governing body encourages feedback from educators concerning their job satisfaction	2.19	8	1
C10	In our school partnerships between the school governing body is characterised by a sense of shared responsibility	2.45	7	1

*= items selected for discussion

TABLE 3.4: ITEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY AND EDUCATORS IN GAUTENG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION:	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER	FACTOR
C2*	Our school governing body does not have the necessary expertise to contribute to the professional development of educators	2.95	2	2
C4*	There is no partnership between our school governing body and the educators	3.11	1	2

*= items selected for discussion

3.4 DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS

Each question was formulated in such a way that the respondents could give their opinion to whether their school body is effective or not effective at all within their schools.

For example: How effective is the school governing body in:

- Keeping records of funds received and spent by the school.

The various questions will now be motivated and discussed using the relevant data given in tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4.

3.4.1   Discussion on the items associated with the effective execution of allocated functions by the school governing body in Gauteng public schools

- QUESTION B5: ensuring that improved learner performance is the focus of the school

Table 3.1 revealed the following statistical data:

Mean score: 2.73

Rank order: 1

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   12.6

From the above it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are of the opinion that school governing bodies are mostly ineffective tending towards reasonably ineffective in ensuring that improved learner performance is the focus of the school. According to the perceptions of educator's school governing bodies should therefore take a greater interest in improving learner performance in schools.

- Question B11: maintaining the property occupied by the school.

Mean score: 2.63

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   15.0

The above results indicate that the majority respondents are of the opinion that their school governing body was mostly ineffective tending towards reasonably ineffective in maintaining the property occupied by the school. This suggests that respondents are not carrying out their duty effectively with regard to this function. This could possibly be due to time constraints of the school governing body as they have their own work obligations.

- Question B29: implementing protection measures for the property of the school, whereby school property is protected from theft and vandalism.

Mean score: 2.63

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   15.3

The above results indicate that the school governing body was mostly ineffective tending towards reasonably ineffective in implementing protection measures for the property of the school, whereby school property is protected from theft and vandalism. This would suggest that this becomes an additional task for the management and educators of the school. This could be due to the limited resources due to insufficient fund raising.

- Question B10: purchasing educational materials or equipment for the school.

Mean score: 2.62

Rank order: 3

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   17.4

From the above it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents have the opinion that their school governing body is mostly ineffective tending towards reasonably ineffective in purchasing educational materials or equipment for the school. This indicates that this becomes an additional task of the school management team of the school.

The above indicates that school governing bodies are according to the perceptions of educators ineffective in the execution of their allocated functions, in public schools in the Gauteng province.

3.4.2 Discussion of questions associated with the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body in Gauteng public schools

The various questions will now be motivated and discussed using the relevant data given in table 3.2.

- QUESTION B17: presenting the budget to a general meeting of parents for consideration and approval

Mean score: 3.38

Rank order: 1

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   27.5

From the above it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are of the opinion that school governing bodies are reasonably ineffective in presenting the budget to a general meeting of parents for consideration and approval. Parent members of school governing bodies should therefore receive the necessary training and support relating to financial responsibilities.

- Question B16: Preparing a budget each year which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year.

Mean score: 3.17

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   24.6

The above results indicate that the majority of the respondents are of the opinion that their school governing body are reasonably ineffective in preparing a budget each year which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following year. This suggests that school governing bodies lack the expertise relating to preparing a budget. School governing bodies should receive the necessary training and support in this regard.

- Question B19: Keeping records of funds received and spent by the school.

Mean score: 3.17

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   28.1

The above results indicate that their school governing body are reasonably ineffective in keeping records of funds received and spent by the school. This would suggest that there are possibly no records available. This responsibility should be

delegated to a member who has some knowledge on record keeping. It should also be controlled by the principal and school governing body chairperson by requesting regular feedback.

- Question B20: Keeping records of assets, liabilities and financial transactions of the school.

Mean score: 3.03

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   24.6

From the above it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents have the opinion that their school governing body are reasonably ineffective in keeping records of assets, liabilities and financial transactions of the school. This indicates that there are possibly no records available.

The above indicates that school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools are reasonably ineffective in their execution of their compulsory governance functions. This also shows that school governing bodies lack the necessary competence relating to finance matters of schools.

3.4.3   Discussion on questions associated with school governing body support for educators in Gauteng public schools

The various questions will now be motivated and discussed using the relevant data given in table 3.3.

- Question C1: Our school governing body is accessible to educators.

Mean score: 2.83

Rank order: 1

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   20.5

From the above it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents disagree tending towards partially disagree with this statement. This indicates that school governing bodies are not as accessible to the educators as the mandate expects from them. Educators should be supported by the school governing body, and work in a collaborative manner.

- Question C4: Our school governing body allows educators to express their opinions on issues of school governance.

Mean score: 2.78

Rank order: 2

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   19.3

The above results indicate that the majority of respondents tend to disagree to partially disagree with the statement. This suggests that educators have the perception that they are not allowed to express their opinion regarding matters of governance. This could create a division between the school governing body and the educators. Most school governing bodies lack confidence and communicative skills. This results in a break in communication between the educators and the school governing body.

- Question C5: Our school governing body makes educators feel valuable

Mean score: 2.66

Rank order: 3

% respondents selecting 5 or 6:   20.0

The above results indicate that the majority of the respondents tend to disagree to partially disagree with the statement. This suggests that in the perception of educator's school governing bodies do not make educators feel valuable. This could create friction between the school governing body and the educators. This could restrict the structures of communication and collaboration within the school.

From the above it can be concluded that it is the perception of educators that they receive little to no support from their school governing body. In this regard it can be concluded that school governing bodies are ineffective in forming an effective working relationship with educators. It is the perception of educators that there is insufficient collaboration between members of the school and members of the school governing body.

3.5   A SYNTHESIS OF ITEM ANALYSIS

Factors such as effective execution of allocated governance functions, effective execution of compulsory governance functions, the support for educators and the collaboration with educators formed the assumption upon which the questionnaire of the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng schools was based. The questionnaire was distributed to educators in schools in primary and secondary schools in the Johannesburg North District (D10) of Gauteng.

Factor analysis by means of a Principal component analysis was used to reduce 30 Items in Section B to two first-order factors and Section C was used to reduce 10 items to two first-order factors, namely:

Section B:

- The effective execution of allocated governance functions (α=0.987) with 19 items.
- The effective execution of compulsory governance functions (α=0.975) with 11 items.

Section C:

- The school governing body support for educators (α=0.962) with 8 items.
- School governing body collaboration with educators (α=0.73) with 2 items.

The questions selected as part of the dimensions of this project that were used to elicit views and responses of educators in Gauteng public schools will now be summarised.

According to the responses received the researcher concludes that governing bodies of schools lack the competence with regard to financial matters. Governing bodies seem to be involved in financial matters in a limited way. The principal who is responsible for the daily management of the school is "hands on", thus informing members of the school governing body on financial matters. It would also seem that very few members serving on governing bodies have financial knowledge of school finances.

The statistics from the responses received indicate that school governing bodies do not have the necessary skills to assist with the improvement of learner performance. A possible conclusion could be that school governing bodies are not certain about their governance functions and believe that the improvement of learner performance resides with the principal and educators. Effective training is a positive step towards a broader understanding, of the way in which education has been democratised.

The researcher has concluded that there is an ineffective collaborative working partnership between the educators and the school governing. Parent members serving on the school governing body must be empowered in effective communication and interrelationship skills.

With regard to maintaining and implementing protective measures for the property of the school, respondents indicate that school governing bodies are not in a position to contribute effectively to the maintenance and safety measures of the school. The researcher believes that parents are not part of the day-to-day functioning of the school thus are not aware of the maintenance that needs to be done and safety measures that are required. Parent members serving on the governing body should understand their responsibility, to contribute to the maintenance and security of the school to contribute to the safe learning and teaching environment of their children.

3.6   RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRES

Of the 200 questionnaires handed 167 were returned of which 167 were useable. This represents a return rate of 83.5%, which is satisfactory considering the fact that most of the Secondary schools were uncooperative.

3.7   SUMMARY

In this chapter a description of the empirical investigation was provided. Relevant tables were provided and the questions pertinent to the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng Public schools were discussed. A discussion of the respondents sampled, their biographical details and the response rate of the questionnaire were also discussed.

The following chapter will focus on aspects such as the reliability and validity of the research instrument; a discussion of the various factors obtained; a comparison of one of the independent pairs involved by stating the appropriate hypothesis and interpreting the statistical tests involved; a comparison of two or more independent groups by stating the hypothesis and analysing the appropriate statistical data; and a discussion of the differences between the factor mean scores of the various groups for each of the factors involved.

CHAPTER FOUR
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter three the research design and methodology were extensively discussed. The instrument of research was discussed. The empirical investigation that details the respondents, the biographical details, the research group and the return of the questionnaires was also dealt with.

In this chapter the following aspects will receive attention:

- The reliability and validity of the structured questionnaire;

- A discussion of the various factors involved;

- One example of a comparison of two independent groups by stating the appropriate hypotheses and analyzing the data by means of univariate statistical test;

- One example of a comparison of three or more independent groups by analyzing the data using ANOVA; and

- A synthesis of the empirical findings.

When one attempts to determine the perceptions of educators using a structured questionnaire it is important that it is valid and reliable. Validity is concerned with whether what one is measuring is what one really intends to measure. Reliability refers to consistency and dependability of measures (Sullivan, 1996:19).

When repeated measurements of the same thing give identical or very similar results, the measurement is said to be reliable. For example, if you climbed on your bathroom scale and it read 100 kilograms, you climbed off and on again and it read

97 kilograms repeated the process and it read 102 kilograms, your scale would not be reliable. If, however, in a series of weightings, you obtain the same answer (100 kg) your scale would be reliable (Voght, 1993:195). Suppose you knew that you actually weighed 95 kilograms; your scale may be reliable but not accurate (valid).

According to Babbie (2005:144), social scientists have found that it's possible to measure almost anything provided that criteria for measuring quality are strictly applied. These criteria serve as the yardstick against which we judge our relative success or failure of measuring things. Babbie (2005:145) continues that when social researchers construct and evaluate measurements however, they pay special attention to two technical considerations: reliability and validity.

Struwig and Stead (2001:130) define reliability as the extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent or stable. A test score's validity is dependent on the score's reliability since if the reliability is inadequate, the validity will also be poor. Within this context, issues of reliability and validity of the research instrument used are discussed.

4.2   RELIABILITY

Mouton (2001:119) explains that in the abstract, reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, would yield the same result each time.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:130) state that reliability is concerned with the consistency of measures and contend that an instrument which produces different scores every time it is used to measure an unchanging value, has low reliability. On the other hand, an instrument which always gives the same score when used to measure an unchanging value can be trusted to give an accurate measurement and is said to have high reliability.

4.3   VALIDITY

Struwig and Stead (2001:136) define validity as the extent to which a research design is scientifically sound or appropriately conducted. Two types of validity for research designs are listed: external validity and internal validity. External validity is defined as the extent to which you can generalize the results of a study to other populations. The external validity of a study is intimately linked to the sampling procedures of time, place and conditions in which the research was conducted. The internal validity of an experimental research design addresses the issue of whether the independent variables, and not other extraneous variables, are responsible for variations in the dependent variable (Struwig & Stead, 2001:136).

There are different types of validity but for the purpose of this research only content and construct validity will be clarified.

4.3.1 Content validity

Content validity refers to the extent to which the items reflect the theoretical content domain of the construct being measured (Struwig & Stead, 2001:139).
Content validity involves analyzing the content of an instrument to determine whether the content represents the quality that the instrument is supposed to measure. An analysis of the way in which each item on a reading test relates to what is known about reading skills represents an effort to establish the content validity of the reading test (Vierra, Pollock & Golez, 1998:80).

A measuring instrument has content validity to the extent that the items represent the content that they are designed to measure (Borg, Gall & Gall, 1993:120). Content validity is not a statistical property; it is rather a matter of expert judgment.

The researcher has taken careful note to include numerous possible important components of school governing bodies within the context of the topic: How effective are school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools? A test should comprise items that reflect important aspects of the construct being measured.

4.3.2 Construct validity

There were two main constructs involved in this research namely, the educators' perceptions of the effectiveness of the governance functions by the school governing body, and the perceived support that the school governing body provides for educators. The first construct was operationalised using 30 items in Section B of a structured questionnaire and a six-point interval scale where 1 represented that they perceived the school governing body as not effective at all in the execution of their governance functions and 6 represented that they were perceived as very effective. The second construct was designed using 10 items in Section C of the questionnaire and operationalised using a six point interval scale where 1 stood for strongly disagree and 6 for strongly agree. The validity of the two constructs was determined using factor analytic procedures.

4.3.3 Factor analysis of Section B of the questionnaire.

The 30 items in Section B of the questionnaire were subjected to factor analytic procedures namely a principal component analysis (PCA) and varimax rotation. A Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of 0.967 and Bartlett's sphericity of p=0.000 indicated that such a procedure would be viable. Two first-order factors resulted which explained 81.05% of the variance present. The factors, their mean scores and factor loadings are provided in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: **Items involved in the effective execution of allocated governance functions by the SGB (α = 0.987)**

Item	Description- How effective is your SGB in:	Mean	Loading
B13	Determining the extra-mural curriculum of your school	2.26	.802
B26	Creating sub-committees of the school governing body to work with the staff on reviewing specific aspects of the school policy and practice	2.27	.797
B27	Operating in a consultative manner to obtain feedback from all staff members	2.27	.783

B9	Raising funds to employ additional educators, where needed, that are not paid by the state	2.28	.783
B7	Encouraging parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school	2.52	.778
B22	Establishing regular meetings with educators and other staff at the school	2.45	.776
B6	Supporting the educators of the school in the performance of their professional functions	2.59	.770
B14	Supplementing the resources supplied by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners of your school	2.47	.769
B11	Maintaining the property occupied by the school	2.63	.760
B28	Establishing an admissions policy for the learners of the school, whereby classes are not overcrowded	2.42	.741
B12	Improving the buildings occupied by the school, when needed	2.61	.737
B25	Acquainting themselves with the internal workings of the school	2.52	.724
B23	Providing regular feedback of its activities to educators	2.55	.722
B5	Ensuring that improved learner performance is the focus of the school	2.73	.720
B8	Building relationships with the community through effective communication	2.60	.705
B10	Purchasing educational materials or equipment for the school	2.62	.688
B30	Making procedurally fair decisions in all aspects of their governance	2.61	.671
B29	Implementing protection measures for the property of the school, whereby school property is protected from theft and vandalism	2.63	.654
B24	Providing for parents to take part in school-based decisions, giving a platform for previously unheard voices	2.50	.651
Average		2.50	

The factor mean indicates that educators' have the perception that the school governing body were mostly ineffective regarding the execution of their allocated functions. This score suggests that the histogram will be slightly negatively skew. The appropriate histogram and box-plot are provided in Figure 1.1.
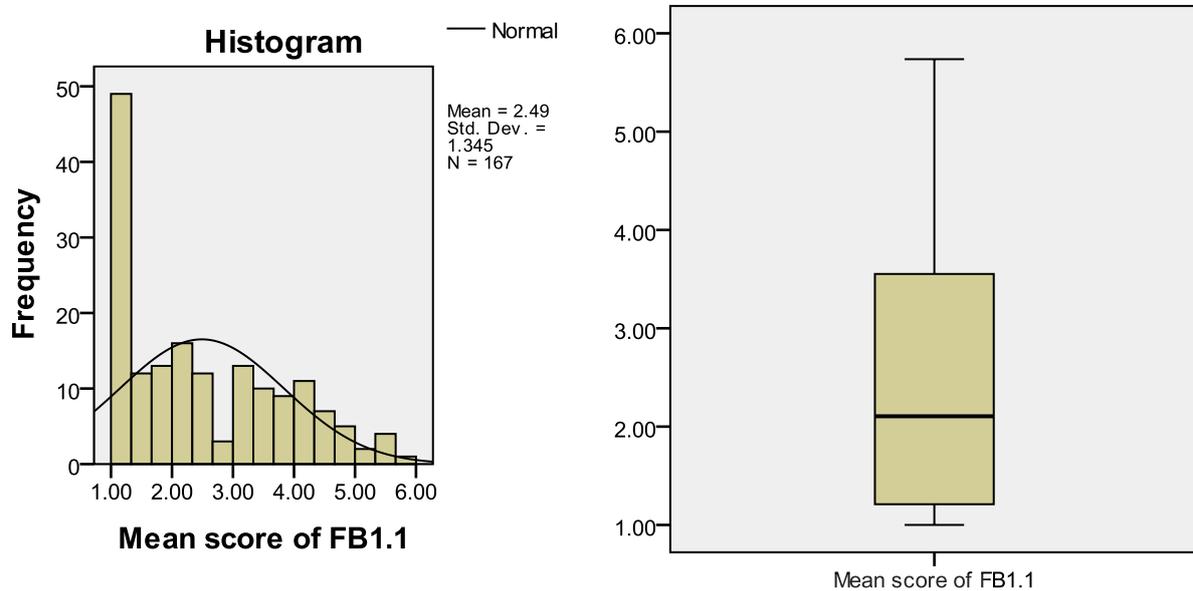
Figure 4.1: Histogram and box-plot of educators' perceptions of the effective execution of allocated governance functions by the SGB

The histogram indicates a positive skewness whilst the box-plot indicates that 50% of the respondents allocated a score of 2.1 or less (median). Respondents thus appear to have the perception that the school governing bodies are mostly ineffective with respect to the effective execution of their allocated functions.

Table 4.2:   Items involved in the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the SGB ($\alpha = 0.975$)

Item	Description	Mean	Loading
B16	Preparing a budget each year which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year	3.17	.855
B17	Presenting the budget to a general meeting of parents for consideration and approval	3.38	.855
B19	Keeping records of funds received and spent by the school	3.17	.835

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B20	Keeping records of assets, liabilities and financial transactions of the school	3.03	.812
B21	Making financial records available for inspection, when requested by an interested person	2.89	.790
B15	Administering the funds of the school it in accordance with the directions issued by the Head of Department	2.94	.737
B2	Developing the mission statement for your school	2.98	.715
B1	Adopting a constitution for your school	3.01	.707
B3	Establishing a code of conduct for the learners of your school	2.96	.686
B4	Creating structures that enable a learning environment in your school	2.96	.620
B18	Enforcing the payment of school fees by parents who are liable to pay in terms of section 40	2.48	.574
Average		3.00	

The factor mean of 3.0 indicates that the normality plot should be slightly positively skew as most respondents had perceptions that the school governing body were reasonably ineffective regarding the execution of their compulsory governance functions. The histogram and box plot associated with this factor are provided in figure 1.2.

Figure 4.2: **Histogram and box-plot of educators' perceptions of the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the SGB**
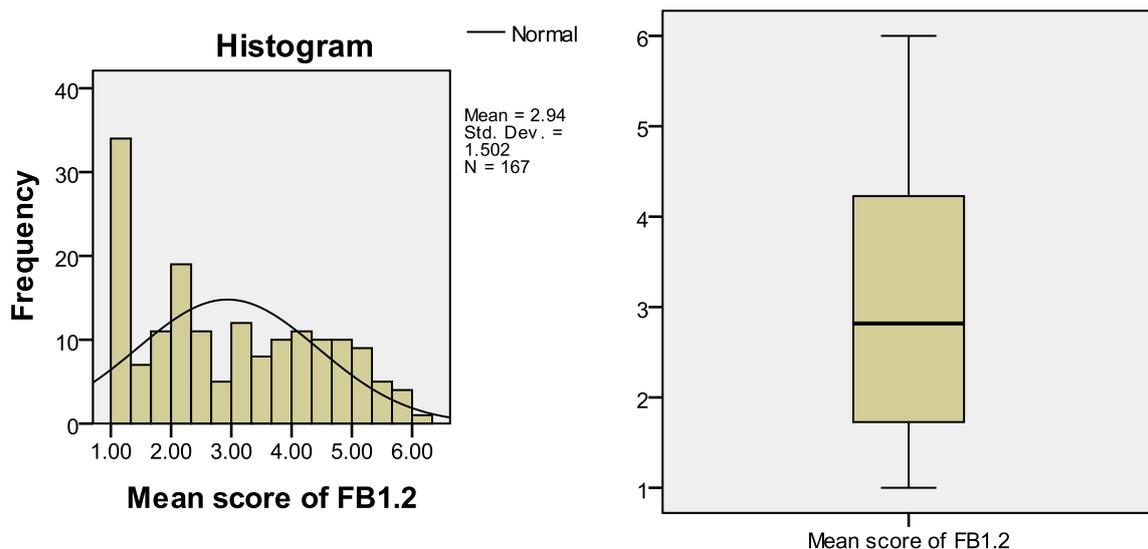
A second-order factor analytic procedure (PCA) indicated that the two first-order factors are sub-dimensions of one factor only. This factor explained 96.12% of the variance present and had a Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.990. It was named educator perceptions of the effective execution of governance functions by the school governing body. However, as both of the first-order factors had high reliability coefficients it was decided to use them when investigating possible significant differences between the independent groups involved.

### 4.3.4 Factor analysis of Section C of the questionnaire

The 10 items in Section C of the questionnaire were subjected to factor analytic procedures namely a principal component analysis (PCA) and varimax rotation. A Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of 0.923 and Bartlett's sphericity of p=0.000 indicated that such a procedure would be viable. Two first-order factors resulted which explained 79.7% of the variance present. The factors, their mean scores and factor loadings are provided in Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.3: Items involved in the SGB support for educators (α = 0.962)

Item	Description. Indicate extent of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:	Mean	Loading
C1	Our school governing body is accessible to educators	2.83	.943
C4	Our school governing body allows educators to express their opinions on issues of school governance	2.78	.931
C5	Our school governing body makes educators feel valuable	2.66	.906
C6	Our school governing body is tactful when communicating with educators regarding complaints received about them	2.58	.904
C7	Our school governing body supports educators through collaboration	2.48	.897
C8	Our school governing body acknowledges the achievements of educators	2.46	.879
C9	Our school governing body encourages feedback from educators concerning their job satisfaction	2.19	.831

C10	In our school partnerships between the school governing body is characterised by a sense of shared responsibility	2.45	.785
Average		2.55	

The factor mean (2.55) suggests that respondents disagree that the school governing body supports them. This low factor mean suggests positive skewness in the histogram. The appropriate histogram and box plot are given in Figure 4.3
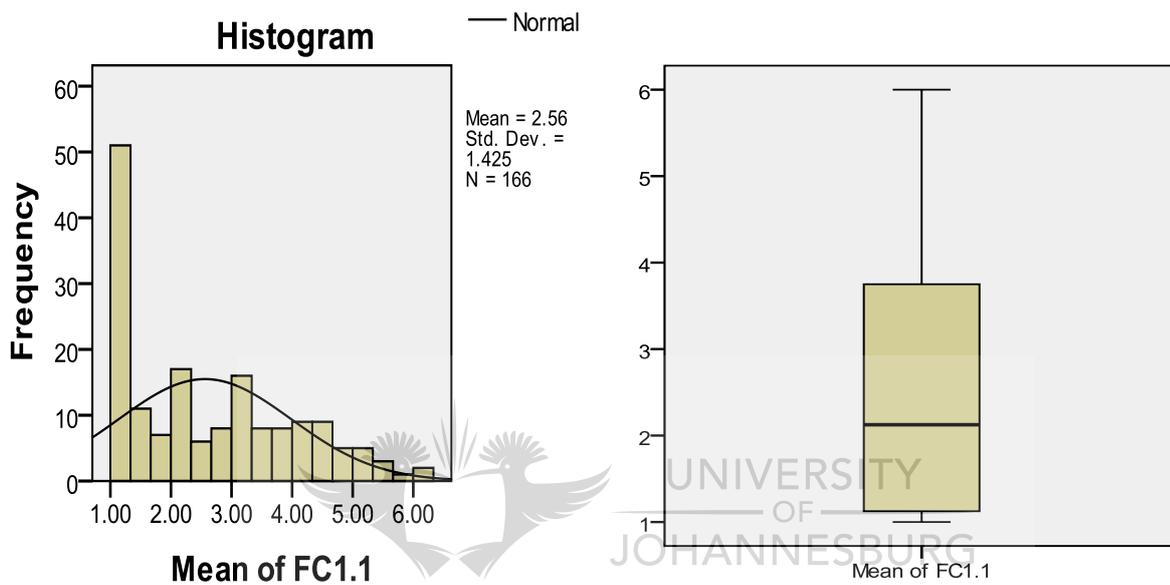
Figure 4.3:   Histogram and box-plot of educators' perceptions of the support provided by the SGB

Table 4.4:   Items involved in perceptions of SGB collaboration with educators (α = 0.73)

Item	Description. Indicate extent of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:	Mean	Loading
rC2	Our school governing body does not have the necessary expertise to contribute to the professional development of educators	2.95	.863
rC3	There is no partnership between our school governing body and the educators	3.11	.838
Average		3.03	

Both items C2 and C3 had their scales inverted as a negative factor loading was recorded in the rotated matrix. A factor mean of 3.03 thus indicates partial disagreement with these items. The appropriate histogram and box plot are given in Figure 4.4.
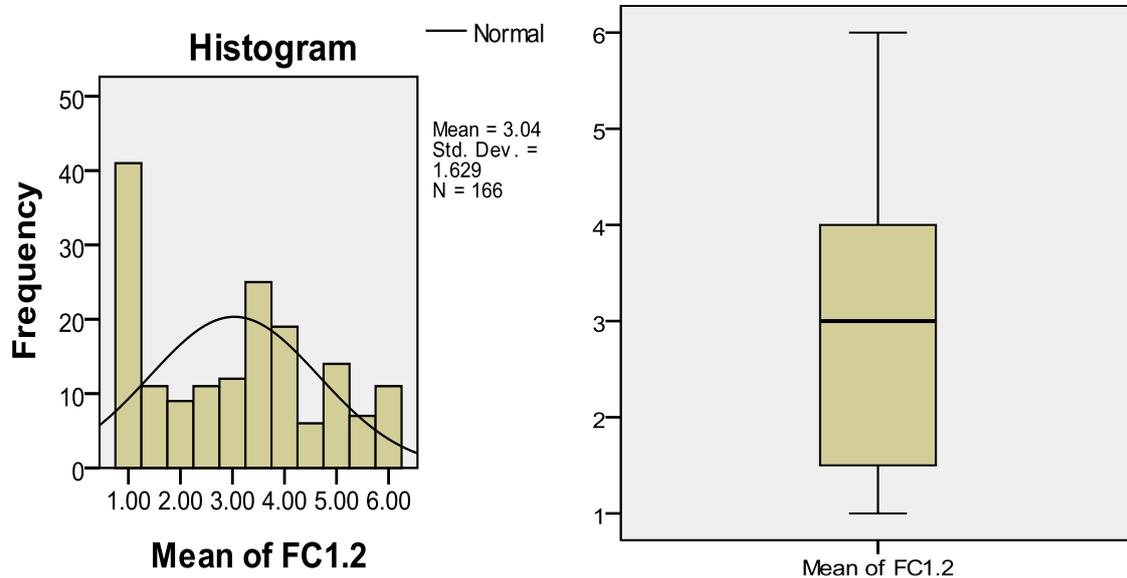
Figure 4.4: **Histogram and box-plot of educators' perceptions of the SGB collaboration with them.**

Although the first-order factors show a slight positive skewness inferential statistical tests were performed on them in order to look for possible differences between the various independent groups in Section A of the questionnaire. Before conducting such analyses it is necessary to investigate the representivity of the various independent groups in the sample.

4.4   DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.4.1 Gender (A1)

The gender ratio of the sample was 2.4 female educators to every 1 male educator. This is representative of the Gauteng ratio which is 2.6 female educators to every one male educator (DoE, 2009:20). The sample is thus representative of gender in Gauteng.

4.4.2 Age (A2)

There were 57 (33.3%) educators that belonged to Group 1 (< 40 yrs of age), 56 that belonged to Group 2 (41-48 yrs) and 48 that belonged to the third group (49+ yrs). The average age of the respondents were about 45 years which indicates a concern of insufficient young educators in the education system at present.

4.4.3 Position you occupy (A3)

The original 4 groupings were collapsed to 2 only namely 43 occupied management positions and 122 were educators. If one makes the assumption that for every 3 educators there should be one management position then the sample is representative of positions occupied in a school.

4.4.4 Member of school governing body (A4)

There were 21 respondents who indicated that they were school governing body members and 143 who indicated no such membership. This may indicate a small number of schools being involved as one would expect at least three school governing body members from each school. The sample is thus representative of educators on the school governing body only. This could be expected as only educators were involved in completing the questionnaire.

4.4.5 Classification of school (A5)

Respondents could answer Township, Urban of Rural. As there were so few rural respondents and they are similar to township schools they were combined leaving two categories namely Township and Urban. Of the 166 responses received 112 indicated a Township classification while 54 indicated Urban. This is not representative of the Gauteng province but it may be so for Township schools.

4.4.6 School type (A6)

There were 111 respondents from primary schools and 47 from secondary schools. Thus this gives a ratio of 2.4 primary school respondents for every 1 secondary school respondents. As there are 2.2 primary schools for every 1 secondary school (DoE, 2009: 20) the sample is representative of school type.

4.4.7 Number of learners in the school (A7)

Three groups were formed with Group1 having less than 100 to 499 learners, Group 2 was from 500 to 999 learners and Group 3 was for schools with learners of 1000 or more learners. Group 1 had 34 respondents, Group 2 had 62 and Group 3 had 68. The sample was representative of schools in Gauteng regarding the number of learners per school.

4.5   COMPARISON OF TWO INDEPENDENT GROUPS

When testing for significant differences between the factor mean scores of two independent groups then Levene's t-test can be used. Levene's test is used to see whether the variances are different between the two groups involved. If the variances are similar ($p > 0.05$) then equal variances are assumed and if they are significantly different ($p < 0.05$) then equal variances are not assumed. Only those independent groups where statistically significant differences were present will be analysed and discussed.

4.5.1 Significance of differences between the two school classification groups regarding the four factors (A5)

Appropriate hypotheses would be:

Ho – There is statistically no significant difference between the two school classification groups regarding the following factors, which indicates a null Hypothesis:

HoFB1.1 - The effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school governing body.

HoFB1.2 - The effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the
school governing body..

HoFC1.1 - The school governing body support for educators

HoFC1.2 - The perceptions of school governing body collaboration with educators

Ha - There is a statistically significant difference between the two school
classification groups regarding the following factors:

HaFB1.1 - The effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school
governing body.

HaFB1.2 - The effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the
school governing body.

HaFC1.1 - The school governing body support for educators

HaFC1.2 - The perceptions of school governing body collaboration with educators

The data to test the hypotheses is given in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: **Significance of the differences between the school
classification groups.**

Factor	Group	Mean	t-test (p-value)	Effect size (r)
Effective execution of allocated governance functions by the SGB	Township	2.28	0.003**	0.23
	Urban	2.94		
Effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the SGB.	Township	2.77	0.05*	0.10
	Urban	3.26		
SGB support for educators	Township	2.38	0.02*	0.20
	Urban	2.92		
Perceptions of SGB collaboration with educators	Township	2.28	0.08	-
	Urban	3.35		

** =Statistically significant at the 1% level (p< 0.01)

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level (p > 0.01 but p < 0.05)

r = 0.1 is a small effect; r = 0.3 is a moderate effect; r = 0.5 large effect

The data in Table 4.5 indicate the HoFB1.1, HoFB1.2 and HoFC1.1 cannot be accepted. With respect to the effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school governing body (FB1.1) both groups of educators have the perception the school governing body is ineffective but township educators believe this more strongly. The same is true for FB1.2 namely the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body. Regarding the support received from the school governing body both groups believe that it is ineffective but township educators believe that their school governing bodies are even more ineffective. The effect sizes were all small. Thus one can conclude that township educators have more negative perceptions about the effective governance of their schools by the school governing body than do urban educators.

4.5.2 Significance of differences between the two school type groups regarding the four factors (A6)

As the hypotheses are similar to the ones posed in 1.5.1 they are not repeated. The relevant data is given in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: **Significance of the differences between the school type groups.**

Factor	Group	Mean	t-test (p-value)	Effect size (r)
Effective execution of allocated governance functions by the SGB	Primary	2.24	0.002**	0.35
	Secondary	3.02		
Effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the SGB.	Primary	2.77	0.054	-
	Secondary	3.28		
SGB support for educators	Primary	2.36	0.003**	0.23
	Secondary	3.09		
Perceptions of SGB collaboration with educators	Primary	2.70	0.000**	0.31
	Secondary	3.80		

** =Statistically significant at the 1% level (p< 0.01)

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level (p > 0.01 but p < 0.05)

r = 0.1 is a small effect; r = 0.3 is a moderate effect; r = 0.5 large effect

In each of the four factors primary school educators had lower factor means than did secondary school respondents. Primary school educators believe to a statistically significantly greater extent that their school governing bodies are less effective than secondary school respondents believe this to be so regarding the allocated governance functions. Secondary school respondents do, however, believe that their school governing bodies are reasonably ineffective. The difference could possibly be that in secondary schools that learner discipline is a larger problem and possibly their school governing bodies are more involved in this aspect of governance than primary school, school governing bodies are. With respect to school governing body involvement in terms of support and collaboration primary school respondents have a more negative perception than do secondary school respondents. The effect sizes are small to moderate possibly indicating the practical significance of school governing body involvement in allocated governance functions and collaboration with educators.

4.6   COMPARISON OF THREE OR MORE INDEPENDENT GROUPS

When testing three or more independent groups for possible significant differences then one can make use of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). If differences are found among all three groups taken together then post-hoc tests can be used to make a pair wise comparison.

4.6.1 Significance of differences between the three school size groups

Three school size groups were formed namely less than 100 to 499, 500-999 and 1000 or more. The relevant data is provided in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Significance of the differences between the three age groups regarding the four factors

Factor	Group	Mean	ANOVA (p-value)		Scheffé/Dunnett T3		
					A	B	C
Effective execution of allocated governance functions by the SGB	100-499	2.57	0.21	A		-	-
	500-999	2.23		B	-		-
	1000+	2.63		C	-	-	
Effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the SGB	100-499	2.77	0.02*	A		-	-
	500-999	2.57		B	-		*
	1000+	3.30		C	-	*	
SGB support for educators	100-499	2.53	0.27	A		-	-
	500-999	2.32		B	-		-
	1000+	2.73		C	-	-	
Perceptions of SGB collaboration with educators	100-499	3.04	0.02*	A		-	-
	500-999	2.60		B	-		*
	1000+	3.02		C	-	*	

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level (p > 0.01 but p < 0.05)

r = 0.1 is a small effect; r = 0.3 is a moderate effect; r = 0.5 large effect

Educators in schools with more than 1 000 learners differ statistically significantly from those with from 500 to 999 learners regarding the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body. In schools with more than 1 000 learners the educators believe that the school governing body is reasonably ineffective while in schools with 500 to 999 learners the educators believe that the school governing bodies are mostly ineffective. This difference could be due to the larger number of school governing body members in the larger schools that is allowed for by legislation. A graph showing the relative factor means for FB1.1 (The effective governance of compulsory functions by the school governing body) is provided in figure 4.5.
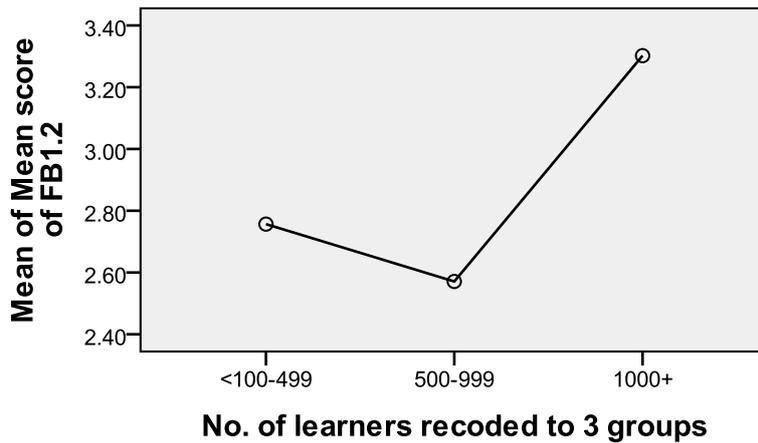
Figure 4.5: **A graph indicating the factor means obtained by the three number of learner groups with respect to FB1.1**

4.7   SYNTHESIS OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The empirical findings are based on the perceptions of educators regarding the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools. The perceptions of educators were obtained by means of a questionnaire containing 30 items in Section B and 10 items in Section C. The 30 items in Section B were reduced to two factors that were named "effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school governing body" and "effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body". The 10 items in Section C were reduced to two factors that were name "school governing body support for educators" and "Collaboration between the school governing body and the educators".

Questions used in the questionnaire were designed around concepts identified from literature, based on the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools. An instrument that has construct validity should be able to distinguish between groups that are known to differ from one another in certain respects. This research did reveal a significant statistical difference between the primary and secondary school respondents with respect to both allocated and compulsory school governing body functions. As the school governing bodies in secondary schools are more involved with learner discipline it was expected that they would believe that the

school governing bodies in their schools would be more effective than those in primary schools. In this respect construct validity is demonstrated.

The descriptive statistics used indicated that the sample used was representative of the population of Gauteng educators regarding gender, age, position occupied in the school and school size.

4.8   SUMMARY

In this chapter the reliability, validity and the content validity was discussed. An analysis and interpretation of the empirical findings was undertaken. The construct validity of the structured questionnaire as research instrument was investigated using successive factor analytic procedures.

From the data that was analyzed, the findings of this study included that the majority of the respondents were female educators which is thus representative of gender in Gauteng, which was also true for the amount of educators as to management positions. It also showed that there are insufficient young educators in the education system at present, as the average of the respondents were about 45years in age. There were also small number of educator respondents that were school governing body members. Responses were obtained from two categories, namely rural and urban. The data obtained showed that township educators have more negative perceptions about the effective governance of their school governance bodies than do urban.

In chapter five a summary of the research will be given, important findings will be discussed and appropriate recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The significance of good governance for effective functioning of schools has become increasingly important. The control of substantial budgets, promoting collaboration between the different structures in the school, a concern for the welfare of staff and to ensure effective teaching and learning, all require efficient governance competencies, skills and understanding.

The preceding chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of data collected from schools in the Johannesburg North District, D10 of the Gauteng Province. Chapter five will focus on the following aspects:

- Summary of the research;
- Important findings;
- Recommendations; and
- Conclusion.

5.2   SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

The democratisation of the education system in South Africa came with many challenges especially in education. There is a high level of public perception that many governors serving on school governing bodies are incompetent regarding the functions of school governance. It is therefore imperative for the Department of Education, to address these problems, before the claim can be made that school governing bodies are effective in their governance duties.

Parents have to be involved and encouraged to create a stimulating environment in the schools their children attend. According to legislation such as the South African Schools Act the opinions of stakeholders, specifically educators cannot be ignored in matters affecting their learners, and their participation must be sought, in order for them to experience the governance of the school as a participatory process.

Accordingly schools had to establish rules and policies and ensure that these policies are implemented effectively, with parents as important decision makers.

This study was based on the assumption that the effectiveness of school governing bodies in Gauteng public schools were composed of aspects such as effective execution of allocated governance functions, effective execution of compulsory governance functions, the support for educators and collaboration with educators. The background analysis undertaken in this study provides systematic material concerning the effectiveness of school governing bodies.

Chapter one introduced the topic and provided the background of the research. It described the problems to be investigated and the method used in this research. In broad terms, the perceptions of educators were probed regarding the effectiveness of their school governing bodies. In addition various concepts involved in the research title were clarified and a demarcation of the research was provided.

In chapter two the following important aspects regarding school governing bodies were discussed:

- The concept of governing bodies
- The South African governance model
- The composition of governing bodies
- Nomination of governing bodies
- Office-bearers and committees of governing bodies
- The composition of the executive committees of governing bodies
- Duties and functions of governing bodies
- Role clarifying of the school management team and the governing body
- Participation of parent members in the governance of schools

The literature survey resulted in the creation of a good foundation for further empirical investigation.

The design of the research instrument was discussed in chapter three. The instrument consisted of 30 closed-ended questions in Section B, which were used to elicit educator perceptions of effective execution of allocated governance functions by the school governing body and the effective execution of compulsory governance functions by the school governing body; and Section C consisted of 10 closed-ended questions, that probed educator perceptions relating to the school governing body's support for educators and the school governing body's collaboration with educators.

The analysis of the responses from the questionnaire was done in chapter four. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the representivity of the sample and inferential statistics probed possible differences between the various independent groups in the sample regarding the perceived effectiveness of governing bodies in public schools in the Johannesburg North area of Gauteng. The content and construct validity and reliability of the structured questionnaire were also discussed. Effective governance of schools is, among other things, dependent on policy formation competence, learner support involvement, educator collaboration and effective financial management. All of these aspects need parents who are committed to effective school governance. This research indicates that the effectiveness of parent members serving on school governing bodies is a priority for an effective school.

5.3   FINDINGS

The theoretical background regarding the importance of effectiveness of school governing bodies will be briefly discussed. The findings could serve to affirm existing theories and possibly add other dimensions of school governance to the fore.

5.3.1 Literature findings

The findings from the literature survey in respect of the effectiveness of school governing bodies in public schools, includes the following:

- In order to govern effectively the parent members on the governing body should acquaint themselves with the knowledge skills and values of school matters.

- Competent collaborative governance is an important component of the governance of schools.
- Competent communication and consultation is an important requirement for effective governance.
- Financial management is an important skill that parent members on the school governing body should have.
- Policy formation and interpretation is an important governance tool.
- Continuous training is a prerequisite for the effective governance of schools.

The parent members on the school governing body should in conjunction with the school, create opportunities where all stakeholders can make meaningful contributions, through active collaboration and through this process the school can be placed on the route towards becoming an organisation where ideas and experiences can be subjected to dialogue among various stakeholders.

5.3.2 Presentation of empirical findings

The questions selected as part of the dimensions of this project that were used to elicit the views and responses of educators in Gauteng public schools, will now be summarized.

5.3.2.1   Finding 1

The perceptions of the effective execution of governance functions are based on two sub-dimensions namely:
- The effective execution of allocated governance functions
- The effective execution of compulsory governance functions

5.3.2.2   Finding 2

The forming of collaborative governance relationships with educators is founded on two sub-dimensions namely:
- School governing body support for educators

- Collaboration between school governing bodies and educators

Findings related to the effective execution of allocated and compulsory governance functions will be firstly provided.

5.3.2.3   Finding 3

The following *allocated governance functions* were perceived to be executed in a reasonably ineffective way (see 3.4.1):

1. A focus on learner performance
2. The maintenance of school property
3. The protecting of school property against theft and vandalism
4. Purchasing educational resources or equipment for the school

Educators from Township schools had a more negative perception about the effective execution of the allocated governance functions than did urban school educators.

Primary school educators had a more negative perception regarding the execution of allocated governance functions by school governing body members than did secondary school educators.

Educators from schools with more than a 1 000 learners were more positive in their perceptions of allocated governance functions than schools between 500 and 1000 learners.

5.3.2.4   Finding 4

The following *compulsory governance functions* were perceived to be mostly to reasonably ineffectively executed (see 3.4.2):

1. Presenting the schools financial budget to the annual general meeting of parents for their consideration and approval.
2. Preparing a financial budget showing the expected income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year.

3. Keeping records of funds received and spent by the school.

4. Keeping records of assets, liabilities and the financial transactions of the school.

Educators in township schools had a more negative perception about the effective execution of the compulsory governance functions than did urban school educators.

Primary school educators had a more negative perception regarding the execution of compulsory governance functions by school governing body members than did secondary school educators.

Educators from schools with more than a 1 000 learners were more positive in their perceptions of compulsory governance functions than schools with between 500 and 1 000 learners.

5.3.2.5 Finding 5

With respect to the *forming of collaborative relationships and support* for educators by school governing bodies the perceptions of educators were (see 3.4.3):

1. School governing bodies are not as accessible to educators as the governance mandate expects from them.

2. That they were not allowed to openly express their views about matters pertaining to school governance.

Educators from township schools agreed to a smaller extent with this factor than did urban educators.

Secondary school educators agreed to a larger extent than did primary school educators that they received support from their governing bodies.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main aim of this research was an investigation into the effectiveness of school governing bodies. In order to realise this aim a literature survey was undertaken and this served as the foundation on which the empirical research could be based.

The findings of this research are now incorporated in the following recommendations.

5.4.1 Recommendation 1

It is very difficult to change the mind set of individuals. When people are in power positions of governance, they tend to disempower their followers. This is a difficult aspect to address but I recommend that the Department of Education should develop specific criteria for the election of parent members who want to serve on the governing body. This will allow for members to have some skills to contribute positively to the effective and efficient working of the school governing body. Also, a support and mentorship system needs to be put in place for parent members of the school governing body, thereby allowing the members the opportunity to identify with other members in the same position and positions within governance.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2

The duties and responsibilities of school governing bodies are clearly set out in the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). School governing body members must therefore be properly informed about their duties and responsibilities, because they play a vital role in the governance of schools. School governing bodies should be educated and equipped to make important decisions and to perform their duties effectively. It is important for the Department of Education to have workshops and development meetings to ensure the professional development of the members of the school governing body, thereby empowering them to have the knowledge to carry out their duties and responsibilities effectively.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3

As set out in the School African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) the school governing body has to support the educators in the performance of their duties. This can only be achieved if the school governing body is aware of the duties of educators. The Department of Education should have workshops and developmental meetings to give school governing body members the necessary

knowledge to support educators within their duties. Once school governing body members are aware of what is expected of educators, can they only support educators.

5.4.4 Recommendation 4

When something is forced on people, it is very difficult to change their mind set and the way they relate to each other. Educators must accept change and make it easier for members of the governing body to be in governance positions. It is important for the Department of Education to provide on-going training to ensure the professional development of members of the school governing body thereby empowering them to have the confidence and knowledge to voice their opinions in meetings. There should also be regular meetings with educators in order to develop effective communication amongst all stake holders. This will lead to open communication channels and a relationship of trust and a good working relationship. Change can only be received and experienced positively if it contributes to the improvement of existing educational practice.

5.4.5 Recommendation 5

Governance functions are closely related to effective school management and often find that school management teams just take over these functions for example the finance committee. Many educators do not accommodate school governing bodies in this committee as meetings have often to occur outside school hours. For effective collaboration to take place then school members also need to be accommodating. School governing bodies can be invited to attend school management team meetings. Educators also need to change their perceptions that parents do not know anything and share their knowledge of teaching by communicating with school governing bodies. Collaboration is a mutual process and both the school governing body and the educators need to be involved in how school governance can be made more effective. The school governing body needs to meet the staff more regularly to encourage better interpersonal relationships. Special meetings could be held on the first Saturday of each term where the school governing body and educators can communicate the needs of the term as well as the challenges. In this way effective

communication and collaboration, in the best interest of the school and its learners, can occur.

5.4.6 Recommendation 6

Decentralization allows for a more democratic school system, whereby parents are more active in school matters. School governing bodies have allocated and compulsory roles and responsibilities which are clearly stipulated in section 20 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The Education Laws Amendment Act (The Republic of South Africa, 2007) has taken away many of these governance powers of school governing bodies thereby further eroding their already limited power base. These governance powers should not have been removed, instead they should have been properly trained in their governance duties by the school governing body who are presently in office with the assistance of experienced principals. This could lead to educators having a more positive perception of the effectiveness with which school governing bodies perform the functions allocated to them.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) was the first step towards educational change. Other changes focus on the curriculum, appraisal procedures for educators and the changes after the establishment of the South African Council for Educators. The above constitute a new working paradigm for all educational stakeholders.

Further research is important to determine the influence on the changing school environment on the school governing body. It should reveal how parents perceive these changes and challenges; and examine the impact of the changes and challenges, on the school governing body governance role and competence.

5.6   SUMMARY

The educational environment in South Africa is changing at a rapid and at times uncalled-for pace. Invariably this educational change impacts on school governance. School governing bodies as important stakeholders is also at the centre of this change and this raises the question whether they are equipped to execute their functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently, in the changing dynamic school environment.

The school governing body has legal status and standing because it has clearly stated statutory duties and responsibilities, as set out in the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). School governing body members must therefore be properly informed about their roles and responsibilities, and they must have the skills necessary to perform the duties required of them. A challenge in many school communities in South Africa is the availability of persons with the necessary skills and expertise who can serve on the school governing body and assist where necessary. School governing bodies will have to develop strategies to meet the changing challenges. Governing bodies will have to have to adjust their role from passive partners to those of participatory stakeholders.

It has been established that school governing bodies should be competent in key functions, such as the effective execution of allocated governance functions; effective execution of compulsory governance functions; support for educators; collaboration with educators; motivational strategies; the management of physical and financial resources; the management of organisational structures; the management of educational policies; and community involvement.

This research clearly confirms the premise that school governing bodies should have the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to execute their governance functions and responsibilities effectively. Having an effective and supportive school governing body which is well informed about their roles and responsibilities is a very important part of the efficient functioning of the school.

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