

**Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously  
Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa**

by

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## DECLARATION

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I declare that the topic “**Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa**” is my own project.

All the sources that have been used or cited have been listed and recognised by means of comprehensive references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johann Nico Horne', is positioned above the printed name.

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### DECLARATION

To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proofread and edited the language of the following dissertation, including the bibliography.

#### **Title of dissertation**

Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa

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5 September 2018

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## **ABSTRACT**

School-based management has become a common global trend within the educational sphere, with institutional autonomy as the major educational reform. Post-apartheid education reform in South Africa shows strong decentralisation inclinations in an effort to redress past inequalities and to ensure comparable standards across all schools.

During the previous political dispensation, principals in South Africa executed their duties with virtually sole authority within the dictatorial prescribes of the central government. They, furthermore, were not obliged to actively involve other stakeholders, such as educators, parents and learners, in school affairs. Decentralisation within education reform legislation necessitates that the role of salient stakeholders of schools be redefined to give true meaning to elements of democracy as prescribed by South African legislation.

This research study is grounded within a theoretical framework that focuses on the concepts, characteristics, assumptions, theories and processes of school-based management. In addition, a qualitative research design was employed. The sample was purposive and consisted of principals and school management team members of three previously disadvantaged schools. A thorough study of the status of principals, deputy principals and heads of departments was made, as this is articulated in the South African legislation and current literature. Three principals and one head of department participated in individual interviews, and two focus group interviews were also conducted with deputy principals and heads of departments of two of the selected schools. In order to confirm and validate the data that were gathered during the interviews, a documentary analysis was performed.

Various themes and subthemes emerged from the qualitative research, which primarily centred on the role and impact of stakeholders within a school-based management strategy. Possible impediments relating to a previously disadvantaged context were

identified as well as how schools are managed and, in particular, the management by principals and school management teams in these confinements. The role of other stakeholders, such as district officials, was also expounded upon, as well as how they currently assist schools to implement school-based management. The perceptions of principals and school management teams on the current assistance being provided and how they would like to be assisted were also recorded. Another important aspect that the research uncovered was how previously disadvantaged schools frequently excel, despite the shortcomings they may experience.

School-based management within a South African context can only work in previously disadvantaged schools if current challenges are acknowledged and addressed by policymakers. All pertinent school leaders of previously disadvantaged schools, such as principals, school management teams and school governing bodies, need to be adequately and regularly trained, based on their unique competencies to enhance a successful school-based management strategy in these schools.

## **KEY CONCEPTS**

School-based management (SBM); educational reform; previously disadvantaged school; principal; school management; school governance; school management team (SMT); school governing body (SGB); decision-making.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CAT	Computer application technology
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
HoD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
NCDE	Northern Cape Department of Education
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PED	Provincial Education Department
PTSA	Parent-Teacher-Student Association
RCL	Representative Council for Learners
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School governing body
SMT	School management team
SSE	School self-evaluation
WSE	Whole-school evaluation

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This research study delved into the dynamics of school-based management (SBM) in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa. Even though the study predominantly focused on the position of school principals as being the main drivers and accountable persons of this strategy, it also investigated the role of other role-players, such as deputy principals, heads of departments (HoDs) and school governing body (SGB) members. The term “previously disadvantaged schools” in this study refers to schools located in disadvantaged communities.

This chapter aims to outline the context of the study by presenting the rationale and the purpose of the research, as well as the theoretical framework and key concepts adopted. In addition, pertinent aspects, such as the problem statement, the research design and the research methodology, are also highlighted. Strategies to ensure quality assurance are also encapsulated, as well as the limitations of the research and the ethical considerations that were adhered to.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

The dynamics of SBM appear to be vast, challenging and comprehensive. These include many different role-players with, more than often, diverse views on how schools should be managed. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:172) reason that SBM requires stakeholders, such as school staff, parents and learners, to use their potential as a collaborative approach to yield school improvement.

SBM within the South African context refers to an educational approach to yield better educational outcomes *via* the shifting of important powers, such as decision-making,

from the central government to individual schools. The notion of SBM has been firmly cemented in schools with the South African Schools Act (SASA) (Act No. 84 of 1996) (Van Wyk & Marumoloa, 2012:101). The central function of school principals continues to be crucial within this collaborative approach to running schools.

### **1.2.1 Towards an SBM Strategy in Education**

Botha (2013:307) points out that major transformation has taken place in educational institutions throughout the world. Various items in the research literature indicate that SBM has been globally implemented within the educational sector. SBM has thus become a common trend in education, with institutional autonomy as the major educational reform (Ayeni & Ibunkun, 2013:37; Botha, 2006:341; Botha, 2013:307; Steyn, 2002:251; Vally & Daud, 2015:694). Since 1980, SBM has featured as a worldwide educational transformational phenomenon (Adeolu & Williams, 2013:37). Al Kaabi (2015:1) concurs and claims that SBM represents a significant educational reform strategy to restructure school systems by decentralising decision-making powers to schools.

### **1.2.2 SBM within a South African Context**

South Africa is not immune to educational reform as its education system has also experienced far-reaching changes since 1994 (Joubert, 2001:79). Jansen and Taylor (2003:8) reflect that very few countries have introduced more educational reform than South Africa since 1994. According to Chutgar and Kanjee (2009:18), schools in South Africa are generally classified based on their poverty ranking – quintiles 4 and 5 (advantaged) and quintiles 1, 2 and 3 (formerly disadvantaged). It appears that this poverty ranking has an impact on the dynamics of school management as experienced by principals and other school leaders and stakeholders.

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:173) explain that the South African Department of Education (DoE), *via* SBM, involves the stakeholders, such as principals, educators and

parents, in school planning and problem solving, under the guidance of both departmental and government policies. These legislative policies will be discussed in Chapter Two, under subsection 2.3.2 (ii), and will, among others, identify the crucial role of principals as key agents to facilitate the implementation of governmental policies and to create opportunities for stakeholder involvement in school affairs. How then do school stakeholders participate in school matters within an SBM framework?

### **1.2.3 Stakeholders in SBM**

Any reform usually leads to some change and will ultimately influence the way institutions, such as schools, will be regulated. SBM has at its core the active involvement of more role-players in the running of school affairs. Botha (2006:341) notes that SBM signals a major change in the roles of those involved in the managing of schools due to the emphasis on the participation of more stakeholders within the decision-making process. Bandur (2012:33) echoes this sentiment and also states that SBM requires the active participation and empowerment of school stakeholders, who should include the principal, the deputy principal, HoDs, educators, the administrative staff of the school, the SGB, parents, learners and the local community. These stakeholders, as explained by Bandur (2012:33), are envisaged within SBM as deciding on various matters that were earlier reviewed by the central, regional or district governments. SBM thus puts great emphasis on the role of each stakeholder in school affairs to yield school improvement and development –

The SBM approach requires different stakeholders such as parents, learners and the school staff, both academic and non-academic, to bring their respective strengths in a concerted manner to the joint task of ensuring school effectiveness. (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:172)

How to actively involve such a diverse group of people in school matters seems to need well-developed legislation that spells out the roles to be played in such a way that school management and governance yield well-run schools to enhance learner achievement.

The previous paragraph listed the stakeholders in SBM. The next section will further expound on how these stakeholders operate within an SBM strategy.

### *1.2.3 (i) Role of Principals in SBM*

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) claim that principals in SBM face a daunting task to manage schools in a process of shared and participatory leadership in order to enable all staff members to feel empowered, respected and capable of adding value to school development. This assertion by Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) suggests that being a principal within an SBM strategy goes far beyond mere school administration, and necessitates an individual capable of managing people with diverse perspectives and interests. The value of strong management and leadership skills in the enhancement of learner performance has been well documented. Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2011:31), while making reference to Leithwood *et al.* (2006:4), refer to this aspect and state that all documented cases on the successful turning around of learners' achievements always refer to the talented leadership displayed by principals. The opposite of this factor unfortunately also holds true, that is, that the effects of poor leadership and management by principals in schools where learner performance is low cannot be underestimated. Perumal (2007:19) comments that weak and unaccountable school leadership contributes to poor learner performance. This study, among others, aims to investigate the management experiences of principals of previously disadvantaged schools in post-apartheid South Africa.

The SBM experiences among principals due to education reform in South Africa should not be seen in isolation from the historical setting and local dynamics of schools. Christie (2010:707) observes, in this regard, that the job of the principal is manifested differently in schools with different past histories.

### *1.2.3 (ii) Role of Educators in SBM*

SBM also changes the role of educators. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) reflect that educators within SBM are not only expected to manage the classroom but also to be involved in “broader outside-the-classroom activities”. Within SBM, educators manage the school with the principal and also form part of the development of, among others, the vision and mission statements and school policies of a school. In South Africa, the SMT usually includes deputy principals and HoDs who, together with the principal, are responsible for various factors, such as curriculum management, teacher evaluation and teacher development. Educators can be co-opted onto the school management team (SMT) and can, hence, be part of school leadership and actively participate in staff development, mentoring and curriculum development (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:175).

### *1.2.3 (iii) Role of SGB parents in SBM*

The SASA (1996) assigns a key role for parents within SBM as members of the SGB. The SASA (1996) thus affords South African parents more participation in school affairs than in the past. As part of the SGB, parents can decide on important school aspects such as school policies, school finances and suitable candidates for vacancies. SGB duties require parents to have the necessary skills, such as financial management, human resource management and the ability to interpret various departmental policies and legislation. Unfortunately, not all school communities have suitably skilled parents to execute their governance function. In such unfavourable circumstances, the principal, as the key stakeholder, is required to be innovative to maintain good school governance to produce school improvement and development. This innovation of principals (Sibanda, 2017:177) is one dynamic that is explored in this research study.

### *1.2.3 (iv) Role of District Officials in SBM*

Other role-players within SBM in South African schools include both those provincial and district officials employed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Their role is to monitor and strengthen the compliance of schools regarding educational legislation. In addition, these officials are also obliged to render assistance to schools in matters relating to school management and school governance.

Circuit managers function as the supervisors of schools and have to play an important role within an SBM approach in South Africa. The role of circuit managers is articulated in the Government Gazette, Notice 180 of 2012, which spells out the functions of education districts (DBE, 2012:58). Here it is emphasised that the circuit manager is responsible for providing curriculum guidance and supporting subject advisory services to educators to enhance quality education. Unfortunately, not much research could be found on what circuit managers actually do to add value to school improvement and how they render such guidance and support. This conclusion is supported by researchers such as Mafuwane and Pitsoe (2014:443) and Mthembu (2014:7), who plead for more clarity on how circuit managers tangibly assist school management to ensure school improvement. The role and responsibilities of circuit managers within SBM thus represent a gap in research which future researchers should consider to pursue in order to achieve better insight into how the different levels of government operate within the broader educational sphere.

### **1.2.4 SBM in Previously Disadvantaged Schools**

According to a report by the World Bank (2008:2), SBM intends to expand the participation of the poor and, in doing so, also advance service delivery. SBM furthermore strives to give citizens a say in how schools are run through the effective dissemination of information so that all people, including the poor, are exposed to effective and good education and know how to act if the required service delivery is not provided (World Bank, 2007:2).



Research on previously disadvantaged schools paints a bleak picture of the SBM challenges that many principals still face. According to Christie (2010:708), the educational reforms in South Africa are actually more beneficial to those schools that have gained from apartheid legislation, and these reforms have unintentionally widened the inequalities between those sectors that have gained and those that have been deprived during apartheid.

However, all is not negative in disadvantaged schools. Evidence is also found of previously disadvantaged schools that perform well in the face of challenges such as poor resourcing, poor infrastructure and unqualified educators (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007:5; Sibanda, 2017:177). Christie *et al.* (2007:5) state that evidence exists in South Africa that schools in mainstream education, despite various challenges and shortcomings due to apartheid legislation, have managed excellent learner achievement against all odds. The researcher also sought to gain insight into how school principals from these deprived communities manage to overcome adversity brought about by the legacies of apartheid policies.

The next section will shed more light on the rationale of, and thus the motivation for, this study.

### **1.2.5 Rationale of the Research Study**

The information, as presented in the previous paragraphs, reveals substantial gaps in the current research literature. The reason for this is that these and other previous studies did not sufficiently supply researchers with context-specific measures to address SBM challenges in disadvantaged schools. Furthermore, research has also been generally limited to the principal as school leader to ensure the successful implementation of SBM (Botha, 2006:345-346). This study adds value to the existing research on SBM in that it makes an effort to gain insight into the contribution of deputy principals and HoDs within an SBM strategy and the difficulties they experience in fulfilling their envisaged managerial role.

According to Hermosilla, Anderson and Mundy (2014:7), there is also a need for more research in developing countries to explore the practice and potential for shared school leadership to attain school goals. This study, with South Africa contextualised as a developing country, sought to explore the practice and potential for shared school leadership within the SBM framework. The actual day-to-day activities of principals within an SBM strategy still appear to be blurred, even despite attempts over the post-apartheid years to explain such activities, because education legislation in South African is dynamic and evolving, which requires school leadership to be adaptable to these changes. According to Spillane, Haverson and Diamond (2004:4), less is known about how principals undertake their in-school leadership role among all the educational changes that occur. These sentiments are reiterated by Jamal (2014:1267), who expresses concern about the ability of principals to lead schools in the complex and ever-changing modern reality.

This study also sought to examine and address the challenges that principals face in effectively involving the entire SMT in school management. The SMT in South African schools generally includes the principal, the deputy principal or principals and HoDs, as well as post-level one educators, if deemed necessary by the principal. This study attempted to gain more insight into the interaction between the principal and the other SMT members, as well as the working relationship between the SMT and the parents as key co-drivers of SBM.

This study additionally intended to address the gaps in the existing research by examining issues around the management of curriculum implementation, and by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of educators and parents in SBM and the support rendered to principals by district offices. Last but not least, the study also aimed to address the opportunities for school leadership to enhance school improvement within an SBM reform strategy through participation and by empowering stakeholders to execute their duties as per the prescribed policies and legislation.

### **1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research study is grounded within a theoretical framework that focuses on the concepts, characteristics, assumptions, theories and processes of SBM. A theoretical framework is defined as the application of a theory or the application of concepts that are derived from the same theory to explain a research problem or event. (Tamene, 2016:53). The theoretical framework, according to Tamene (2016:53), furthermore guides the research and determines what should be measured and what statistical relationships should be looked for. As already revealed, this research study was guided and underpinned by an SBM framework.

The theoretical framework is grounded on the study objectives and will be divided into three parts. The first part will detail the SBM as a decentralised education strategy as embedded in education legislation. The second section will describe the major professional management issues that principals and SMT members experience with regard to curriculum and instruction, effective school leadership, staff development and the effective monitoring and evaluating of teacher performance. These will be referred to as “staff-related SBM issues”. The third part will refer to the challenges that principals experience with regard to infrastructure improvement, budget allocation and management. These will be described as “governance-related SBM issues”, as they address issues in which the parents and governing body are involved. This is in line with what the literature on SBM suggests, and it aims to address and improve certain purposes, processes, structures and roles in SBM (*cf.* Al Kaabi, 2015:22-23).

The following paragraphs give more clarity concerning the theoretical framework that anchored this study.

#### **1.3.1 SBM as a Decentralised Educational Strategy**

Caldwell (2005:1) defines SBM as “the systematic decentralization to the school level of authority and responsibility to make decisions on significant matters related to school

operations within a centrally determined framework of goals, policies, curriculum, standards, and accountability”.

Decentralisation, as defined by Caldwell (2005:1) above, is administrative rather than political. It, therefore, suggests that decisions at school level are made within the framework of national policies and guidelines to ensure the preservation of a notion of one organisation (Caldwell, 2005:2). As the economic environment has changed over the decades, national governments realised that the central government structures were unable to address the local needs of society, which also include the needs of individual schools (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:173).

SBM in education, therefore, came to the fore when national governments realised that those people who are closest to schools are suitably placed to resolve how the execution of school functions should take place (Al Kaabi, 2015:15). The devolvement of predetermined functions and responsibilities to schools established SBM as a more democratic education strategy compared to the former bureaucratic centralised education model (Bandur, 2012:35). Since principals, educators and parents are closest to the primary business of schools, SBM is thus founded on the premise that they are in the most suitable position to make the best-informed decisions (Al Kaabi, 2015:15; Pomuti & Weber, 2012:2).

Although an SBM strategy entrusts powers and responsibilities to schools, it does not mean that schools are not subject to any control. Al Kaabi (2015:15) explains that within an SBM strategy, schools must function according to prearranged government legislation. The next paragraph will, for that reason, focus on the legislation that guides an SBM strategy.

### **1.3.2 SBM Legislation**

Bandur (2008:96) and Barrer-Osorio, Fasih, Patrinos and Santibáñez (2009:4) hold the opinion that SBM manifests itself differently in different countries, based on the

educational objectives individual countries pursue. Al Kaabi (2015) lists the functions that are generally devolved to schools within the SBM strategy. These include, but are not limited to, the authority concerning the budget, personnel management, developing the curriculum, maintenance and infrastructure and the monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance and learner progress.

Various researchers concur that SBM implementation in South Africa was predominantly done to address the unequal education system caused by apartheid (Coetzee, 2014:2; Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:1). The supreme law in the post-apartheid South African era is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (hereafter “the Constitution”), which is founded on democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and anti-discrimination principles, which also find expression in current South African education legislation. The SASA (1996), for example, provides the legal framework to involve the parent community in school governance (Moonsammy-Koopasammy, 2012:18-21). Christie (2010:701-702) discusses the role of principals and educators as articulated by the Employment of Educators Act of 1998 and the Labour Relations and Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which regulate the provisions of the work of principals and educators.

### **1.3.3 Staff-related SBM Issues**

The SASA (1996) offers direction to schools on how they should be managed and governed. These functions and the role-players who should execute these functions will be set out below.

#### *1.3.3 (i) Management of the Curriculum and Instruction*

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:1) explain that management in South African schools is entrusted to the broader SMT. According to Nehemia (2011:1591), principals, deputy principals and HoDs have to provide comprehensive guidance, preserve discipline and put into practice efficient norms to improve educational quality at the level of the school.

The SMT thus manages the curriculum and coordinates it in such a way that the time spent on teaching is used most efficiently. In addition, the SMT also has to supervise teaching, monitor learner progress and create conditions that will aid quality teaching and learning (Nehemia, 2011:1591).

### *1.3.3 (ii) Effective School Leadership*

Nehemia (2011:1591) asserts that SBM requires school leadership that not only oversees the curriculum but also spearheads the drafting and implementation of the vision and mission of a school and fosters close ties with the community. While the SMT, under the leadership of the principal, executes this overseeing role, the educator within SBM shows leadership in his or her class by implementing innovating strategies to enhance quality teaching, discipline and learner achievement within the classroom.

### *1.3.3 (iii) Management of Staff*

Algahtani (2014:74) believes that management entails providing direction to and supervision of a group or organisation. The principal within SBM is responsible for managing the deputy principals, the HoDs, the educators and the non-teaching staff, such as administration clerks and general workers. SBM requires an effective principal who possesses qualities such as good communication skills, excellent organisational skills, the ability to negotiate and effective delegation skills to lead a staff of which the members each has different abilities and interests.

### *1.3.3 (iv) Monitoring and Evaluation of Teacher Performance*

Al Kaabi (2015:17) draws attention to the responsibility of the SMT within an SBM strategy for monitoring and evaluating not only learner outcomes but also teacher performance. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy, as stated by Queen-Mary and Mtapuri (2014:2), is designed to assist South African educators in identifying their weaknesses and professional development needs and advancing educational improvements at schools. The IQMS provides a platform for educators to be

evaluated by SMT members and peers on their teaching methodologies and other duties allocated to them. The IQMS was thus implemented to strengthen quality teaching and assist educators in their continuous professional development (Queen-Mary & Mtapuri, 2014:2).

#### **1.3.4 Governance-related SBM Issues**

School governance within an SBM strategy in South African schools entails the participation of stakeholders such as parents, educators and learners in making decisions on how the school should be operated (Mavuso & Duku, 2014:454). Section 16(1) of the SASA (1996) declares that school governance is vested within the SGB of the school. The governance duties are briefly set out in the next paragraphs.

##### *1.3.4 (i) Management of Infrastructure Improvement*

The SGB, as per Section 20 of the SASA (1996), is also responsible for preserving and developing the property of the school. This function directly addresses the provision of a safe environment in which teachers can teach and learners can learn. The SGB, with the assistance of the SMT, should therefore employ strategies to identify infrastructure deficiencies and use the allocated funds to do the necessary repairs and maintenance of the infrastructure of the school.

##### *1.3.4 (ii) Budget Allocation and Infrastructure Management*

Another responsibility of SGBs is highlighted by Mavuso and Duku (2014:454), namely to manage the school funds and maintain the infrastructure. SBM within South African schools thus requires SGBs to have the necessary financial management skills to manage allocated funds as prescribed by the SASA (1996).

### 1.3.4 (iii) *The SGB*

The SGB contains the principal, elected educators, elected parents, elected non-teaching staff and elected high school learners as well as other members the SGB can co-opt to assist in their operations (SASA, 1996). Genniker (2015:71) explains that the SASA affords parents the chance to participate actively in school affairs, and in doing so, they, together with the school staff, determine the character of the school.

The following paragraphs aim to explain the meaning of concepts that are essential in SBM.

## 1.4 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Concepts that are central to an SBM framework are clarified below.

### 1.4.1 SBM

Ayeni and Ibukun (2013:36) define SBM as follows:

...the process of devolution of power and authority to significant stakeholders to perform statutory responsibilities in the administration, monitoring, evaluation and review of education policy issues for sustainable goal-oriented governance and effective teaching and learning activities to achieve set standards and quality learning outcomes in schools.

SBM, as articulated in the quotation above, involves a school milieu in which schools take ownership and the authority to make critical decisions that have an impact on teaching and learning. Hermosilla *et al.* (2014:3) comment that extensive evidence suggests that SBM changes how schools operate by mobilising parents and educators to become more involved in school affairs.



### **1.4.2 Previously Disadvantaged Schools**

Page (2016:14), in making reference to the National Empowerment Fund Act 105 of 1998, clarifies that the term “previously disadvantaged group” refers to the previously disenfranchised population groups in South Africa and include blacks and coloured persons, as well as Indians. These groups were socially, economically and educationally deprived by the then apartheid South African government through unequal, discriminatory racial treatment (Page, 2016:14).

The term “previously disadvantaged school” in this study refers to a school located in a community that was neglected under apartheid legislation. The funding and resources provided to these communities and their schools were of a poorer quality as those provided to the white communities and their schools. While the researcher acknowledges the pro-poor funding provided by the post-apartheid government to these communities and schools, this research is mindful of the backlogs left by apartheid legislation and the reality that the legacy of past inequalities is still evident today.

### **1.4.3 Dynamics**

“Dynamics” implies continuous change and productive activity (Merriam-Webster, 2018). In this context, SBM is not something static but is ever-changing and evolving due to changing educational legislation. This research, therefore, served to gain insight into an educational framework that is diverse, with diverse outcomes in schools, within diverse socio-economic and political contexts.

### **1.4.4 School Management**

Section 16(3) of the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (2011) regulates the crucial position of principals on how schools are managed and states that the principal must take responsibility for the professional management of the school. This responsibility of principals is executed as directed by the head of the Provincial Education Department

(PED). Section 16A of this Act (2011) spells out the duties of the principal regarding professional management, which include, among others, the daily management of teaching and learning and the management of the support that is required for this. Also the SASA (1996), Section 16(1), affirms that principals are in charge of the management of teaching and learning duties performed by educators. According to Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen (2009:1), the management of teaching and learning is the most important activity of school principals.

One should be mindful of the fact that educators in school-based management do not fall outside the scope of professional management of a school. According to Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:1), management in South African schools is the responsibility of not only the principals but also deputy principals and HoDs. Bush *et al.* (2009:1-7) state that the principal, together with the SMT, oversees the daily running of the teaching and learning process, and that each educator should manage how teaching and learning unfold in individual classes. Based on the discussion of Bush *et al.* (2009:1-7), the principal as the “chief executive officer” is the overall accounting officer who must facilitate effective management regarding the operation of school activities. These aspects of management include the manner in which teaching and learning happen in the individual classes.

#### **1.4.5 School Governance**

Section 16(1) of the SASA (1996) clearly states that the SGB is responsible for governing the school. Modisaotsile (2012:4) asserts that the SGB is mandated to set policies and rules that govern the school and monitor the implementation of these. Loock and Gravett (2014:177) furthermore explain that the SGB plays an oversight role and executes specific functions, such as the regulating of school assets, managing school finances and the procurement of learning and teaching material. Christie (2010:702), citing the SASA (1996), lists the partners of the SGB as follows: principals as governmental representatives, elected parents, educators, non-teaching staff and high school learners.

Up to now, this chapter has given a broad overview of what the research study will focus on and why the research was conducted. The next section reviews the study objectives and questions.

## **1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

It is common knowledge that the principal's pivotal role in education remains undisputed. Various researchers also emphasise the challenges that principals experience within the dynamics of SBM. Botha (2013:307), for example, asserts that school principals are major role-players in education, but are often at the receiving end of various effects generated by educational reform. Shun-wing and Sing-ying (2015:3) add that principals are required to run schools efficiently, in spite of various problems and in addition to experiencing manifold demands and difficulties. It stands to reason that all of these reforms within education would ultimately have an impact on the role and functions of school principals. Townsend and MacBeath (2011:19) argue that the task of leading a school within an SBM strategy has become so diverse that leadership needs to be spread out to ensure that schools are run successfully. Shun-wing and Sing-yeng (2015:1) claim that the work of principals has become subject to radical and remarkable shifts due to education reforms such as SBM.

Recent research also shows that principals serving schools in disadvantaged communities confront problems associated with the following: an uninviting and unpleasant school environment; difficulties in attracting and retaining suitably qualified and experienced educators; frustration with the lack of parental involvement in the academic performance of learners; poor parent attendance at school meetings; and involvement in fundraising. Furthermore, there is often conflict between principals and staff members and poor working relations with SGB members (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:244; Bush & Glover, 2016:211-231; Murtin, 2013:17). Christie (2010:702) observes that SGBs in poor communities often do not have the necessary competencies to govern schools as articulated in the SASA (1996). Botha (2012:264)

emphasises that, if all the stakeholders in the SGB do not actively participate in the decision-making process, there is a considerable chance that conflict may arise.

### **1.5.1 Research Problem**

The introduction has touched on some of the challenges that school principals are experiencing as managers. Christie (2010:698-699) believes that the shift to SBM enforces the managerial role of principals who are expected to fulfil management tasks they have not necessarily been trained for. These managerial tasks include, among others, the management of the curriculum and instruction, financial management and staff management, as well as the management of learner progress and teacher performance. In addition, Naicker and Mestry (2013:2) identify new legislation as being a contributing factor in the added demands facing South African principals. Taole (2013:77) proclaims that the revised education policies in South Africa since 1994 have created new and daunting challenges for school principals.

Based on the central role of principals, post-apartheid education reform firmly places the responsibility on principals for mediating, advocating and facilitating these policy changes brought about by education reforms. Reform policies also accentuate the transformational role of principals in transformation to bring about post-apartheid restructuring in education.

SBM in South Africa, as per the SASA (1996), requires that diverse responsibilities, such as financial management, had to be devolved to schools. Chalufu (2011:3) points out that South African principals have very seldom been trained to perform functions such as financial management, as required by an SBM strategy. Christie (2010:700) calls attention to the fact that SBM highlights aspects of how South African schools operate. SBM shows marked differences in school management for differently positioned schools.

Oosthuizen (2003:183-184) sheds light on the new dimension in South African education and identifies the following parties with an interest in education, all with the power to compel the principal to drastically adapt his or her role. These parties are:

- the educators, who have a greater say in school management;
- the parents, with a greater say in school governance;
- the learners, whose legal status has changed due to the promulgation of the Bill of Rights;
- the state, which is playing a diminishing role compared to that of the apartheid area;
- the organised teaching profession and teacher unions, which frequently test and oppose decisions made at all levels of education, even at school level; and
- the general public, such as the business community, who have become potential sponsors.

Oosthuizen (2003:184) emphasises that these parties challenge principals continuously to make decisions considering diverse views. The parties represent different constituencies with varying perspectives and interests. Christie *et al.* (2010:20) observe that the relationship between management and governance is often very difficult to negotiate at the level of the school because the interests of the various and diverse parties, as stated by Oosthuizen (2003:183-184), need to be considered before decisions are made. SBM requires dynamic school structures and innovative leadership to ensure that such diverse interests collaborate as a cohesive unit to the advantage of quality teaching and learning in particular, and school improvement in general.

Another point of concern is the challenges related to inequalities in schools in South Africa. Christie (2010:702) states that the inequalities of apartheid, such as inferior infrastructure and inferior educator qualifications at disenfranchised communities, did not vanish with the implementation of education reform in South Africa. This implies that principals from previously disadvantaged schools still have to deal with these persistent inequalities while executing their duties within an SBM framework.

As alluded to previously, the apartheid legislation caused major inequalities based along racial lines, which are still evident in schools with different historical contexts. The impact of post-apartheid legislation changed the educational sphere and, in particular, the role of principals (Taole, 2013:75). In addition, those principals of previously disadvantaged communities have had to grapple with socio-economic conditions of poverty, high unemployment and high levels of illiteracy among adults. The researcher thus believes that this poor socio-economic environment makes it virtually impossible for parents of previously disadvantaged communities to contribute financially to the needs of their school. The poor literacy levels appear to hamper SGB functionality, which requires parents who have the necessary skills to execute functions such as financial management and policy development and interpretation.

Murtin (2013:5-12) advocates that education resources should be increased and equalised across all South African schools. Murtin (2013:5) adds that disadvantaged schools, notwithstanding education reforms, still experience infrastructure backlogs and the low availability of learning materials, including textbooks, desks and computers. This point is illustrated by the shortages of computers and even the water supply at formerly disadvantaged schools. Data retrieved from the National Education Infrastructure Management (NEIMS) database (DBE, 2016a:1-5) reflect that 58.62% of schools have no computer centres, 70.83% have no libraries, 171 schools have no water supply and 569 schools still operate without electricity. Murtin (2013:17) highlights various other challenges in previously disadvantaged schools and communities. These challenges include shortages of human resources in communities and the lack of quality educators.

Inequality in school performance is also linked to socio-economic differences in the parental background. This aspect also has an impact on the functioning of the SGB because of the gaps in the skills levels between parents serving former Model C schools and those from previously disadvantaged communities (Murtin, 2013:21). Heystek (2011:458) reasons that often parents from previously disadvantaged communities, even after training, do not have the required competencies to execute the functions allocated to them by the state. In the absence of such skills, attention is yet

again focused on the principal, who is regarded as the strategic agent of change and transformation. In such scenarios, the challenges of principals to manage the school become more varied, more extensive and more demanding. In addition, Van Wyk, Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2014:465) identify the shortage of financial resources in especially previously disadvantaged schools, which causes further frustration for principals. According to Murtin (2013:20), former Model C schools are in a position to collect tuition fees to supplement and expand on their existing teaching and learning resources, while schools that serve impoverished communities, on the other hand, rely entirely on government funds.

Despite all the previously mentioned impediments, there are examples of several previously disadvantaged schools that still perform well amidst all these obstacles. The Ministerial Committee Report on Schools at Work (Christie *et al.*, 2017:5) touches on the evidence that exists of previously disadvantaged schools performing well regardless of the various challenges that have an impact on their daily operations. Naicker, Grant and Pillay (2016:1) highlight how such schools employ innovative ways to maintain good learner achievement. Heystek (2016:1) confirms this stance and reflects that there are already significant examples of schools that perform exceptionally well, notwithstanding the challenges of educational changes.

This study, therefore, also endeavoured to highlight the good practices alluded to above, as these may add value to the existing research on why some previously disadvantaged schools perform well, despite the various problems they encounter.

### **1.5.2 Research Questions**

The research problem statement guides the main research question to be answered, namely: **What are the dynamics of school-based management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa?**

The following research subquestions are investigated in the study:

- How do school principals of previously disadvantaged schools practise SBM?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy?
- What are the practices in SBM at previously disadvantaged schools that need improvement?
- What are the opportunities for SBM at previously disadvantaged schools?
- How should principals, deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools be supported in implementing a sustainable SBM strategy?

### 1.5.3 Research Objectives

The key objective of this study is to illustrate **the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa**. The sub-objectives that are brought to the fore are:

- to explore how school principals of previously disadvantaged schools practise SBM;
- to highlight the role and responsibilities of deputy principals, HoDs and SGB members of previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy;
- to identify those practices within SBM at previously disadvantaged schools that need improvement;
- to identify the opportunities in SBM at previously disadvantaged schools; and
- to make recommendations as to how principals, SMTs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools should be supported to implement a sustainable SBM strategy.

## 1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.6.1 Research Design

“A research design involves a set of decisions regarding what topic is to be studied, among what population, with what research methods, for what purpose” (Babbie,



2014:121). This study employed a multiple case study research design. Vohra (2014:55) defines “multiple case study” as the study of phenomena by using a replication strategy. In a multiple case study approach, the researcher studies multiple cases to grasp the differences and the similarities concerning these cases (Vohra, 2014:55). Lawrence (2014:42) states that case study research affords one the opportunity to elaborate on an entire situation or process holistically and allows for the incorporation of multiple perspectives and viewpoints. A wider knowledge of the dynamics of SBM in three previously disadvantaged schools was sought by adopting the multiple case study design.

A multiple case study design was employed in this study to seek various perspectives from stakeholders concerning the running of schools on how SBM is experienced in a previously disadvantaged context. This design also allowed the researcher to incorporate not only different stakeholders, but also multiple collection methods, which have included interviews and documentary analysis.

Another reason for opting for a multiple case study design was that the researcher wanted to observe the different stakeholders in their natural setting to elicit in-depth knowledge on their experiences. A multiple case study design was, therefore, used to gain different perspectives from different school principals, deputy principals and HoDs on how an SBM strategy is being implemented in their schools.

### **1.6.2 Research Approaches**

A qualitative research approach was implemented. Hancock, Windridge and Ockelford (2009:7) state that the aim of qualitative research is to assist the researcher’s knowledge of the social environment that people occupy and to understand better why phenomena are operating in a particular manner. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011:92), qualitative research provides a thorough and in-depth description of a phenomenon. Mack, Woodsong, MacQeeun, Guest and Namey (2011:1) explain that qualitative research makes available knowledge around personal views on an issue

because it is able to record various behaviours, opinions, beliefs and emotions of different people around the same issue.

The salient characteristics of qualitative research listed by Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013:9) include, among others, that it is non-numerical and descriptive, applies reasoning and uses words. Unfortunately, qualitative research also has its own disadvantages. Hancock *et al.* (2009:7), for example, state that the outcomes of a qualitative research cannot be generalised to the bigger population. This inability to generalise is due to the small sample used in such studies and also because the participants are usually not chosen at random but purposively.

Nevertheless, a qualitative research approach was chosen in order to gain awareness and understanding of the human side of school management by eliciting opinions, beliefs and perceptions from different stakeholders of previously disadvantaged schools on how they experience an SBM strategy.

### **1.6.3 The Research Environment and Population**

In addition to the research design and methodology, one also needs to decide what or whom one needs to investigate or study. Babbie (2014:119) defines population as all the people or phenomena that the researcher considers studying to draw conclusions.

The research environment of this research is two primary schools and one combined school situated within the Pixley Ka Seme Education District in the Northern Cape Province.

The research population of this study is stakeholders involved in the decision-making around school matters within an SBM framework and includes the principals, deputy principals, HoDs, post level one educators and parents. The research population is situated in previously disadvantaged areas.

#### **1.6.4 Selection of Participants**

The participants in the study were purposively selected. Yin (2011:88) explains that purposive sampling involves selecting those persons who will yield the most relevant and plentiful data because they are most familiar with the research topic.

Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016:2) explain that in purposive sampling the researcher decides what information is required and selects participant who can and are willing to provide the information based on their knowledge or experience. Three principals, two deputy principals and seven HoDs from three previously disadvantaged schools situated in the Pixley Ka Seme District of the Northern Cape Province were purposively selected. These participants are responsible for school management and are, hence, suitably placed to highlight what impact educational legislation, such as SBM, has on their roles and responsibilities.

#### **1.6.5 Data Collection Methods and Procedures**

Individual interviews, focus group interviews and the analysis of SBM-related documents were used to collect the data as follows:

- Individual interviews were held with the three principals of the selected schools. The HoD of School B also participated in an individual interview because the school only qualified for one HoD because of its low learner enrolment.
- Two focus group interviews were conducted, involving the deputy principals and HoDs of School A and School C.

##### *1.6.5 (i) Individual interviews*

A semi-structured approach was implemented for the four individual interviews. According to Lavery (2016:12), semi-structured interviews are extensive. Intensive interviews and questions are pre-determined, although researchers can ask follow-up

questions to foster a stronger understanding of the responses and views of the participants.

According to Edwards and Holland (2013:3), the researcher in a qualitative interview will have a mental framework of the study questions, but verbalising these questions will differ according to the setting and context of the interview and the participants. Qualitative interviews are thus face-to-face dialogues and are semi-structured in nature. Deenanath (2013:10) asserts that semi-structured interviews provide participants with more opportunities to articulate their views and insights, even though the focus of the interview is retained. Further advantages of this method include, among others, getting clarification for individually tailored questions, probing more for personal reasoning and presenting participants with the opportunity to query the researcher (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:184; Yin, 2011:133).

Unfortunately, the qualitative interview may lend itself to hindrances such as incorrect capturing or interpretation of the views expressed by those who participate in the interviews. Researchers must, therefore, be skilled in identifying aspects that need more probing to capture the views expressed accurately (Edwards & Holland, 2013:68-69).

In this study, individual interviews were employed to evoke detailed and in-depth responses from the three principals and one HoD on how they manage their schools within an SBM framework. The individual interviews were also used to gather recommendations on how the challenges that principals and SMTs experience can be eradicated and what improvements are needed for the successful implementation of an SBM strategy.

#### *1.6.5 (ii) Focus Group Interviews with Deputy Principals and HoDs*

A focus group interview is a small group, consisting of six to ten people, who engage in a collective discussion of a topic previously selected by the researcher (Edward & Holland, 2013:36; Mack *et al.*, 2011:51). Mack *et al.* (2011:51) state that a fundamental

benefit of focus group interviews is that such interviews yield large amounts of information and a wide-ranging scope of views on a particular subject over a relatively short period of time. A shortcoming of a focus group interview is, however, the difficulty to manoeuvre conversations to ensure that all of the participants express their views freely and without antagonising others (Edwards & Holland, 2013:38; Mack *et al.*, 2011:61).

Two focus group interviews were conducted at two sampled schools, which included one deputy principal and three HoDs from each school. The participants are currently employed at previously disadvantaged schools and have the necessary experience, knowledge and information of current educational legislation on how to manage and govern schools.

The researcher decided to conduct separate interviews with the principals and their deputy principals and HoDs. This was done to allow the deputy principals and HoDs the opportunity to raise their concerns and frustrations about school leadership as honestly as possible, without the presence of the principal.

#### *1.6.5 (iii) Documentary Analysis*

Collecting and analysing documents relevant to the research were important to guide the flow of the research writing process. Documentary analysis is a method of qualitative research where documents are reviewed by the researcher to explain their views on pre-determined themes. Bowen (2009:27) and Yin (2011:148) explain that documents can yield invaluable data pertaining to a topic that are not always directly observable *via* interviews or observations. These documents may include correspondence, diaries, minutes and calendars (Yin, 2011:148).

The benefit of documentary analysis is that it is long-standing and can be studied continuously. It also encapsulates a broad range, with precise names, references and details. Documents relevant to SBM practices were, therefore, collected and analysed.

The documents were used as added information to ascertain how the sampled principals, SMT members and SGB members conduct their managerial role. These documents included, among others, the vision and mission statements of the schools, school policies, school improvement plans, minutes of SMT and SGB meetings, evidence of school functions, parent notices, photographs and brochures.

#### *1.6.5 (iv) Data Analysis*

The data were analysed to uncover and understand the big picture, that is, to find out the dynamics of SBM challenges of principals in previously disadvantaged schools. These data were analysed qualitatively. Notes were taken during the interviews and transcriptions were made when the interviews had been conducted. The data were labelled and coded to recognise similarities and differences. The datasets of the individual interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis were integrated and analysed by making use of the content analysis and thematic analysis. The data were then grouped into themes. According to Babbie (2014:341) and Neuendorf (2017:1), content analysis refers to a data analysis technique that entails the systematic and objective analysis of recorded human communications, such as books, newspapers, letters, email messages and speeches. Content analysis is also well suited to the analysis of open-ended questions and answering the vital question in communication research: “Who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect” (Babbie, 2014:341). During the content analysis process, the data were analysed, firstly, by providing a descriptive account of the data and, secondly, by providing a more interpretive analysis that is concerned with both the response and what may have been implied. This includes the process of coding and classifying of the data, with the aim of highlighting the important messages, features or findings.

During the thematic analysis process, the data were coded and categorised into themes. Thematic analysis requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher. According to Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012:10), thematic analysis focuses on identifying and describing patterns within the recorded data. The data were

thus analysed and emerging patterns were categorised into themes related to the research topic.

The presentation of the data is done in Chapter Four and Chapter Five of the dissertation. Key findings were made under the main themes identified during the analysis of data. Verbatim quotes of participants were used to illustrate the findings. In Chapter Five, the research findings are discussed and linkages are made to existing research (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008:432).

## **1.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The Research Information Network (2010:4) asserts that quality assurance of research studies underpins trustworthiness in the work of the research community. It is thus important to ascertain how qualitative researchers employ strategies to ensure that their findings are credible, transferable, confirmable and dependable. The next paragraphs will accordingly provide a synopsis of some of the pertinent aspects to enhance quality assurance of this study.

### **1.7.1 Trustworthiness**

Plaatjies (2016:182), in making reference to Silverman (2011:360), explains that trustworthiness refers to repetitiveness, and it establishes if researchers who will conduct the same research in the future will be able to reach the same findings and conclusions. Kumar (2011:169) states that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability confirm trustworthiness in a qualitative study. These indicators and how they are manifested within this research study will be briefly highlighted in the following paragraphs.

### **1.7.2 Credibility**

According to Kumar (2011:169), credibility implies that the research participants will perceive the research findings as authentic and a true account of what transpired during the study. In this study, every effort was made to capture the perceptions and views of the participants accurately. Transcriptions of all interviews were subsequently used to enable the researcher to use the actual responses of participations in the analysis of these interviews.

Anney (2014:277) explains that credibility is attained *via* triangulation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:141) depict triangulation as the use of multiple methods to gather data about a particular human facet to ensure research credibility. In this research study, the data were collected by using individual interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis to investigate how SMT members of schools cope with SBM within a previously disadvantaged context.

### **1.7.3 Dependability**

Dependability in research is concerned with whether the same results would be obtained if the same topic is observed or studied again (Kumar, 2011:169). This implies that the research findings are consistent and with the repeat of the same study, the same findings would be arrived at. Detailed records of the research process were kept to enable future researchers studying an SBM strategy in South African schools to make comparisons on their findings.

### **1.7.4 Transferability**

Transferability in research shows to what extent the research findings are applicable to other settings and contexts (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014:5746). The research process that was adopted for this study will thus be extensively outlined and described for other



researchers to follow and replicate in order to ensure transferability of the research findings.

### **1.7.5 Confirmability**

Kumar (2011:172) points out that conformability indicates the extent to which research findings are endorsed or substantiated by others. Confirmability of this study can only be assessed if future scholars adhere to the same research process employed in this study so that findings can be weighed against each other. As mentioned already, the research approach and procedures adopted are described in detail for such comparisons to be made.

## **1.8 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study sought to identify the dynamics of SBM and the challenges that principals, deputy principals and HoDs in previously disadvantaged schools experience in implementing SBM, as well as the potential for growth and improvement towards successfully implementing SBM.

The information gathered can identify specific challenges the principals, deputy principals and HoDs from previously disadvantaged schools have to face in the everyday running of their schools and how they overcome such challenges. Peers who experience similar challenges will thus have documented references on possible solutions.

Based on the key role of principals within an SBM strategy, it is envisaged that this information will be utilised by policymakers to recognise problems experienced by principals regarding the effective implementation of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools. It is furthermore hoped that through this study, principals, deputy principals and HoDs will be inspired to identify their limitations concerning the facilitation of school management and governance. The participation of the identified principals, deputy

principals and HoDs will hopefully encourage them and their peers in similar circumstances to adopt one or more of the recommendations offered to equip themselves with strategies to strengthen the SBM strategy in their institutions.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Atieno (2009:17) states that a fundamental shortcoming of qualitative approaches is that the results of such an approach cannot be generalised to larger groups. Although it was envisaged that four schools would participate in the study, only three schools ultimately actively participated in it. The sample used in this study included only three previously disadvantaged schools situated in one municipal area. Care should thus be taken when comparing these results of the study to all South African previously disadvantaged schools.

## **1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101) identify critical categories regarding ethical aspects in research that embrace shielding from harm, knowledgeable permission, privacy and professional trustworthiness. Care was taken in this study to comply with the required ethics, such as observing respect for persons and knowledge, as well as adhering to the quality of the educational research.

Permission and authorisation to undertake the research were sought from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Free State, the Northern Cape Department of Education (NCDE) and the chosen participants. The participants were thoroughly informed regarding the reasons for and the scope and intended outcomes of the study. Voluntary participation was, moreover, emphasised, including the fact that the participants could withdraw from the study at whichever stage and that no private data would be publicised if they did not provide prior consent.

## 1.11 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

The structure of the research study is set out below.

### **Chapter One**

*Background and Orientation:* This section constitutes an introduction and background to the research problem. Reference is made to the theoretical framework, objectives and question questions, the research design and methodology and the ethical considerations adhered to in the study.

### **Chapter Two**

*Literature Review:* Current and relevant literature that exist concerning SBM is extensively reviewed.

### **Chapter Three**

*Research Design and Methodology:* A detailed description is provided on the research methodologies used for sampling and the data collection as well as the data analysis processes.

### **Chapter Four**

*Results:* The results emanating from the data analysis are reflected upon plus an interpretation of these is provided.

### **Chapter Five**

*Summary:* This chapter exhibits the study conclusion. The findings of the study are summarised, the strengths and weaknesses are discussed and recommendations are made.

## 1.12 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter One was geared towards the introduction of the research study and narrating its background. A theoretical framework was also highlighted to set the context in which the study unfolded. The “what” and “how” of the study were brought into focus through a review of the problem statement, the objectives and the research questions.

The study design was, moreover, discussed, reflecting on how the researcher went about investigating the challenges that principals, deputy principals and HoDs experience. The methods of data collection and data analysis were underlined to focus on inferences that would be made to reach the ultimate goal of making viable recommendations that could assist principals and the rest of the SMT members to implement a sound SBM strategy.

The researcher furthermore explained that the focus of the research was to elicit the insights of SMT members concerning an SBM framework. The value of such perspectives should not be discarded in order to ensure that any intervention for improvement on the implementation of SBM truly answers the actual concerns of those closest to the problem.

Chapter Two will present an examination of SBM literature in general, with a particular focus on the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to provide a review of the international literature on SBM. In order to ensure alignment with the theme and objectives of this project, the literature also focuses on the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa. The discussions are aligned to the following main sections:

- *Review of SBM as a decentralised educational strategy*: This section explains the rationale behind the implementation of an SBM strategy and the scope of this strategy, as well its strengths and hindrances.
- *Towards an SBM strategy within South African schools*: This section focuses on education legislation before 1994, the legislation that underpins an SBM strategy within South African schools and the impact that SBM has on the role of important stakeholders.
- *The implementation of an SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa*: The inherited inequalities and their impact on SBM implementation in previously disadvantaged schools are highlighted in this section.
- *Previously disadvantaged schools that succeed against all odds*: In this section, the focus turns to innovative strategies employed by previously disadvantaged schools that show good learner achievement and school improvement despite the difficulties they experience.

#### **2.2 SBM AS A DECENTRALISED EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY**

SBM is a pragmatic approach to transforming a bureaucratic centralised paradigm of school organisation to a more self-governing structure (Bandur, 2012:35). Caldwell

(2005:1) and Abulencia (2012:6) outline SBM as being the authority to make decisions that are decentralised to schools, based on policies and standards that are determined centrally. Decentralisation, in this context, is administrative rather than political. It therefore implies that decisions at school level are made within the framework of national policies and guidelines to ensure that a unified system is maintained (Caldwell, 2005:2). Caldwell (2005:2) explains that a sense of system is sustained because it is centrally decided what and how authority is implemented at school level. One can, therefore, conclude that although schools can make decisions, these decisions should not contradict national legislation and policies.

The next paragraphs explore the dynamics of an SBM strategy, as implemented globally within the educational sphere.

### **2.2.1 A Global Perspective on an SBM Strategy**

School-Based Management has been widely accepted as a major reform initiative in both developed and developing nations, including Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the USA, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Thailand. (Bandur, 2012:33)

The sentiment expressed in the above quotation embodies the view that SBM has become a global strategy. Various studies illustrate that SBM has gradually turned into a universal drive for independence for collective decision-making combined with collaboration by the school community to enhance school development (Barrer-Osorio *et al.*, 2009:15; Hermosilla *et al.*, 2014:3; Prabhakar & Rao 2011:108; Yau & Cheng 2014:45).

A few examples that reflect the global nature of SBM within education are cited below:

- De Grauwe (2005:1) declares that SBM was first integrated in government policies in the Anglo-Saxon world, which included the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America.

- Bandur (2012:35) comments that the SBM strategy was integrated in Indonesian policies in 1998 owing to the increasing recognition of, among others, the importance of democracy and community participation.
- Ayeni and Ibunkunm (2013:37) record that SBM commenced in the United States of America when the Teacher Council Movement was formed, which introduced councils controlled by teachers who dictated policies on how individual schools should be administered.
- Ayeni and Ibunkun (2013:37) reveal that the 1988 Education Reform Act in Great Britain transferred power to parents and teachers to elect management boards consisting of principals and governors.
- Al Kaabi (2015:37) affirms that Hong Kong established school management initiatives in the 1990s that pursued less rigidity in school finance by expanding the accountability of schools and the decisions taken by a collective.
- Prabhakar and RAO (2011:108) shed more light on the implementation of SBM within the Indian educational sector, which aimed to create greater autonomy in government institutions by protecting the rights of stakeholders such as teachers, parents and learners.

These examples clearly demonstrate the global nature of SBM. The following paragraphs focus on why governments around the globe lean towards the implementation of SBM as an educational reform strategy.

### **2.2.2 Rationale and Scope of an SBM Strategy**

People live in an ever-evolving changing world with countries competing for prosperity, development and growth. National legislation and policies are subject to redesign and change in order to create and maintain this much sought-after growth and development. Many countries use institutions such as schools to enhance national objectives. Strategies are, furthermore, implemented to yield the best possible results. Education and its institutions are not immune to change and continuously undergo changes to fit the national agenda.

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:172) observe that a global tendency to a decentralised education system started in advanced countries during the 1980s and 1990s. According to Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:173), it was realised that large, centralised administrations were slow to respond to the fast fluctuating economic environments. National governments, therefore, saw the need to devolve certain functions and responsibilities to those closest to the primary business of schools (Pomuti & Weber (2012:2). Al Kaabi (2015:15) agrees with this assertion by Pomuti and Weber (2012:2) and reasons that people who are at the point of implementation are in the best place to decide how the execution of duties should happen.

Principals, educators and parents are closest to the primary business of schools and are in the most suitable position to make the best-informed decisions (Al Kaabi, 2015:15; Pomuti & Weber, 2012:2). Barrer-Osorio *et al.* (2009:3) emphasise that SBM involves the transfer of authority around school operations to a collective consisting of principals, educators, parents and other school associates. In an SBM strategy, this collective thus has greater liberty in and accountability for school affairs to create more effective teaching and learning environments. This notion of shared responsibility will, as argued by Bandur (2009:3), enhance a sense of ownership of the school. Hermosilla *et al.* (2014:3) refer to extensive evidence that suggests that SBM strategies have altered the aspects that influence schools by mobilising important stakeholders, such as the parent component and the broader educator staff, to participate more actively and vigorously in school affairs. Abulencia (2012:7) proclaims that SBM can pave the way to a transparent, higher accountability and an increased focus on improving educational outcomes. Based on the preceding paragraphs, SBM is thus geared towards empowering stakeholders within school communities *via* the sharing of power and authority at school level (Al Kaabi, 2015:1)

Even though the SBM strategy has been implemented in many countries, the implementation thereof is not necessarily done in the same manner. SBM manifests itself differently in different countries, based on the educational objectives that individual



countries pursue. Bandur (2008:96) points out that, although SBM has been implemented worldwide, the global trends in developing SBM vary from one country to another. Each country thus introduces SBM based on the local dynamics and as is predetermined by what aspects should be operated and managed at the school level.

Kiragu, King’oina and Migosi (2013:1167) express their view that SBM programmes are diverse, both in relation to who has the authority to make decisions and the extent of the decision-making powers that are shifted to schools. Barrer-Osorio *et al.* (2009:4), on the other hand, clarify that government objectives determine the SBM strategies of countries. Countries will allocate powers to schools based on what those countries want to achieve through their schooling programmes. If, for example, the aim is to enhance democracy, those powers devolved to schools will be to encourage broader consultation and involvement of more people in making school decisions.

The “how” and “what” powers that are devolved to schools differ from one country to another. Moradi, Hussin and Barzegar (2012:2145) expound on the historical development of SBM and list the countries and their reasons for implementing an SBM strategy, as illustrated in Table 2.1.

<b>Table 2.1: Selective List of Countries that Introduced and Implemented SBM Reforms</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of implementation</b>	<b>Motivation for Reform</b>
<b>United States of America</b>	1970-1980	Expanding budget allocation and advocating teacher empowerment and community participation in schools.
<b>Australia</b>	1970	Increasing effectiveness by vast independence and delivering more parity between schools.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	1988	Providing schools with more efficient financial independence to strengthen school improvement.

<b>Table 2.1: Selective List of Countries that Introduced and Implemented SBM Reforms</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of implementation</b>	<b>Motivation for Reform</b>
<b>Hong Kong (China)</b>	1991	Growing responsibility, shared decision-making and school success.
<b>Uganda</b>	1993	Increasing authorities and assets for local councils and enhancing democratic involvement of stakeholders in decision-making.
<b>Kenya</b>	2003	Enlarging answerability of schools and teachers by an increase in incentives to improve the management of schools.
<b>Indonesia</b>	2005	Increasing responsibility and obligation to parents and students by enhancing the role of school committees.

*(Adapted: Moradi et al., 2012:2145)*

Table 2.1 reflects why the listed countries implemented SBM as an education reform strategy. It is, however, also essential to understand what powers or responsibilities are devolved to stakeholders at school level.

Barrer-Osorio *et al.* (2009:4) elicit important dimensions in the transfer of decision-making contained in an SBM strategy, namely the amount of independence being transferred (what), and the role-players to whom the decision-making authority is transferred (who). Barrer-Osorio *et al.* (2009:9) list the following aspects that are generally transferred in an SBM strategy, as reflected in Table 2.2. These include issues around authority, comprising the budget, personnel management, developing the curriculum, maintenance and infrastructure as well as monitoring and evaluation.

<b>Table 2.2: Decentralisation of Authority within an SBM Strategy</b>	
<b>Authority</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
<b>Budget</b>	The school oversees the budget and is responsible for the establishment of school fees and the procurement of textbooks and other learning materials.
<b>Personnel Management</b>	The school has a say in the hiring of staff and the payment of salaries.
<b>Developing Curriculum</b>	The school decides how the prescribed curriculum will be implemented by setting a school timetable and method of instruction.
<b>Maintenance and Infrastructure</b>	The school is responsible for maintaining the school buildings and infrastructure.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	The school evaluates teacher performance and learner outcomes.

Table 2.2 displays the various powers assigned to schools within an SBM strategy. Kiragu *et al.* (2013:1167) state that the devolving of authority, as reflected in Table 2.2, is pursued by governments to enhance education quality, to yield community ownership and to provide more efficient administration of the education system. While the available literature provides extensive detail on how professionals, such as the school principals, are prepared to embrace an SBM strategy, not much is said about how other stakeholders, such as parents, are trained to participate actively in the various duties of authority, as outlined in Table 2.2. Literature on aspects such as the monitoring and evaluation of the administrative staff of schools (secretaries, cleaners and so forth) is also not readily available. This might seem as if the roles of these school stakeholders are not regarded as significant.

One can assume that the education authorities in each country will thoroughly assess the pros and cons of an SBM strategy before its implementation. The strengths and weaknesses of an SBM strategy in education will subsequently be flagged.

### 2.2.3 Strengths of an SBM Strategy

Numerous solid reasons are available to defend the establishment of SBM. Various sources of literature that support the implementation of an SBM strategy are available. It appears that SBM enhances the involvement of more people with an interest in the school in the decision-making process. Parents within SBM are now allowed to be part of decisions that will affect their children. According to Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:174), SBM promotes a participatory school environment that allows educators and parents to take autonomous decisions on aspects that influence school affairs. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:174) argue that by nurturing partnership and mutual respect amid the staff, they will become more cohesive, work together and divide duties among themselves. Mncube (2009:84) states that, through SBM, the school becomes a major avenue of inspiring and nourishing development.

The SBM strategy is, likewise, advantageous with regard to educators. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:174) explain that *via* SBM, educators will possibly choose to continuously improve professionally to develop themselves. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:174) add that professional development helps to achieve school objectives since this capacitates not only the people who are nearest to the learning but also the broader community. The preceding statement is supported by the assertion of Barrer-Osario *et al.* (2009:6) that the main objectives of SBM are to develop not only educators but also learners, parents and, ultimately, the school itself.

Kiragu *et al.* (2013:1169) mention that the involvement of principals, educators and parents within an SBM strategy creates positive development for their schools because they know best what the school needs to flourish. Barrer-Osorio *et al.* (2009:6) highlight another potential benefit of SBM insofar as that it leads to the efficient usage of assets as people who make decisions for schools are familiar with what the school actually needs.

As described in the previous paragraphs, it is clear that SBM as an educational reform strategy can offer much to involve stakeholders, besides principals and teachers, in school affairs. There are, however, also shortcomings that have an impact on the efficiency of SBM in schools. Examples of obstacles in the path of SBM are, for this reason, brought to the fore in the next section.

#### **2.2.4 Hindrances to an SBM Strategy**

Researchers have highlighted impediments pertaining to the successful implementation of an SBM strategy. These included, among others:

- a lack of involving parents and educators in school matters (Kiragu, 2013:1168);
- a lack of professional growth for school leaders plus confusion of stakeholders in relation to new roles and responsibilities (Bandur, 2004:94);
- a lack of decision-making authority, low parental participation and underfunding of education by governments (Bandur, 2008:94);
- an absence of understanding and competencies by parents who represent the majority in SGBs (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:173); and
- many schools not being equipped for SBM reforms, and even if groundwork was done, it seems to have been inadequate for stakeholders to execute functions assigned to them effectively (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:175).

Based on these impediments, it appears that an essential component of any SBM strategy that needs to be in place is that SBM is invested heavily in the amount of willingness, knowledge, cooperation and expertise of the stakeholders of the school. If, therefore, for any reason, one of these stakeholders shows apathy towards the SBM strategy, its effectiveness may be impacted on adversely.

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175), citing Li (2010:4), argue that the concerns of stakeholders differ at schools, and power battles could arise among parents and the staff of the school. Based on this assertion, Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) explain that disputes may surface because stakeholders have differing perceptions on

matters such as staff selections, curriculum needs and financial management. It thus seems that, without clear mediation between all the stakeholders of the school on what SBM entails, room is created for conflicting interests and perceptions.

The above paragraph illustrates that SBM is not without difficulties. It appears that changing policy does not automatically translate into immediate change in practice. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) mention that democracy within an educational decentralisation paradigm requires additional time with more practical initiatives and action to assist and empower vital role-players, such as principals, parents and educators, together with learners, to grow into instruments of participatory school management and school governance.

The next paragraphs will shift the focal point towards a thorough understanding of the dynamics of SBM within South African schools.

### **2.3 TOWARDS AN SBM STRATEGY WITHIN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS**

The roots of an SBM strategy in the South African education sphere lie in the history of the country, as articulated by Poutiainen (2009:22):

In order to gain a full understanding of where South Africa as a nation and specifically the education system is today, it is necessary to understand the history of the country, in particular the history of apartheid and how it still affects the country.

Van Wyk and Marumoloa (2012:101) state that, since the advent of democracy in 1994, a wide range of educational legislation has been promulgated in South Africa, such as the SASA (1996).

The next paragraphs briefly highlight the South African education system before 1994, which necessitated the education reform that included an SBM strategy.

### **2.3.1 The Education System in South Africa before 1994**

Coetzee (2014:2) makes a telling observation in stating that schools in South African are stratified along lines of aspects of race, socio-economic status and geographical location. According to Coetzee (2014:3), the consequences of apartheid are still visible and the quality of education and outcomes currently correlate with these aspects. This period was characterised by stark differences between disadvantaged schools and their wealthier counterparts. These differences included unequal funding and training of educators as well as the authority of schools. Some of these differences and inequalities are discussed in the next paragraphs.

#### *2.3.1 (i) Unequal Funding*

Many South African communities were deprived of quality basic education under the apartheid legislation. Maforah and Schulze (2012:227) mention that the government provided much more funding to schools for white children than it did to schools for black children. Sathiapama, Wolhuter and Wyk (2012:63) argue that in the so-called white schools, based on assets, the qualifications of the teachers and learner performance were “orders of magnitude better” than those of the disadvantaged schools. Sathiapama *et al.* (2012:63) explain that the white education system received the largest quantity of subsidy and resources, whereas the subsidy and resources assigned to deprived schools were minimal in contrast. The so-called black schools were provided with substandard services, and the learners were frequently deprived of textbooks (Sathiapama *et al.*, 2012:63). Examples of these inferior facilities include, for instance, schools with laboratories and libraries for white schools, while black schools were deprived of these vital resources.

#### *2.3.1 (ii) Unequal Training of Educators*

Another aspect that has relevance to this study is that many educators from deprived communities were not trained properly for their job (Chrisholm, 2012:93). According to

Chrisholm (2012:93), educators during the apartheid regime were unequally schooled, qualified and trained. Poutiainen (2009:28) explains that the National Education Policy Amendment Acts 1974 mandated that training for secondary teaching for white teachers must be concluded over four years and be provided by universities, while their primary teacher training had to be over a three-year period from universities or colleges. The teaching qualification for black primary school teachers, on the other hand, was Standard Eight (Grade 10) plus two years' teaching training. One can assume that this difference in educator training shows that the educators for black learners were perhaps not as thoroughly trained as their white counterparts.

The budget allocated for the training of black and white educators also showed marked differences. During apartheid, the government spent three times more on training for white teachers compared to the training of black teachers (Poutiainen, 2009:29). Sathiapama *et al.* (2012:63) maintain that deprived communities frequently had no, or poor, professional qualifications. Poutiainen (2009:29) observes that by the termination of apartheid, 46% of black teachers were either not qualified or underqualified, and many of the teachers in the poorer areas were unqualified. One can conclude that teacher training during apartheid mirrored the injustice of apartheid in which the quality of teacher training was determined by race.

### *2.3.1 (iii) Authority of Schools*

Another aspect that needs mentioning and has relevance to this research study is how schools were regulated and managed before 1994. The apartheid regime in South Africa imposed a system of education where schools did not have the authority and power to control and manage themselves. The central government made most decisions and the only authority, control and responsibility concerning planning and control were vested in the central government (Poutiainen, 2009:27).

The centralised apartheid government thus dictated to the school, with the principal at its helm, how the school should be managed. Sibanda (2017:567), for instance, laments



the fact that throughout apartheid, all power in schools was vested in the principals and participation by other stakeholders in school management and leadership was insignificant. According to Sibanda (2017:567), school leadership during the apartheid dispensation was largely authoritarian, hierarchical and centralised and a “microcosm of apartheid governance”. School principals in this context dictated to educators how and what they should do based on national centralised directives. Educators played no role in school management but only executed management duties if the principals deemed it necessary.

However, some significant changes were made to the education system when South Africa became a democracy, not only to address the past inequalities but also to involve more stakeholders in school management and governance. The inequalities in the pre-1994 South African education sphere compelled the post-apartheid government to eradicate the imbalances of the past *via* introducing new educational legislation, such as an SBM strategy. These laws, which gave rise to an SBM strategy within South African schools, are reviewed in the next section.

### **2.3.2 Legislation that Underpins an SBM Strategy in South African Schools**

There is a consensus among researchers that SBM in South Africa was primarily geared towards dismantling the unequal education system created by apartheid. Educational reforms have, therefore, focused on addressing historical imbalances and achieving equity in attempts to restructure the South African education (Coetzee, 2014:2; Mestry, 2013:162; Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:1; Sayed, Kanjee & Nkomo, 2013:7; Sehoole, 2013:13; Republic of South Africa, 2014:11).

#### *2.3.2 (i) Rationale for an SBM Strategy in Post-apartheid South Africa*

Christie (2010:701) argues that, because apartheid dogmas regulated education alongside race, which led to inequalities, the democratic government was confronted by not only the dismantling of apartheid structures but also designing and implementing a

new education system. Education legislation since 1994 in South Africa has embedded certain values into education law to enhance the quality of education for all learners. Legislation that gives more authority to the school and its role-players has been introduced. One such value is to run schools democratically, in such a way that parents, educators and community members can all get involved. Another value is the idea that the people and groups who run a school should work in co-operation with one another and avoid power struggles.

The next paragraph discusses the pertinent educational legislation in post-apartheid South Africa that indicates notions of an SBM strategy.

### *2.3.2 (ii) SBM Legislation*

It is important to note that the Constitution (1996) is the highest law and supersedes all other laws. Section 29(1) of the Constitution articulates the right to education as follows: “Everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education.”

Another important provision in the Constitution is Section 41(1)(h) on cooperative governance. This section sets out how the various parties involved in governing schools should interact together: “All spheres of government and all organs of state within each sphere must co-operate with one another in mutual trust and good faith...”

Moonsammy-Koopasammy (2012:18-21) and Christie (2010:701-702) identify the following salient educational reform legislation in South Africa:

- The White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1994) represented a design for the new education system.
- Configurations for making decisions were determined by the National Education Policy Act of 1996.
- Governance structures for schools were provided by the SASA (1996).
- The National Norms and Standards for School Funding (DoE, 1998) introduced a pro-poor financial subsidy structure.

- The Employment of Educators Act (South Africa, 1998) outlined the roles of principals and educators within schools.
- Curriculum 2005 (1998) developed an outcomes-based education approach for schools.
- The Education Labour Relations Act of 1995 introduced how negotiations around teacher conditions of service should be conducted and the codes of conduct thereof.
- The Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007, among others, amended the roles and duties of principals.

The pieces of legislation that regulate the conditions of work of principals and educators are as follows (together with their amendments):

- The Labour Relations Act
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act
- The Education Labour Relations Act

The Education Labour Relations Council was established in 1993 to maintain labour harmony through procedures to prevent disagreement and how to resolve disputes. The Education Labour Relations Council bargained over settlements on, for instance, educators' duties, working hours and compensation scales.

The literature reveals that the notion of SBM was firmly cemented in South Africa *via* legislation (Heystek, 2004:311; Mafora, 2013:688; Marumoloa, 2012:101). Based on the literature, SBM within the South African context represents an approach to improving education by devolving substantial decision-making power from national offices to individual schools. The SASA (1996) changed the South African school landscape. Sibanda (2014:367) identifies two principles of the SASA (1996), namely "inclusivity" and "desentralisation". Inclusivity is promoted through the SASA (1996) because parents, educators, non-educators and high school learners are required by legislation to be involved in school matters. Decentralisation occurs because decisions are made

by these stakeholders. The SASA (1996) concurs with the objective of SBM to devolve authority to those closest to schools in decision-making.

### *2.3.2 (iii) How Powers are Devolved to Schools within an SBM Strategy*

Christie (2010:700) and Sedibe (2011:129) list the aspects that were devolved to school level as part of post-apartheid educational reform, namely accountability for financial management, management of staffing and school improvement.

Trends of SBM in South Africa surfaced in the early 1990s (Govender, 2012:18; Mncube & Harber, 2013:2). Ironically, it was the outgoing apartheid government that introduced SBM in the dying days of apartheid (Christie, 2010:700; Mphanza, 2015:9). The parents of former Model C schools obtained the power to decide on policies for admission and language, which they could integrate into post-apartheid South Africa with their own provisos when political change became imminent. According to Christie (2010:700), SBM assisted former Model C schools to retain authority over important aspects that influenced the character of schools, such as what language would be used and the criteria to be admitted to these schools. SBM was thus abused by some former white schools to preserve the privileges they had been granted under apartheid (Christie, 2010:700).

It is also explained by Mphanza (2015:9) that Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTSAs), which show SBM tendencies, were established at some black schools as part of the struggle to dismantle apartheid. Thus, parent involvement was prevalent prior to the advent of democracy and satisfied the interest of the community on all sides of the apartheid political divide.

Hermosilla *et al.* (2014:3) indicate that SBM transformed schools by mobilising parents and educators to become more involved in school affairs. Mokoena (2011:119) argues that the SASA (1996), which became operative at the beginning of 1997, transformed the nature and make-up of how decisions were made at schools. Schools now make

collective decisions with the involvement of stakeholders, as mandated by the SASA (1996).

Centralised tendencies are visible within an SBM strategy in South Africa. National and provincial education departments still determine the national curriculum, strategic objectives and the evaluation criteria, as well as standards for performance (Christie, 2010:701, Van Wyk & Marumoloa, 2012:102). Van Wyk and Marumoloa (2012:102) explain that regulations and programmes are introduced at central government level. These are the foundation of provincial policies which, in turn, form the basis of school policies. This means that the most critical policies are conceptualised, developed, documented and presented by authoritative bodies such as the national government or a provincial legislature (Van Wyk & Marumoloa, 2012:102). So, while schools are obliged to formulate their own policies, such policies must be aligned with national and provincial policies and regulations.

The section below indicates how SBM influences how schools are run.

#### *2.3.2 (iv) How Schools are Run within an SBM Strategy*

The SASA (1996) provides schools with direction on how they should be managed and governed. Naidoo (2005:32) explains that two distinct but overlapping concepts are outlined by the SASA, namely school management and school governance.

According to Naidoo (2005:32), the SASA views management as being the domain of principals, and the school staff and governance being the territory of SGBs. Christie *et al.* (2010:20) observe that the SASA has had an impact on both school management and school governance. According to Christie *et al.* (2010:20), these two core functions within the school milieu are often difficult to negotiate at school level in post-apartheid South Africa.

Hermosilla *et al.* (2014:3) hint that the notion of SBM in South Africa is clearly manifested in how schools operate, as set out below.

- *School Management*

The principal, as per the SASA (1996), Section 16(1), is responsible for the management of educator activities. The principal's duty is, therefore, to organise teaching and learning efficiently and to execute the day-to-day operational undertakings. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are managed by principals. Bush *et al.* (2009:1) argue that managing curriculum implementation is the most important duty of school principals.

The SASA (1996) underwent numerous adjustments that were contained within amended acts. The Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 15 of 2011, 16(3) (2011) affirms that principals must take responsibility for the professional management of schools.

One must be mindful of the fact that educators in SBM do not fall outside the scope of school management. According to Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:1), management in South African schools is the responsibility of the SMT. Bush *et al.* (2009:1-7) explain that the principal, the deputy principals and HoDs oversee the daily running of the teaching and learning process and each educator should manage how teaching and learning unfold in individual classes. SBM is, hence, entrenched in South African schools because leadership is now not only the prerogative of the principal alone but is rather based on stakeholder involvement as promoted through legislation. This shared leadership will enable more educators to be developed in effectively managing schools.

- *School Governance*

Mavuso and Duku (2014:454) define school governance as the participation of the parents, educators, learners and non-teaching staff in making decisions on school governance, as articulated in the SASA (1996).

As discussed in earlier paragraphs, stakeholders such as parents and educators actively participated in school governance prior to 1994, albeit for different reasons. As explained, the parents at former Model C schools were granted ownership to decide on important aspects such as language and school funds. Parents from black communities became involved as a way to oppose apartheid policies.

Mphanza (2015:9) describes how the Parent-Teacher-Student Association, commonly referred to as the “PTSA”, became a school governance body consisting of parents, educators and learners of high schools. According to Mphanza (2015:9), PTSAs brought together local stakeholders to participate in the running of schools, to ensure continued education, while busy with anti-apartheid struggle activities, to promote a democratic approach to decision-making and to oppose the apartheid government by managing the problem of instability at schools.

Currently, post-apartheid South Africa has specific laws concerning school governance. These include the SASA (1996), which sets out the roles that different parties play in governing schools, the National Education Policy Act and circulars and regulations created by provincial governments. Section 16(1) of the SASA (1996) proclaims that the SGB is responsible for school governance. This Act introduced the SGB as a mandatory school governance structure. The SASA (1996) acknowledges the importance of stakeholders and makes it mandatory to establish school SGBs in public schools. Christie (2010:702), citing the SASA (1996), lists the SGB members, namely the principal as state representative, elected parents, educators, non-teaching staff and high school learners.

Mphanza (2015:9) states that the main role and responsibility of all the stakeholders, including the government, are to expose all learners to worthwhile education. SGBs were established to involve community stakeholders in the education of their children (Mphanza, 2015:9; Xaba, 2011:202). Xaba (2011:202), while analysing the SASA (1996), concludes that the SGB occupies a trustworthy position towards the school and should undertake its duties with good intentions to

enhance the interests of the school to assist educators and learners continuously to bring about improvement in learner performance and school development.

Xaba (2011:2013) also highlights the functions allocated to schools as per Section 21 of SASA (1996). SGBs are provided with these functions on application for these, and functions are granted only if the HoD is convinced that the SGB can execute them. The SASA (1996) stipulates allocated functions, which include the maintenance of school property, the management of the subject options at the school based on provincial curriculum guidelines and the procurement of teacher and learner resources.

Modisaotsile (2012:4) and Loock and Gravett (2014:177) state that the SGB is mandated to set up policies and rules that govern the school and monitor the implementation of these. Whereas there are various different role-players in school governance within an SBM strategy in South African schools, their roles are intertwined and co-operation is required between them to put the learners' best interests first.

### **2.3.3 Examples of Reform Initiatives in South African Schools**

This section highlights two reform initiatives – Tirisano and whole-school evaluation (WSE) – that were implemented in post-apartheid South Africa.

#### *2.3.3 (i) Tirisano (Working Together)*

The Tirisano Campaign was launched on 13 January 2000 by the Minister of Education, Kader Asmal (Narain, 2015:96; Steyn, 2002:258). According to Narain (2015:96), Tirisano, which means “working together”, was a nine-point plan to address the considerable difficulties experienced in previously disadvantaged schools. The Tirisano Campaign considered inadequate education as being related to poverty, poor facilities, insufficient resources and the ill-discipline of both educators and learners.



Both Steyn (2002:259) and Narain (2015:96) allude to Programme 2 of the Tirisano Campaign, which focused on the efficiency of schools and educator proficiency. Steyn (2002:259) highlights four priorities: schools should be developed to function as centres where communities can be assisted; physical deprivation in South African schools must be brought to an end; teaching must be developed; and the accomplishment of active learning must be guaranteed through outcomes-based education.

Seven projects were identified to enhance a positive culture of teaching and learning at schools. Projects 2 (school leadership) and 3 (school governance), which have relevance to this research study, are highlighted briefly below (Narain, 2015:96; Steyn 2002:260).

- *Project 2: School Leadership*

Steyn (2002:260) states the following strategic objectives of the project pertaining to school leadership, namely that all schools should have SMTs that:

- display a willingness to develop schools by inspiring excellence in education;
- encourage a shared vision to heighten teaching and learning standards;
- formulate high principles and prospects for learners and educators; and
- construct beneficial environment for learning and the specialised development of educators.

- *Project 3: School Governance*

The following governance strategic objectives are listed by Steyn (2002:260): to make sure that all schools have SGBs and all high schools have a Representative Council for Learners (RCL), to provide conditions for SGBs to exchange and develop skills and knowledge and to enable training and development programmes for SGBs and RCLs.

The preceding paragraphs indicate noticeably that initiatives such as Tirisano prescribed to notions embedded within an SBM strategy. The Tirisano reform initiative

advocated that pertinent stakeholders, at the level of the school, should function as a unit to strengthen teaching and learning outcomes.

### 2.3.3 (ii) *Whole-School Evaluation*

Another reform initiative, namely whole-school evaluation (WSE), was geared towards developing all aspects under the authority of the school. Steyn (2002:261-264) expounds on the National Policy on WSE, which was drawn up to make certain that schools were assessed as per an agreed-upon national model. The *WSE Handbook* (DoE, 2002:3) encapsulates the main objective of the WSE as an approach that provides “the opportunity for acknowledging the achievements of a school and for identifying areas that need attention ... the need for all schools to look continually for ways of improving”.

Steyn (2002:262) explains that the intention of WSE was to render assistance towards development and not to be a disciplinary and condemnatory process. WSE expects schools to develop their own development plan based on a school self-evaluation (SSE). National criteria are used in the SSE. It was envisaged that the self-evaluations of schools would enable districts to assess which type of support should be rendered at schools. It was, moreover, envisaged that the SSE would serve to give feedback to stakeholders on what plans need to be implemented to ensure school improvement and provide progress reports thereof. The school is also expected to draw up a school improvement plan based on the SSE.

The *WSE Handbook* (DoE, 2002:3-4) outlines the following key principles:

- The fundamental objective of schools is the improvement in the achievement of learners. The WSE process must thus be able to ascertain how schools contribute to develop the already existing knowledge and skills of learners.
- Everybody at the school (including educators, non-teaching staff, learners and parents) should be accountable for their personal growth and achievement.

- Openness, transparency and collaboration should be part and parcel of the evaluation process.
- The quality of WSE must be constant.
- Diverse data (quantitative and qualitative) should be used during school evaluations.
- Staff improvement is vital to school development.

Steyn (2002:262) clarifies that the National Policy of WSE seeks to understand why schools are where they are by an evaluation process based on national predetermined indicators. The predetermined criteria are outlined in the *WSE Handbook* (DoE, 2002:5), which lists the following areas for intervention: the basic functionality of the school; leadership; management and communication; governance and relationships; the quality of teaching and teacher development; curriculum provision and resources; learner achievement; school safety, security and discipline; school infrastructure; and parents and the community.

The WSE policy also guides an external evaluation process and, furthermore, explains the following approach to help schools measure their achievement and improve their overall performance (DoE, 2002:8):

- The school completes its SSE.
- External evaluation is conducted by the supervisory unit officials who are trained to evaluate schools.
- The school receives an oral evaluation report of the external evaluation.
- A school improvement plan is compiled by the school with assistance from district officials.
- District officials regularly visit the school to provide assistance and advice to the stakeholders of the school to improve their performance.
- The WSE unit provides written reports on the performance of the school to the DoE.
- The school submits a progress report on the implementation of recommendations as per the written WSE report.

- Annual WSE reports are published by the DoE and the provinces, reflecting the status of education.

WSE, like Tirisano, is geared towards quality teaching and learning by involving all stakeholders in assessing what the school needs to improve itself. Concepts of SSE show that role-players at school level are best equipped to identify the needs of the school. These approaches are thus aligned to SBM, which seeks solutions at the level of the school and requires stakeholders to look continually for ways to better themselves for the benefit of school improvement.

### **2.3.4 Leadership and Management**

Day and Sammons (2016:5) believe that school leaders are relentlessly pressured to explain how they contribute to the development of schools. SBM necessitates not only good administration and school management but also someone capable to lead various stakeholders with diverse interests. It appears that school leadership, like school management, has become crucial within an SBM framework.

Algahtani (2014:71) asserts that the assumption that all managers are leaders is incorrect, because some managers do not exercise leadership, and some people lead without having any management positions. Nehemia (2011:1591), on the other hand, observes that current governments are confronted with producing school leaders who are not only managers who are able to address challenges objectively but also leaders who possess the visionary strategic ability to inspire commitment of others to aspire to a shared objective. The distinction between these two functions will subsequently be clarified, as well as how they manifest themselves within the school environment.

#### *2.3.4 (i) Leadership*

According to Nehemia (2011:1591), leaders form and direct the activities, objectives and inspirations of those they have to lead. Leadership, therefore, means influencing

others' actions to achieve desired goals. The functions of leadership include curriculum oversight, instructional programme improvement, engaging with staff members around the vision and mission of the school and fostering close ties with the local public (Nehemia, 2011:1591). Nehemia (2011:1591) differentiates between instructional, transformational and facilitative leadership.

- *Instructional Leadership*

Instructional leadership, as described by Bush (2007:400), views teaching and learning as being the central objective of any school. Nehemia (2011:1591) states that instructional leadership expects leaders to draw up detailed prospects, preserve discipline and put in place excellent measures to yield improvement in teaching and learning at the level of the school. Instructional leaders, as per Nehemia (2011:1591), are visionary and lead the school community by using innovative teaching practices to assist educators to apply these innovative initiatives. Instructional leadership thus has as its prime focus the responsibility to promote learner achievement by emphasising the importance of quality teaching and learning (Day & Sammons, 2016:20).

Nehemia (2011:1591) also identifies the following five functions of instructional leaders:

- *Definition and sharing of a detailed mission and objectives:* The instructional leader, with the collaboration of staff members, formulates a mission, goals and objectives to realise effective teaching and learning. A clear sense of mission is particularly important when schools are undergoing a number of changes.
- *Curriculum and instruction management:* The curriculum is managed and coordinated to ensure instructional time is use to its fullest.
- *Teaching supervision:* The instructional leader ensures that the necessary assistance is given to educators to allow them to render efficient teaching.
- *Monitoring learner progress:* Tests and examinations are used to assess learner achievement and development. Intervention strategies are designed based on

the outcomes of these tests and examination. The results, furthermore, give parents insight into how their children perform educationally.

- *Promoting an instructional climate:* Teaching and learning are enhanced by establishing conditions necessary to assist quality education.

- *Transformational Leadership*

Bush (2007:396) points out that transformational leaders have the ability to attract the willingness of others so that improved achievement levels become an ethical obligation to which everybody wants to aspire. Nehemia (2011:1591) claims that transformational leaders are able to make educators feel they are part and parcel of the vision and goals they have set for the school.

Transformational leaders, as clarified by Nehemia (2011:1591), are able to convince supporters to align themselves and share the ideals set by the transformational leader. Day and Sammons (2016:18) confirm that transformational leaders use the essence of a their vision, directions and goal to become the shared vision, direction and goal to restructure and develop the school, staff and curriculum and involving the external community in school activities.

- *Facilitative Leadership*

“Facilitative leaders are at the centre of school management and they involve educators, learners, parents and others in adapting to new challenges, solving problems and improving learners’ performance” (Nehemia, 2011:1591).

Nehemia (2011:1591) explains that the principal, as the facilitative leader, involves the whole staff *via* small groups or team meetings. Nehemia (2011:1591) furthermore warns that facilitative leadership requires considerable time and energy to continuously adapt a team approach in all decision-making activities. The researcher of this study believes that SBM requires a school leader who has the ability to take elements of instructional, transformational and facilitative leadership models as part of his or her armour. SBM involves broader participation and needs a

leader who is capable of enhancing quality teaching and learning (instructional leadership), while continuously involving a team of parents or staff members in decision-making (facilitative leadership), and inspiring and motivating the collective around a predetermined vision (transformational leadership).

#### *2.3.4 (ii) Management*

Algahtani (2014:74) defines management as “exercising direction of a group or organization through executive, administrative, and supervisory positions”. Algahtani (2014:74) lists examples of management activities, which include planning, organising, budgeting and monitoring of activities. Management, in general, is thus a process that is used to achieve organisational goals by maintaining efficient and effective current organisational structures and systems (Algahtani, 2014:74). The overall functions of management are geared toward maintenance rather than change (Nehemia, 2011:1592). In addition, Algahtani (2014:74) reasons that an effective manager needs to have specific qualities, such as good communication skills, excellent organisational skills, the ability to negotiate and effective delegation skills. Algahtani (2014:76) emphasises the importance of both leadership and management in the success of any organisation, such as a school, especially in the face of new legislation, which creates a dynamic workplace with new diverse challenges.

To summarise this section, it can be realised that the primary mission of both leaders and managers is to control and influence other people. However, how they achieve objectives is the most important difference between managers and leaders, while school managers, on the one hand, exercise their control by virtue of the position as the highest government appointee at school level, and school leaders, on the other hand, use their vision to inspire and motivate the staff, learners and parents (Algahtani, 2014:80).

Management in the context of an SBM strategy is a crucial aspect because educators, learners and non-teaching staff need an individual with authority (the school manager)

to give administrative direction as to how required policies will be implemented. Management within SBM, however, requires team management, which requires school leadership consisting of the SMT, and not the principal as school manager alone, to manage the school and oversee the daily operations of the school (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:1).

The next section will highlight the role of stakeholders such as the SMT within an SBM strategy.

### **2.3.5 The Impact of SBM on the Role of Principals**

Mokoena (2011:120) clarifies that the term “stakeholder” means everyone who has a rightful concern about the consistent efficiency and improvement of an institution. The SASA (1996) mandates principals, parents, teachers and learners to be stakeholders of schools, who collectively should make decisions in pursuit of a shared interest.

The following sections will shed light on the role of those stakeholders mentioned within an SBM framework.

#### *2.3.5 (i) How the SBM Strategy has Changed the Role of Principals*

Numerous sources in the literature give attention to the impact of an SBM strategy on the role that school principals play. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) note that the principal is viewed as the central figure in promoting an SBM strategy. Shun-wing and Sing-yeng (2015:1) reflect that education reforms, such as SBM, have fundamentally transformed principals’ position regarding how schools should operate. These include changes related to the decision-making at schools. Al-Ghefeili, Ghani and Elham (2014:57) affirm this tendency and mention that the responsibilities of principals have changed under SBM because principals are required to make increasingly complex decisions with the participation of other stakeholders who may have diverse opinions on



the same issue. From the cited literature, one can deduce that principals have to accept the majority of changes due to an SBM strategy.

It must be noted that different stakeholders have different views and ultimately also different interests. If stakeholders such as the principal, deputy principals, HoDs and SGB parents do not have a shared view on how their school must be managed and governed, it will become a difficult task for the principal as the central figure to balance their different views. The decision-making process around certain key aspects, such as staff appointments and the allocation of school funds, could cause tension and strained relations – an unfortunate scenario that the principal will have to manage.

Mokoena (2011:120) indicates how the role of principals in South Africa has changed within an SBM strategy (see Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3: How School Principals' Roles have been Transformed**

Decrease in	Increase in
Individual responsibility to make decisions, although the number and variety of decisions have increased significantly	The need to work collectively with and through representative committees and groups in a collaborative way to make shared decisions
Opportunities to make individual decisions	The need to delegate decisions to others to empower them
Involvement in low-level management activities delegated to others where possible	Accountability to school community members
	School leadership through visioning, strategic planning, changes in attitudes and culture, and a focus on people
	Operational climate change for decision-making at school

Table 2.3 illustrates that noticeable changes are occurring pertaining to the responsibilities of principals. This is in contrast with past circumstances where principals were usually the only ones to make decisions concerning the school. The following paragraphs briefly highlight the changed role of principals within an SBM strategy, as presented in Table 2.3.

- *The need to work collectively with and through representative committees and groups in a collaborative way to make shared decisions*

The SASA (1996) stresses the involvement of stakeholders such as parents, educators and learners (high schools) in the decision-making process. Principals within an SBM framework are required to ensure that the voices of these stakeholders are heard and reflected in decisions made around school matters such as, for example, school policies, how the budget is spent and learner discipline. Govender (2012:18) states that SBM in South Africa expects the principal to execute leadership that encourages the active involvement of all role-players. The SASA (1996) grants principals complete involvement in the management and governance of the school. The SASA (1996) requires that principals lead the entire school community while promoting and aiding shared decision-making and collective development as well as shared financial management (Bandur, 2008:94; Christie *et al.*, 2010:20; Mokoena, 2011:121). Mokoena (2011:121) argues that principals' leadership skills and capacities are critical in activities that warrant stakeholder participation in decision-making. Principals should, therefore, be liable for ensuring that stakeholders fully participate in the management and governance of the school.

- *The need to delegate decisions to others to empower them*

The SASA (1996), in making reference to SMTs, advocates shared management. As such, the principal will delegate responsibilities such as staff evaluation and class discipline to deputy principals and HoDs. SBM requires principals to involve the staff continually in collective decision-making and delegated responsibility. Principals are nowadays expected not only to ensure educator empowerment but also to pioneer such empowerment. In addition, principals are expected to promote collective

decisions at schools. It appears that SBM requires principals to be willing to share authority and have the added capability to employ strategies to involve all stakeholders actively in school management and governance with a common objective to strengthen learner achievement and school improvement.

- *Accountability to school community members*

The principal, as per the Education Laws Amendment Act, Act 31 of 2007, Section (a)(i), has an obligation to present an annual report to stakeholders (such as teachers, parents and learners) on school progress and school planning. This will grant these school community members the opportunity to assess whether shared decisions were implemented and the success of these.

- *School leadership through visioning, strategic planning, changes in attitudes and culture, and a focus on people*

The principal needs to manage the participation of stakeholders with diverse interests. The parents, teachers and learners should be inspired in such a way as to make them work as a collective to attain a shared vision, despite different cultural, socio-economic and political backgrounds.

School leadership within an SBM strategy is thus all about empowering others as partners to achieve the mission, objectives and vision of the school. Bandur (2008:96) accordingly advocates for principals to establish a functioning system to liaise efficiently with role-players such as government institutions, educators, parents and learners, as well as the broader community. Such liaisons seem to require principals to strengthen their skills in human relations and general communication. In addition, Mokoena (2011:121) expounds that it is necessary for principals to have thorough skills to compromise, when needed, to resolve conflict and the ability to form partnerships. Mokoena (2011:121) is further convinced that reforms such as SBM may pose difficulties regarding the required skill levels to establish participatory decision-making, which includes the diverse interests of the various stakeholders.

- *Operational climate change for decision-making at school*

Within SBM, the principal has to pursue conditions that are beneficial for involving everyone, irrespective of their skills and expertise, in the progress of the school. Mokoena (2011:121) points out that SBM requires principals to have the ability to identify individuals for certain activities where their strengths can be utilised. It also means that opportunities for professional development are created to enhance school development and growth.

The next section underlines the duties that principals have to execute within an SBM strategy.

### *2.3.5 (ii) Duties of Principals within SBM*

Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) reflect that the principal's role has been transformed from the previous dictatorial approach to a more representative approach, which is stimulated by the dynamic contribution of various stakeholders within the school community.

Caldwell (2005:2-21) outlines what is expected of principals to govern the school within SBM, namely:

- the capacity to make decisions on important school operations, which are aligned to national policies;
- ensuring that the school community remains focused on learning achievement amidst the managerial and governance functions;
- making sure that the principals, with the rest of the staff, keep abreast of innovative practices to aid school development and inspire continuous professional development; and
- developing efficient budgetary measures to enable teaching and learning requirements to be met, as well as national requirements.

These responsibilities and skills that principals under SBM need to display seem unattainable if one considers the training that principals undergo. Principals in South Africa receive the same training as any other educator and have not necessarily been trained to manage the involvement of other staff members in the daily running of the school (Chalufu, 2011:3). Such capabilities, such as having knowledge of national policies, being an agent of continuous professional development and being an expert on budgetary processes, envisage an individual who is invested in ongoing personal growth with regard to professional, managerial and leadership matters.

In addition to the responsibilities and skills set as identified in the preceding paragraphs, Al Kaabi (2015:46) summarises the duties of the principal within an SBM strategy as:

- analysing school functioning to implement strategies to sustain school improvement;
- making sure that everyone is afforded an opportunity to participate in school affairs;
- crafting strategies, procedures and programmes;
- ensuring the effective use of current resources so that the objectives of the school can be realised;
- taking responsibility for the daily school management and school administration.
- developing leadership capacity among the staff and the SGB; and
- involving parents and the broader community in learner achievement.

The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), as per the Government Gazette, No. 39684 (2016:38), highlights the following school governance duties that the principal needs to execute, namely:

- serving on the SGB and providing guidance to ensure functions are executed as prescribed in the SASA;
- acting on behalf of the HoD in the SGB;
- being present and participating in all SGB meetings;
- making reports available to the SGB about the professional management of the school;

- assisting the SGB in managing learner misconduct;
- notifying and updating the SGB on relevant legislation; and
- supporting the SGB in executing their functions and responsibilities (this support may, however, not contradict the instructions of the HoD, legislation or policy).

The varied duties that principals have to execute within an SBM strategy are often accompanied by challenges. The next section focuses on the difficulties principals have to face because of the SBM strategy.

### *2.3.5 (iii) Challenges of Principals within SBM*

Bandur (2008:94) contends that the changed functions of principals under SBM have compelled principals to confront challenges such as difficulty in fostering partnerships with school stakeholders. Another challenge seems to be to establish SBM as a method to bring forth democracy by promoting diverse groupings with diverse interests to come together as a collective to make decisions on how schools should be managed and governed (Bandur, 2008:94). The participation of stakeholders is an essential requirement for the success of SBM, and it seems that principals are integral to the process of giving meaning and sustenance to collaborative and participatory decision-making.

Effective participation of all stakeholders implies that they should be knowledgeable on school matters (e.g. the formulation of school policies) that need to be discussed to make informed decisions. It seems that if this capacity is not built among all stakeholders, such as parents on the SGB, the involvement of the parent component is reduced to mere rubber-stamping the views and sentiments of principals and other educators who possess the required knowledge. Mokoena (2011:119) argues that some principals allow very little stakeholder participation because they believe that it is unproductive. Mokoena (2011:119), moreover, explains that such scenarios increase the workload of principals, and they become the soul stakeholders to ensure that the SGB complies with SASA requirements in terms of school governance.

The next paragraphs expand on why some principals may experience difficulties within implementing an SBM strategy in South Africa.

- *South African principals have not been trained to implement an SBM strategy*

There is a growing realisation that the position of principal is a job for an expert with particular specialised training (Bush & Moorosi, 2011:31). It is contended that teaching experience is the main criterion for an appointment as a principal in South Africa. Principals in South Africa undergo the same training as any other educator. The PAM (DBE, 2016b:46) stipulates the following criteria for principals: an acknowledged three- or four-year qualification with professional teacher training; registration to the South African Council for Educators; good knowledge of teaching; and good management and leadership skills.

Bush and Moorosi (2011:31) claim that numerous countries, including South Africa, only require teaching qualification and teaching experience for educators to be promoted to the position of school principals. Maile (2012:205) reflects that the general pattern exists that one must first become an educator, then be promoted to being a departmental head or deputy principal and then, later, to the post of principal. Chalufu (2011:3) emphasises that most South African principals rise to the position with very little (if any) training or opportunities for professional development. This is in contrast with the situation in countries such as the United States of America, Canada and others where, in order to become a principal, candidates are required to take advanced degrees or complete a certification programme, usually in educational administration, or to receive training at leadership academies and leadership centres (Chalufu, 2011:3; Van der Westhuizen & Van Vuuren, 2007:432).

Regrettably, not all principals are adequately equipped to execute the duties as required by all the educational reforms. A large body of research shows that principals serving schools in disadvantaged communities frequently are confronted by the problems associated with an uninviting and unpleasant school environment, difficulties in attracting and retaining suitably qualified and experienced educators,

frustration with the lack of parental involvement in the academic performance of learners and the poor parent attendance at school meetings and low parental involvement in fundraising (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:244; Bush & Glover, 2016:211-231; Murtin, 2013:15-23; OECD, 2012:130-142). Such an uninviting school environment must surely influence how principals manage in these unfavourable conditions.

- *Difficulties principals encounter in balancing roles in both management and governance*

The SASA (1996) places a huge responsibility on principals to execute functions as both an employee of the DoE and an *ex officio* member of the SGB. According to Bagarette (2012:230), this arrangement places the principal in a very powerful position. Because the principal occupies such a powerful position in both school management and school governance, he or she is central to deciding the extent of participation by stakeholders in decisions around school matters.

As already mentioned, principals serve as *ex officio* members in the SGB. As a government official, the principal should ensure that policies and procedures are being adhered to. Principals are, therefore, obliged to guide SGB members and capacitate them in relevant policy matters and the manner in which SGB duties should be executed. Bagarette (2012:97) observes that principals are frequently involved in a power struggle with SGB members. Bagarette (2012:97) hints that these power struggles have developed because the principal is in a privileged position pertaining to his or her knowledge on school policies, while many SGB members lack knowledge concerning these matters. Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:172) emphasise that an SBM strategy requires the active involvement of stakeholders to pursue common goals and objectives. Based on this friction between the principal and SGB members, it becomes crucial that the communication skills of principals are adequate to ensure that the participation of the SGB members is maintained and strengthened, even amidst friction, to benefit learning and teaching and the successful pursuit of common goals.



As hinted earlier, the principal within an SBM framework does not manage the school alone, but together with the SMT. The next section highlights the role of deputy principals and HoDs within SBM.

### **2.3.6 Role of Deputy Principals and HoDs within an SBM Strategy**

The SMT consists of the principal, deputy principals and HoDs. The SASA (1996) implies that educators, in their role as deputy principals and HoDs, manage the school together with the principal. The PAM, as per the Government Gazette, No. 39684 (2016:36), outlines the duties of principals, deputy principals and HoDs.

#### *2.3.6 (i) Core Duties and Responsibilities of HoDs*

HoDs are required to:

- teach, be a class teacher when needed and assess and record learner achievement;
- be in charge of a subject and, together with subject educators, develop a subject policy;
- coordinate the assessment of learners in that department;
- be responsible for, and coordinate approaches to, the subject, methods, aids and techniques;
- provide and coordinate guidance to inexperienced staff members;
- assist with the general administration of the schools with regard to planning, such as timetabling;
- assist with communication with other stakeholders, such as parents; and
- liaise with the community when the principal is unable to do so.

#### *2.3.6 (ii) Core Duties and Responsibilities of Deputy Principals*

According to the PAM (DBE, 2016b:37), the post of deputy principal was established to help the principal with school management and curriculum management. The duties

and responsibilities of deputy principals depend on the approaches of each school and include, among others:

- assisting with and executing functions in the absence of principals;
- managing school administration, including duty timetables and school and the external assessment of learners;
- assisting with school finances and the maintenance of services and buildings;
- teaching, based on the needs of schools;
- being responsible for the implementation of the curriculum;
- coordinating, among others, the work of subject committees, timetabling and in-service training;
- playing an active role in promoting extra-mural activities, such as sports and cultural activities;
- participating in departmental committees and courses;
- guiding and overseeing the work of the school staff;
- playing an oversight role over the RCL; and
- liaising with stakeholders on behalf of the principal.

The core duties of deputy principals, as listed above, require deputy principals to participate actively in school management with, among others, principals, which illustrates an SBM strategy based on stakeholder participation in school affairs.

According to Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008:221), the formalisation of SMTs in South African schools has rested on the adoption of SBM. SMTs, as the professional core of SBM at school level, are mandated to work together with the SGB to transform the previous “top-down autocratic decision-making hierarchy to a more horizontal, participatory style of leadership” (Van der Mescht & Tyala, 2008:221). The rationale behind this statement is that the different stakeholders in the school, including the SMT and SGB, are supposed to play key roles in all school activities, including policy matters.

Section 16 of the SASA (1996) states that an SMT must be formed to assume responsibility for the day-to-day professional management of the school and the implementation of its policies. Van Wyk and Marumoloa (2012:104) assert that the SMT, in particular, should have an intimate understanding of the daily operation of the school and know what is needed to guide the school in translating policy decisions into practice to achieve intended goals. The SMT is responsible for the specialised management of the school, which includes all programmes in aid of teaching and learning.

The functioning and roles of SMTs with regard to policy matters can, to a degree, also be derived from the core duties of the principal as the chief executive officer and senior member of the SMT. The deputy principals and HoDs, therefore, execute management duties under the supervision, guidance and control of the principal.

The SASA (1996) furthermore mandates educators to serve as educator representatives on the SGB. Deputy principals and HoDs, as part of the educators' core, are thus, like principals, involved in both school management and school governance. Deputy principals and HoDs should, like principals, use their expertise as SGB members to assist the principal in equipping parents with the required knowledge to participate actively in school matters, which include the formulation of school policies, learner discipline and the management of the school funds.

What is needed from deputy principals and HoDs seems to be both their commitment to shared management and their skills in implementing policies.

### **2.3.7 Role of the SGB in an SBM strategy**

“The South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) formally provides for democratic governance, which entails the decentralisation of power to school level, through the establishment of the SGB” (Nienaber, 2014:88).

The above quotation alludes to SBM insofar as power is decentralised to schools. The SASA (1996) stipulates that the SGB membership is made up of the principal, elected members from parents, educators, non-teaching staff and high school learners. The parents are in the majority (50% plus one member). The SASA (1996) gives considerable powers to SGBs.

Section 20 of the SASA (1996) identifies the SGB functions, which include, among others:

- promoting the best interests of the school and making every effort to encourage school development and improvement;
- adopting a constitution;
- developing the mission statement of the school;
- developing a code of conduct for the learners;
- supporting the principal, educators and other staff in executing their teaching and learning duties;
- managing and controlling the school assets, buildings and grounds;
- encouraging parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to serve the school voluntarily;
- making recommendations to the HoD regarding the appointment of educators;
- maintaining and improving the property of the school and the buildings and grounds occupied by the school;
- deciding on the extramural curriculum of the school and the subjects to be taught in line with provincial policy requirements;
- procuring textbooks and teaching and learning resources;
- paying for services to the school; and
- executing other duties as required by any applicable provincial law.

“SGBs present an important opportunity to both allow parents to hold schools accountable for learner performance and to generate parental participation in communities where they may otherwise be reluctant” (Van der Berg, Taylor,

Gustafsson, Spaul & Armstrong, 2011:13). Sathiapama *et al.* (2012:59) explain that specific conditions of each school influence the planning around parental participation at that school. Genniker (2015:71) explains that the SASA confers significant authority on SGBs in matters such as school administration, the language of instruction, school fees and staff appointments. Such authority thus allows the SGB to determine the character of the school.

According to Mavuso and Duku (2014:454), anticipation existed that the SASA would bring about the effective participation of parents in school matters, which would then translate into school improvement and an improvement in learner achievement. As SGB members, parents should take charge of duties, including, among others, the management of school funds and the maintenance of the infrastructure. These functions require specialist skills such as financial management skills and the capacity to interpret government policies.

Genniker (2015:72) and Nienaber (2015:88) reflect that SGBs face many problems that hamper the effective running of the SGB as envisaged by the SASA (1996). Bagarette (2012:97) echoes these sentiments and argues that the challenges experienced by some SGBs stem from their lack of skills and the capacity to execute their required duties and their insistence to become involved with the professional side of the school. Genniker (2015:72) and Nienaber (2015:89) reflect on examples of the lack of skills of SGB parents in fulfilling functions and highlight in particular their inability to manage school finances and develop school policies. In response to the challenges experienced by some SGB parents, Nienaber (2015:89) emphasises that SGB members should be trained annually to ensure that they are equipped to deal with with changes in legislation and gain the confidence and knowledge to execute their functions. However, training is only effective if it yields a positive impact. It appears that the current training rendered to SGB parents of previously disadvantaged schools does not adequately equip them to execute their governance role.

The above section outlines what is expected of stakeholders within an SBM strategy in South African schools. The dynamics of SBM within previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa will now be explained.

## **2.4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN SBM STRATEGY IN PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

### **2.4.1 Unpacking the Concept of “Previously Disadvantaged”**

This section aims to clarify the concept “previously disadvantaged” and the context in which it should be viewed for the purpose of this research study. During apartheid, South Africans were governed based on racial lines, where one section was grossly advantaged at the expense of others. Seekings and Nattras (2005:49) explain the influence of this differentiation as follows: “Apartheid policies of systematic racial discrimination and segregation had a deep and enduring influence on inequality in South Africa.”

White people received the best of what the government could provide in terms of basic services, such as housing and education, while the rest of the population were deprived of, among others, quality education. Under apartheid, disenfranchised groups (black people, coloured people and Indians) experienced inferior treatment in terms of the allocation of resources, which included quality education.

The education budget was disproportionately allocated according to race, with the major share dedicated to the white minority. The education quality rendered to the disenfranchised groups was under-resourced, with limited access to quality education (Coetzee, 2014:2; Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:2; Sayed *et al.*, 2013:7; Sehoole, 2013:13; Republic of South Africa, 2014:11).

A practical example of disenfranchised groups being deprived of quality education is reflected in the per capita spending on learners. Sayed *et al.* (2013:7) comment that, at the height of apartheid, the government spent nine times more on white learners than

on black learners in the homelands. Chrisholm (2012:89) claims that by 1994 there was a pronounced inequality in how education was being provided to South African communities. These inequalities, coupled with poverty, caused profound distinctions between providing resources for black and white schools. In addition, huge differences were visible in the infrastructure and educator qualifications for black and white schools (Chrisholm, 2012:89).

The term “previously disadvantaged schools”, as used in this research study, thus refers to the South African school communities who were neglected and deprived of basic human rights and, in particular, quality educational provisioning under apartheid legislation.

#### **2.4.2 Inherited Inequalities and the Impact of these on SBM Implementation in Previously Disadvantaged Schools**

Marafaroh and Schulze (2012:227) reason that skewed funding resulted in an unequal education system, which the country is still trying to correct today. The extent of the inequalities and the impact thereof on the implementation of SBM within previously disadvantaged schools will now be explored.

##### *2.4.2 (i) Infrastructural Backlogs*

Murtin (2013:15) argues that, although some progress has been made in addressing past inequalities, many schools that were previously neglected still suffer from many infrastructure backlogs. As hinted while focusing on pre-1994 education in South Africa, those previously disadvantaged schools were provided with inferior infrastructure. The NEIMS database of 2016 (DBE, 2016a:1-5) paints a bleak picture concerning previously disadvantaged schools. These statistics indicated that 58.62% of such schools had no computer centres, while 171 schools had no water supply and 569 schools still operated without electricity.

#### 2.4.2 (ii) *Insufficient Financial Resources*

The South African government embarked on a pro-poor funding approach to address the unequal provisioning of education under apartheid legislation. Post-apartheid reforms were implemented to eradicate inequality through national policies such as the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy that directs state funding to public schools (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:1). The National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy gives legal guidelines for school subsidies in that South African schools are currently categorised into wealthy or poor quintiles, and schools are funded based on these quintiles. Chutgar and Kanjee (2009:18) explain that the quintile system regulates funding to schools and was introduced to compensate for and address past inequalities within the educational sphere.

Van Wyk *et al.* (2014:457) concur that many shortages exist at schools which were previously deprived and neglected, and these include a shortage of financial resources. Van Wyk *et al.* (2014:460) argue that the government's efforts to address past distorted school funding place huge pressure on current national budgets, so much so that the inequalities between former Model C schools and previously disadvantaged schools will never be addressed in full. Bandur (2008:94) hints that SBM is hampered if funding is not sufficient. Previously disadvantaged schools, who have to rely on the government allocation, will thus struggle to purchase additional teaching aids to adhere to SBM effectively, which requires keeping those educators in touch not only with current policy changes but also with technology to enhance quality teaching.

Parents in more affluent schools are able to complement school funding and contribute in terms of school fees. Sibanda (2017:573) argues that the former white schools vigorously promote the payment of school fees to enable them to give incentives to educators to ensure that the required curriculum is implemented with innovative teaching practices to expand on the prior knowledge and skills of learners. In contrast, the majority of parents of poor previously disadvantaged schools cannot contribute to school fees to supplement government funding. Previously disadvantaged schools thus



primarily survive on the government allocation and because of their quintile ranking of “no-fee” status, they cannot require learners to pay school fees. Additional funding sourced from the impoverished school community thus seems unlikely, which could have an impact on the morale of stakeholders who cannot adequately address and take ownership of the needs of the school themselves, as advocated by an SBM strategy.

#### *2.4.2 (iii) Struggle to Retain Qualified Educators*

Many previously disadvantaged schools struggle to recruit and retain qualified educators. Van der Berg *et al.* (2011:4) conclude in the South African Report for the National Planning Commission that the “school system cannot exceed the quality of its teaching force”. This implies that the quality and efficiency of an SBM strategy is only as good as the quality and efficiency of educators. Qualified educators would rather opt to seek employment at well-resourced schools than at schools with poor infrastructure and resources to assist in teaching and learning (Khumalo & Mji, 2014:1523-1524). If, therefore, previously disadvantaged schools cannot sustain a quality educator corps, the impact and efficiency of an SBM strategy in these schools are both adversely influenced.

Just as a quality education corps enhances the effective implementation of the SBM, a capacitated parent component on the SGB will enhance effective school governance within an SBM strategy.

#### *2.4.2 (iv) Lack of Capacity of Parents on the SGB*

The literature is clear about the lack of capacity among parents in previously disadvantaged schools. Maile (2002:239) reflects that a lack of capacity and skills among SGB members of previously disadvantaged schools, especially parents, may contribute to the inefficiency of the SGB. Christie (2010:702) agrees and observes that SGBs in previously disadvantaged schools frequently lack the necessary expertise in order to execute governance functions as articulated in the SASA (1996). Van den Berg

*et al.* (2011:12) contend that the effective functioning of SGBs is constrained by a lack of capacity among parents in many poor communities. According to Van den Berg *et al.* (2011:4), SGBs are compelled by current laws to execute crucial school functions, such as managing school finances and policy development, but some SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools cannot fully perform required duties because they do not possess important competencies to fulfil their legal obligation completely. SBM requires the active participation of all stakeholders, including parents, in school affairs to be truly involved in the decision-making process (Mokoena, 2011:129). So, if parents cannot execute their governance role due to a lack of skills in policy development and financial management, SBM does not take its rightful place in getting all stakeholders involved in decision-making.

#### *2.4.2 (v) Conflict among Stakeholders*

Xaba (2011:201-211) studied the challenges facing SGBs in previously disadvantaged schools and found that conflict among stakeholders often hampers school improvement. According to Xaba (2011:208), educators frequently blame parents for their poor involvement in learner progress, the SGB blames educators for looking down on their poor literacy levels, and educators blame the principal for influencing the SGB to force decisions onto them. Bayat, Louw and Rena (2014:353-363) moreover researched the role of SGBs within those schools neglected under apartheid (thus previously disadvantaged), and the evidence points to a disjuncture between the expectations of the educators on the one hand, and the SGB on the other. If conflict is rife, as portrayed in the cited literature, shared decision-making as advocated by an SBM strategy is adversely influenced and effective implementation thereof in previously disadvantaged schools will be difficult to achieve.

#### *2.4.2 (vi) Inadequate Support Rendered to Previously Disadvantaged Schools*

Education district offices have a pivotal role to perform, since district offices function as a liaison between the PED, schools and the public (DoE, 2012:5). According to Van den

Berg *et al.* (2011:14), despite the low levels of skills in previously disadvantaged schools, school interventions by district and provincial offices are inadequate. Provincial and district education offices are thus obliged to see to the implementation of an SBM strategy as per the SASA (1996) and the PAM (DBE, 2016b). If their involvement in schools is minimal and inadequate, as hinted by Van den Berg *et al.* (2011:14), the functioning of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools appears to be done without proper supervision and guidance by those officials who are supposed to enforce legislation.

#### *2.4.2 (vii) Parental Involvement*

Page (2016:21) explains that parental involvement has the ability to improve children's academic outcomes. Page (2016:134) studied parental involvement at one previously disadvantaged school and found that the parents at this school face various challenges, such as their lack of ability to assist their children with schoolwork, the challenge of poverty and unemployment and the inadequate nature of communication between the home and the school. These contextual factors seem to hamper SBM in previously disadvantaged schools because it appears that it is not only a case of these parents being uninvolved but also a case of parents who do not know how to assist their children with their academic performance. Page's (2016:134) research also illustrates that schools need to develop innovative ways to communicate with parents and, in doing so, give true meaning to SBM by involving all stakeholders, especially parents, in school affairs, which include learner achievement.

Despite the inherent inequalities of an SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools, there are schools that succeed, as illustrated in the next section.

## **2.5 PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS THAT SUCCEED AGAINST ALL ODDS**

“Even in disadvantaged contexts, school leaders cannot succumb to the pressure of the challenges they encounter because it is the function of leaders to seek solutions rather than excuses” (Heystek, 2015:2).

The above quotation implies that principals of previously disadvantaged school have to be innovative in the face of adversity. It would be misguided and erroneous to assume that every previously disadvantaged school displays poor school achievement with incompetent management and governance structures. Research on previously disadvantaged schools frequently paints a bleak picture of the SBM challenges that many principals still face. However, research has discovered previously disadvantaged schools that perform against all odds (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007:5; Naicker, Grant & Pillay, 2016:1). Christie *et al.* (2007:5) state that evidence exists in South Africa that schools in mainstream education, despite various challenges and shortcomings due to apartheid legislation, still manage to function well.

The Schools That Work Report (Christie *et al.*, 2007) highlights some previously disadvantaged schools that produce excellent school development amidst challenging circumstances. Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014:251) observe that many previously disadvantaged schools do not yield excellent school improvement through doing one or two activities in a different way, but they rather do numerous activities differently at the same time. It appears that this approach has made a marked difference in learner outcomes. What, then, are these schools doing right, which others can learn from? The literature indicates that aspects such as effective leadership, quality teaching and caring educators contribute to excellent performance in previously disadvantaged schools. These and other aspects will now be discussed in greater detail.

### **2.5.1 Effective Leadership**

The literature indicates that the school principal is central in involving stakeholders in school matters, however small their contribution might be. Koalepe (2013:49) asserts that principals from successful previously disadvantaged schools are the “cohesive force” that includes role-players in the instructional activities of the school, and they put a high premium on the quality of education rendered to learners. Deputy principals and HoDs within an SBM strategy, under the helm of the principal, should thus daily provide

inspiring leadership to ensure that each classroom becomes a vibrant environment for teaching and learning to flourish (Koalepe, 2013:123).

### **2.5.2 Quality Teaching**

Quality teaching at well-performing previously disadvantaged schools is enhanced by educators who show a commitment to expanding their knowledge and skills through continuous professional development (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:254). Educators at these schools have an abundance of professional capital, which is the product of their social, human and decisional capital. They are committed, collegial and attentive and are always striving to be knowledgeable in what they are supposed to do. In an SBM strategy, educators at previously disadvantaged schools take full ownership of their individual classes; they are committed to personal and professional development, devoted to improving learners' performance with regard to learner discipline and knowledgeable curriculum implementers (Koalepe, 2013:124; Naicker *et al.*, 2016:4).

### **2.5.3 Engaging Learners in Extramural Activities**

Many previously disadvantaged schools make optimal use of sporting and cultural activities to involve learners in school activities. According to Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014:251), extramural activities, such as sports and culture, enjoy high priority in succeeding previously disadvantaged schools. It is thus assumed that the success of learners in extramural activities may act as a catalyst to breed confidence, and it can effectively strengthen the involvement of parents of previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy to ensure the continuous success of their children.

### **2.5.4 Caring Educators**

Many educators, including the principal and the SMT of successful previously disadvantaged schools, are actively involved in school matters even beyond the school boundaries (Heystek, 2015:2; Naicker *et al.*, 2016:8). Badenhorst and Koalepe

(2014:252) highlight the significant of the role played by educators in assisting poor but excellent-performing Grade 12 learners. In their study conducted on leadership in three previously disadvantaged schools, the educators at one of the participating schools established a bursary scheme to assist the learners to register at tertiary institutions (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:252). What this aspect proves, is that teaching and learning should take cognisance of the socio-economic environment of learners outside the classroom and also that educators who care are willing to go the proverbial extra mile in providing learners with an education.

The study by Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014:252) further illustrated that no contribution can be viewed as too little or of no value. At one of the participating schools (Badenhorst & Koapele, 2014:252), the learners each even donated R1 per week towards a programme meant to assist those extremely needy learners at the school. Such practices enhance cohesion and strengthen the efforts of stakeholders to rally around a common vision to realise shared objectives, as advocated by an SBM strategy

In a case study conducted by Naicker *et al.* (2016:6) at one previously disadvantaged school in KwaZulu-Natal, the research findings revealed that the educators of this school were visible within community activities outside the school and frequently took up leadership positions within various religious, cultural and sports organisations. These educators are thus actively embracing SBM by immersing themselves within the community they serve and pursuing the involvement of the parent component in school affairs.

### **2.5.5 Actively Involving Parents in Learners' Progress**

Previously disadvantaged schools that participated in the study of Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014:252) took the initiative to involve parents directly in the progress of their children. One school, for example, issued learner reports directly to the parents. This direct approach enables educators to use the opportunity to engage parents on issues such as discipline, absenteeism and school activities and programmes. Schools

reported that a more direct approach led to a decrease in learner absenteeism, while the attendance of parents at school activities improved. The literature, such as Page's (2016:134) study, emphasises that such innovation strategies are required within an SBM strategy to ensure true involvement of and participation by parents

### **2.5.6 Using Positive Role Models**

Previously disadvantaged schools which perform well reported that they conduct regular motivational sessions by involving former learners from the same school who have achieved success. These peers share similar socio-economic backgrounds and, as such, remind the learners that it is possible to rise above one's circumstances (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:252).

The previous paragraphs indicate that in order for previously disadvantaged schools to perform within an SBM strategy, collaboration between stakeholders has played a critical role. The research has shown that successful previously disadvantaged schools have educators who are committed to personal and professional development. The staff of these schools have also been inspired and driven by a common purpose, which has made them strive for the shared goal, that is, excellent learner achievement. The sheer commitment of educators under the leadership of inspiring principals, has ensured that learners from low-income backgrounds have received the same standard of education as other learners (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:254).

Previously disadvantaged schools, based on the evidence provided, can perform well within an SBM framework that necessitates the involvement of all stakeholders. Moreover, the cited research on a successful SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools underscores the importance of strong leadership under the guidance of an inspiring principal (Koalepe, 2013:123; Page, 2016:134) and of educators with an abundance of professional capital, commitment and caring nature (Naicker *et al.*, 2016:4) who all work together to embrace and involve parents and learners to give

impetus to the successful implementation of post-apartheid educational reform, such as an SBM strategy.

## **2.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

The literature review provided in this chapter serves as a solid foundation on which the research study was founded. It was, furthermore, explained how the role of the key role-players in schools, namely principals, was affected by an SBM strategy. The theoretical framework was then put into a South African context and the way it manifested itself in especially previously disadvantaged schools was discussed. The roles of stakeholders within South African schools were highlighted as well as how they contribute to school management and school governance.

This chapter briefly highlighted how previously disadvantaged schools excel despite the various challenges they have to endure daily. Chapter Three will focus on the practical side of the research and outline how the research was conducted.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The two prior chapters set the stage for the phenomenon that was to be researched, namely **the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools**.

Chapters One and Two dealt with the study theme and outlined the specifics of the research problem to be studied. In Chapter Two, prior literature on the research problem was discussed and, in particular, a theoretical framework (that is, SBM) was provided. This framework will anchor the research study to be used as a research platform. The prior chapters furthermore set out the political and social framework of the study. A broad understanding of how post-apartheid legislation manifested itself within the South African educational sphere was subsequently established.

Having determined what will be studied, Chapter Three spells out how the research study was conducted. Chapter Three highlights the procedure that was followed in addressing the research objectives and questions encapsulated in Chapter One. It also serves to explain the way in which the researcher has structured the study, aligned to the objectives and questions of the study. The next section will accentuate the research design and methodology employed to align the research objectives and research questions.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Sudheesh, Duggappa and Nethra (2016:632) state that the research design should be “unmistakably tied to the specific aims of your study”. This study aimed to understand the dynamics of SBM within previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa.

The research design is described by various researchers as a “blueprint”, which comprises a set of decisions and choices pertaining to what subject matter is going to be studied and among which population the subject matter will be studied, as well as what research methods will be applied to answer the questions with regard to the subject matter (Babbie, 2014:121; Creswell, 2012:293; Kumar, 2011:74; Laverty, 2016:9; Yin, 2011:75-76). In addition, Kumar (2011:74-75) summarises the key purpose of a research design as being the acquiring of answers to one’s research questions or problems *via* the quality of procedures used to ensure validity, objectivity and accuracy. Laverty (2016:9) concurs and explains that in any research design, there should be a clear connection between the research questions and the study objectives, as well as the data collection and the analysis of the data.

The researcher, therefore, had to consider various factors before deciding on an appropriate research design for the research problem.

Kothari (2004:33) identifies the factors that need to be considered, namely:

- the means of gaining data;
- the researcher’s skills;
- the objectives of the study;
- the study problem and its nature; and
- the time and funding to conduct the research.

In order to align the research design to the research questions, theme and aim, Chapter Three will discuss pertinent aspects, as articulated below. These deal with:

- the research design that was used;
- how the respondents were selected;
- how the data were collected from the respondents;
- how the collected data were analysed;
- what was done to ensure quality assurance of the study; and
- how ethical concerns were adhered to.

The next section features the research approach, namely qualitative research, that was employed while conducting the research study.

### **3.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

#### **3.3.1 Defining Qualitative Research**

Clark and Braun (2013:2) provide the most basic definition of qualitative research, namely that “it uses words as data collected and analysed in all sorts of ways”.

Skovdal, Morten and Cornish (2015:1) additionally define qualitative research as an inquiry method that begins with the belief that there are benefits to exploring, unpacking and describing the meanings and perceptions of a matter. According to Baškarada (2014:2), qualitative research does not generally use statistical procedures but focuses instead on understanding the nature of the research problem. This implies that meaning and understanding of a specific theme are both central to qualitative research. Chrism, Douglas and Hilson (2008:1) explain that qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena in depth within a specific context and focuses on experiences, themes, types and qualities. This research study sought to understand an SBM strategy within a previously disadvantaged context by tapping into the experiences and perspectives of principals, deputy principals and HoDs. Chrism *et al.* (2008:1) also hold the opinion that qualitative research enables the researcher to adapt to natural settings, such as the classroom or laboratory, because it is concerned with text or non-numerical data. In this research study, previously disadvantaged schools served as the setting to gain more insight into how an SBM strategy is implemented.

Qualitative research was employed in the study to achieve greater insight into the participants' views of SBM by identifying not only what they know, think and do, but also why. While it was important to the researcher to understand how an SBM framework affected the role of school managers and other SMT members, it was also important to gain insight into their personal experiences and perceptions of the mentioned impact.

### **3.3.2 Aims of Qualitative Research**

Hancock *et al.* (2009:7) view the aim of qualitative research to assist researchers in fostering a better knowledge of the world they live in as well as a greater understanding of “why things are the way they are”. Mack *et al.* (2011:1) explain that qualitative research offers facts about the personal side of phenomena because it reveals various behaviours, opinions, beliefs and emotions of different people around the same issue. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011:92), the aim of qualitative research is to provide a comprehensive and in-depth account of an aspect. The essence, according to Marshall and Rossman (2011:92), is also to get an idea of a specific situation in a specific context. As discussed in previous paragraphs, a better understanding of SBM within a previously disadvantaged setting formed the basis of this study.

Mack *et al.* (2009:1) argue that qualitative research is useful when one seeks details about the views and beliefs about a group within a particular social setting. Qualitative research was, hence, regarded as appropriate for this research study, which wanted to tap into the personal experiences and perceptions of principals and SMT members of previously disadvantaged schools. In short, qualitative research was used to investigate how principals and SMT members experience SBM within a previously disadvantaged context.

### **3.3.3 Characteristics of Qualitative Research**

Chrism *et al.* (2008:16) emphasise that the researcher is central in the collection of information, and analysis is crucial to the interpretation of the meanings, perceptions and beliefs of the participants. Various studies available in the literature identify the characteristics displayed in Table 3.1. Table 3.1 reviews a list of characteristics common to several qualitative methods. Although the list below is not exhaustive, it offers a sense of the fundamental characteristics of qualitative research.

**Table 3.1: Characteristics of Qualitative Research**

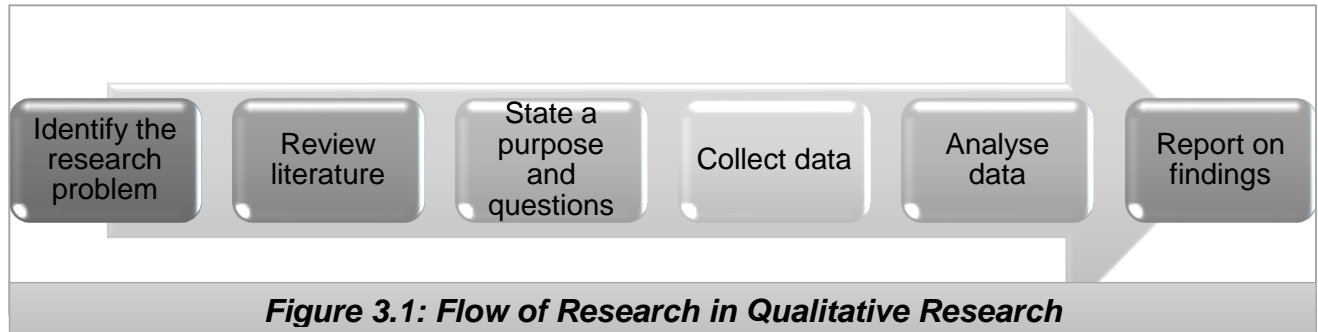
Naturalistic orientation	The studies are usually conducted in a natural setting, rather than under laboratory circumstances, and pursue to understand existing conditions.
Purpose	The studies are predominantly aimed at understanding, and not prediction, control or generalisation.
Researcher involvement	The presence of the researcher is recognised and his or her engagement is viewed as a strength rather than a tainting aspect.
Holistic perspective	The researcher is concerned with looking at matters in context and noticing the patterns of change and interaction.
Inductive approach	The researcher works from the specific to patterns, not from theories on specific cases.
Emergent design	Qualitative researchers develop draft plans and make amendments instead of laying out a fixed design beforehand, since findings might suggest new directions.

(Adapted: *Chrism et al., 2008:16; Creswell, 2009:175; Styśko-Kunkowska, 2014:26; Yin, 2011:7*)

Kumar (2011:83) highlights the role of the researcher as being a distinctive feature of qualitative research. According to Kumar (2011:83), the researcher in qualitative research makes every effort to seek the agreement of the participants that their interpretation, experiences, perceptions and conclusions have been correctly captured. This implies that qualitative research provides the participants in the research study with the chance to answer on their own, and the researcher does not need to force them to select answers from a predetermined list. In this research study, transcriptions were used to reflect the exact responses of participants to substantiate the findings.

### 3.3.4 Flow of Research in Qualitative Research

Figure 3.1 shows how a qualitative research study will generally unfold.



(Adapted: Cohen et al., 2007:83; Kothari, 2004:12; Neuman, 2014:21)

The figure above outlines the various steps that unfold within qualitative research as set out below.

*Step One (identify the research problem):* The researcher identifies what is going to be studied. This study, for example, will study the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools.

*Step Two (review literature):* The researcher studies previous and current literature that is relevant to the identified research problem. Chapter Two of this study constitutes the literature review.

*Step Three (specify a purpose):* After the research problem has been explained and contextualised, the rationale for it is outlined. This step highlights the main objectives of the research and the main research questions of the study.

*Step Four (collect data):* Steps One to Three form the “theory” part of the study, while Steps Four and beyond are more concerned with practical application. In Step Four, evidence is collected based on the aims and questions that have been formulated.

*Step Five (analyse data):* The collected data are analysed, and interpretations and inferences are drawn.

*Step Six (report on findings):* Important findings of the research are discussed, and recommendations are made.

### **3.3.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Qualitative Research**

As clarified in prior discussions, qualitative research is geared towards understanding the perceptions and experiences of people within a specific context.

#### *3.3.5 (i) Advantages of Qualitative Research*

The advantages of qualitative research include, but are not limited to, the following (Atieno, 2009:4; Choy, 2014:101; Hancock *et al.*, 2009:16; Mack *et al.*, 2009:4; Yin, 2011:1334):

- Qualitative research is good at simplifying data without destroying complexity and context.
- Qualitative research uncovers additional information because of its semi-structured nature.
- Qualitative methods produce new ways of seeing existing data.
- Qualitative methods afford researchers the opportunity to follow up on responses by asking “why” or “how”.

#### *3.3.5 (ii) Disadvantages of Qualitative Research*

The disadvantages of qualitative research include, among others, the following (Atieno, 2009:17; Choy, 2014:101; Rahman, 2017:104):

- Qualitative research uses fewer people to study. The findings can, as a result, not be extended to wider populations.
- The data analysis and interpretation are more difficult and complex.

- Qualitative research is dependent on the skills of the researcher, particularly during interviews, focus group interviews and observation.
- The qualitative researcher is deeply involved in the process, which could give the researcher a subjective view of the participants.
- The researcher interprets the research according to his or her own biased view, which may skew the collected data.

Both the advantages and the limitations were carefully considered before the researcher of this study chose this kind of study to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of SMT members of previously disadvantaged schools.

### **3.3.6 Multiple Case Study**

A multiple case study research design, focusing on three previously disadvantaged schools, was adopted for the study.

#### *3.3.6 (i) Description of a Multiple Case Study*

Crowe, Creswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery and Sheik (2011:1) describe the case study as an approach towards producing a detailed understanding of a complex aspect in its actual setting. Vohra (2014:55) underscores the definition of case studies as provided by Crowe *et al.* (2011:1) and explains that case study research is “the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon”. Case studies thus facilitate a deeper understanding of how an aspect operates within a real-life setting using the views of research participants as a basis to draw inferences to establish findings.

Chrism *et al.* (2008:13) explain that case studies can be conducted across multiple cases in order to obtain a broader view of the phenomenon. An important criterion highlighted by Chrism *et al.* (2008:13) is that multiple case study research needs to use cases that are similar in some ways. In other words, although different cases are



studied, the same aspect is investigated. In this study, the implementation of an SBM strategy was studied at three previously disadvantaged schools.

### *3.3.6 (ii) Aim of a Multiple Case Study*

Kumar (2011:125) explains that the objective of a multiple case study is to gain a holistic understanding of a situation, a phenomenon, a group or a community. Furthermore, according to Lawrence (2014:42), case study research aims to elaborate on an entire situation or process holistically and allows for the incorporation of multiple perspectives and viewpoints. This study aimed to explore extensively and understand SBM, and in particular how it is implemented in three previously disadvantaged schools.

### *3.3.6 (iii) Reasons for Using a Multiple Case Study*

Crowe *et al.* (2011:8) clarify that the case study approach allows, among others, important proceedings, activities and programmes to be examined thoroughly as they unfold in the actual circumstances of the study. Vohra (2014:54) points out that multiple cases strengthen the results by replicating the patterns, and by doing so, the credibility of the findings is also strengthened.

A multiple case study was opted for as a research design, because the research study sought to record detail on a real-life context (Crowe *et al.*, 2011:8), namely an SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools. Crowe *et al.* (2011:8) also make reference to studies on policy developments and programme-based service reforms that yield rich information by means of case study research. Because SBM serves as a South African educational reform policy, a multiple case study design was used to gain extensive knowledge about how SBM is implemented, based on the perspectives of principals, deputy principals and HoDs of three disadvantaged schools.

Theiler (2012:36) reflects that a significant advantage of multiple case studies is that evidence is gained from many sources, which make it easier to generalise. The multiple

case study, in addition, allowed the researcher to incorporate not only different stakeholders but also multiple collection methods, which included interviews and a documentary analysis. The researcher could, therefore, explore SBM as an educational reform strategy in its organisational environment (the school).

### 3.3.6 (iv) *Limitations of a Multiple Case Study Approach*

Zinal (2007:5) and Vissak (2010:375) identify the following weaknesses of a multiple case study approach:

- *Researcher bias*: The personal views of the researcher may affect the outcome of the study and what recommendations are proposed. The subjectivity of the researcher is possible because the researcher decides what data collection methods will be used and how the sample will be selected.
- *Very few scientific generalisations*: Multiple case studies use only a small number of participants, and generalisation for the larger population cannot be made.
- *Inability to replicate*: Many case studies cannot be replicated, and therefore, it means that the data and results are only valid for that one case.

Cognisance was taken of these disadvantages of a multiple case study approach while the research was being conducted.

## **3.4 POPULATION**

In addition to the research design, the researcher also needs to decide what or whom he or she needs to investigate or study. Babbie (2014:119) defines “population” as everyone or everything of concern the researcher wants to study to draw conclusions. The research population of this study is stakeholders involved in the decision-making concerning school matters within an SBM framework. These stakeholders include the principals, the deputy principals and the HoDs employed at three previously disadvantaged schools situated in the Pixley Ka Seme District in the Northern Cape Province.

### 3.5 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Mack *et al.* (2009:5) state that it is not compulsory to gather information from the entire population to make reasonable conclusions. Neuman (2011:246) explains that sampling indicates the selection of a section of the people or phenomena to represent the entire population the researcher needs to study to draw inferences. Qualitative research selects a sample of a population for its studies. According to Mack *et al.* (2009:5), the research objectives and the study population are used to decide which and how many people to select for the study. Yin (2011:88) explains that the sample in qualitative research is likely to be chosen in a deliberate manner, known as “purposive sampling”.

According to Yin (2011:88), the aim of purposive sampling is to involve those who will yield the most relevant and plentiful data, given the theme of the research study. Kumar (2011:176) claims that, in qualitative research, the participants are purposely selected to bring forth “information-rich” participants who will provide the information needed.

The participants of this study were purposively selected based on their involvement in school management within a previously disadvantaged context. Principals and other SMT members employed in previously disadvantaged schools were thus purposively selected to share their experiences, challenges and perceptions of the impact of education legislation, such as SBM, on school management in South Africa.

Table 3.2 reflects the total number of participants selected per school.

<b>Table 3.2: Number of Participants Selected per School</b>				
<b>Participating Schools</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>	<b>HoD</b>	<b>Total Participants per School</b>
School A	1	1	3	5
School B	1	0	1	2
School C	1	1	3	5

## **3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Neuman (2014:166) mentions that social research builds on the principle that the researcher learns more by observing from numerous angles than by looking from only a single perspective. According to Choy (2014:99), qualitative methods usually gather data by using purposive sampling and open-ended interviews. To yield data for this qualitative study, different methods were employed. The opinions and views of SMT members of previously disadvantaged schools on the impact of SBM were sought by conducting interviews.

Documents of participating schools were, furthermore, analysed to gain insight into and foster a better understanding as to how schools are managed within a previously disadvantaged context. Notes were also made during the interviews to record non-verbal responses to shed light on personal feelings of participants.

The data-collection methods that were employed in this qualitative research study will now be discussed.

### **3.6.1 Interviews**

“The use of the interview in research marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals, and towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversations” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:349).

Interviews, as per Cohen *et al.* (2007:350), enable both the interviewer and the interviewees to state clearly how they view situations using their own words and phrases. Yin (2011:135) reflects that, during qualitative interviews, the researcher attempts to gain knowledge of the social condition in which participants live, and concentrates on giving the correct interpretation of how participants respond to

questions. Interviews were used to gain insight from the participants on how they experience an SBM strategy in their schools.

Individual interviews and focus group interviews were employed to gather data.

### *3.6.1 (i) Individual Interviews*

Semi-structured questions were employed in the individual interviews. Lavery (2016:12) defines semi-structured interviews as “in-depth or intensive interviews where an outline of the questions is pre-determined, however, researchers have flexibility during the interview to probe into questions further or follow-up on ideas presented during the conversation”.

Hancock *et al.* (2009:16) observe that qualitative researchers usually make use of open-ended questions with a semi-structured nature on the themes that the researcher seeks to study. According to Hancock *et al.* (2009:16), questions without predetermined responses allow the researcher and the participants to explore some topics in more detail. Additionally, Lavery (2016:12) comments that the researcher can also request participants to explain their responses in more detail.

The next paragraphs will briefly highlight the advantages and disadvantages as well as the rationale for collecting information *via* individual interviews.

- *Advantages of individual interviews*

Kothari (2004:99), Kumar (2011:129) and Lavery (2016:11) list some of the pertinent advantages of individual interviews. These interviews enable friendly and reciprocal exploration of matters. It provides changes to clarify certain responses. Conversations may provide people to share more detailed information on their personal feelings about certain questions. More information can also be obtained in greater depth. In addition, there is more flexibility under this method because questions can be rephrased if participants are not clear as to what needs to be

answered. The language usage can also be altered to suit the participants' language preferences to the ability or educational level of the person interviewed, and as such, misinterpretations concerning questions can be avoided. The interview schedule, which provides the structured part of the individual interview, has been attached to this dissertation as Appendix F.

- *Disadvantages of individual interviews*

The following disadvantages of individual interviews have been identified by Kothari (2004:99), Kumar (2011:129) and Laverty (2016:11). The individual interview is a very expensive method, particularly when the participants selected for the study live or work far from one another. The method is, moreover, a lengthy process, and even more so if the study has many participants and follow-up sessions are required to gain more clarity on certain responses. Transcription is expensive and time-consuming. The quality of the data depends upon the quality of the interviewer because the quality of the data generated is affected by the experience, skills and commitment of the interviewer. The researcher may introduce his or her bias because researcher bias in the formulation of questions and the interpretation of responses is always possible.

- *Why individual interviews were conducted*

Individual interviews with semi-structured questions were used to afford the researcher enough opportunity to ask follow-up questions if responses could not be interpreted clearly to enable the correct capturing of responses of participants. Although the SASA (1996) and the PAM (DBE, 2016b:38) advocate shared leadership of the principal together with deputy principals and HoDs, the principal still remains the accountable officer. For this reason, three principals of previously disadvantaged schools were interviewed individually to afford them the opportunity to express their views freely on the participation of deputy principals, HoDs and SGB members in school management and school governance.

An individual interview was, moreover, conducted with one HoD from School B. School B only qualifies for a principal and one HoD as SMT members owing to its low learner enrolment. The researcher, therefore, resolved to afford both the principal and the HoD a chance to convey their personal views and to identify challenges regarding the SBM in a previously disadvantaged school.

### *3.6.1 (ii) Focus Group Interviews*

Kumar (2011:103) clarifies that focus groups are a “form of strategy in qualitative research in which attitudes, opinions or perceptions towards an issue, are explored through a free and open discussion between members of a group and the researcher”.

Creswell (2012:218) defines a focus group interview as an information collection method of interviewing groups usually consisting of four to six people. Lavery (2016:12) believes that focus groups cluster individuals to have a focused discussion on an aspect that has been decided upon beforehand. According to Yin (2011:141), the groups are “focused” because individuals who previously have had some common experience or apparently share some common views on the predetermined theme are gathered. Kumar (2011:131) states that the perceptions, experiences and understandings of a group of people who have some experience in common with regard to a situation or event are explored in a focus group interview. Kumar (2011:103) also explains that focus group interviews are facilitated group discussions in which a researcher raises issues or asks questions that stimulate discussion among the members of the group. This implies that focus group interviews set the stage for different viewpoints to be voiced on the same aspect.

The study employed two focus group interviews. The participants included two deputy principals and six HoDs who were selected as follows:

- Focus Group School A: One deputy principal and three HoDs
- Focus Group School B: One deputy principal and three HoDs

The advantages and disadvantages to using focus group interviews, as well as the reason for using these interviews, are set out below.

- *Advantages of focus group interviews*

Mack *et al.* (2011:51) advocate the use of focus group interviews because these yield a plethora of data over a short time span. Mack *et al.* (2011:51), in addition, reflect that focus group interviews are useful because they collect data on agreed-upon views but gain diverse and plentiful perspectives on a particular subject. Another asset, as explained by Mack *et al.* (2011:52), is that these interviews acquire data about societal principles and the multiple perceptions of a community. Focus groups thus yield information-rich data due to the group dynamics and from the diversity of the group (Mack *et al.*, 2011:52). According to Babbie (2014:330), focus group interviews are low in cost and can yield speedy and immediate results. In addition, Babbie (2014:330) observes that focus group interviews elicit group dynamics, and new topics are also introduced by participants, which the researcher can explore to add value to the study.

- *Disadvantages of focus group interviews*

Babbie (2014:330) identifies the following disadvantages of focus group interviews:

- In contrast to individual research, the researcher has less control.
- It is challenging to analyse the gathered information.
- Differences between groups and participants can be troublesome.
- Groups are sometimes difficult to assemble and to control.

- *Reasons for using focus group interviews*

The researcher wanted to gather as much information, perspectives and perceptions of school leaders, such as deputy principals and HoDs, on the implementation of an SBM strategy in their schools. Because an SBM strategy, as prescribed by the SASA (1996), requires shared leadership *via* the SMT, the researcher wanted to assess the group dynamics and investigate what joint strategies are employed where these participants not only show leadership but work together in their pursuit



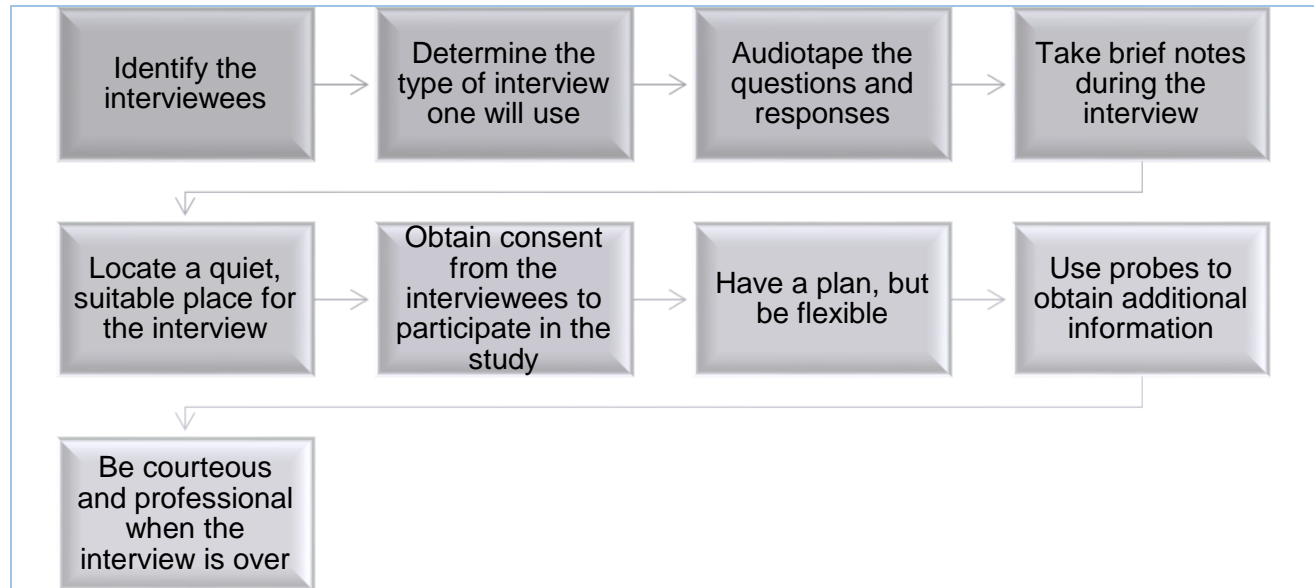
of common goals and objectives. The focus group interviews were, moreover, conducted to assess the correlation between how principals view the role of deputy principals and HoDs, and how these deputy principals and HoDs view their role in school management and school governance within an SBM strategy.

### 3.6.1 (iii) Interview Procedure

The following procedures were adopted for both the individual and focus group interviews:

- The views of the selected participants were recorded *via* a digital voice recorder and back-up recorder.
- The participating schools were used as venues to host the interviews. All of the interviews took place at the selected schools (individual interviews took place in the offices of the participating principals and the focus group interviews in the staff rooms of the schools).
- Photocopies of the interview schedule and information on how to contact the researcher were given to each participant in case they wanted additional information on the study.

Creswell (2012:211) lists general steps, as portrayed in Figure 3.2, to be followed when conducting interviews.



**Figure 3.2 General Steps in Conducting Interviews**

The researcher took notes during the interviews, and transcriptions were constructed of the recorded interviews. The issues for discussion were carefully identified and every opportunity was provided for additional issues to be raised. The process of recording the discussion was decided upon in consultation with each focus group. This included fixing the times that the group would meet to discuss the issues in detail. The members of each focus group were allowed to express their opinions freely while discussing these issues. The researcher also gave everybody in the focus group the opportunity to raise issues or share their experiences regarding school management.

The next paragraph focuses on the third data collection method, namely the documentary analysis.

### **3.6.2 Documentary Analysis**

Documents of the participating schools that indicate how principals and SMT members manage the school were used to collect data. These documents included school policies, missions and vision statements, the minutes of meetings, letters to parents and learners, brochures, school development plans, noticeboard messages and

photographs of school activities and school infrastructure. A control list (Appendix H) was used to evaluate these documents.

### *3.6.2 (i) Definition of Documentary Analysis*

Bowen (2009:27) describes document analysis as the weighing up or assessing of written and electronic documents. Creswell (2012:223) concurs and states that unrestricted and private archives that shed more light on a particular setting or the participants can be obtained. Numerous and diverse documents in the school can be used in the document analysis, including reports, minutes, missions statements, visions, brochures, emails, letters, diaries, notices, photographs, records, plans, memos, journals and libraries (Bowen, 2009:27; Creswell, 2012:223; Hancock *et al.*, 2009:19; Kelly, 2016:55; Yin, 2011:149).

### *3.6.2 (ii) Rationale for Documentary Analysis*

Bowen (2009:30) is of the opinion that different types of documents can assist researchers in unearthing and fostering a better understanding of phenomena that are studied. Yin (2011:148) claims that archival records, such as population statistics, school records, newspaper or magazine articles, can provide important contextual information to complement one's own fieldwork. Cardno, Rosales-Anderson and McDonald (2017:146) observe that documents can shed light on many aspects of an organisation because it serves as an important way of communication at all levels of the organisation.

Meeting minutes, authorised memos and library information are all examples of public documents, while private documents include, among others, personal records, letters and jottings people scribble down so that they can remember certain information (Creswell, 2012:223). The researcher embarked on a documentary analysis to add to the personal experiences of the participants in order to yield an information-rich outcome to the study.

Bowen (2009:29-30) provides the following substantiation for the use of document analysis as a data collection method, which also explains why documents were analysed for this research study:

- Documents can bring forth information on the setting of the participants' living environment.
- Documents can generate circumstantial information. These insights can help to give meaning to the context in which studies are carried out.
- Documents can highlight those additional aspects related to the study that need more clarity.
- The extra data provided by documents can add value to research findings and can contribute to a better understanding of the study topic.
- Where various drafts of a particular document are accessible, the researcher can compare these to identify the differences between them.
- Documents may serve as a vital source to corroborate or endorse evidence collected from other sources, such as interviews.

Another important asset of documents is stressed by Creswell (2012:223), and that is that documentary analysis may serve as a valuable method to collect information in cases where the study participants forgot crucial information or where certain activities cannot be witnessed anymore. Photographs studied during this research study, for example, showed how the infrastructure of the schools had changed after a period of time.

### *3.6.2 (iii) Advantages and Limitations of Documentary Analysis*

Table 3.3 below reveals the salient advantages and the limitations of collecting research data by analysing documents (Bowen, 2009:31; Kelly, 2016:55; Yin, 2011:149).

**Table 3.3: Advantages and Limitations of Document Analysis**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
Document analysis does not take up as much time as other data collection methods such as interviews.	Occasionally it becomes challenging to gain access to important documents because they may contain restricted information that the public cannot access.
With the advent of the Internet, plentiful relevant information has become available without the permission of the authors.	Documents may be incomplete, false or inaccurate.
Document analysis is less costly because the data have already been gathered.	Not all minutes are accurate, because they may not have been reviewed for accuracy.
The collected objects can reduce the challenges of reflexivity. These objects were created for some reason and could not be influenced by the researcher's inquiry.	The quality of available documents may compromise the credibility of the information.
Documents are non-reactive and cannot be modified by the researcher.	Deciphering and interpretation may be difficult in documents such as personal notes and diaries when handwriting is difficult to read.
Documents are diverse and cover information on a variety of topics, which took place over lengthy periods and within many settings.	

The benefits of document analysis visibly surpass its weaknesses, especially when taking into account its low financial costs. It is, therefore, clear that documents provide useful textual information to add value to qualitative studies.

### *3.6.2 (iv) How Document Analysis was Used in this Research Study*

Creswell (2012:223) provides procedural guidelines and steps on how documents should be collected. The researcher took into account these guidelines, as set out below, while analysing the documents of the participating schools.

- Identify documents that have reference to the research questions.

- Study various public and private documents to gain additional information for the study.
- If it is known where to obtain or access the required documents, obtain permission or consent from people or the institution regarding their usage in the study.
- After permission has been granted to use the documents, study them to ensure that their content is accurate and they would assist in providing answers to the research questions.
- Note down the data obtained from documents.

The study aimed to highlight the dynamics of school management within a previously disadvantaged context. Documents that were used included those that particularly revealed how those role-players involved in school management go about in managing school affairs. Particular attention was also given to how, within a previously disadvantaged context, school management interacts with the SGB, learners and the broader school community.

The following documents were used in the research study:

- *Mission and vision statements:* These statements were used to assess how participants view the aim of the existence of the school, as well as how it is reflected in school plans.
- *School plans:* The plans of the schools, including the development plan and school improvement plan, were analysed to assess how stakeholders are involved in school matters and what the nature of staff development plans is.
- *Minutes:* The minutes of meetings were analysed to assess what is being discussed at school level, who is involved in decision-making and to establish what innovative measures are devised by stakeholders.
- *Letters to stakeholders:* The researcher wanted to establish how the school management communicates with the parents, learners and the broader community.
- *Brochures:* Brochures and their availability were assessed to establish how the school is being marketed.

- *Photographs*: Photographs were scrutinised to establish what types of school activities are held and who attends these activities. The photographs were also used to assess how the school building, school grounds and other physical structures have improved or degraded over time.

The next section highlights how the collected data were analysed.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

“Analyzing qualitative data requires understanding how to make sense of text and images so that you can form answers to your research questions” (Creswell, 2012:236).

Chrism *et al.* (2008:43) claim that the researcher in qualitative research begins analysis during the data collection because of its flexible design. Deenath (2013:173) views data analysis as a procedure to arrange the huge amount of information in such a way that findings can be recorded.

Genniker (2015:150) argues that a focused process of data analysis involves the following steps:

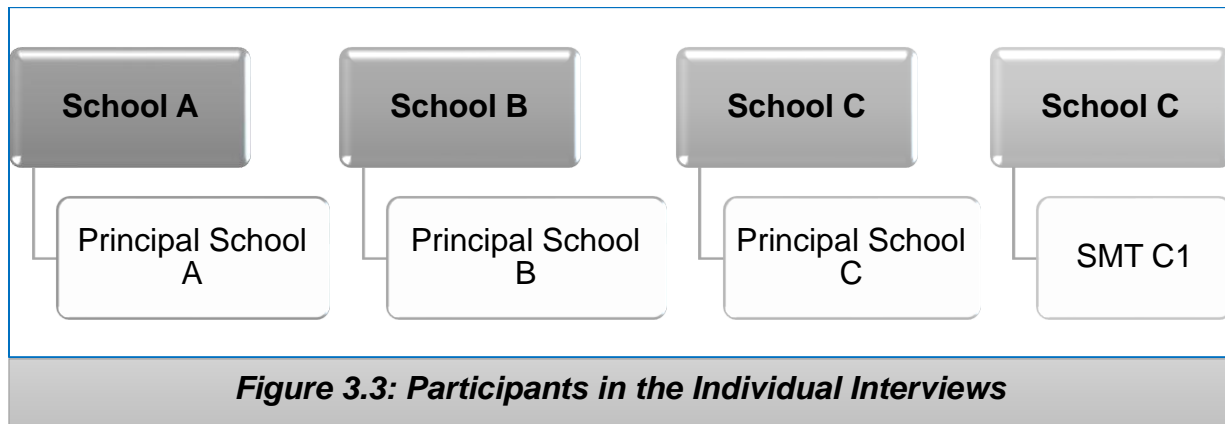
- Reducing large amounts of raw data
- Ordering and restructuring the reduced data
- Identifying categories from within the restructured data
- Using the categories to develop themes to structure a framework to reveal the essence of what the data reveal
- Presenting the data as research findings

The study offered descriptive data to enable readers to gain a detailed understanding of what was studied, namely the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa.

The next subsections focus on how the collected data were analysed.

### 3.7.1 Analysis of Individual Interviews

Three principals and one HoD of previously disadvantaged schools were individually interviewed by using semi-structured questions (Appendix F). The anonymity of the participating principals was secured by using pseudonyms for both the schools and their principals. These are reflected in Figure 3.3.



An interview schedule (Appendix G) was used; this was aligned to the research aims and questions. Section A of the interview schedule covered the biographical data of the principals.

The experience of the participants was important because it could enable the researcher to search for any linkages between experience gained and the type of approaches employed by principals to manage schools. The transcriptions of the recorded interviews, along with the researcher's notes made in the course of the interviews, were grouped into themes.

#### 3.7.1 (i) Transcriptions

Davidson (2009:37) defines transcription as a process central to qualitative research that is theoretical, selective, interpretive and representational. According to Mack *et al.* (2011:52), typed transcripts are generally used to capture the data obtained from interviews. Sutton and Austin (2015:28) advise that all audio recordings should be



transcribed verbatim, regardless of how intelligible the transcript may be when it is read. An independent source was appointed to transcribe all of the interviews, and these transcripts were thereafter filed per participant of these previously disadvantaged schools.

### *3.7.1 (ii) Coding*

Sutton and Austin (2015:28) explain that coding should take place after all of the interviews have been transcribed. Coding refers to the identification of topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are exposed through the participants' narratives (Sutton & Austin, 2015:28). The transcripts were coded based on the participants' responses to each question. Coding was also done based on the most prominent themes that surfaced after all of the transcripts had been scanned (Mack *et al.*, 2011:52).

### *3.7.1 (iii) Content Analysis*

According to Babbie (2014:341) and Neuendorf (2017:1), content analysis refers to a data analysis technique that entails the systematic and objective analysis of recorded human communications, such as books, newspapers, letters, email messages and speeches. Hashemnezhad (2015:60) believes that qualitative content analysis closely studies particular themes that will explain the meaning of that information that has been collected on the predetermined topic.

During the content analysis, the researcher analysed the data by providing a descriptive account of the data and, secondly, by providing a more interpretive analysis of the responses of the principals, deputy principals and HoDs who participated in the study. A process of coding and classifying of the data was thus conducted with the aim of emphasising significant meanings and findings.

### 3.7.1 (iv) Thematic Analysis

Ibrahim (2012:40) argues that thematic analysis is used to analyse classifications and present themes that relate to the data. Ibrahim (2012:40) furthermore explains that thematic analysis illustrates the data in great detail and engages with different subjects *via* interpretations. Thematic analysis requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher (Ibrahim, 2012:40). During the thematic analysis process, the data were coded and categorised into themes. According to Guest *et al.* (2012:10), thematic analysis focuses on identifying and describing patterns within the recorded data. The researcher analysed the data, and the emerging patterns were categorised in themes related to the research topic.

### 3.7.2 Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

As stated in Section 3.6.1 (ii), two focus group interviews were conducted. The anonymity of the deputy principals and HoDs was preserved in the presentation of the data as portrayed in Table 3.4.

<b>School A</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>School C</b>	<b>Code</b>
<b>Position</b>		<b>Position</b>	
Deputy Principal 1	SMT A1	Deputy Principal 1	SMT C1
HoD 1	SMT A2	HoD 1	SMT C2
HoD 2	SMT A3	HoD 2	SMT C3
HoD 3	SMT A4	HoD 3	SMT C4

Section A of the interview schedule (Appendix G) provided for the biographical data of the deputy principals and HoDs.

At this juncture, it is essential to note that the analysis of the focus group interviews follows the same procedure as that done for the individual interviews, namely:

- *Transcriptions* were made of the digital recordings of the three focus interviews. Notes were taken during the interviews to record emotions and other non-verbal data.
- *Coding*: The data, coupled with the transcriptions, were carefully analysed, and similar data were grouped together. These data were then coded.
- *Content analysis*: Topics, issues, similarities and differences based on the participants' answers and comments were identified (Sutton & Austin, 2015:28).
- *Thematic analysis*: After that, categories were created and thematically analysed (Guest *et al.*, 2012:10). The viewpoints of the participants were reflected in the data and substantiated *via* verbatim quotations from the audio recordings.

### **3.7.3 Analysis of Documents**

Bowen (2009:32) explains that document analysis involves “skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation”. Content analysis and thematic analysis were used to analyse the vision and mission statements, school plans, minutes of meetings, letters to stakeholders, brochures and photographs of the three participating previously disadvantaged schools.

These documents were also used to verify and support the data gathered during the individual and focus group interviews (Bowen, 2009:33). An evaluation schedule (Appendix H) was used to analyse the documents critically. In addition, the school documents were used to verify the data provided for the duration of the individual and focus group interviews. The data from the said documents were categorised, aligned to the main questions of the study (*cf.* Bowen, 2009:32). Emerging themes from these categories were then identified, under which the researcher reached findings.

### **3.7.4 Integrated Data Presentation**

The interview transcripts and school documents provided a descriptive account of the research study, but they do not provide explanations (*cf.* Burnard *et al.*, 2008:429). The

researcher, therefore, had to generate meaning of the gathered data by exploring and interpreting these (*cf.* Burnard *et al.*, 2008:430).

The analysis procedure unfolded as follows:

- The data gathered through the three individual interviews and two focus group interviews were analysed *via* transcriptions, content analysis and thematic analysis.
- The researcher also conducted content and thematic analysis of the documents to assess their alignment to answering the research questions.
- The overarching, recurrent patterns in all the interviews and the school documents were categorised.
- The emerging themes were then grouped together, which became the foundation of the research findings.

Efforts were also made to guarantee that the findings of the study would be credible by employing strategies to assure the quality of the research.

### **3.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The researcher made great efforts to ensure that the findings of the dissertation are not questionable but are beyond doubt. Great care was, therefore, taken to enhance the quality of the research to ensure that the findings could be utilised in practices such as educational policy formulation, training strategies for SMTs and identification criteria to support previously disadvantaged schools. According to Kumar (2011:169) and Anney (2014:276), researchers need to keep in mind the following aspects to ensure the quality of the qualitative research project. These include matters pertaining to trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability.

#### **3.8.1 Trustworthiness**

Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen and Kyngäs (2014:1) argue that trustworthiness in qualitative research indicates whether the research findings are

defensible and able to establish trust and confidence for these findings to be used in further research. Elo *et al.* (2014:1) moreover explain that the trustworthiness of qualitative analysis is generally presented by using terms such as “credibility”, “dependability”, “conformability” and “transferability”.

### **3.8.2 Credibility**

According to Kumar (2011:169), credibility has to do with determining whether the study findings of qualitative research are believable and a true account of the research. Anney (2014:276) defines credibility as the degree of certainty that research findings are true and accurate. The researcher, therefore, needed to establish how one would know if the research findings are true and accurate. According to Anney (2014:277), credibility strategies such as checking and triangulation are used to enhance the integrity of research findings. These credibility strategies are underlined in the subsections below.

#### *3.8.2 (i) Member Checking*

Checking is a credibility strategy that is used in qualitative research to improve the quality of qualitative data (Anney, 2014:277). Kumar (2011:169) and Anney (2014:277) explain that during checking, information and understandings from participants in the study are constantly verified. Kumar (2011:169) states that the researcher is obliged to include the actual views of participants in the data analysis and the interpretation thereof. According to Anney (2014:277), the purpose of checking is to exclude the prejudice of researchers in the analysis of the data and the study findings. It is for these reasons that the actual responses of participants were transcribed and used to substantiate the research findings. In addition, school documents were used to check whether the responses of participants could be corroborated through, among others, minutes, photographs and school plans. To illustrate further, minutes were, for instance, used to verify the responses of the participants on the extent of involvement of stakeholders in decisions made concerning school affairs.

### 3.8.2 (ii) Triangulation

Cohen *et al.* (2007:141) define triangulation as the use of multiple data collection methods in the study of particular phenomena to ensure research credibility. Anney (2014:277) agrees and expounds that triangulation “involves the use of multiple and different methods, investigators, sources and theories to obtain corroborating evidence”. According to Anney (2014:277), triangulation assists researchers in lessening preconceived notions because it thoroughly scrutinises the truthfulness of the responses of participants. Anney (2014:277) identifies the following three triangulation techniques:

- Multiple researchers are used to investigate the same problem. More researchers will bring forth diverse insights of the study, which will strengthen the reliability of the findings.
- Different data collection methods, such as interviews and observations, are used. Coupled with this, different informants or participants are also used to heighten the usefulness of information from various sources.
- Various research methods are used.

In this study, the data were accumulated through various methods, namely individual interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis to investigate how the principals, deputy principals and HoDs of the relevant schools cope with SBM within a previously disadvantaged context.

### 3.8.3 Dependability

Kumar (2011:169) clarifies the fact that dependability in research has to do with whether the same results will be obtained if the same topic is observed or studied again. This suggests that if other researchers sought to reproduce a study, they ought to obtain enough material from the current study to obtain results comparable to those of the current study.

During this study, the researcher went to great lengths to keep detailed records of the research process to afford future researchers the opportunity to make comparisons on findings if they set out to study the implementation of an SBM strategy in South African schools within a previously disadvantaged context.

#### **3.8.4 Transferability**

The fourth method to ensure the trustworthiness of the research is transferability. Anney (2014:277) explains that transferability represents the extent to which study findings can be transferred. Transferability thus makes evident how research findings can be applied to other settings, circumstances or groups. To ensure transferability, thick descriptions can be used by providing detailed accounts of field experiences and a detailed background of the participants and the environment in which they operate (Shenton, 2004:69).

Transferability in this study was pursued as follows:

- The interview schedules used by the researcher in this research study contained not only the possible questions to be asked but also the biographical data of the participants.
- Documents supplied to schools by the NCDE were used, which reflected the quintile ranking of schools, their staff establishments and approved Section 21 functions. These documents provided extensive insight into the background of the participating schools.

#### **3.8.5 Confirmability**

Another method of enhancing trustworthiness of the research study is confirmability. Confirmability is the steps taken by researchers in order to prove that the study findings are not their personal prejudiced opinions but arose from the collected information (Shenton, 2004:72). According to Anney (2014:279), confirmability is concerned with “establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” . .

Confirmability is thus the level of impartiality in the findings of the study. The findings are, hence, founded on the replies of the participants, devoid of the personal perceptions of researchers. The researcher, therefore, endeavoured to eliminate partiality to guarantee that the responses of participants were not twisted (Anney, 2014:279). These efforts included the following strategies:

- The purpose of the research study and the process thereof were thoroughly discussed with the participants beforehand to build trust and to enable them to develop their own thoughts on how they would respond to their role within an SBM strategy.
- A detailed record of the evidence and how it was gathered was provided to illustrate the findings derived from a thorough collection and analysis of the data.
- In cases where the researcher was sceptical about the data given by the participants, this uncertainty was reflected in the research findings.

### **3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLIED IN THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The Constitution (1996) forms the foundation of human constitutional rights and ethical principles in South Africa. The research was consequently guided by these rights and principles as articulated in the Constitution. Mack *et al.* (2009:8) argue that research standards safeguard that any unease of participants is respected, the conduct of research is properly supervised and confidence is fostered between researchers and participants. On the other hand, Sudheesh *et al.* (2016:663) clarify that ethical considerations indicate the protection of the rights of participants, such as the right to privacy and self-determination. Other rights that need protection during research include protection from harm, and confidentiality.

The researcher adhered to the following ethical aspects (evidence of adherence to ethical aspects is attached as Appendix A to the research report).



### **3.9.1 Permission to Conduct the Research Study**

The prescribed application was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Free State for approval to conduct the research. This approval was granted (Appendix A). The Superintendent General of the NCDE granted consent and approval to approach schools to participate in the study (Appendix B: Request for approval and Appendix C: Permission from NCDE to conduct the research at the selected schools).

### **3.9.2 Informed Consent**

The participants received information on the nature of the study, the participation requirements, confidentiality and contact information of the researcher (Appendix E). Requests to participate in the study were sent to the schools and the participants (Appendix D), and their consent was sought (Appendix F).

### **3.9.3 Voluntary Participation**

The researcher emphasised voluntary participation and freedom to withdraw from the study, as reflected in the Information Leaflet, Annexure E, to the research participants.

### **3.9.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

The anonymity of the participants was guaranteed by using pseudonyms for participating schools and participants. No personal information of participants will thus be disclosed, including comments made by the participants labelled as “off the record”. The answers of the participants were given fictitious code numbers and the participants were identified in this way in the data (Figures 3.3 and 3.4). Similar fictitious numbers will be used in any other publication of this study, such as articles in research journals.

### **3.9.5 No Harm to Participants**

The participants were not exposed to any risk of unfamiliar pressure, humiliation or damage to self-esteem.

### **3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The following limitations of the study are worth mentioning:

- Generalisations to the broader SMT population cannot be made based on the small number of participants in the study.
- School operations and programmes caused a constant review of times when the schools could be visited and the participants be interviewed.
- Not all of the participants who were approached could participate in the study due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness and personal commitments.

### **3.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

Chapter Three accentuated how the research was carried out to answer the research objectives and questions encapsulated in Chapter One. This chapter thus served as a “blueprint” on how the operational side of the research study unfolded.

The qualitative approach was presented to readers as the most appropriate instrument for the study. The founding principles of qualitative research were underscored, namely its aims, characteristics, the flow of the research process and its advantages as well as limitations. The chapter furthermore outlined how the participants in the research study were selected. Purposive sampling was explained as a means of selecting the most appropriate people to shed light on the research topic. The researcher discussed another important aspect that needed more clarity, namely the data collection methods. This aspect of the research featured how the individual interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis were applied in order to accumulate information pertaining to the study.

In this chapter, it was also explained and reflected on how the mass of collected data had been analysed. The researcher deemed it necessary to make the readers aware of how quality assurance of the research study was ensured. The ethical considerations adhered to were also accentuated to show cognisance of the importance of retaining the trust of participants.

Every effort was made to give substantive reasons for embarking on a qualitative approach towards conducting the research. It was, therefore, crucial that readers gained insight into both the benefits and limitations of the various aspects such as the data collection methods and sampling. Based on this, the reader can be assured that the best possible decisions were made to ensure that the research would yield the most accurate results.

Chapter Four deals with the findings emanating from the data analysis process plus an interpretation of these.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three gave a comprehensive outline of the research design and methods that were employed to gather data. It also documented the procedure around the selection of participants as well as the ethical considerations and measures that were used to guarantee trustworthiness of the research.

Chapter Four offers a summary and understanding of the findings based on the main research objective, which was **to describe the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa**. This chapter furthermore presents the data gathered *via* individual interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis. During the analysis of the collected data, verbatim quotes extracted from the raw data from the interviews were utilised to illustrate important findings.

The findings will be presented and expounded upon, categorised according to the subdivisions stated below:

- The background of the participating schools
- The biographical data of the participants
- Findings based on the categorisation of the gathered data into themes

The next section highlights the previously disadvantaged context of the research study and looks at the quintile ranking of the participating schools, the infrastructure and resources of the participating schools and the biographical data of the participating principals, deputy principals and HoDs.

## 4.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

This section describes the background of the participating schools to sketch the setting and context in which an SBM strategy is being implemented. These backgrounds will give the reader insight into aspects such as the type of school, learner enrolment, the number of educator posts, the quintile ranking and the school fee status. The background will thus highlight the conditions under which school management and school governance are practised.

The three schools that participated in this study are situated in the Pixley Ka Seme Education District in the Northern Cape Province. The profiles of the schools are reflected in Table 4.1.

<b>Participating School</b>	<b>Type of School</b>	<b>Learner Enrolment</b>	<b>Number of Educator Posts</b>	<b>Quintile Ranking</b>	<b>School Fee Status (Yes/No)</b>
<b>School A</b>	Primary school	1 259	37	3	No school fee
<b>School B</b>	Primary school	211	7	3	No school fee
<b>School C</b>	Combined school	812	26	2	No school fee

(Source: NCDE, 2017)

Table 4.1 indicates that both School A and School B are primary schools that offer tuition to Grades R to 7. School C is a combined school that offers education to Grades R to 12. School A has a large learner enrolment of 1 259 learners and is currently the second largest school in the Northern Cape Province. Table 4.1 also indicates the number of educators employed at each school. Educator posts are allocated per school,

based on the school learner enrolment. School A has 37 educators, School B has 7 educators, and 26 educators are employed at School C.

These school profiles hint at the context in which some previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy have to operate. Although School A and School B are situated in the same town, School A was the only school in apartheid South Africa that catered for disadvantaged communities, and it has experienced overcrowded classes throughout the years.

Crowded classrooms can have an adverse impact on the provision of education, which has an effect on the teaching practices of educators and learner achievement. Matshipi, Mulaudzi and Mashau (2017:109) observe that overcrowding in classes may stem from a community that is served by one school. Matshipi *et al.* (2009:109) furthermore reflect that lengthy periods will lapse before the DBE provides schools experiencing overcrowding with additional classrooms or perform major renovations on dilapidated school buildings. Fortunately for School A, the NCDE has started with the building of another primary school to host primary school learners from the community from 2019 onwards. Large class sizes and the number of grades in a class are drawbacks for SBM because innovative teaching methodologies and, thus, quality teaching are both negatively influenced (Gropello, 2006:29). Hopefully the new school will lower the class sizes of School A and enhance quality teaching within an SBM strategy to allow the teachers to implement innovative teaching practices.

The aspect of the “no-fee” status of the three schools will be further elaborated on in the next section.

#### **4.2.1 Quintile Rank of Participating Schools**

The quintile rank of South African schools sets out the socio-economic conditions in which schools operate (Chutgar & Kanje, 2009:18). These conditions have relevance to the research aim of seeking to establish the dynamics of SBM in previously

disadvantaged schools. The researcher deemed it necessary to determine the socio-economic environment of each participating school and its impact on how these schools are being managed and governed. Information pertaining to the quintile ranking was gathered as part of the documentary analysis, which included the study of each school's staff establishments and Section 21 allocations, as approved by the NCDE.

Table 4.2 highlights the concept of quintile ranking and its impact on how the South African government allocates funds to schools as part of an SBM strategy regulated by the SASA (1996).

<b>Table 4.2: Allocation per Quintile Ranking</b>				
<b>Quintile Ranking</b>	<b>No-Fee Status</b>	<b>From Poorest to Least Poor</b>	<b>2017 Allocation per Learner</b>	<b>National Expenditure Allocation</b>
1	No-fee school	Poorest 20%	R1 243	35% of the resources
2	No-fee school	Next 20%	R1 243	25% of the resources
3	No-fee school	Next 20%	R1 243	20% of the resources
4	School fee	Next 20%	R623	15% of the resources
5	School fee	Least poor 20%	R215	5% of the resources

*(2017 Allocation per learner is included in Government Notice, No. 394 as per the Government Gazette No. 40818 of 2017)*

The quintile rank (1 to 5) is the indigent notch of a school and is determined by how poor the community it serves is (Chutgar & Kanjee, 2009:18). Chutgar and Kanjee (2009:18) explain that nationwide census information on aspects such as literacy levels, household income and rate of unemployment are used to compute the poverty score of schools:

- Quintile 1 to 3 schools are the poorest 60% of schools within a province. These schools serve poor communities with a high unemployment rate and low literacy levels. Quintile 1 to 3 schools received R1 243 per learner for 2017. Such schools

are furthermore categorised as no-fee institutions that cannot charge school fees to supplement the government allocation.

- Quintile 4 schools are viewed as the next poorest 20% of provincial schools after the quintile 3 component. These schools are viewed as being better off than the quintile 1 to 3 schools. For the 2017 academic year, quintile 4 schools received R623 per learner. Quintile 4 schools can charge school fees to supplement their government allocation.
- Public schools categorised as quintile 5 are viewed as being the more affluent schools serving wealthier communities. Like quintile 4 schools, they may charge school fees to complement the allocation from the state.

Based on Table 4.2, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy thus ensures that more financial aid by the national government is provided to schools situated in impoverished communities than schools that render services to more prosperous communities. Despite a decrease in financial allocations, well-off schools can generate additional funds through school fees and other strategies to raise funds in order to procure the additional teaching and learning resources required to expand on the quality of education provided to its learners (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:10). One must further be mindful of the fact that government allocations are ring-fenced with clear instructions concerning how these allocations must be utilised. This implies that the three sampled schools cannot utilise government funding for aspects other than for those prescribed by the government, which include the maintenance of infrastructure and paying for services (Section 21, SASA, 1996). Because quintile 4 and 5 schools are able to supplement their government allocation, they are able to fulfil to their own unique necessities (within the prescribed policies) that fall outside the government directives.

#### **4.2.2 Infrastructure and Resources of the Participating Schools**

SBM requires educators and learners who are innovative and are always looking for new strategies to improve teaching and learning. Khumalo and Mji (2014:1521) state that the infrastructure of schools is important because it permits educators and learners



to gain access to a variety of apparatuses, facilities and assets that can enhance teaching and learning practices.

The current infrastructure and resources of the participating schools will now be highlighted to assess the environment in which teaching and learning within an SBM strategy take place. The infrastructure that was observed included the buildings, science laboratories, computer rooms, sports fields, libraries and resources to assist in classroom teaching.

#### *4.2.2 (i) Buildings*

School A was established in 1979, and its buildings are relatively old. A section of the school also burnt down in 1980 and was initially replaced with prefabricated mobile classrooms. The NCDE later replaced these prefabricated mobile classrooms. At School B, the researcher observed that some classrooms are in a dilapidated condition. As reflected in Table 4.1, School C is a combined school and offers Grades R to 12. The high school section of School C was burnt down previously and replaced with prefabricated mobile buildings. Khumalo and Mji (2014:1523) point out that suitable and well-maintained buildings have a direct bearing on effective learning and teaching. This, in essence, means that an appropriate classroom environment, conducive to teaching and learning, can significantly influence educator and learner performance.

In South Africa, as part of the decentralisation of school authority, poor conditions of schools and inadequate infrastructure resulted in mandatory norms and standards for school infrastructure in 2013 (Centre for International Teacher Education, 2016:25). Based on these norms and standards, every school in South Africa must have water, electricity, access to the Internet, working toilets, safe classrooms with a maximum of 40 learners, security, and thereafter libraries, laboratories and sports facilities. This information demonstrates that efforts are thus being made by the current government to address past inequalities. Major renovations have been made at the three participating schools. The principal of School B hinted at the former state of their school buildings,

but appreciated that renovations, such as a new ablution block to enhance a healthier school environment, had helped to change the face of the school.

*The progress that have been made in my school, when we start – I started here you can't see if it is a school or a crèche or what, but now you can see it is a school now, because now by that time, we didn't have that name board, but now we have a name board... And then we are having the three prefab classes added at our school. The Department built us a new ablution block.*

The fact that School B was provided with prefabricated mobile classrooms unfortunately shows that this poor school (based on its poverty ranking) has to settle for inferior structures instead of the preferred brick structure. The prefabricated structure at School B may become dilapidated and unsafe if it needs to be used for a long period, which will have an impact on the educational environment. Hopefully these buildings will be replaced sooner rather than later to maintain quality teaching and learning as envisaged by an SBM strategy that prioritises learner achievement.

#### *4.2.2 (ii) Science Laboratories*

School A currently has one science laboratory. If one bears in mind that the school has a learner enrolment exceeding 1 000 learners, one science laboratory is insufficient. School B currently has no laboratory. The science laboratory and the woodwork and needlework classes of School C were destroyed in a fire in 2004. The study revealed that the participating schools have insufficient science laboratories, which might mean that educators, in the absence of sufficient science facilities, have to innovate to explain certain subject content practically, while their more affluent counterparts can experience the practical application of science experiments first-hand. Makori and Onderi (2014:75) warn that if learners do not work with actual apparatus, they will perceive science as theoretical or immaterial. Mtsi and Maphosa (2016:59) reason that appropriate resources in science teaching are pivotal because uncovering scientific facts requires conducting experiments and not lecturing. It, therefore, seems that within the current SBM strategy in South Africa, learners of some previously disadvantaged schools, such as the participating schools, are prevented from improving their understanding of

subjects such as physical sciences, through laboratory investigation, owing to the lack of laboratories. Next, the availability of computer centres at the participating schools will be discussed.

#### 4.2.2 (iii) Computer Centres

Neither School A nor School B currently have a computer room. School C, on the other hand, has a computer room with 24 computers, and offers the subject computer application technology (CAT) to Grade 10 to 12 learners. Tembalihe (2012:50) believes that CAT is a useful life skills subject because we live in the age of computers and this subject will equip learners with marketable skills to cope in an information-driven society. SBM advocates innovative teaching strategies. It seems that through CAT, School C enables its learners to adapt more easily to life after school where computers have become a part of everyday life. Hopefully this will also assist those who opt for further tertiary studies, which nowadays require computer-literate students.

The importance of offering subjects with a practical component was expressed during the focus group interview conducted at School C. One SMT member of the school (SMT B1) concluded that the school needs assistance to provide learners with more subject choices because currently parents take learners to other schools with more variety in this regard. This SMT member regarded the ability to provide more subject choices as being crucial to assist in the development of the broader community.

*Dis nie almal wat die akademiese stroom wil volg nie. Op die oomblik kan ons net CAT as praktiese vak gee. So, ouers wat dit bekostig, skryf hul kinders by skole in wat meer vakkeuse bied. As die regering ons hierin kan help, kan ons die dorp help.*

[Not everybody can follow the academic stream. At this moment, we only offer CAT as a practical subject. So, parents who can afford it, register their children at schools that offer more subjects. If the government can assist us in this regard, it can help the town.]

Gardiner (2008:18) states that poor, unemployed people from rural schools are anxious for their children to find employment after schools to enable them to shake off the burden of poverty. There is, therefore, according to Gardiner (2008:18), a

desire among rural parents for their children to acquire practical skills rather than to study, for example, history. One core principle of SBM is that the needs of the school are determined by those closest to the schools, such as parents (Al Kaabi, 2015:15; Ayeni & Ibukun, 2013:36; Mafora, 2013:688; Pomuti & Weber, 2012:2). If the assertion of Gardiner (2008:18) holds true, the implementation of a desired curriculum for rural parents must be considered by national governments which, within an SBM strategy, allocate funds to schools. Such schools need added support to acquire the necessary equipment to phase in new practical subjects such as CAT and consumer studies.

#### *4.2.2 (iv) Sports Fields*

The three participating school have no sports field. The benefits of participation in sports are highlighted by Makori and Onderi (2014:75). These benefits consist of developing courses and opportunities for educators and learners, strengthening the self-esteem, enhancing skills to function within a group, strengthening the ability to set personal goals and enhancing the discipline of learners. Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014:251) argue that extramural activities, such as sports, are used in successful previously disadvantaged schools to foster confidence in learners and to involve their parents in school activities.

The involvement of parents as important stakeholders in SBM thus appears to be strengthened through sport. The absence of sports fields at these and perhaps other previously disadvantaged schools may rob these schools of an opportunity to foster closer ties with learners and parents.

#### *4.2.2. (v) Libraries*

Both School B and School C do not have libraries. School A has a library, although the books are outdated and too few in numbers for its 1 200 plus learners. According to Mojapelo and Dube (2014:9), school library development in South Africa is still skewed

despite educational reforms. In addition, Mojapelo and Dube (2014:2) reflect that the DBE envisages that all schools will have a well-resourced and functioning school library to complement the school curriculum. It thus looks as if an opportunity to strengthen quality teaching within an SBM strategy is lost, because some previously disadvantaged schools, such as the participating schools, are still operating without libraries.

#### 4.2.2 (vi) Resources to Assist Classroom Teaching

The three participating schools have certain functions as regulated by the SASA (1996). Section 21(c) of the SASA (1996) states that these schools can purchase, among others, learning and teaching resources or school equipment. The NCDE thus allocates monies to the participating school to procure the necessary textbooks and educational materials and equipment. In addition, the DBE has provided new textbooks from 2011 onwards to schools after a review of the National Curriculum Statement, which introduced the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). The three schools could, therefore, provide learners with the textbooks, learner workbooks and teacher guides that were included in the CAPS learning and teaching support material provided by the DBE.

The South African Human Rights Commission (2014:5) observes that a number of studies indicate that the provision of appropriate textbooks can significantly improve educational outcomes. None of the participating schools are equipped with technological resources, such as interactive blackboards or internet connectivity, to enhance classroom teaching and learning. The importance of adequate infrastructure and resources to support teaching and learning was accentuated by the principal of School A:

*Maar as onderwysers voel daar word na hul behoeftes gekyk, doen hul sommeer meer. Gee vir hulle hulpbronne om te teach, en hul loop daai ekstra myl. Ons is 'n groot skool. As ons onderwysers nou net met rekenaars en slimborde kan teach, ai meester, hul sal nie mind om laat te werk nie.*

[If teachers feel their needs are addressed, they give more. Give them resources to teach, and they go the extra mile. We are a big school. If our teachers just had computers and smartboards...they would not mind working late.]

Although the researcher has empathy with the fact that schools such as School A do not have the latest technology aids such as computers and slim boards, it must be noted that having the best teaching resources will not automatically translate into better learner achievement. Merely equipping schools with excellent teaching aids and resources will not automatically increase learner accomplishment. Instead, what carries more weight is if the resources are utilised appropriately and educators are skilled enough to use them optimally (Makori & Onderi, 2014:75).

The sentiments of the principal of School A on educator enthusiasm to go the extra mile emphasise an important prerequisite of SBM, namely active participation and involvement. This finding has been acknowledged by previous studies. According to Bandur (2012:44), SBM requires active participation, readiness and willingness to participate by all stakeholders.

A research report by Lauwerier and Akkari (2015:3) further mentions that if stakeholders such as educators feel their needs are not being met, they tend to give only what is expected from them. It appears that all possible endeavours are required to address the teaching needs of teachers to maintain their active participation to strengthen the implementation of an SBM strategy in their classrooms with willingness and innovation.

Another pertinent point regarding the importance of resources was raised by SMT member B1. SMT B1 pointed out that previously disadvantaged schools lose learners to other better-resourced schools that can deliver the curriculum needs of learners. It thus becomes imperative for the government, as an important partner in an SBM strategy, to allocate funds in such a way as to enable previously disadvantaged schools to fulfil the needs of the immediate school community.

The availability of good infrastructure and resources can also have a negative impact on educator recruitment. In the absence of good infrastructure and resources, previously disadvantaged schools, such as the participating schools, may struggle to recruit

suitably qualified educators, and then the parents from these communities may opt to place their children at better resourced schools with good infrastructure (Khumalo & Mji, 2014:1523-1524). The principal of School C, who struggled to attract and retain qualified educators, endorsed such sentiments:

*Dit het al gebeur dat die skool ongekwalifiseerde onderwysers moes gebruik want niemand wil sommer na 'n klein plekkie kom nie. Nuwe Funsu Lusaka beurs-onnies moet as't ware gedwing word om in klein, armer gemeenskappe diens te doen – as dit van dokters verwag word, hoekom nie van voornemende onderwysers nie?*

[It has happened that the school had to use unqualified teachers because no one will just come to a small town. New Funsu Lusaka scholarship teachers have to be practically forced to serve in small, poorer communities – if doctors have to do so, why not prospective teachers as well?]

School infrastructure and resources, as outlined in the preceding sections, both form an integral requirement for an SBM strategy (Khumalo & Mji, 2014:1523). In the next section, attention is focused on the biographical data of the participants, which include their gender, age and qualifications.

### **4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS**

The biographical data of participants were gathered during the individual and focus group interview schedules (Appendix F: Interview schedule for the individual interviews, and Appendix G: Interview schedule for the focus group interviews). These annexures made provision for information such as age, gender, qualifications and teaching experience. This information was deemed to be crucial to the researcher in order to ascertain, among others, the experience of the participants in SBM strategies and the impact thereof to assist in school improvement, and how participants have been trained to execute functions of school management and school governance within an SBM strategy.

The staff establishment of each school is determined by learner enrolment, which also determines the number of senior positions for which a school qualifies.

The staff establishment of the three participating schools is reflected in Table 4.3 (NCDE, 2017).

<b>Table 4.3: Staff Establishment of Participating Schools</b>									
<b>Schools</b>	<b>SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM</b>				<b>Post Level 1</b>	<b>Admin Clerk</b>	<b>Cleaners</b>	<b>Grounds-men</b>	<b>Supervisor/Foreman</b>
	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>	<b>HoDs</b>	<b>SMT Total</b>					
School A	1	2	5	8	29	2	4	2	1
School B	1	0	1	2	5	1	1	0	0
School C	1	1	4	6	20	1	2	1	1

Based on the information contained in Table 4.3, the SMT of School A consists of eight members, the SMT of School B has two members and School C has six SMT members. SBM, as underpinned by the SASA (1996), expects these SMT members to assist in school management and school governance. The principal, who leads the SMT, has to delegate management and governance functions after a collaborative process, to individual SMT members based on their expertise in order to create an effective school management structure (Hermosilla *et al.*, 2014:3).

Table 4.4 reflects the biographical data of the participants and expands on the data as contained in Table 4.3.



**Table 4.4: Biographical Data of Participants**

PRINCIPALS	GENDER		AGE			QUALIFICATIONS				YEARS IN POST					YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE
	Male	Female	20-35	36-50	51-65	M + 3	M + 4	ACE	Post-grad	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 ≥	
<b>SCHOOL A</b>															
Principal	x			x		x				x					29
Deputy Principal	x			x			x						x		25
HoD 1		x		x			x	x	x	x					26
HoD 2		x		x			x	x		x					17
HoD 3	x			x		x		x		x					12
<b>SCHOOL B</b>															
Principal		x			x		x					x			25
HoD 1	x			x		x		x		x					16
<b>SCHOOL C</b>															
Principal	x				x		x			x					30
Deputy Principal	x			x							x	x			17
HoD 1	x				x		x			x					34
HoD 2		x		x				x							26
HoD 3		x		x			x			x					27

The next paragraphs summarise the biographical data (Table 4.3) of the participants.

#### 4.3.1 Gender

All three schools adhere adequately to the representation of both male and female educators as part of the SMT. This in line with the NCDE’s “commitment to providing equal opportunities and practicing affirmative action employment”, as per point 6.2 of the Vacancy Circular for departmental heads, deputy principals and principals (NCDE, 2017). This commitment is also in line with SBM principles of democracy to provide all

stakeholders with the opportunity to voice their views on the nature of school management and governance.

The gender spread for the SMT of School A consists of 66% male and 34% female educators, while Schools B and C have a 50:50 gender representation. SBM is thus effectively implemented in the participating previously disadvantaged schools in terms of addressing historical imbalances by providing equal opportunities (irrespective of gender) to stakeholders (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:1; Republic of South Africa, 2014:11).

#### **4.3.2 Age**

Of the 15 participants, 10 were between 36 and 50 years old. No participant was younger than 36 years. One can thus conclude that the participants have been exposed to the SBM strategy over a prolonged period and must have gained valuable experience on how to deal with unique difficulties regarding curriculum implementation, parental involvement within the SGB and school development in general. These experiences were important to this research study, as experience is generally linked to stronger institutional knowledge and better performance in seeking to gain insight on how an SBM strategy is implemented in previously disadvantaged schools. Gropello (2006:42) observes that limited teaching experience makes it difficult for teachers to implement innovative teaching methods. The participants in this study are experienced teachers, and this experience can assist them as the SMT in guiding novice teachers to implement innovation within the classroom.

#### **4.3.3 Qualifications**

The entry level into the education system for any educator in South Africa is Matric (Grade 12) plus a three-year teaching qualification (M + 3). No unqualified educator is employed as an SMT member at the three schools. In fact, the majority of these SMT members (80%) have a qualification beyond the minimum required qualification of M + 3. The question that subsequently needs to be answered is: Are these qualifications relevant to the management and governance functions these SMT members have to

execute daily? The professional qualifications of participants will be reviewed in the following paragraphs.

The qualifications of the participating educators are manifested in Table 4.3 and the spread thereof in Figure 4.1, which follows.

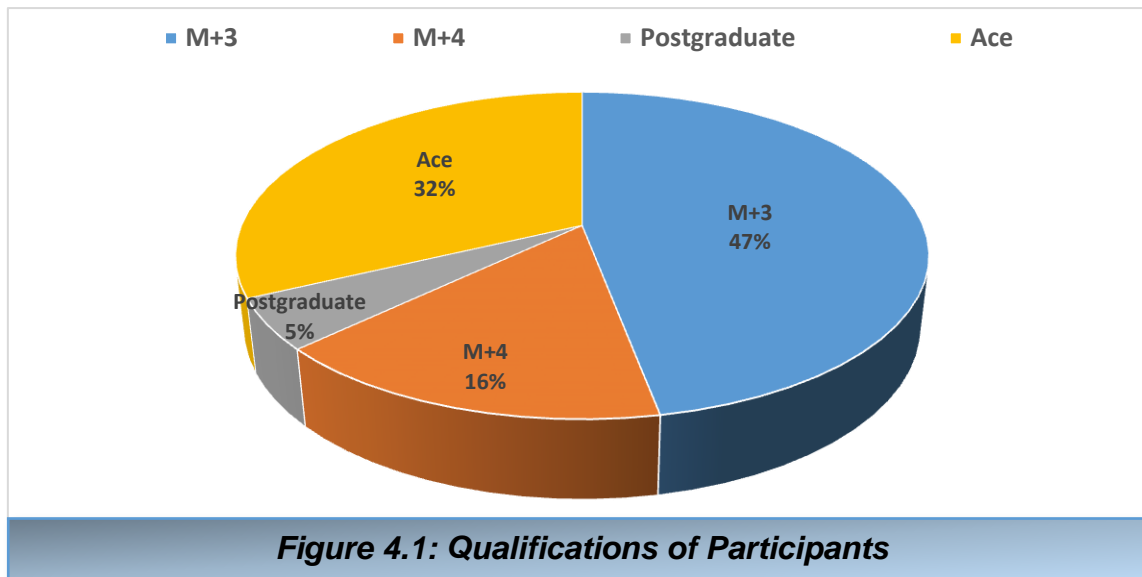


Figure 4.1 indicates that five out of the eight participating HoDs have completed the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE): School Leadership. The finding indicates that the majority of HoDs have the required understanding and are aware of the skills necessary for management and leadership, as envisaged by the national education department that, in liaison with universities, implement this qualification. The question remains whether this qualification is sufficient to enhance their management skills.

Kgwete (2014:117), in a research report on school leadership programmes in South Africa, found that some principals lacked the capacity to democratise school governance, to implement curriculum programmes, to communicate effectively with stakeholders and to deal with educator and learner discipline. Bush *et al.* (2011:31) mention that the South African government has recognised the need to provide effective continuing professional growth for educators and school managers. The ACE was launched by the DoE in 2007 for aspirant principals and is embedded in the broader

approach to advance educational standards (Bush *et al.*, 2011:31). Unfortunately, none of the participating principals possesses the ACE school leadership qualification. It seems that the participants have to rely on their teaching experience to manage schools.

As alluded to in Chapter Two, teaching qualification and experience serve as prerequisites for an appointment as principal (Bush *et al.*, 2011:31; Chalufu, 2011:3). The three participants confirmed that they only had to meet qualification criteria (M + 3) and teaching experience to be appointed as principals. If these principals had achieved the ACE qualification, they would have been exposed to the knowledge and skills that could possibly fill the void in management qualification to equip them for the demands of an SBM strategy (Bush *et al.*, 2011:33). But, as stated by Kgwete (2014:118), who researched the impact of the ACE programme, those SMT members involved in the ACE programme were more concerned with the completion of assignments than with improving their schools.

The NCDE annually conducts induction training for all newly appointed school principals, deputy principals and HoDs. This is done to assist new appointees in senior posts at schools with knowledge on how to manage schools within an SBM strategy. Some participants unfortunately felt that these inductions are not enough to equip SMTs to execute their duties as required.

The Principal of School C boldly stated in this regard:

*Deurlopende opleiding vir prinsipale is ook kardinaal; jy moet abreast bly met beleidsveranderings. Die induction week vir nuwe prinsipale is onvoldoende; jy moet kan teruggaan en sê: "Dit het nie gewerk, wat kan ek anders doen?"*  
[Continuous training of principals is essential; you must keep abreast of policy changes. The induction week for new principals is insufficient; you must be able to go back and say: "This has not worked, what can I do differently?"]

*SMT C2: Maar daai induction was die, wat ek van weet, die enigste formele training van die Department.*

[...that induction was the only formal training of the Department that I know of.]

These responses from the participants demonstrate a very alarming fact, which is that they do not take charge of the personal professional improvement as accountable professionals. Smith (2015:21) makes reference to Mestry *et al.* (2009) and states that professional development is imperative for school improvement and remains the responsibility of both the principal and the deputy principal to ensure educator mentoring during professional development programmes. Similarly, the HoDs, as part of the SMT, should also be responsible for improving educational services and teaching practices of educators. These functions, as articulated by Smith (2015:21-22), are contained in current South African legislation, such as the PAM (DBE, 2016b:36). SBM puts great emphasis on the school identifying its own needs, such as teacher development, and effective use of the capacity available at the school. It is, therefore, clear that, while the government has an obligation to ensure the professional development of the teacher corps, the school, where possible, should utilise the skills, knowledge and experience of the SMT members to address some professional development needs of the staff that they are able to address.

#### **4.3.4 Management Experience in Current Post**

Although all of the participants have taught for 10 years or more, the majority (11 of 12 SMT members) do not have SMT experience of more than five years. This scenario supports the discussion in Chapter Two in which the opinion of Chalufu (2011:3) was brought to the fore that teaching experience is the major criterion for appointment in senior school positions.

The NCDE prescribes that HoDs must have least three years' teaching experience, deputy principals five years' teaching experience and principals at least seven years' teaching experience (NCDE, 2017). The data, as reflected in Figure 4.2, show that 32% of the participating SMT members have acquired the ACE qualification. This qualification exposed these participants to content such as knowledge on how to lead and manage schools, how to manage the curriculum, how to manage people, and how

to enhance and maintain school development and effective school governance (Bush *et al.*, 2011:33).

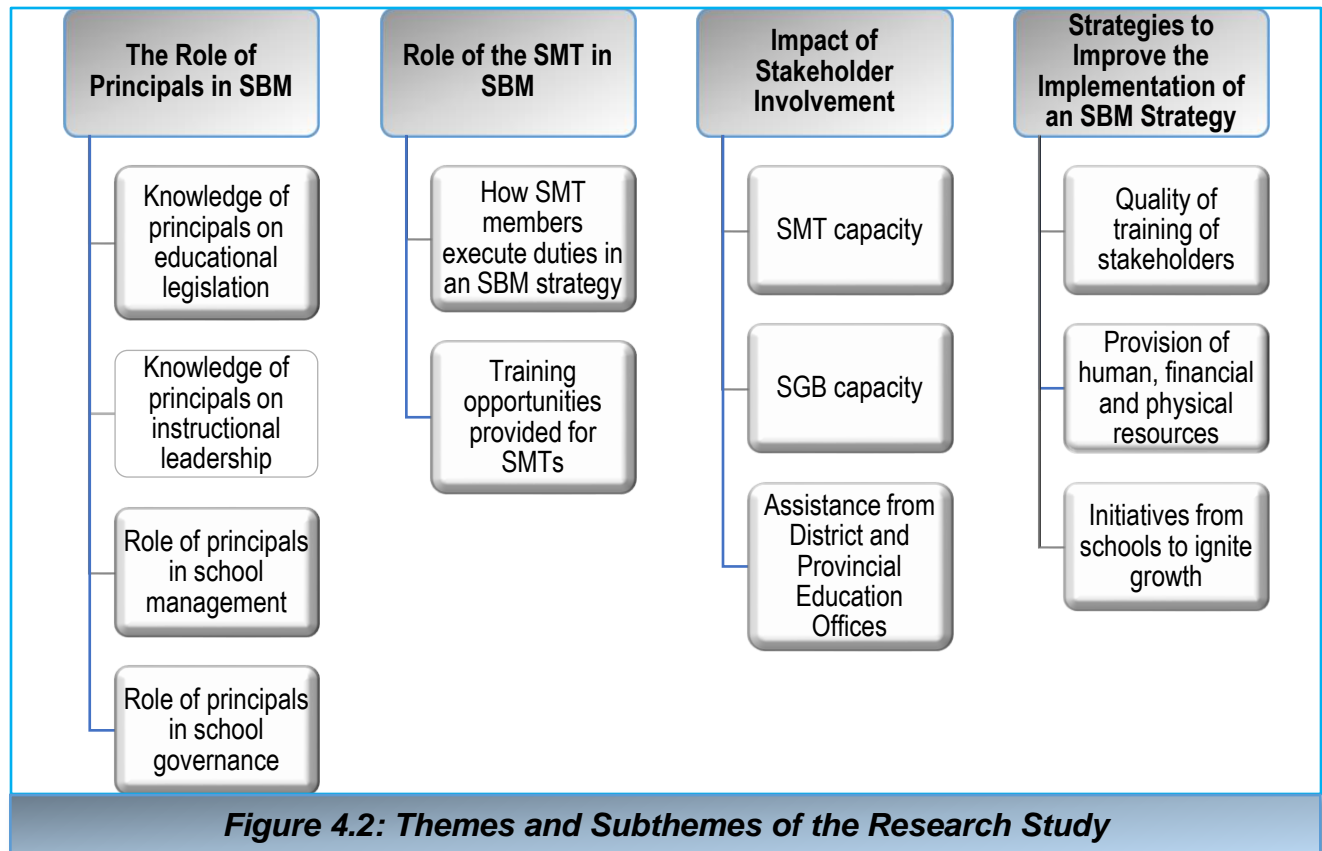
As previously mentioned, no participating principal acquired the ACE qualification, and it appears that they would primary rely on their teaching experience, NCDE training sessions and the ACE knowledge of deputy principals and HoDs to manage schools. The participating principals are thus in a position to actively use the expertise and knowledge of deputy principals and HoDs to actively involve these stakeholders in school management, as also advocated by an SBM strategy.

The next section presents the research findings as drawn from the categorisation of the data gathered, which have been arranged into themes.

#### **4.4 FINDINGS BASED ON THE CATEGORISATION OF GATHERED DATA INTO THEMES**

This section explores the findings based on the categorisation of themes of the data that were accumulated through the interviews and documentary analysis. Notes were taken during the interview, and transcriptions were made of the interview after it had been conducted. Analysis was done both throughout and after the data collection. The data were closely examined to seek out emerging themes to report adequately on the views and perceptions of participants on the implementation of SBM.

The research objective, which was to describe the dynamics of SBM in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa, underpinned the themes to manage and arrange the raw data accordingly. Subthemes were also derived from the listed themes and are reflected in Figure 4.2



#### 4.4.1 The Role of Principals in an SBM Strategy

The data from the subthemes, as outlined in Figure 4.2, will now be discussed.

##### 4.4.1 (i) Knowledge of Principals Concerning Educational Legislation

The individual interviews indicate that the three participating principals have a sense of how educational legislation has had an impact on the role of principals. The principal of School C, with 30 years teaching experience, shared how school management educational legislation with regard to external evaluation by school inspectors had changed after 1994:

*Meester onthou seker die dae van die inspekteurs wat ons almal so op hol gehad het. Die hoof het die laaste sê in als gehad en ons almal moes net spring... Ek verkies hoe ons vandag as personeel en ouers saam kan werk.”*  
 [Sir, you probably remember the days of inspectors who made everyone nervous. The principal had the last say in everything and all of us just had to jump... I prefer how nowadays we as staff and parents can work together.]

In the individual interviews, it became clear that the participating principals have extensive knowledge on important educational legislation, such as the SASSA (1996). All of them could articulate clearly how this act spells out the duties of the principal as required by legislation. The principals were also clear on the role within school management and school governance as directed by legislation such as the SASSA (1996). According to Mashau and Mutshaeni (2013:31), the rights of all the learners in South Africa would be protected and equitable education achieved if more school managers understood and implemented legislation such as the Constitution and the SASSA.

Unfortunately, knowledge of educational legislation does not automatically translate into the implementation of this legislation such as actively engaging and involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process. The researcher, therefore, also analysed the school documents related to educational legislation and how it impacts on SBM implementation. School documents, such as minutes, the vision and mission statements, policies and school plans to establish if SBM requirements are fulfilled as advocated in current educational legislation, and stakeholder participation are reflected in the said documents. The reason for investigating these documents was to see how the principals understood and applied SBM legislation in the daily running of the school. The minutes of the SGBs indicated that many decisions, such as those regarding procurement, at all the participating schools were made after discussions in which the views of the parents on the SGB and those of the teachers were considered. These decision-making practices are in line with SBM requirements to involve stakeholders such as parents and teachers at the school level in decisions concerning school affairs and, in doing so, empowering stakeholders and enhancing a sense of ownership of the school (Bruns, Filmer & Patrinos, 2011:88).

The next section highlights the knowledge of participating principals on instructional leadership, which aims to promote better learner achievement by emphasising the importance of quality teaching and learning (Day & Sammons, 2016:20).



#### 4.4.1 (ii) Knowledge of Principals of Instructional Leadership

On the question posed to them about their instructional leadership role, all of the principals highlighted this role as being the most important.

Principal School A: *As die professionele bestuurder en leier van die SMT is ek verantwoordelik vir die vlot verloop van die skool elke dag.*

[As the professional manager and leader of the SMT, I am responsible for the smooth running of the school every day.]

Principal School B: *As the leader, I must provide the professional leadership in the school each and every day and I must put (sic) a good example to the other educators. I must walk what I'm saying.*

Principal School C: *Eintlik lei ek die SMT om toe te sien leer en onderrig speel sy regmatige rol binne elke klas. Ek self onderrig ook nog en, sjoe, partykeer is dit moeilik, want jy's die gom wat als en almal by die skool aanmekaar moet hou.*

[I actually lead the SMT in ensuring that learning and teaching play their rightful role in each class. I also teach and sometimes it is difficult because you are the glue that keeps the school in place.]

The input of the principal of School C on the instructional leadership role of principals is in line with the duties of principals as articulated in the PAM (DBE, 2016b:43) The PAM (DBE, 2016b:43) states that the principal, among others, are responsible to engage in class teaching as per the workload of the relevant post level and the needs of the school, to be a class teacher if required, and to assess and record the attainment of the learners taught.

However, this study has revealed that principals are overwhelmed by school administration while their teaching and instructional role duties, as required by the PAM (DBE, 2016b:43) are being neglected. Research furthermore substantiates the fact that principals seldom recognise instructional leadership and their own classroom practice as a training need (Kgwete, 2014:196). Leadership to ensure quality teaching and learning is a core objective of an SBM strategy, and principals, as central role-players in this, need to understand its importance and actively pursue efforts to strengthen school structures to yield positive learner achievement and school improvement in general (Heystek, 2015:2; Naicker *et al.*, 2016:8).

#### 4.4.1 (iii) Role of Principals in School Management

The principals reflected that the responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school has a major management function as displayed in the following utterances:

Principal School A: *Dan die professionele bestuur van die skool waarvoor die prinsipaal absoluut verantwoordelik is, die dag-tot-dag bestuur van die skool in terme van finansies, die bates, die tye en die werk wat by die skool gedoen moet word.*

[...the professional management of the school for which the principal is responsible in terms of finance, the assets, the time and the work that needs to be done at the school.]

Principal School B: *As the leader, I must provide the professional leadership in the school each and every day.*

Principal School C: *As die professionele bestuurder en leier van die SMT... is ek verantwoordelik vir die vlot verloop van die skool elke dag.*

[As the professional manager and leader of the SMT... I am responsible for the smooth running of the school each day.]

These responses indicate that the principals realised their role in ensuring that the school operates smoothly. Only the principal of School C indicated that principals are also responsible for the actual teaching of certain subjects as indicated in the timetables of their schools. This observation confirms research (Kgwete, 2014:196) that principals seldom make mention of their own classroom management practices or how they themselves actively and innovatively teach in their classes to yield positive learner outcomes, which are a prerequisite of an SBM strategy (Heystek, 2015:2; Naicker *et al.* 2016:8).

The following important management duties were observed by the three principals:

- *Interaction with staff and learners to ensure that teaching and learning take place*

Documentary evidence in the form of meeting agendas and minutes were provided by both School A and School C of weekly sessions where educators gathered for information sharing. Issues such as late coming and absenteeism are discussed during these short sessions, as well as restorative measures.

These information-sharing sessions are in line with an SBM strategy, which requires principals to create opportunities for stakeholder participation (Makoena, 2011:121). By having these regular sessions, the principals not only identify hindrances to quality teaching and learning, such as late coming and absenteeism, but also afford educators the opportunity to be part of decisions to address these hindrances.

All of the participating principals also referred to departmental circulars and upcoming meetings. Circulars that were made available to the researcher included, for example, information on promotion and progression requirements for learners, moderation of educators' work by the NCDE and how school plans such as the school improvement plan should be completed and reported on. Principals thus share with educators what needs to be done to ensure alignment with government directives and educators are part of decisions on how compliance to government directive will unfold at the school level. This demonstrates competency among principals who are aligned to SBM principals, in management skills, such as communication and information sharing, to ensure that stakeholders such as teachers are involved in and informed on school affairs.

- *Guidance to the SMT pertaining to curriculum management*

The principals stated that they explain to the rest of the SMT how their duties, such as subject meetings and the drafting of timetables, must be executed. The principal of School A, for example, mentioned one-on-one sessions with the deputy principal and HoDs to address individual shortcomings, such as late submission of subject reports and poor learner achievement in certain subjects. Ways to improve their managerial role are also discussed. These include subject improvement plans and managing school activities, such as parent meetings. The principals from School A and School C, moreover, provided detailed reports on internal moderation done by HoDs within their subjects. What was, however, missing in these reports was detailed feedback and

recommendations. This suggests that these reports are being completed only for the sake of compliance.

- *Monitoring and management of assets such as finances and infrastructure to ensure that teaching and learning occur in a conducive environment*

All three principals emphasised their role in the management of school funds. They also expressed the importance to follow up on infrastructure deficiencies to ensure that teaching and learning occur in a clean and safe environment.

Principal School C: *As prinsipaal is jy ook verantwoordelik vir die bates wat daaglik bestuur word.*

[As principal you are also responsible for the assets that have to be managed daily.]

The principal of School C went to great lengths in explaining how he involves educators in the procurement process. Educators at School C have to identify their individual teaching needs to the HoDs, and the rest of the SMT compile a composite list of needs to be included in the school budget to be approved by the SGB. In doing so, stakeholder involvement, as envisaged by an SBM strategy, is obtained.

#### *4.4.1 (iv) Role of Principals in School Governance*

All of the principals showed an awareness of their role in school governance in relation to their responsibility to ensure that departmental policies are adhered to. This is evident in the following responses:

Principal School B: *But as the department's rep, I try my best that the right things are done and implemented.*

Principal School C: *Kyk, ek's die departementele verteenwoordiger en as die SGB sal flop, flop ek ook.*

[Look, I'm the departmental representative and if the SGB fails, I fail.]

While the researcher agrees that principals are vital to ensuring compliance to policy, it appears that the participating principals displayed a tendency to implement policy slavishly. This finding endorsed research done by Kgwete (2014:166), who observes that principals were obsessed with required policies to be in place and not

necessarily if stakeholders have participated in the formulation thereof. This slavish implementation is perhaps an attempt by the participating principals to comply with policy requirements because the availability of policies are generally checked by officials such as those within the WSE unit.

It was found that the school policies of all the participating schools, namely the financial policy, code of conduct for learners and even the mission and vision statements, had never changed over the past five years. Although some of these policies had been signed off by the incumbent SGB, it is not clear if the current SGB members have actually examined these policies before the approval thereof. The minutes of SGB meetings that were provided by the participating schools did not reflect that school policies, such as the mission and vision statements, had been discussed or endorsed. Unfortunately, the study did not make provision for the views of current SGB members, and the researcher relied on SGB documents, such as meeting minutes, to corroborate what the principals said. However, the principal of School B hinted that, at times, SGBs do not interrogate documents and rely on teachers to execute functions such as the development of policies:

*Principal School B: They will ask us as the teachers to do the books of the school. Even... us to do the policies and they just want to do the signing of the policies.*

The scenario portrayed in the response above may have serious implications for an SBM strategy that warrants active involvement in school affairs. It appears that SGB parents just shrug off their responsibilities, and true involvement is compromised because they might not have proper knowledge of decisions that have a direct impact on the school and their children. SBM is founded on the belief that those closest to the school know its needs and are suitably placed to address those needs (Al Kaabi, 2015:15; Pomuti & Weber, 2012:2). Such practices will thus perhaps take away valuable opportunities for principals and the rest of the staff (who are suitably placed) to use their skills to equip and capacitate these parents.

Governance duties identified by the principals include guidance to the SGB to manage school funds, learner discipline and ensure that subcommittees are maintained. The principal of School C mentioned that, in order to strengthen the SGB, educators are earmarked to assist in the various subcommittees:

*...die voorsitter van die subkomitee is en hy word ondersteun deur 'n opvoeder of opvoeders wat in hierdie subkomitee is.*  
[...is the chairperson of the subcommittee and he is assisted by an educator or educators who are in these subcommittees.]

SGB subcommittees, such as the subcommittees for finance, learner discipline and maintenance of school infrastructure, do not have decision-making powers but can make recommendations to a full sitting of the SGB before decisions are made. The SGB can co-opt anyone within the school community to serve on a subcommittee. This means that anyone with specialist expertise can be asked to serve to render expert advice on school affairs. An example of this could be a community member with a legal background to render advice on how to conduct disciplinary hearings. SBM is strengthened by subcommittees that provide for the involvement of more stakeholders within the community to participate in identifying the needs of the school and to make decisions based on this needs analysis. Unfortunately, previously disadvantaged schools frequently do not have such expertise within the community; therefore, educators and principals with the required knowledge are positioned to fill this void.

The principal of School B and two SMT members of School C complained that the SGB expected them to develop policies and arrange school functions. Research conducted by Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:176) on the implementation of SBM at schools in the North West Province revealed that many SGBs, especially those in the rural and less advantaged urban areas, do not have the required skills and experience to exercise their new powers and may have difficulty fulfilling their functions. According to Xaba (2011:208), many governance functions as promulgated by Section 21 of the SISA (1996), such as financial management and the procurement of goods, are deferred to the principals. So while the community

may not have the skills to execute their governance role fully, an opportunity is created for educators in an SBM strategy to use their educational knowledge and skills to assist parents in executing duties such as policy formulation, financial management and learner discipline.

#### **4.4.2 The Role of the Deputy Principals and HoDs in an SBM Strategy**

The following sections focus on the role of the SMT with regard to the execution of duties within an SBM strategy and professional opportunities provided to develop principals, deputy principals and HoDs.

##### *4.4.2 (i) How Deputy Principals and HoDs Execute Duties in an SBM Strategy*

A key objective of this study was to ascertain how SMT members experience the SBM strategy, especially the opportunities for growth it creates. It was also hoped that participating SMT members would reveal the unintended negatives of an SBM strategy and would provide practical and viable recommendations to circumvent such hindrances. Participating SMT members identify the following roles as essential:

- *Responsibility to ensure the implementation of the prescribed curriculum*

Seven of the participating SMT members identify their role as drivers of curriculum implementation as the most important aspect. This stance is expressed, among others, by the following SMT members:

*SMT A2: We visit class to ensure that the teachers are well prepared and that they do implement the curriculum.*

*SMT A3: ...we make sure that educators come prepared to the classes and they plan their planning according to CAPS document.*

*SMT C3: ...ek dink ook ons is die – hoe sal ek sê, die dryfveer van die curriculum.*

[...I also think we are ... the driving force of the curriculum.]

*SMT B1: First and foremost, the SMT is the managers of the school, so they have to see that there is a smooth and effective implementation of the curriculum.*

The principals agreed that deputy principals and HoDs are responsible for curriculum implementation as, for example, expressed by the principal of School B:

*...they must make sure the teachers implement the curriculum – that the curriculum... in place.*

Documentary evidence was also provided by School A and School C on management plans concerning when the SMT members will engage with subject educators in terms of planning done, assessments to be written and appraisals to be completed as per the IQMS. This is consistent with SBM legislation such as PAM (DBE, 2016b:43) which, among others, requires SMT members to participate in agreed school or educator appraisal processes in order to review professional practices regularly with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management (Ramelepe, 2014:21).

- *Implementation of school policies*

Another aspect highlighted by SMT members during the focus group interviews is their role in ensuring that school policies are developed and implemented. Evidence of the school policies was presented to the researcher. This include, among others, the mission and vision statements, the admission policy, the code of conduct for learners, the financial policy and the assessment policy. A checklist (Annexure H) was used to assess which school policies were in place at the participating schools. The minutes of meetings were then used to establish which people were involved in the decision-making to adopt these policies and how policies find expression in the daily running of the school. This aspect was important to assess whether deputy principals and HoDs actively contribute policy formulation and decision-making around these policies as advocated by an SBM strategy that leans heavily on stakeholder involvement.

According to Yau and Cheng (2011:111), school policies are implemented more effectively by the participation of all school stakeholders who jointly develop these policies into the educational ideal, which they as a collective will pursue.



Documentary analysis, which includes the various subject policies, revealed that HoDs generally use pro forma policies issued by the district subject advisor. The unique circumstances of the schools thus are not reflected in such standardised instruments.

- *Professional development of post level one educators*

The researcher also sought to assess the role of the SMT in the professional development of post level one educators. The following response bears testimony to the role of SMT members in capacity building of post level one educators:

*SMT A2: And we give guidance to them to develop them.*

The importance of guidance and support to beginner teachers is underscored by the literature. Platjies (2016:261), for instance, asserts that assistance from more experienced colleagues can make a difference in the teaching and assessment practices of beginner educators. Even though the participants mentioned that they provide professional guidance to post level one educators, they were vague concerning the finer details of this guidance and how it unfolds within the SBM strategy. It is possible that they themselves are not really sure what their role in this regard entails.

A good SMT practice was found at School A, which has an induction programme in place for novice educators. This programme includes assistance to inexperienced educators with planning, how to manage the classroom and monitoring their progress throughout their first year of teaching. This is in line with statements by Cheng and Ko (2009:15), advocating for school-based professional development programmes that cater for the professional needs of both the experienced as well as the novice educator.

*SMT A1: Ons loop 'n pad met veral nuwe onnies – dat hul hul voete kan vind. Ons adopt hulle en help hulle nie met skoolaangeleenthede nie, maar ook kan hul kom praat as daar persoonlike probleme is.*

[We go the distance with especially new educators so that they can find their feet. We adopt them and not only help them with school matters, but they can also approach us if they have personal problems.]

A good practice, which is worth mentioning, is the team approach implemented by foundation phase (Grade 1 to 3) educators at Schools A and C. It was explained by the foundation phase HoD of School A that these educators, under the leadership of the HoD, plan together and compile class activities together. This practice enables the learners to be accommodated in another class if an educator is absent to ensure that daily tuition is completed. This is in line with the assertion of Cheng and Ko (2009:15) that school-based professional development must afford opportunities for team development so that educators can learn from one another and are inspired by one another to enhance the quality of teaching.

- *The Role of the SMT in School Governance*

The research furthermore wanted to establish whether deputy principals and HoDs are involved in SGB activities. Unfortunately, not many SMT members highlighted their role within the SGB. Gardiner (2008:11) makes an important observation in that the involvement of educators in school governance depends on the principal. This assertion of Gardiner (2008:11) was confirmed by SMT C3, who mentioned that SMT members assist with SGB duties if the principal deemed it necessary:

*...kyk, ons help ook met SGB programmes as die hoof ons nodig het.*

[...look, we also help with SGB programmes if the principal needs our assistance.]

The above response of SMT C3 indicates that not all SMT members recognise involvement within the SGB as being an important vehicle to strengthen ties with especially the parent component. This observation was corroborated by the response of one SMT member who indicated indifference towards what transpired within the SGB as legitimate school governance structure:

SMT C2: *...nie een van ons is op die skoolbeheerliggaam soos ons hier sit nie. Ons fokus op kinders en implementeer maar die SBL-besluite.*

[None of us, as we are sitting here, is on the SGB. We focus on the children and implement the SGB decisions.]

The principal of School C explained how the SMT members assist in the procurement of resources and the maintenance of the school resources and infrastructure needed to maintain teaching and learning:

*...hulle is ook betrokke by die finansiële bestuur... Hulle kry ook kwotasies en dies meer vir goed wat moontlik aangekoop moet word en dit word binne die begrotings en die kontantvloeiplan van die skool so opgeneem.*

[...they are also involved in financial management... They get quotations and the like for things that may have to be procured and these are integrated into the budgets and the cash flow plan of the school.]

Based on this response of the principal of School C, it appears that SMT members are mostly involved in SGB functions, such as procurement, insofar it has reference to the needs of classroom teaching.

#### 4.4.2 (ii) Professional Opportunities Provided for Deputy Principals and HoDs

This section centres on professional opportunities, as previous research indicates that educators within an SBM framework must be developed professionally on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving themselves as individuals (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:174). The participants alluded to the quality of training currently provided to them. While many of them acknowledge that the education department conducted induction training, they felt that this once-off training session was insufficient:

SMT A4: *I think that induction was not enough... More trainings must be organised for us. Not just once; maybe once a year.*

SMT C2: *...daai induction was die, wat ek van weet, die enigste formele training van die Department.*

[...that induction was the only formal training by the Department that I know of.]

These responses point out that SMT members view professional development as a function to be executed by an external structure such as the district education office or the PED. SBM is geared towards authority at school level, which includes the involvement of the school in the professional development of its educators. Boaduo (2010:76) reasons that it is necessary for every school to determine the professional needs of educators to render effective in-service training programmes (Boaduo, 2010:76). This perspective (Boaduo, 2010:76) is confirmed by Plaatjies (2016:216), who acknowledges the importance of SMT members in the onsite professional development of educators to improve classroom practices. It therefore appears that, for participating schools to implement a sustainable SBM strategy, SMT members need to equip themselves to take ownership of the educators under their responsibility.

The principal of School B recognised the central role of the principal in the professional development of the staff:

*I'm the one who is responsible... development of the staff, organising training programmes.*

This acknowledgement of the pivotal role of the principal within an SBM strategy is collaborated by Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175). Strategies geared towards professional development, as explained by Plaatjies (2016:216), include, among others, that the SMT should conduct demonstration lessons and act as mentors to other educators.

The study, moreover, revealed that SMT members want formal professional accredited training that will not only assist them in classroom practices but also improve their teaching qualification. This sentiment was voiced by the principal of School C:

*...dit sal baie meer help as prinsipale en SMT's formeel deur universiteite spesifiek opgelei word.*

[...it will assist more if principals and SMTs are formally trained by universities specifically.]

Quality training to SMTs is based on a gap in an SBM strategy that needs to be strengthened. It appears that deputy principals and HoDs do not observe the opportunities of professional development on the school itself. Research conducted by Steyn (2011:51) resolved that principal in South Africa should draw on the “expertise and wealth of knowledge and skills” in their schools, which could be shared with other staff members. If principals can thus tap into the school-based expertise and knowledge, they can ignite innovative strategies, as advocated by an SBM strategy, to enhance teacher development by using experts from their school who know the school and its development needs.

#### **4.4.3 Impact of Stakeholder Involvement**

The quality of participation of these stakeholders in school management is crucial in any SBM strategy (Al Kaabi, 2015:15). The research thus set out to assess the impact of stakeholder involvement within an SBM strategy.

##### *4.4.3 (i) SMT Involvement*

- *Involvement of principals*

The findings based on the individual interviews and documentary analysis indicate that the participating principals play a pivotal role in both school management and school governance. This role of principals is aligned to SBM, which views the principal as central to the decentralisation of power to the level of the school (Kiragu *et al.*, 2013:1168; Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:175).

The participating principals emphasised their instructional leadership role, which is directly geared towards teaching and learning, with the ultimate aim of improving learner achievement (Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013:41).

Principal School A: *...dit is ook belangrik om daardie interaksie met die personeel te hê, en met die leerders ook, sodat jy ook moet seker wees dat leer en onderrig wel sal geskied.*

[It is also important to have that interaction with educators and learners, for you to be sure that teaching and learning will take place.]

Principal School C: *...een van die hoofbestuursrolle wat ek elke dag by die skool moet volvoer is om toe te sien dat daar 'n onderwyser in elke klas is en dat die leerders onderrig word.*

[One of the management roles I have to execute every day is to ensure that each class has an educator and that the learners are being taught.]

In addition to their role in school management, the participating principals alluded to their central role of ensuring that school governance functions are executed. This sentiment is consistent with the assertion of Mollootimile and Zengele, (2015:179) that, since the implementation of an SBM strategy in South Africa, the principal at school level acts as a custodian of not only school management and school governance, but also of decisions made on behalf of the school.

It appears that the dual role of the participating principals, as key players in school management and school governance, has increased their workloads, as manifested by the following utterances:

Principal School A: *Daar's so baie wat jy moet doen; dan moet jy al weer klas toe hardloop. Admin hou mens besig; daar's gedurig iets. Vir die kort tydjie in die stoel het ek besef jy as prinsipaal moet so baie doen en almal... soek onmiddelijke aandag.*

[There is so much you have to do; then you have to run to class again. Admin keeps you busy, there is always something. For the short time I have held this position, I have realised that as a principal you have to do a lot and everyone demands your immediate attention.]

Principal School B: *And I can't say, "No, I have other work." I am sometimes tired, but I just must listen to the department, the teachers, and sometimes the learners also come to complain.*

The sentiments expressed by the participating principals concerning the increase in workload are corroborated by previous research which observed that, in SBM, the role of the principal has become more complex, more demanding and more stressful (Kiragu *et al.*, 2013:1176; Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013:39; Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:175).

- *Involvement of deputy principals and HoDs*

The participating deputy principals and HoDs emphasised their role in curriculum management under the leadership of the principals, as a key duty. The participating SMT members did not elaborate much on their role in school governance. The SMT members from School C actually mentioned that they were not even involved in SGB functions. It appears that the deputy principals and HoDs only see themselves as responsible for teaching and learning activities.

Because educators, like SMT members, have the knowledge pertaining to policies and the skills such financial management, it seems that their involvement in capacitating parents on the SGB can be utilised more widely (Xaba, 2011:208). Currently, the participating deputy principals and HoDs members do not realise their involvement beyond the school curriculum. Involvement within the SGB will afford SMT members the opportunity to liaise regularly with parent leaders (Koalepe, 2014:252). Such engagements can be utilised to campaign actively for more parental involvement in the teaching and learning process and can assist in aspects such as, for example, learner absenteeism. This mindshift by SMT members to participate actively in SGB programmes is another gap that implementers of SBM strategies should address.

#### 4.4.3 (ii) SGB Involvement

The principals and SMT members from Schools A and C reflected on the availability of parents on the SGB to attend meetings:

SMT A3: *...each and every time we have our meetings, they do attend meetings.*

Principal C: *...hulle sorg dat daar altyd kworums by die vergaderings deur hulle teenwoordigheid daar sodat goed van die skool nie moet stilstaan nie.*

[...they make sure that quorums can be filled by their attendance to ensure that school matters do not come to a standstill.]

SMT C3: *...dan woon hulle net vergaderings by en daar stop dit.*

[...they then only attend meetings and it stops there.]

Unfortunately, the attendance of parents at SGB meetings does not necessarily translate into their taking a leading role in their governance function. This sentiment was also voiced by the participants:

SMT A3: *Nie al die ouers het die skills nie.*

[Not all parents have the skills.]

SMT A2: *...hulle... sukkel om die res van die ouers betrokke te kry by die skool.*

[...they struggle to get the rest of the parents involved at the school.]

Principal School C: *...nee, hulle beskik nie rêrig oor die nodige vaardighede om dit te kan doen nie.*

[...no, they do not really have the required skills...]

SMT C1: *Ek glo nie dat ouers van die SGB nie wil nie; ek dink hul weet nie hoe nie. Hulle weet nie eintlik wat hulle se rol is nie.*

[I do not believe that parents on the SGB do not want to; I think they do not know what to do. They don't really know what their role is.]

SMT C2: *...dit kom vir my voor hulle is 'n bietjie senuweeagtig... en teruggetrokke dat hulle nie te openly is om voor te vat by die prosesse nie.*

[...it seems to me that they are nervous ... and reserved and do not want to openly to take the lead in processes.]

The preceding responses confirm previous research that not all parents have the



necessary skills to execute their governance functions fully (Mollootimile & Zengele, 2015:173).

It also became clear that parents on the SGB did not fully comprehend their roles and responsibilities, as summed up by SMT C2:

*Hulle soek net die title...vir hulle gaan dit om wanneer hier poste is om mense in die poste te sit wat hulle voel hulle het mag oor. Hulle is heeltemal verward oor hulle rol as SBL. Hulle verwar hulle rolle tussen skoolbestuur en skoolbeheer, sien u.*

[They only look for titles... for them it is about giving positions to people over which they feel they have power. They are totally confused about their role as the SGB. They confuse their roles of school management and school governance.]

The sentiments expressed in the preceding responses about the lack of effective SGB involvement are echoed by Bagarette (2012:97), who reflects that challenges are encountered because some SGBs lack skills and the capacity to execute their required duties, and insist on getting involved with the professional side of the school. It thus seems that SBM at the participating previously disadvantaged schools is weakened by unskilled parents who do not always have the best interests of the school or their children at heart.

From the responses, it appears that SMTs do not utilise the intellectual capital that is sometimes readily available. Gardiner (2010:11) remarks that previously disadvantaged schools seldom draw on the many sources of expertise and numerous possible forms of support to be found in poor communities. Gardiner (2010:11) reasons that there are many well-matriculated youths, retired professionals and business-minded individuals who could offer to schools and learners a wealth of instruction. This study revealed that the participating schools took little advantage of this wealth just outside the school fence.

#### 4.4.3 (iii) Assistance from District and Provincial Education Offices

The participants felt that not enough management training is provided for principals, deputy principals and HoDs. The induction of newly appointed principals, deputy principals and HoDs is a once-off training and 8 of the 12 participants indicate that continuous management training is needed for professional development and to keep abreast of policy changes.

The inadequate training of the parent component on the SGB was also highlighted by the participants as a weakness in the current SBM strategy. This claim is supported by Chaka (2008:28), who identifies pertinent weaknesses with the training provided by the DoE. These are that training does not take into account the literacy level of parents, not all SGB members are trained, and the dominance of English in training material.

The aspect of insufficient training was voiced by SMT C1:

*Die Department kan ook nie een training gee soos nou nie. Hulle word net getrain as hul gekies word, dan niks verder nie. So wat kan jy verwag?*

[The Department cannot only give one training, like it does now. They are only trained when they are selected, then nothing further. So what do you expect?]

The sentiment of insufficient training, as expressed by SMT C1, suggests that the current training provided by the NCDE does not take into account the literacy level of SBG parents of previously disadvantaged schools, as also confirmed by Chaka (2008:28). If this status quo remains, the involvement of parents on the SGB of previously disadvantaged schools will be nothing more than rubber-stamping the views of the principals and other educators serving on the SGB. This implies that the rationale of SBM to involve all stakeholders effectively will remain only a theory.

#### 4.4.4 Strategies to Improve the Implementation of an SBM Strategy

The participants provided valuable insight into what needs to be done to enhance the implementation of an SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools. These inputs, namely the quality of training of stakeholders and the provision of human, financial and physical resources, will now be focused on, as well as how schools implement their own initiatives to maintain school improvement.

##### 4.4.4 (i) Quality of Training of Stakeholders

According to the participants in the study, assistance from the district and provincial education offices should be strengthened. Currently, the once-off training for new SMT and SGB members does not adequately address capacitating these school structures. A plea was made that training must be more regular to enable SMTs and SGBs to be knowledgeable concerning new developments within the educational sector related to SBM. This plea is aligned to research done by Kigaru *et al.* (2013:1176), which concludes that enhancing the skills of teachers appears to be one of the key aims in many SBM programmes. In addition, Joubert (2014:97) claims that the training and development of SBM agents, such as principals and SGB members, can be regarded as being the strategically most important process necessary to transform education successfully in post-apartheid South Africa.

The participants shared their experiences around the type of onsite assistance currently provided by departmental officials, such as the circuit manager and subject advisors. The principal of School C hinted that school visits by subject advisors are nothing more than completing a checklist to verify compliance concerning aspects such as curriculum coverage and checking the evidence of learner assessment:

*Bystand moet resultate kan bring; byvoorbeeld, vakadviseurs moet meer gereeld vakonderwysers besoek as hul weet daardie onderwyser moet gemonitor word. Hulle moenie net kom om files te trek en af te tick nie. Nee, waarom nie na skool bly en saam met die onderwyser moeilike vakinhoud met leerders deel nie?*

[Assistance should yield results; for example, subject advisors should visit subject educators more regularly if they know that educator needs to be monitored. They shouldn't come only to draw files and tick them off. No, why not stay after school with the educators and share subject content with the learners?]

The participants voiced their opinion that assistance or training can be more effective if it is geared towards the actual needs of individual SMT members, the SGB or the school in general. Mbanjwa (2014:29) advocates that subject advisors should establish professional learning communities to explore and advance their curriculum objectives by bringing teachers together to strengthen content knowledge and classroom practices.

The participants did not give in-depth insight on how they are assisted or developed by the circuit manager. Circuit managers can play an important role in the implementation of an SBM strategy, as mentioned by Mafuwame and Pitsoe (2014:440). Even though circuit managers are in constant contact with school principals during meetings, workshops and seminars, they seldom meet educators to discuss matters of development and support (Mafuwame & Pitsoe, 2014:440).

The current standardised generic approach with standardised monitoring instruments used, defeats the purpose, which is to develop and improve school management and school governance. More direct and targeted approaches are required, as also alluded to by the principal of School C:

*Die distrik behoort elke skool op meriete, op die skool se vordering, te hanteer... Dit kan nie net 'n blanket approach, 'n one-shoe-fits-all approach wees nie.*

[The district has to treat each school on its merit and development... It cannot merely be a blanket approach, a one-shoe-fits-all approach.]

This implies that departmental officials must be familiar with the specific challenges of previously disadvantaged schools, which include limited resources and the incapacity of parents serving on the SGB. In addition, subject advisors and circuit managers are suitably placed in an SBM strategy to address the unique challenges

of individual principals, deputy principals, HoDs and educators. These officials are, moreover, mandated to improve educational access and provide management and professional support to schools to achieve excellence in teaching (DBE, 2013; Van Der Voort & Wood, 2016:1). Quality teaching and learning, as one objective of SBM, may thus be enhanced if these district educational officials actively pursue development of schools by focusing on the development needs of the educators assigned to them.

#### *4.4.4 (ii) Provision of Human, Financial and Physical Resources*

As reflected in Table 4.1, School C operates as a combined school, offering tuition to Grades R to 12. School C is, furthermore, currently the only school operating in town. Based on the available documentary evidence, School C was established after the merger of two schools in town. After the merger, the white parents withdrew all of the white learners, which means that the school currently only caters for the poorer, previously disadvantaged communities. Businesses in town are, moreover, primarily owned by white people and foreigners, who do not have children in School C and thus do not have a direct interest in School C. This scenario might explain why local businesses do not contribute to the financial resources of the school.

The HoD of School B and the principal and one HoD from School C also pinpoint the filling of vacancies as a priority to implement a sustainable SBM strategy. These SMT members believe that if one is only acting in a post, one does not have the same authority as someone who is permanently appointed. Schools A and C worked on a rotational system, which allows for different post level one educators to act in promotional posts until they are filled permanently. This system implies that a new HoD is temporary appointed each quarter. This could lead to instability within the SMT to implement programmes such as monitoring and moderation of educator performance. The temporary appointments have a bearing on the authority of these individuals who have to instruct their peers. Such instructions could be nullified by

the next temporary incumbent. The following responses by the participants highlight the weakness of acting in promotional positions:

SMT B1: *I'm for now, only an acting HoD. I hope they can appoint someone so that everyone will know this one is in charge and gives instruction.*

SMT C1: *Daar was baie tydelike bestuursposte en verskillende ouens het in die poste ge-act. Ja, mens kan nie die ander onderwysers oor dissipline aanspreek as hulle weet jy is net tydelik in die pos nie.*

[There were temporary senior positions and different people acted in these posts... one cannot discipline educators if they know that person is in that post only temporarily.]

Even though the rotation system employed by School A and C has difficulties, it nevertheless offers more educators the opportunity to grow professionally and actively participate in school management. Such opportunities are crucial in an SBM framework that is founded on educators having the necessary skills to be innovative, not only in class but just as creative within the broader school management sphere.

The study revealed that the participating schools have many old buildings and do not have resources such as computer rooms, libraries, laboratories and sports fields. In an SBM strategy, suitable and well-maintained buildings have a direct bearing on effective learning and teaching (Khumalo & Mji, 2014:1523). These sentiments were echoed by SMT C2, who pleaded for better resources to be able to compete with his counterparts at other, more affluent, schools.

SMT C2: *Gee ook vir ons meer resources. Mens raak jaloers as jy by ander skole kom en sien hul klasse het als, apparaat, the works. Hoe compete met jy met skole wat als het? Baie lyk soos klein universiteite.*

[Give us more resources. One gets jealous if one visits other schools and sees their resources. How does one compete with schools that have everything? Many of them look like small universities.]

An important aspect was highlighted by the principal of School C pertaining to the unwillingness of local businesses to invest in previously disadvantaged schools:

Dan nog 'n aspek – finansiële bystand. Die regering moet begryp besighede gee net groot donasies aan die vorige Model C-skole. Ons

arm skole wat die armste van die armes dien, suig maar aan die agterspene. Ons kry die peanuts.

[Then another aspect – financial assistance. The government must realise that large businesses only give big donations to former Model C schools. Our poor schools that serve the poorest of the poor are getting the shorter stick. We only get peanuts.]

This response alludes to many previously disadvantaged schools that primarily survive on only the funds allocated by the government (Van Wyk *et al.*, 2014:457). It can be assumed that these schools will find it difficult to, for example, procure additional teaching resources to enhance innovative teaching and learning practices.

#### *4.4.4 (iii) Initiatives of Schools to Ignite Growth*

As alluded to throughout this research report, SBM requires innovation from stakeholders at school level to not only identify challenges but also resolve these challenges. The good matric results of School C bear testimony to this. For the past three years, School C has maintained a matric pass rate of 90% and above, and in doing so, has provided a platform for its learners to continue their studies at tertiary institutions. The minutes of Grade 12 educator-parent meetings indicated that educators, parents and Grade 12 learners formed a pact to leave no stone unturned in ensuring that learners leave school with a National Senior Certificate. These initiatives were implemented in 2016 under the slogan “Project 100%” and included, among others, afternoon classes, learners being allocated to staff members to assist them in whatever way possible, making available the school’s hostel for studying to Grade 12 learners for the duration on the Grade 12 academic year and a WhatsApp group for Grade 12 educators, parents and learners.

School A also showed determination to excel. Through hard work and persistence to acquire donors, this school today has its own transport. Each year, learners from School A are also selected to represent the Northern Cape Province in sports such as athletics, rugby and cricket. The school also saw the need to serve the broader local community and are busy phasing in isiXhosa as Home Language and dual

medium or parallel medium instruction, based on the learner enrolment for these streams.

These school initiatives point to the SBM strategy, which allows for the stakeholders of previously disadvantaged schools to work together for the achievement of a common goal. These previously disadvantaged schools made a firm decision to improve the conditions in which they operate. They identified their strengths and as a collective, pursued ways to provide better conditions for its learners. Based on these successful initiatives, the researcher sought to establish how such previously disadvantaged schools could yield growth in terms of learner performance and school improvement in general. This was done by promoting a school identity, a back-to-basics approach, SMT members becoming mentors and educators assisting the SGB.

- *Inspiring school leaders*

The study revealed that, in certain areas such as sports, educator training and learner academic performance, the participating previously disadvantaged schools showed a marked improvement with their principals at the forefront of initiatives to ensure improvement. The principals of the participating schools fulfilled their instructional leadership function within SBM to provide a positive climate for teaching and learning to flourish as well as motivating educators and learners through innovative strategies and inspiring leadership (Mestry, 2017:258). The following responses indicate that these principals actively campaigned to gain the involvement of stakeholders to address the unique needs of their schools:

Principal School A: *...as ek weet 'n leerder kan provinsiale sportspanne haal, maak (ek) werk daarvan om geld vir hulle te kry. Ek gaan na besighede en sê: "Hoor hier, ons ouers koop hier, gee 'n hand." As ek weer sien, is daar sommer 'n ou Civic Day wat onderwysers reël om nog geld vir ons sportsterre te kry.*

[If I know a learner can make a provincial sports team, I go all out to get funds for them. I go to businesses and say: "Our parents buy here, lend us a hand." The next thing I know, the teachers have arranged a Civic Day to get more money for our sports stars.]



The above response of the principal of School A seems to indicate how educators can be inspired not only to buy into an idea but also to actively participate in a strategy to reach a common goal determined and initiated by a school leader who inspires (Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013:42). Also refer to the following:

*Principal School B: As the leader, I don't have all the skills, but I will go all out to organise the ones of our staff who have those skills to do some training for the staff and educators.*

The principal of School B stressed that a leader should realise his or her weaknesses and co-opt others with the necessary skills to achieve goals such as the professional development of the staff. This is in line with research done by Mestry (2017:272), which concluded that principals within the new educational environment in South Africa should take initiatives to identify their own professional needs as well as those of their staff and arrange and conduct professional development programmes.

*Principal School C: Sukses is net moontlik as almal aan boord is. Ek is die accountable officer, so ek gaan persoonlik na die ouers, roep elke graad 12-onderwyser en -leerder in en vra wat hul planne vir die jaar is. Dis lekker om te sien almal glo saam met jou ons kan die beste akademiese skool wees. As die resultate kom, wil almal betrokke wees en saam feesvier ... Daarom predik ek die positiewe: gebruik dit wat jy het maksimaal.*

[Success is only possible if everyone is on board. I am the accountable officer, so I personally go to parents, call in each Grade 12 teacher and learner and ask them what their plans for the year are. It is good to see everyone believes with you that we can be the best academic school. If the results come, everyone wants to be involved and rejoice together... Therefore I preach the positive: use what you have optimally.]

The response of the principal of School C is consistent with an SBM strategy that involves stakeholders uniting around a common goal and ensures their active participation to reach that common objective. The examples cited above attest to the implementation of an SBM strategy in which principals discover the problem and subsequently solve it with creative approaches coupled with their own wisdom (Hoque, Alam, Ariff, Mishra & Rabby, 2011:3624). It also is in line with Mestry's (2017:272) assertion that there is a positive link between quality leadership and performing schools.

- *Promoting school identity*

The participating schools realised that they must inculcate a sense of belonging and school identity in their learners. The principal of School B highlighted how they embarked on advocacy to wear the school uniform, while SMT A1 referred to school pride:

Principal School B: *Our kids – we love our kids. We talk to parents to buy school uniforms for them. They look so nice. Nowadays the majority wear uniform – it’s now part of them.*

SMT A1: *So arm soos ons is, is ons trots, is ons baie trots. Dis lekker as almal sê: “Hier kom (School A) se kombi, kyk hulle track suits, kyk hoe netjies lyk hulle.”*

[Even as poor as we are, we are proud, very proud. It is wonderful when people say: “Here comes (School A’s) kombi, look at their tracksuits, look how neat they look.”]

The principal of School C furthermore hinted at the importance of having role models from the school to foster school identity and school pride:

*Sukses is aansteeklik – leerders wil soos hul voorgangers ook prestee. So, die kultuur om jou matrieksertifikaat te kry, het deel geword van ons skool. Dit bly vir my ‘n riem onder die hart en dis lekker as oudmatrikulante weer terug skool toe kom om dankie te kom sê. Hulle dien nou as rolmodelle vir andere.*

[Success is contagious – learners want to achieve like their predecessors. So, the culture of getting your Matric Certificate has become part of our school. It is a great feeling if previous matriculants come back to school to say thank you. They now serve as role models for others.]

SBM is very much geared towards those closest to the school having the decision-making power over school matters (Abulencia, 2015:6; Ayeni & Ibukun, 2013:36). It thus stands to reason that any initiatives, such as creating role models, should first look among those closest to the school, such as former learners. The SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools may thus create opportunities for local community members to give back to their school by showing the learners that circumstances of poverty do not dictate one’s success.

- *Back-to-basics approach*

The schools also realised that one needs to focus on the basic things to turn around school achievement. They hence implemented a “back-to-basics approach” to produce a better quality of teaching and learning. Aspects that were highlighted include the strengthening of intervention towards late coming, teachers being in class, teaching, and monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum:

Principal School A: *...teen halfagt wanneer die skooldag begin, dan moet leerders in die klasse wees sodat daar met onderrig of leer en onderrig begin moet word. So, daar is... improvement, verstaan? Ook met die laatkommery...*

[...at 7:30, when the school day starts, all the learners must be in class so that teaching can commence. So, there is improvement, understand? Also with the late coming...]

SMT A2: *As die leerders laat gekom het, die hoof en die bestuurspan het gesit en kyk wat kan aan die probleem gedoen word.*

[If the learners arrived late, the principal and SMT considered the problem and saw what could be done.]

Principal School C: *Ons het 'n probleem gehad met onderwysers wat nie gaan onderrig by die klas nie. Dit is geminimaliseer... ons het met rasse skrede verbeter in terme van kinders wat afwesig is, in terme van kinders wat laat kom, in terme van kinders wat absoluut net arrogant is en wat stokkiesdraai... Ons het met 'n inklusiewe proses begin waar ons sê: “Mense, maar dit is die situasie oor laat kom, dit is wat nie ge-tolerate kan word nie.”*

[We had a problem with teachers who did not teach in class. That has been minimalised... we have improved drastically in terms of learner absenteeism, in terms of learners who arrived late, in terms of arrogant children who stay away from school... We started an inclusive proses where we discuss late coming and make it known that it will not be tolerated.]

These responses reflect a commitment to addressing weaknesses that have an impact on teaching and learning. Al Kaabi (2015:24-25) highlights various management strategies to enhance an ethos of teaching and learning. This includes leading curriculum change in their classrooms to allow effective teaching and learning to take place. This stance confirms the assertion of researchers such as Al Kaabi (2015:25) that an SBM strategy requires effective curriculum implementation.

- *SMT members became mentors*

SMT members at School A decided to mentor new appointees on what was expected from them. They then also monitored the progress and quality of the work of these new appointees to guide them to enhance quality teaching in classes:

*SMT A2: Ons loop 'n pad met veral nuwe onnies – dat hul hul voete kan vind. Ons adopt hulle en help hulle nie net met skoolaangeleenthede nie, maar ook kan hul kom praat as daar persoonlike problem is nie. En natuurlik probeer ons om – to lead by example.*

[We go the distance with especially new teachers so that they can adapt. We adopt them and help them, not only with school matters, but they can also share their personal problems with us. And then we also try to lead by example.]

This school has thus taken the responsibility to ensure that quality teaching and learning are both improved. The responsibility of being a mentor will hopefully inspire SMT members to equip themselves with added knowledge and skills to provide quality support to post level one educators.

Plaatjies (2016:80) supports the possibilities that need to be created for participatory strategies to yield better learner achievement. If the SMT fulfils an effective mentorship role, it can ensure that teaching remains innovative by not only showing how teaching should unfold but also through involving all educators actively in planning and the execution of their teaching duties (Steyn, 2011:51).

- *Educators assisting the SGB*

Chapter Two shows that SGB parents of previously disadvantaged schools do not have the necessary skills to execute specialised functions such as financial management and development of policies. Although the participants confirmed this sentiment, they could still count on the availability of these parents to attend meetings. School C saw that parents were willing to serve and added teachers to subcommittees to strengthen SGB functionality. In doing this, parents could get first-hand experience on how things should be done, and empowerment and

skills development could take place at school level. SGBs are the heart of how schools operate by making decisions in the best interests of the school (Bechuke & Nwosu, 2017:84). Bechuke and Nwosu (2017:84) argue that, since the effectiveness of SGBs in schools governance and management is tied to the general performance of schools, they should be provided much needed support in this. Coupled to this, SBM requires stakeholders at school level to identify and address weakness. This implies that educators, with the necessary knowledge of educational legislation, as well as the skills of financial management and policy formulation, are best placed to assist the SGB in its mandate pertaining to school governance. In doing so, educators will align their scope of duties to outside-the-classroom activities, as advocated by an SBM strategy.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

Chapter Four sought to present and analyse the raw data gathered through the individual interviews, the focus group interviews and the documentary analysis. The biographical data of the participants and background of each were provided. The themes that were developed during the collection of information and analysis of the data were also highlighted. These themes were aligned to the research questions, as documented in Chapter One.

Salient findings based on the analysis of the data include the following:

- The participating previously disadvantaged schools do not have enough teaching and learning resources such as computers, libraries and laboratories.
- The current managerial and governance training provided by the DoE is insufficient.
- District and provincial officials of the DoE currently do not adequately address the specific needs of schools.
- The parents serving on the SGB of previously disadvantaged schools do not have the necessary capacity to execute their school governance duties.

- Schools have the resilience to bring about change, despite the difficulties they endure daily.

Chapter Five will discuss the findings as presented in Chapter Four, and will set out pertinent recommendations on how a sustainable SBM strategy can be implemented.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this research study is to answer the main research question: **What are the dynamics of school-based management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa?**

In order to answer the main research question, the following research subquestions were formulated:

- How do school principals of previously disadvantaged schools practise SBM?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy?
- What are the practices in SBM at previously disadvantaged schools that need improvement?
- What are the opportunities for SBM at previously disadvantaged schools?
- How should principals, deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools be supported in implementing a sustainable SBM strategy?

The research questions guided the collection of data needed for the research as well as the collection methods used and the analysis and presentation of the data collected.

Chapter Five presents the conclusion of the research study and sets out the following: a summary of Chapters One to Four, a summary of the findings of the research study and a discussion of these, recommendations based on the research findings, recommendations for further study, the limitations of the research study and a conclusion to the study.

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The research study theme, namely **The dynamics of school-based management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa** was considered as follows:

Chapter One outlined the background and the rationale of the research study. This chapter also described the theoretical framework adopted for the study. It furthermore briefly set out what would follow in the next chapters, including the clarification of key concepts, the research design and the research methodology. Of importance in Chapter One is the formulation of the questions and objectives that guided the research study throughout the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Two provided a review of current and relevant literature on SBM. A global perspective of SBM was also presented and its impact on the role of principals was discussed. Background information on how SBM manifests itself within previously disadvantaged schools in South African was presented, coupled with the role of stakeholders in its implementation.

Chapter Three covered the research design and methodology used in the research study. Qualitative research was used as the design; this was explained and reference was made to sampling, collection and analysis methods as well as how quality assurance of the research and ethical considerations unfolded throughout the study. It was explained that principals, deputy principals and HoDs from three previously disadvantaged schools participated in the study to gain insight into SBM implementation within a previously disadvantaged context.

In Chapter Four, the collected data were presented and analysed, and inferences were made. Transcriptions of interviews form the foundation for thematically analysing the data, and the actual responses of participants were used to substantiate the inferences.



Chapter Five gives a summary of the chapters and of the findings of the study. It also makes recommendations pertaining to the study and future studies to be undertaken.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The next paragraphs emphasise the findings of the research study. The study aimed to provide answers for the main research question: **What are the dynamics of school-based management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa?** The research findings will be discussed as per the research subquestions.

#### **5.3.1 Findings and Interpretation Based on the First Research Subquestion**

*How do school principals of previously disadvantaged schools practise SBM?*

The participating principals experienced the transition from apartheid legislation to a democratic dispensation in South Africa. The participants confirmed Sibanda's (2017:567) sentiments that the principal in pre-1994 had the only say in school management and did what he or she was instructed to do from above. All the participating principals welcomed the educational reforms, such as SBM, that have been implemented because SBM values the involvement and contribution of all stakeholders in the development of the school (*cf.* 4.4.1 i).

The research study revealed that principals are equipped with broad knowledge concerning the educational legislation that formulates an SBM strategy in South African schools. All the participating principals easily recollected the pertinent legislation to guide them on how schools should be run. This knowledge of educational legislation assisted them in implementing, for example, stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process concerning matters such as procurement (*cf.* 4.4.1 i).

Of note is that all principals emphasised the importance of their role as the professional leader in curriculum management to ensure daily curriculum implementation as

advocated by an SBM strategy. The duties as defined by principals included leading SMTs to provide guidance around teaching and learning, ensuring educator and learner discipline, the monitoring of current resources, managing educator professional development and creating an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. These duties show that the participating principals realise the central instructional leadership role they have to play within an SBM strategy (*cf.* 4.4.1 ii).

These duties are not only performed by the principal. All of the principals involved in the study expressed their gratitude towards the rest of the SMT in executing management duties under their leadership and guidance. The participation of educators such as those in the SMT enables the principal as the “executive officer” to execute his or her management duty (Mestry, 2017:1). Teamwork was another aspect that was found to be crucial within an SBM strategy to assist school principals in executing their management role. The research study revealed that SBM is based on a participatory approach to strengthen the management capacity of schools.

However, although the participating principals realised the importance of instructional leadership within SBM, they expressed frustration concerning the amount of time they have to spend on other duties, such as parent meetings, learner and educator discipline and executing SGB duties (*cf.* 4.4.1 i). This frustration is in line with the comments of Kiragu *et al.* (2013:1176), Lindberg and Vanyushyn (2013:39) and Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175) that SBM has increased principals’ administrative and managerial workloads, while at the same time making it more difficult for them to carry out their instructional leadership role successfully.

In addition to the professional management functions as listed above, principals also play a crucial role within school governance as mandated by the SASA (1996) and the PAM (DBE, 2016b:43). An important aspect of school governance that was raised by the principals was the quality of involvement of those parents who serve on the SGB. All of the principals reflected that these parents have low literacy levels and display an incapacity to execute SGB duties (*cf.* 4.4.3 ii). This scenario puts added responsibilities

on principals because they often have to take full responsibility for SGB duties such as financial management and policy development. One could, therefore, assume that, while the aim of an SBM strategy is to enhance parental participation in school governance, this study has shown that it unintentionally increases the workload of principals of previously disadvantaged schools. Findings with regard to the role of parents in SBM will be further discussed in later sections.

### **5.3.2 Findings and Interpretation Based on the Second Research Subquestion**

*What are the roles and responsibilities of deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools within an SBM strategy?*

#### *5.3.2 (i) Role of Deputy Principals and HoDs in an SBM Strategy*

As explained in Chapter Two, the SMT consists of the principal, deputy principals and HoDs. The principal within an SBM strategy is the SMT leader who delegates duties to the deputy principals and HoDs to run and manage the school daily.

The participating deputy principals and HoDs stressed their role as subject or phase leaders to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum (*cf.* 4.4.2). Another SMT duty highlighted was the involvement of deputy principals and HoDs in the induction, development and appraisal of educators. The findings showed that the deputy principals and HoDs of School A have a system similar to mentoring, where they not only induct new appointees but also monitor and evaluate their progress.

In addition to the professional role in the induction of novice educators, deputy principals and HoDs also listed the following duties they execute (*cf.* 4.4.2 i): providing guidance in the subjects or phase for which they are responsible; assisting in school planning; assisting with extra-curricular activities, such as coaching (sport); and assisting the SGB at the request of the principal. This finding indicates that deputy

principals and HoDs have a solid grasp of their responsibilities as members of the SMT within an SBM strategy.

A crucial point raised by the SMT of School C is the fact that one HoD is sometimes responsible for more than one subject. This could be problematic, seeing that frequently the HoD is not a specialist in all the subjects he or she has to manage.

The varied and diverse duties of the SMT as expressed by the participating deputy principals and HoDs are proof that school management structures in South Africa have changed within an SBM framework. Within SBM, school management has changed from the individual school manager – the principal – to a team of managers, namely the SMT. It hence becomes important that, for this team to work together, they need to develop a system of management that is followed by the whole team. Schools are operating as a system, and if only one SMT member does not execute the duties as required, the efficiency of the school system could be compromised (*cf.* 2.4.2 v).

All the principals have commended the SMT members for their involvement without which the principals would struggle to deal with the vast scope of their roles and responsibilities.

### *5.3.2 (ii) The role of the SGB in an SBM Framework*

The findings of this research study pertaining to the role of parents who serve on the SGB include the following:

- *There is a commitment of SGB parents to attend meetings to enable decision-making on school matters.*

The research study revealed that parents understand the importance of attending meetings, and in doing so, ensure their involvement in the decision-making process concerning school matters (*cf.* 4.4.3.) This willingness of parents to ensure that importance decisions are made timeously enables the school to procure learning and teaching resources when needed.

Section 20(e-j) of the SASA (1996) states that one of the primary roles of the SGB is to support the principal, educators and staff in the performance of their professional functions. This study also revealed that, while many parents lack the required skills (*cf.* 4.4.3 i), the participants feel that parents on the SGB show commitment to assist the professional side of the school.

Based on the willingness of parents to make themselves available, they are well aware of their mandate to assist the school in executing its professional duties. The participants commended SGB parents for their commitment to assist with, in particular, learner discipline. It was revealed that frequently SGB parents make time to come to school to engage learners on matters regarding discipline in the school. This finding is in line with the requirement of SBM that needs the commitment of stakeholders such as parents to enhance their primary function, which is to put the best interest of learners first (Section 20(e-j), SASA, 1996). It became apparent that parents are committed to the education of their children.

- *The majority of the parents serving as SGB members do not have the required skills to execute the duties assigned to them by the legislation.*

The study revealed that parents serving in the SGB lack the necessary skills required to execute their duties (*cf.* 4.4.3). As per the SASA, Section 20, SGBs have to undertake complex functions (Chaka, 2008:27). The participants in this study complained that parents on the SGB do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to execute their school governance functions as mandated by the said education legislation (*cf.* 4.4.3).

The research findings thus confirm the literature that shows that the parents on the SGB serving poorer communities usually do not have the necessary knowledge and skills (Chaba, 2008:27; Xaba, 2011:202). This became evident while conducting the interviews (*cf.* 4.4.3 i).

The participants furthermore observed that SGB parents lack the confidence to execute their required duties (*cf.* 4.4.3 ii). The data also showed that the lack of confidence of parents leads to a reliance on the principals and educators to undertake governance functions (*cf.* 4.4.1). These findings are in line with Chaka's (2008:27) warning that if parents rely too heavily on educators and principals, this limits parents' involvement in the SGB. The consequence is that at some schools, parents just go along with whatever decisions the staff makes. The final products, such as the school budget and developed school policies, are thus, in fact, products of educators.

It seems that if SGB parents do not actively participate in decision-making regarding the development of school policies, planning and budget, they do not add value to the education of their children because the principal and the SMT develop school policies that govern the school and plan the school activities.

- *Parents on the SGB pursue their own interests, which cause tension and conflict between themselves and the school management and school governance.*

The SASA (1996) states that the SGB stands in a position of trust towards the school and must act in good faith and not engage in any conduct that may jeopardise the interests of the school. This implies that all SGB members must focus their efforts on the provision of quality education for learners. The findings, however, showed that frequently SGB parents do not share the same objectives as the educators, for example, when decisions have to be made regarding staff appointments (*cf.* 4.4.3). Such scenarios are consistent with research conducted by Mollootimile and Zengele (2015:175), which concludes that if stakeholders pursue different interests with an SBM strategy, power struggles can develop, which have a negative impact on school improvement.

Some of the participants have reported that SGBs do not understand their roles. This was also found in research conducted by Xaba (2011:30). The principal of School B revealed that, at times, SGB parents will insist that they are in charge and

important decisions concerning, for example, procurement can be delayed by them (*cf.* 4.4.3). This causes tension and creates room for conflict to flare up. Such conflict between stakeholders stands in the way of the successful implementation of an SBM strategy.

- *Extensive training is required for SGB members to enable them to execute their duties as required.*

Given the fact that some parents on the SGB do not have the required technical skills and knowledge, the need for training and development becomes critical. The findings of the study indicate that although the NCDE provided training, it failed to capacitate the SGB parents fully.

Even though SGB members were trained after they had been elected, the training failed to capacitate the SGB members with the necessary skills and knowledge. It seems that the training content assumed that SGB members already had the skills to execute their duties. (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii). This finding is consistent with the research of Chaba (2008:30), which concludes that training is not relevant to the actual needs and skills of SGB parents.

The NCDE has appointed officials (Integrated Management and Governance Development officials) who are tasked with school development and support, which includes school governance support. Despite the capacity-building training, it seems that the SGBs continue to experience governance challenges (*cf.* 4.4.4). Therefore, this study will conclude that the new governance structure within an SBM strategy still has the effect of depriving parents of the ability to participate fully in their children's education, as required by legislation.

It has, moreover, been found that parents cannot fully participate in decision-making processes, because they lack knowledge and the necessary skills.

### 5.3.3 Findings and Interpretation Based on the Third Research Subquestion

*What are the practices in SBM at previously disadvantaged schools that need improvement?*

While inequalities in resource allocation from the state have been removed, inequalities persist owing to the inability of the state to provide free education to all, parents' inability to pay fees and the unavailability of qualified teachers in the schools of poor communities (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014:1)

The participants raised various issues aimed at implementing SBM effectively, namely recruiting and retaining qualified educators, the provisioning of human financial and physical resources, better management of existing personnel and improvement in the quality of training of stakeholders.

#### *5.3.3 (i) Recruiting and Retaining of Qualified Educators*

Sibanda (2017:573) states that poorer schools experience difficulties in attracting qualified educators to their institutions. Sibanda's (2017:573) assumption was confirmed by some participants from School B and School C, who expressed alarm that, at times, the school had to appoint unqualified educators because qualified educators did not apply for the vacancies at the school (*cf.* 4.4.3 ii). These participants furthermore revealed that qualified novice educators only apply to their schools in order to enter the system but leave as soon as they get better offers at better-resourced schools in urban areas. SBM is geared towards improvement in the quality of education provided to learners, but if there is not a consistent supply of quality of educators, quality education will suffer (Ojwan'g, 2016:84).



### 5.3.3 (ii) Provisioning of Human, Financial and Physical Resources

The data showed that the participants in the research study also pleaded for better-resourced schools in the form of additional educators, more funding and more teaching and learning resources (*cf.* 4.4.4 ii). This plea is consistent with the contention by Mestry and Ndhlovu (2014:1), who conclude that many previously disadvantaged schools still experience constraints such as insufficient funds because poor parents cannot contribute financially, it remains a struggle to attract and retain qualified teachers, poor infrastructure is sometimes still prevalent and unfavourable learner-teacher ratios remain.

Even though the South African government has made great strides *via* its pro-poor funding approach (*cf.* 4.2.1; Table 4.2), the inequalities of the unequal apartheid legislation have, nevertheless, not been eradicated entirely. The principals who participated in this study were also well aware of the dire and sometimes difficult environments with which they have to be content. Many of these hindrances were highlighted by the principals. The principals of School B and School C reflected, for example, that there was a time that unqualified educators were appointed at their school. Infrastructural challenges were also mentioned, and in addition, none of the schools have functional libraries and laboratories (*cf.* 4.4.2). School infrastructure and resources, as outlined in the preceding sections, form an integral requirement for an SBM strategy (Khumalo & Mji, 2014:1523). The infrastructural challenges, as well as the lack of resources, had a negative impact on the implementation of SBM at the participating previously disadvantaged schools because of their inability to retain qualified educators and the low morale of current educators who express frustration with teaching in inferior conditions compared to their counterparts at more affluent schools (*cf.* 4.2.2 iv).

The participating schools are all classified as “no-fee” schools and may not charge school fees (*cf.* 4.2.1). These schools serve a community in which unemployment is rife. It thus becomes a struggle for the participating schools to run successful fundraising

campaigns to add to the Section 21 funds they receive from the government. The principal of School C, for example, stated that the parents knew they need not pay school fees and just decided that they would also not contribute financially towards any fundraising project.

### *5.3.3 (iii) Improvement in Human Resource Management*

The researcher got the impression that deputy principals and HoDs only participate in, for example, governance matters at the request of the principal. SBM requires effective and efficient use of human talents to ensure that school goals are met (Omebe, 2014:26). According to one HoD at School C, the SMT was not even remotely involved in SGB operation, not even as co-opted members for subcommittees of the SGB (*cf.* 4.4.2 i). Keeping in mind that all of the participating principals commended their deputy principals and HoDs for having excellent skills to advance school development, it raised questions as to why their expertise is not channelled to the governance aspect where parents do not have the required skills to add value to school development.

### *5.3.3 (iv) Improvement of Quality Training Provided for Stakeholders*

All of the participants in the research study categorically stated that the training provided to them by the NCDE does not adequately equip them to execute duties efficiently. These participants highlighted that the generic training provided by the NCDE does not assist them in addressing the unique conditions of poverty they have to be content with. The induction training provided by the Northern Cape PED was also viewed as insufficient. The participants pleaded that these inductions session for principals, deputy principals and HoDs should be strengthened by annual training on current educational matters such as policy amendments and strategies to yield school improvement.

Frustration was also expressed by the participants about the quality of training provided to SGB members. Training for SGBs was viewed by the participants as not enough

because the training does not equip the SGB with the necessary skills to execute the school governance duties (*cf.* 4.4.3 iii).

#### **5.3.4 Findings and Interpretation Based on the Fourth Research Subquestion**

*What are the opportunities in SBM at previously disadvantaged schools?*

There was a feeling among the participants that a successful SBM strategy is a process that takes time. The participants also observed that they were able to make strides because important stakeholders, such as parents and SMT members, show a willingness to embrace change. The principal of School B, for instance, stated that, despite SGB parents not being literate, they showed willingness and commitment to change the school for the better.

The success that was observed at the participating schools generally resulted due to the positive leadership displayed by the principals (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii). It therefore seems that SBM affords principals of previously disadvantaged schools opportunities to involve stakeholders innovatively around common goals. This observation is supported by Hoqu's (2011:3624) claim that effective principals within SBM generally have high expectations for their school to improve and will support others in achieving common goals.

A "back-to-basics approach" also served as an initial step to create a positive environment for teaching and learning (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii). It was especially principals who accentuated the significance and value of discipline among educators and learners. The principals felt that circumventing ill-discipline such as late coming and absenteeism and ensuring that teaching proceeds in every classroom will eventually lead to better learner achievement.

In addition, the notion of "success breeds success" was also highlighted by the participants to activate school improvement. Another important aspect arising from the

individual interview with the principal of School C is that the school created its own role models for success. Learners can relate better to these role models who have succeeded after school, despite coming from the same previously disadvantaged community and with similar backgrounds as those of the current learners at the school (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii).

The study revealed that the participants identified school identity as being important in any “turnaround” strategy (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii). Learners of School A, for example, displayed a good track record in terms of its learners being selected annually for various provincial sports teams. Based on this, the reputation of the school has been elevated because of their ability to produce excellent athletes and rugby, netball and cricket players. The participants from School A thus expressed pride in being associated with School A because surrounding schools often compliment them on the sports achievements of their school. In addition, the participants felt that matters such as the wearing of school uniforms, the vision and mission statements of the school and learner achievement foster school pride. Efforts were made by all of the schools to acquire school uniforms for their learners. School B, for instance, received a donation of school uniforms, while School C procures affordable uniforms from Cape Town. School A procures its own transport and has branded it to enhance school pride.

It was also enlightening to realise that the participants look beyond conditions of deprivation. The principals of Schools A and C stated that they did not wait for government to provide in all their needs, and they attempted to remain positive and inspire educators to give the best to their learners with what they have. These sentiments indicate that the leadership of principals helped to change the mindset of others (*cf.* 4.4.4 iii). The visionary leadership of principals looked beyond the lack of resources, such as money, and teaching resources, such as libraries and laboratories. School A, for example, has annual school tours to expose its learners to environments beyond their immediate vicinity. Although this costs money, with their positive outlook and the willingness of parents to assist, they succeed in this venture. The stakeholders of School A thus show that they are more than willing to invest in their learners to

broaden their education beyond the school gates. At School B, educators belonging to the same union went so far as to donate a television to the school. For many schools, a television is nothing extraordinary, but by donating it, the educators clearly displayed dedication to the school and its learners.

These examples of caring educators demonstrate that a successful SBM strategy demands the involvement of stakeholders, however small the contribution might be (*cf.* 2.5.4). Coupled with this, the commitment and willingness of stakeholders are essential to contribute towards the broader school objectives, which are to put the interests of the learners first and foremost (Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:252).

### **5.3.1 Findings and Interpretation Based on the Fifth Research Subquestion**

*How should principals, deputy principals, HoDs and SGBs of previously disadvantaged schools be supported in implementing a sustainable SBM strategy?*

Throughout the research study it became abundantly clear that stakeholders within an SBM framework are in dire need of quality and continuous training.

Mestry (2017:1) asserts that many principals lack basic leadership and management training prior to and after their entry into the position of principal. South African principals are thus often not well prepared for this senior position and rely heavily on experience and common sense (Mestry, 2017:1) Mestry (2017:1) concludes that there is thus a dire need for education authorities to develop and support principals continually so that they can lead schools effectively.

The participating principals stated that they were in need of adequate training besides the induction training conducted by the NCDE when they had been appointed as principals. Some of them felt that it would help more if SMTs were formally trained by universities to enable them to acquire accredited qualifications. The participating deputy principals and HoDs also felt that their induction training was not enough and that circuit

managers were suitably placed to provide regular short in-service training to assist them to keep abreast with current educational legislation and policy requirements (*cf.* 4.4.4 i).

Based on this, it seems that the circuit managers miss a golden opportunity to include deputy principals and HoDs in circuit meetings so that they will be exposed to first-hand information regarding school management issues. Such meetings can, in a sense, be used to facilitate regular capacity building of not only principals but also deputy principals and HoDs who ultimately assist the principal in the professional management of the school.

The participants hinted that the training of SGB members is also insufficient. Bearing in mind that the SGB parents of the participating schools lack important skills and knowledge, a once-off training session may not address the specific skills shortage of each SGB. This finding is in line with previous research on the matter by Chaka (2008:28), who lists the following problem with the training provided by the DoE:

- In some cases, training was pitched at the wrong level for the literacy levels of parents.
- There have been reports of SGB members being trained more than a year after their election. In some cases, only some members of the SGB were trained
- Another problem is the dominance of English in the training sessions and training materials.

Training is only successful if it yields positive outcomes. Appropriate training of governing body members is crucial if SGBs are going to perform their functions effectively. It is, however, just as crucial that training facilitators assess the impact of their training at the end of the three-year tenure of SGB members.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations are made based on the findings of the research study and the gaps in research that require further study.

### 5.4.1 Recommendations of the Research Study

The following recommendations are made, which could assist in the successful implementation of an SBM strategy within South African schools.

#### 5.4.1 (i) *Recommendations to Assist Principals in the Central Role They Need to Play within an SBM strategy*

- *Compulsory management qualification must be implemented as a prerequisite for appointment as principal in South African schools (cf. 2.3.5 iii; 4.3.3).*

The findings of this research suggest that management preparation and training are central to school improvement. It was also established that in South Africa, there are no rigorous criteria for educators to be appointed as school principals (Mestry, 2017:7). As discussed in Chapter Four, the ACE was introduced by the DoE to fill this void in management qualification of principals. It is, therefore, recommended that:

- more of the current serving principals be drawn into this programme or that the PED fund principals to embark on acquiring similar qualifications; and
  - aspiring principals should have a suitable professional management qualification before being considered for a position as school principal.
- *Support rendered to principals by PED provincial and or district officials must address the unique challenges principals experience (cf. 2.4.2 vi; 4.4.4 i).*

The Government Gazette, pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of education districts (DBE, 2012), outlines how circuit managers as supervisors of schools, should assist principals and other staff members. The research findings indicate that circuit managers currently predominately convey information as per provincial directives and do not necessarily address challenges as experienced by principals under their supervision. Support rendered to principals by officials such as circuit managers should thus be informed by what principals say they need.

5.4.1 (ii) *Recommendations to Assist Deputy Principals and HoDs to Execute Duties within an SBM Strategy*

- *Deputy principals and HoDs must be exposed to more school management sessions (cf. 4.4.4 i).*

It is recommended that deputy principals and HoDs, like principals, should be exposed to more formal school management training. The current induction training conducted by the PED is not enough for these SMT members to keep abreast of current educational law, legislation and innovations.

- *Regular capacity-building sessions concerning school management and school governance must be conducted by the circuit manager (cf. 1.2.3 iv).*

Professional development of SMT members forms part of the core duties of circuit managers. The participants mentioned that the circuit managers hold regular meetings, but many SMT members are not mandated to attend these meetings. Such opportunities can be used by circuit managers not only to update the entire SMT on the latest developments in education but also as opportunities to expand the skills and knowledge base of SMT members. As “assistants” to the principal, SMT members also need to be involved in school governance. Deputy principals and HoDs thus also require regular training on school governance matters.

5.4.1 (iii) *Recommendations to Assist SGBs to Execute Duties within an SBM Strategy*

- *Current induction training of SGBs must be supplemented with practical skills training (cf. 4.4.3 iii).*

It is argued that SGB members will remain reliant on the knowledge and skills of the principal and the SGB educator if they are not properly trained concerning policy development and financial and human resource management.



In addition to the induction training currently provided by the PED about roles and responsibilities of SGBs, follow-up focus sessions should be conducted regularly to equip especially the SGB parents with the knowledge regarding crucial aspects such as policy development and financial management.

- *Training modules on SGB capacity must be more user-friendly to accommodate the various capacity levels of SGB members (cf. 4.4.3 iii).*

The current over-reliance on English in SGB training modules must be revisited. The focus of these training modules should also be more practical in nature.

- *The SMT under the leadership of the principal must provide in-service training to SGBs (cf. 4.4.2).*

The researcher believes that the SMT (principals, deputy principals and HoDs) possess the necessary knowledge and skills required to execute school governance duties such as procurement, policy development and general financial management. SMTs furthermore have extensive knowledge of the capacity of individual SGB members and will know how to engage with them.

#### *5.4.1 (iv) Recommendations to Address Current Shortcomings of an SBM Strategy in Previously Disadvantaged Schools*

- *Timeous filling of promotional vacancies (cf. 4.4.4 ii).*

The study revealed that acting SMT members do not necessarily have the authority to execute supervisory duties. In addition, some schools have a rotation system in which different educators are afforded the opportunity to act in the same vacancy until the PED has advertised and filled this vacancy. It is, therefore, advisable to fill these vacancies as soon as possible to create stability in school management.

- *Assisting previously disadvantaged schools with the recruitment of suitable qualified educators (cf. 2.4.2 iii).*

Owing to poor resourcing and the impoverished environment of previously disadvantaged schools, the recruitment and retention of qualified educators become part of their everyday reality. The PED should thus move towards a similar approach as that used for aspiring doctors who are obliged to render one year of service in rural or remote communities.

- *Improvement in the support provided by the district education office (cf. 1.2.3 iv; 2.4.2 vi; 4.4.4 i).*

A clearer understanding of the functions of districts is required. In particular, support and monitoring should be carefully considered to address the actual needs of schools and in particular those of school management and school governance. The current standardised instruments used by districts must be reviewed to facilitate the actual needs of schools. The role of the circuit manager as school supervisor needs clearer definition, especially as to how they go about to support schools. The same is needed for Integrated Management and Governance Development officials who are responsible for SGB functionality.

- *Principals should delegate responsibilities to educators (cf. 2.3.5 i).*

Principals cannot deal with the vast scope of school management alone. They need the delegation of responsibilities to educators to increase the morale of the staff. This will enhance broad-based participation and development of skills. Support is easier to achieve when the principal not only assigns roles to staff members but transfers decision-making powers to them as well.

- *Developing a good reputation can encourage a school identity and create community support (cf. 4.4.4 iii).*

Priority must be given to those aspects that raise the good reputation of the school. These include achievements of both the educators and the learners.

Local media should be utilised to report on such achievement regularly. Parents and community members should be involved at all levels to guarantee additional income through donations. This money could be used to implement school programmes that need an additional budget.

- *Aspiring educators and educational administrators should be trained on SBM.* Undergraduate teaching qualifications should include modules in the theory, approach and processes of an SBM strategy. The DoE should thus liaise with universities to foster partnerships in this regard.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

It is recommended that studies should be conducted regarding the gaps in the current research, namely:

- the role of circuit managers in an SBM framework;
- the role of Integrated Management and Governance Development officials in SGB functionality;
- recruitment and retention of qualified educators at previously disadvantaged schools and how these schools can be assisted in this regard;
- how training modules for SGB capacity can be made more user-friendly; and
- why there is a reluctance on the part of businesses to be involved in previously disadvantaged schools.

#### **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The following limitations of the research study should be noted:

- Principals, deputy principals and HoDs of three previously disadvantaged schools in the Northern Cape Province participated in this research study. The participants in the study can, therefore, not be viewed as being representative of the entire population of previously disadvantaged schools in the Northern Cape Province or

South Africa. A larger sample could probably have given more in-depth information concerning the implementation of an SBM strategy within a previously disadvantaged context. The research findings can thus not be viewed as being generally acceptable or valid. The value of the research lies in the fact that schools in a similar environment can use the best practices presented in this study to their own benefit.

- Initially, it was envisaged that at least four schools would participate in the study. Unfortunately, only three schools ultimately participated in the study. The majority of the SMT posts of the other school were vacant and educators were acting in these positions on a rotational basis. The researcher wanted to tap into the management experiences of SMT members in this study, and it was therefore decided not to involve this school for the purposes of this study.
- Not all of the SMT members could participate in the focus group interviews owing to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness and other personal commitments. Valuable input from these educators could, therefore, not be included in the final research product.
- The study also mentions the role of parents serving in the SGB. The study relied heavily on responses from SMT members to draw inferences regarding SGB capacity. In retrospect, it would have added more value to the study if SGB parents had also been afforded the opportunity to share their experiences of an SBM strategy.
- Another aspect that would have contributed much to the end product, is the voice of district officials, especially that of the circuit manager. Input from circuit managers would have given broader insight into how district offices support and guide schools on the effective implementation of an SBM strategy.

## **5.6 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

This research study sought to gain insight into the implementation of an SBM strategy in previously disadvantaged schools.

South Africa, like other countries embarked on educational reforms with strong decentralised inclinations. SBM represents a vehicle to enhance broader participation in the schooling system. South African legislation, such as the SASA (Act No. 84 of 1996), requires educators, non-teaching staff, parents and high school learners to be part of the decision-making process at school level. The research study aimed to reveal the perspectives of some of these stakeholders from previously disadvantaged schools as to how they experience SBM.

While there are other factors, the leadership role of the school principal is commonly regarded as being the primary factor contributing to a successful relationship between SBM and school improvement. It was established that principals in South Africa do not require any professional qualification for appointment as school principals. South African principals were, therefore, not adequately prepared or equipped for the mammoth task with diverse responsibilities of an SBM framework.

School leadership is an essential dimension of successful SBM. School leadership within SBM is, however, not the sole responsibility of principals but involves deputy principals and HoDs as well. The study focuses on how all school leaders (that is, the SMT) experience SBM under the guidance of the principal.

The study revealed that democracy has not eradicated past inequalities and deprivation. It was found that previously disadvantaged schools in many aspects remain poorly resourced and understaffed and experience difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified educators. Another problem concerning SBM in previously disadvantaged schools is the incapacity of parents serving on the SGB. The researcher feels that the lack of knowledge and skills of parents serving on the SGB prevents them from

participating fully in the decision-making at school level. In such cases, the parents instead rely on the educators for the execution of governance functions.

Another point worth mentioning is the fact that deputy principals and HoDs do not fully comprehend their responsibility towards school governance. Currently, many of these SMT members only fulfil their governance role if they are requested to do so by the principal, although they have the knowledge and possess the skills to contribute actively to the empowerment of the parent component on the SGB.

Fortunately, all is not gloom and doom within an SBM strategy. Previously disadvantaged schools show resilience in improving, despite challenges such as limited resources, poor infrastructure and SGB incapacity. The leadership of principals came to the fore to persuade the mindset of stakeholders to contribute willingly to school improvement. A “back-to-basics approach” was adopted to strengthen teaching and learning. Alumni who have succeeded are also used as role models for current learners to emulate and to raise the profile and reputation of schools.

Pertinent recommendations, based on the research findings, include the improvement of the quality of training of stakeholders in SBM, support from district offices based on the unique needs of previously disadvantaged schools, and also assistance to previously disadvantaged schools to recruit qualified educators.

SBM within a South African context was embarked upon to redress past inequalities within the educational landscape. It can only work in previously disadvantaged schools if current hindrances are acknowledged by policymakers. This means that policymakers should address issues such as poor literacy and the limited knowledge and skill levels of parents serving on SGBs to make meaningful contributions in decision-making processes at school level. If such matters are not fully grasped, the pre-1994 conditions will be perpetuated because no real effort will have been made to capacitate these parents to engage actively and meaningfully in school matters.

It has become an educational cliché that “the only constant in South Africa is change”. It therefore becomes imperative that school leaders of previously disadvantaged schools are suitably and regularly trained to keep abreast of changes in the educational sphere. Failing to do so will not only defeat the good intentions of an SBM strategy but will perpetuate past imbalances and inequalities, by which the children of poor communities are deprived of quality education yet again.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A



Faculty of Education

30-Aug-2017

Dear Mr Johann Horne

Ethics Clearance: **Dynamics of school-based management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa**

Principal Investigator: **Mr Johann Horne**

Department: **School of Education Studies (Bloemfontein Campus)**

### APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Education, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2017/1039**

This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours faithfully

Prof. MM Mokhele

Chairperson: Ethics Committee

Education Ethics Committee

Office of the Dean: Education

T: +27 (0)51 401 9683 | F: +27 (0)86 546 1113 | E: NkoaneMM@ufs.ac.za

Winkie Direko Building | P.O. Box/Posbus 339 | Bloemfontein 9300 | South Africa



## Appendix B



**The Superintendent General: Education  
Northern Cape Department of Education  
Private Bag X5029  
Kimberley  
8300**

Dear Sir

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

The undersigned is currently a registered student for the degree *Magister Educationis* (MEd) at the University of the Free State, and herewith requests permission to conduct research at three schools in the Thembelihle Circuit (Pixley Ka Seme District), namely Oranje-Diamant Primary School, Strydenburg Combined School and Vukasizwe Primary School.

#### **Date of research**

The research will be conducted from 10 August 2017 to 30 November 2017.

#### **Title of research**

Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa

#### **Details of researcher**

<i>Principal Investigator</i>	<i>Student Number</i>	<i>Contact Details</i>
Johann Nico Horne	2015319953	(053) 839 6757 (w) 083 505 8588 jnhorne2702@gmail.com

#### **Faculty**

Faculty of Education

#### **Study leader**

Dr. B. Plaatjies  
051-4012955 / PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za

#### **Aim of research study**

The research study aims to highlight the experiences of principals of previously disadvantaged schools within a School-Based Management (SBM) framework.

Revised education policies in South Africa since 1994 created new and daunting challenges for the role of school principals. The shift to SBM in the 1990s enforces the role of principals as managers who are expected to fulfil management tasks they had not necessarily been trained for. Post-apartheid education reform firmly places the responsibility for running schools on principals and necessitates that diverse responsibilities for areas such as finance, staff and school development are moved to school level.

Despite all the impediments brought forth by apartheid legislation, there are examples of several previously disadvantaged schools that perform well. This study thus also aims to highlight these good practices, as it may add value to existing research on why previously disadvantaged schools perform well, despite the various impediments they have to endure.

### **Researcher**

*The research will be conducted by Mr. J.N. Horne, currently employed within the Policy and Planning Unit at the Head Office of the Northern Cape Department of Education. As an educationist devoted to lifelong learning, the researcher wants to add value to quality education. Principals are essential in implementing government policy, and the research aims to give these key agents a voice to express challenges they experience and the type of assistants they need to execute duties as required.*

### **Ethical approval**

A proposal of this study was presented to the Research Ethics Committee of the UFS for approval before the commencement of the research.

### **Rationale for using identified schools**

The schools earmarked for the research form part of the sector that had been deprived of equal education under apartheid policies. Principals and SMT members will thus have experience of the magnitude of responsibilities they have to execute within a previously disadvantaged context. It is envisaged that approximately 20 participants will be involved in the research study.

### **Nature of participation**

Identified principals will be subjected to a semi-structured interview to get insight into how they experience school management. The SMTs of the identified schools will be part of a focus group interview to elicit responses on their role in school management. The expected duration of all interviews is approximately one hour. Questions that will be asked, include those concerning roles and responsibilities, general challenges that are experienced, how parents are involved in school matters and what good practices the schools implement to enhance school development. Ethical aspects in research, which include protection from harm, informed consent, the right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues, will be pursued at all times. Cognisance will subsequently be taken to comply with the required ethics, such as respect for persons and knowledge, as well as the quality of the educational research. Participants will be thoroughly informed regarding the reasons, scope and intended outcomes of the study. Voluntary participation will, moreover, be emphasised, including the fact that participants may withdraw from the research at any time and that no personal information will be revealed without their prior consent. Participation is voluntary and no financial rewards will be given.

**Confidentiality of information**

All efforts will be made to ensure the confidentiality of information. Names of schools and participants will thus not be made known. Pseudonyms will also be used to protect the privacy of participant schools and individuals. Answers will be given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym, and participants will be referred to in this way in the data as well as any publications or other research reporting methods, such as conference proceedings. The transcriber will have access to the data and will maintain confidentiality by signing a confidentiality agreement. Answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that the research is done properly, including the transcriber and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify participants will be available only to people working on the study, unless permission is given for other people to see the records. Kindly note that all anonymous data may be used for other purposes, which include research reports, journal articles or conference presentation. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report. While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that participants will not be connected to the information that is shared during the focus group interview, guarantees cannot be given that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. All participants will, however, be encouraged to do so. Hard copies of answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet at home for future research or academic purposes, and electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further research ethics review and approval, if applicable.

**Availability of research findings**

For information on the final research findings or any further information about any aspect of this study, please contact Mr. J. Horne at 053-8396757 or via email at [jnhorne2702@gmail.com](mailto:jnhorne2702@gmail.com). Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr. B. Plaatjies at 051-4012955 or via email at [PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za](mailto:PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za).

Yours sincerely



**J N Horne**

## Appendix C



I.K Nkoane Education House

156 Barkly Road  
Homestead  
Kimberley 8301

Private Bag X5029  
Kimberley 8300  
Republic of South Africa

Tel: 053 839 6500  
Fax: 053 839 6580/1  
Web: ncdoe.ncpg.gov.za

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: Mr H. Esau  
Reference:  
Date: 11 September 2017

Mr J Horne  
Northern Cape Department of Education  
Private Bag X5029  
**Kimberley**  
8300

Dear Madam

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research on Dynamics of School-Based Management in previously disadvantaged schools in South Africa in the Pixley-Ka-Seme District.

This approval is granted with the proviso that the normal school program is not compromised in any way, and that the research results will be shared with the Northern Cape Department of Education after completion and publication.

Kind Regards

**MR GT PHARASI**  
**SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL**

## Appendix D



24  
August  
2017

### The Principal

..... High/Primary School

Hopetown

8750

Dear Sir/Madam

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The undersigned is currently a registered student for the degree *Magister Educationis* (MEd) at the University of the Free State, and herewith humbly requests the participation of yourself as principal as well as the School Management Team (SMT) in a research study as outlined below.

### Date of research

The research will be conducted from 3 September 2017 to 30 November 2017.

### Title of research

Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa

### Details of researcher

<i>Principal Investigator</i>	<i>Student Number</i>	<i>Contact Details</i>
Johann Nico Horne	2015319953	(053) 839 6757 (w) 083 505 8588 jnhorne2702@gmail.com

The research study aims to highlight the experiences of principals of previously disadvantaged schools within a School-Based Management (SBM) framework. Revised education policies in South Africa since 1994 created challenges for the role of school principals. The study therefore serves to get insight into daily experiences and challenges of principals and SMT within a previously disadvantaged context.

Despite many impediments brought forth by past legislation, several previously disadvantaged schools display good management and school development practices. This study thus also aims to highlight these good practices, as it may add value to existing research on why previously disadvantaged schools perform well, despite the various impediments they have to endure.

Kindly note that the research study requires interviews with principals and SMT members as well as getting insight into school documents that will shed more light on how the school is managed. The researcher believes that you, as principal, and your SMT, are suitably placed and experienced to add value to the research study. You are therefore humbly requested to make yourself available for the research study to gain a proper understanding into the daily experiences of those persons responsible for school management.

Kindly find attached hereto a **Research Study Information Leaflet** to foster a broader understanding of the envisaged study. A **Consent Form** is also attached if you agree to participate in the research study. For any further information about any aspect of this study, please contact Mr. J. Horne at 053-8396757 or via email at [jnhorne2702@gmail.com](mailto:jnhorne2702@gmail.com). You may also contact the researcher's supervisor, Dr. B. Plaatjies, at 051-4012955 or via email at [PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za](mailto:PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za).

Your availability to participate in sharing your valuable experiences around school management will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J N Horne', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

**J N Horne**



## Appendix E



### RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET

#### **DATE OF RESEARCH**

3 September 2017 to 30 November 2017.

#### **TITLE OF RESEARCH**

Dynamics of School-Based Management in Previously Disadvantaged Schools in South Africa

#### **DETAILS OF RESEARCHER**

<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Student Number</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Johann Nico Horne	2015319953	(053) 839 6757 (w) 083 505 8588 jnhorne2702@gmail.com

#### **FACULTY**

Faculty of Education

#### **STUDY LEADER**

Dr. B. Plaatjies  
9301  
051-4012955 / PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za

#### **WHAT IS RESEARCH?**

Research is something we do to find new knowledge about things and people work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about aspects like people and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families, their health and so forth. We do this to try to make the world a better place!

#### **WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

The study aims to highlight the experiences of principals and SMT members of disadvantaged schools within the context of various post-apartheid legislation acts.

#### **WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?**

The research will be conducted by Mr. J. Horne, a former principal and currently employed as Deputy Chief Education Specialist at the Head Office of the Northern Cape Department of Education, Kimberley.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?**

The study has received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the UFS. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher.

**WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?**

As principal or SMT member of a disadvantaged school, you are suitably placed to share experiences of school management within a previously disadvantaged context. You will therefore be able to highlight challenges as well as good practices within previously disadvantaged schools.

**WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

**CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?**

Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

**WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

Your peers in similar school management positions can use findings to overcome similar challenges they might experience. Findings can also be used by policymakers to implement interventions for schools management based on recommendations made by yourself and other participants.

**WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

All efforts will be made to ensure the confidentiality of information. Names of schools and of participants will thus not be made known. Pseudonyms will also be used to protect the privacy of participant schools and individuals. Answers will be given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym, and participants will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods, such as conference proceedings.

**HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY BE DESTROYED?**

Hard copies of answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet at home for future research or academic purposes, and electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

Participation in this study is voluntary and no financial incentives will be given.

**HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANTS BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?**

For information on the final research findings or any further information about any aspect of this study, please contact Mr. J Horne at 053-8396757 or via email at [jnhorne2702@gmail.com](mailto:jnhorne2702@gmail.com). Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr. B. Plaatjies at 051-4012955, or via email at [PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za](mailto:PlaatjiesBO@ufs.ac.za)

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.**

## Appendix F



### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name), confirm that Mr. J. Horne asked my consent to take part in this research and told me about the nature, procedure and potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read the information that has been explained to me, and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study. I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty. I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publication and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured/focus group interview.

I have received a copy of the informed consent agreement.

Full name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G



### INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTION SCHEDULE

Please answer the following questions on the implementation of a School-Based Management framework in South African schools which decentralised decision-making on various school matters to the school.

#### A. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

PRINCIPALS	GENDER		AGE			QUALIFICATIONS				YEARS IN POST				
	Male	Female	20-35	36-50	51-65	M + 3	M + 4	ACE	Post-grad	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 & more
Principal 1														
Principal 2														
Principal 3														

#### B. QUESTIONS TO USE AS POINT OF DEPARTURE TO DIRECT INTERVIEW

1. Please name the important educational policies, laws and/or acts implemented by the government after the 1994 democratic elections, which influence how schools are managed.
2. Can you give your own interpretation on the South African Schools' Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) and how it impacts on your management role?
3. List the most important management roles and responsibilities you have to execute daily.
4. SBM implies that decision-making over school matters are made by stakeholders within the school.
  - 4.1 What types of management decisions are made at your school?
  - 4.2 Who are involved in making these decisions?
5. Describe how SMT members assist you with managing the school.
6. What skills should SMT members have to assist in school management, and do the SMT members of your school have these skills?
7. SBM also requires an active role of parents in school governance.
  - 7.1 What role does the parent component play in the SGB?

7.2 In your opinion, do parents in the SGB have the necessary skills and capacity to execute their duties as required?

8. Do your school have adequate resources (human, infrastructure, financial) to enhance learning and teaching?
9. Name the progress the school has made under your leadership and describe how such progress has been made.
10. Give any recommendation to ensure that government policies like SBM are implemented successfully.

## Appendix H



### FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMTS) INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions on the implementation of a School-Based Management framework in South African schools which decentralised decision-making on various school matters to the school.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS	GENDER		AGE			QUALIFICATIONS				CURRENT POST		YEARS IN MANAGEMENT				
	Male	Female	20-35	36-50	51-65	M + 3	M + 4	ACE	Post Grad	Deputy	HOD	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 & more
1																
2																
3																
4																
5																
6																

#### QUESTIONS TO USE AS POINT OF DEPARTURE TO DIRECT INTERVIEW

1. School-Based Management requires that role players like teachers actively participate in amongst others, school management.
  - 1.1 What are the roles and responsibilities of the SMT in school management?
  - 1.2 What structures are in place to ensure effective school management at your school?
2. What training did you receive in the last year to strengthen management skills?
3. How do you view the contribution made by parents as part of the SGB?
4. List the progress your school has made and how such progress came about.
5. What assistance is needed to implement a sustainable SBM strategy in schools?

## Appendix I



### CHECKLIST FOR THE EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTS

NO	Document	Not available	Poorly done	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	<b>Vision &amp; Mission</b> Is the vision and mission clearly spelled out?						
2	<b>School Policies</b> Are school policies in place and regularly updated						
3	<b>School Improvement Plans</b> Are School Improvement Plans in place with clearly defined targets and continuous monitoring systems?						
4	<b>Agenda &amp; Minutes</b> Are agendas and minutes of meetings available and do it reflects decisions to address school progress and how to overcome challenges being experienced?						
5	<b>Communication with stakeholders</b> Is evidence (e.g. notices of school functions, brosjures) available which reflect regular interaction with stakeholders like parents, learners, broader school community?						
6	<b>Staff Development</b> Is evidence available of staff development needs and trainings attended?						