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**EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP IN
ENSURING EFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN TOWNSHIP SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

by

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DISSERTATION

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DECLARATION

I, TSHEDISO KENETH KHANTSI (2014085068), hereby declare that the Master's research study that I herewith submit to the University of the Free State for the Master's qualification in Educational Management and Leadership is my independent work and I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another higher education institution.



Khantsi Tshediso Keneth

30 July 2024

Date

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ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

In this qualitative study, the researcher has explored collaborative leadership as a way of ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools, thereby helping to improve learner academic performance and discipline. A literature search on national, continental and international sources was conducted on how to the members of school governance can use collaborative leadership strategies to improve the academic performance and discipline in township secondary schools. The study was furthermore grounded in a theoretical framework by David Chrislip and Carl Larson named the Collaborative Leadership Theory.

Using thematic analysis, themes were identified, and data were analysed and interpreted through logical reasoning to determine the relationship, trends and patterns of the study in order to bring meaning to a set of data. The findings revealed that, even though the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996) promulgates the participation of parents and learners in the SGB, they participate the least, due to a number of factors. As a result, there is a lack of collaborative leadership. Although this lack of participation is of serious concern, the study found that it has quite a minimum impact on the academic performance of the learners. The study therefore recommends regular training of parents and learners to help improve their participation. The study further recommends the election of learners in lower grades (particularly Grade 10) into the SGB to allow for sufficient time in governance.

Keywords: Collaborative Leadership, Legislation and School Governance, Representative Council of Learners (RCL), School Governing Body

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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Collaborative leadership is described as any association between various people who are doing the same work and have the same vision of achieving good results for an organisation (Modha, 2021:356). These individuals split their authority, accountability and responsibility to achieve the intended outcomes (Mohda, 2021:357). Effective school governance, on the other hand, is one of the most vital determinants of a school's success or failure (Lorentzen & McCaw, 2017:11). According to Connolly and James (2022:03), governance is typically defined as the process of governing a particular social entity and it usually draws attention to complicated processes and interactions that composes of patterns of rules. For the purpose of this study, maximum learner academic performance and good discipline are the two most important focuses of effective school governance. Muralidharan and Singh (2020:01) found that, to avoid widespread learning crises in the developing countries internationally, there has been an increase in the implementation of reforms to help improve school governance.

The inception of a democratic governance in South Africa post-apartheid brought about several transformations in most legislation, including in the education sector, which reshaped the entire educational system from the initial racially segregated system of the apartheid government pre-1994 to a more democratic system (Khoza, 2021:1). According to Gqeba (2021:39), the purpose of learner and parental involvement in governance structures in schools is to ensure that the interests of all parties are safeguarded, and that their views are presented.

These fundamental principles were made possible by introducing legislation like the *South African Schools Act*, no. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b). This Act's promulgation made provision for the formation of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) who should be the main participants in the governance of public schools. This body includes parents, Representative Council of Learners (RCL members), and both teachers and non-teaching staff members (Zulu, Bhengu & Mkhize 2021:208). The nature of this legislation speaks directly to this study's purpose as it aims to examine the collaboration that exists between the various stakeholders who are involved in school

governance as recommended by the School's Act. The publication of the White Paper 2 (RSA DoE, 1996:17) on school organisation, school governance and school funding was one other attempt of the Department of Education to try and promote democracy in the general administration and running of the schools. The paper made provision for the mandatory participation of all stakeholders, including learner representatives, parents, members of the staff who are not teacher, teachers as well the principals in their capacity of being ex-officio members. According to Galster (2018:2), the introduction of the SGBs, which replaced School Committees, played a crucial role in ascertaining transparency and accountability in public schools and consequently in increasing the quality of the educational system in the country.

1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

According to Zulu, Bhengu, and Mkhize (2021:207), leading a township school is a complicated and a difficult task. One of the reasons for these complexities apparent in township schools is the ongoing legacy left by the Bantu education policy of the South African apartheid system (Gallo, 2020:03), which had its restrictions on the delivery of good and up to standard education for the black majority in South Africa. These educational and socio-economic factors that eventuated as a result of this system called for the implementation of redress policies post-1994, as the new democracy dawned.

These redress policies included the *South African Schools Act (SASA)* (RSA, 1996b) which highly supported democracy enhancement in education. The process of transformation in schools towards a more democratic educational system started in 1996 (Khoza, 2021:02). The establishment of SGBs in public schools was one way that SASA aimed to create more transparency, inclusivity and democracy in all government school in the country. According to Ajani et al. (2022:37), collaboration plays a very important role in effective school governance and, consequently, principals cannot manage governance on their own. It is therefore vital to involve all stakeholders in the SGB as well as the whole community in the school governance for the effective running of the school as promulgated in Chapter 3 of the *SASA* (RSA, 1996b). In line with the perspective of this inclusive and democratic educational system, this research study was carried out to investigate the influence of collaborative leadership in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Schools Act clearly outlines the duties and responsibilities of the SGB members in Chapter 3, Section 20(1) (RSA, 1996b). Despite the country's legislation efforts to create a democratic and socially equitable educational system, it is unavoidable to note the necessities of specialised skills needed by the members of the SGBs to try to carry out these functions (Mutekwe, 2020:04). In addition to the principals in their ex-officio capacity as a member of the SGB, Section 23(1) makes provision for the involvement of RCL members, members of the community, including the parents and guardians of children in the school, members of the staff who are not teachers as well as teachers, as mandatory members of the SGB. Consequently, an SGB is only in full complement if all these stakeholders are elected.

The challenge that arises is that the majority of parents in underdeveloped areas are usually uneducated (Tsotetsi & Ntombela, 2020:186). Consequently, parents are reluctant to participate in meetings and training due to a lack of comprehension and because the language that is often used in these gatherings, which is English, they are unfamiliar with. Parents, therefore, rely on the principals and teacher members for the interpretation of most legislation, and they end up delegating some of their duties to the principals, which may pose a hindrance to collaborative leadership.

Learners, on the other hand, also face numerous challenges in executing their roles in governance, although their participation in school governance is mandatory. Gamede (2021:74) highlights a few of these challenges, including cultural hindrances and stereotypes by older SGB members. These prevalent challenges have led to the exclusion of the RCL members who are mandated by *the Schools Act* to be in the SGB. Moreover, the learners themselves are mostly seen as reluctant to participate in any governance activities, as they too, sometimes question the value of their inputs (Gamede, 2021:78).

The problem identified during the conduct of this study is that the lack of proficient governance from the parents and the learner-members in the SGB which is quite concerning as it has led to unfamiliarity with some important legislation necessary for efficient governing of a school, poor contributions to meetings and training, feeling intimidated by other knowledgeable members as well as undermining their own roles in the school governance (Slabbert, 2021:05).

It is important that all the members of the school governance work together as recommended by the legislation, in order to allow full participation of all the members for effective and efficient governance. As a result, the researcher is of the belief that there is an insufficient collaboration of leadership in most SGBs in township secondary schools. This study therefore wished to explore the influence of collaboration in ensuring effective governance.

1.3.1 Research Question

The primary research question which was formulated to serve as a guide to the secondary research questions was:

What influence can collaborative leadership have on ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools?

Secondary Research Questions

To delve deeper, in a quest to find more information to respond to the primary research question, the below secondary research questions were developed:

1. How can collaborative leadership assist in ensuring optimum learner academic performance and discipline in schools?
2. What is each stakeholder's collaborative role in ensuring effective school governance?
3. How do stakeholders experience collaborative leadership in township secondary schools?
4. What adaptations to current practices should the stakeholders make to improve collaborative leadership in township secondary schools?

1.3.2 Research Aim and Objectives

This qualitative research was conducted to examine the collaborative leadership's influence in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools. The main aim was to establish if the lack of collaboration by other members of school governance has any impact on the performance and discipline of the learners.

Further objectives included:

1. To explore the assistance of collaborative leadership in ensuring optimum learner academic performance and discipline in schools.
2. To investigate each stakeholder's collaborative role in ensuring schools' effective governance.
3. To examine the stakeholders' collaborative leadership experiences in township secondary schools.
4. To investigate adaptations to current practices that the stakeholders should make in order to improve collaborative leadership in township secondary schools.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a collection of theories that are connected and developed in order to assist the researcher in scaffolding a study, provide a ground for the research and relate those concepts to the study (Varpio, Paradis & Uijtdehaage, 2020:990).

For the purpose of this research, a theory by David Chrislip and Carl Larson named "The Collaborative Leadership Theory" was adopted. This theoretical framework highlights the importance of bringing together people with the same vision, equipping them with the necessary resources and expecting positive outcomes for the organisation. Further deliberation of this theoretical framework is in the next Chapter. In the following section, the focus is on how the researcher aimed to obtain more knowledge as well as comprehension using a close interaction with the participants, who in this case are the members of school governance to be able to respond to the research questions. Therefore, a brief look into the research methodology and research design will take place.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Asenahabi (2019:77) explains that research can be defined as a systematic process of unearthing and improving the human knowledge, which can assist in solving a particular problem or make an innovative contribution to an existing problem. Chapter

3 gives a more detailed discussion of the study's paradigm, research design as well as research approach.

1.6 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

Interpretivism paradigm was adopted for the purpose of this research because the researcher wanted to obtain detailed meaning as well as facts from individuals who were taking part in the study (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:41). This type of research paradigm provides the researcher chance to be part of the participants investigated to allow for a more contextual understanding (Singh, 2019:10), in particular, how the members of school governance collaborate in the execution of their roles in the SGB. As a result, the interpretivist paradigm was the most relevant paradigm, since the aim was to gain detailed comprehension that collaborative leadership could play in ensuring effective school governance.

1.6.1 The Research Design

This research is conducted using a case study design which gave the researcher much broader category for analysis (Hancock, Algozzine & Lim, 2021:15), while giving the researcher an extensive look at the phenomenon and individual that is being investigated through interactions and a wide variety of data collection methods (Schoch, 2020:246). The usage of an exploratory research design seemed more relevant to the researcher because the aim was to discover various schools so as to unearth different patterns, trends and behaviour of the members of school governance in secondary schools.

1.6.2 The Research Approach

To obtain the lived experiences of the research participants first-hand (Alase, 2017:9), qualitative research approach was used. According to Islam and Aldaihani (2022:2), qualitative research grants the researcher a chance to investigate the quality of the phenomenon of interest. To gain greater comprehension of the participants' truthful and real perspective, the researcher decided to use interviews. Thus, as put by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2020:12), this type of approach gives researchers a chance to investigate individuals' lived experiences by putting into use various types of interviews such as structured and semi-structured interviews as well as focus

groups. Qualitative research was therefore the most suitable approach, seeing that there was a lot of probing that took place in a quest to explore more on whether the members of the SGB are working in collaboratively or not.

1.6.3 Research Population

The population of this study consisted of various individuals and entities that the study focused on who share the same characteristics (Hossan, Dato & Jaharuddin, 2023:211). In addition, Moser and Kortsjens (2018:10) assert that the study's population is key in any research as it helps the researcher to arrive at a particular conclusion by generalising their findings. The sample population for this study was drawn from three quintile 3 secondary schools situated in Botshabelo, Free State Province.

1.6.4 Selection of the Participants

Purposive sampling method was used in this research in order to select individuals who took part in this study. Mweshi and Sakyi (2020:180) explains that sampling procedure is a process that a researcher uses to select a few participants out of a larger number of individuals who are of interest to the researched phenomena. Additionally, Bhardwaj (2019:161) defines purposive sampling as a method used to gather data which helps to select participants, with the study purpose as the main criteria. Consequently, the researcher found this method as the most relatable for this research seeing that the selected participants had a direct contribution to the governance of the school. Thus, to obtain the study's intended outcomes, the principals, three RCL learners, three SGB chairpersons and three teachers serving in the SGB formed part of the study.

1.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

To collect data, the researcher made use of two instruments, namely the face-to-face interviews and open-ended questionnaires. According to Jain (2021:541), interviews are helpful in acquiring a much broader comprehension of why and how certain things happen. On the other hand, Phellas, Bloch and Seale (2011:183) are of the idea that questionnaires are more suitable in situations where the researcher provides only a few questions that the participants can easily understand and be able to answer with

ease. Therefore, the researcher dedicated the interviews to the principals and the teachers, which are believed to be more eloquent, while the questionnaires were given to the learners and the parents, as there is more clarity and ease to the response of the questions. Chapter 3 provides more insightful information on data collection.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGY

Mezmir (2020:15) defines data analysis strategy as a systematic way that can allow a reader to make sense to a set of data by providing structure and coherence. In addition, the author sets forth that analysed data create consistency to the data, while maintaining the originality of the data (Mezmir, 2020:15). The data collected was therefore analysed by using themes. A more comprehensive data analysis is conducted later in Chapter 3.

1.9 QUALITY ASSURANCE

For quality assurance of this study, trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, and dependability and confirmability were conducted.

1.9.1 Trustworthiness

Ravitch and Carl (2016:204) describes trustworthiness as actions taken by a qualitative researcher to confirm that their findings are honest and truthful as obtained from participants' lived experiences and perspectives. McGinley et al. (2020:10) additionally describes trustworthiness as the ability to establish the same constructs in different types of ways. To ascertain this study's trustworthiness, confirmability, dependability, transferability and credibility played an important role and were thoroughly addressed in the study.

1.9.2 Credibility

Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) explain that credibility has more to do with the true value of the study and further aims to establish if whether the data were interpreted correctly or not. Additionally, Nassaii (2020:428) describes credibility as a qualitative research concept that determines the truthfulness of the study by ensuring that the research is believable or not. To ascertain credibility of this study, the researcher

carefully transcribed the data verbatim and through a concise and careful interpretation of the data.

1.9.3 Dependability

Korstjens and Moser (2018:122) furthermore explains that dependability has more to do with consistency and it helps the researcher to check if whether the data analysis process corresponds with the accepted standard of the study's design. Furthermore, McGinley et al. (2020:10) found that dependability is a technique that can assist the researcher in obtaining similar results and findings if the same research is repeated, using the same methods, setups and participants. To ascertain the dependability of this study, elaborate and extensive data were collected. Moreover, the researcher made use of triangulation by using two types of data collection methods and an extensive analysis.

1.9.4 Transferability

According to Ghafouri and Ofoghi (2016:1917), transferability can be defined as having the same research findings in two different settings, presently and in the future, and still having suitable findings. Moreover, transferability is one way that a researcher can obtain similar findings from different studies, making use of different set of participants and context. To ascertain the transferability, the researcher thoroughly described the methodology in Chapter 3.

1.9.5 Confirmability

Confirmability has more to do with how much other people can confirm the research findings, and this can be obtained by making sure that the interpretations and results of the research are accurately derived from the collected data (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016:1917). In addition, confirmability entails the processes that can be used to ensure that research is free of any bias and is completely objective (Meihami, 2020:50). To ascertain the confirmability, all the data that was collected were safely archived and can be accessible if the study findings are challenged.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The implementation of favourable ethical principles in a qualitative study is of paramount importance (Arifin, 2018:30). The need for ethical consideration in a qualitative study is mainly due to the protection of human objects, which in this case are the people who have been identified to take part in the research study. An important factor to take cognisance of during research is the participants' privacy, and according to Clark-Kazak (2017:13), it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the protection of the participants and to refrain from disclosing any personal information that might compromise the anonymity of the participants.

As a result, all the necessary precautions to ensure the protection and safety of the participants were taken throughout the entire research process. Consequently, the researcher firstly requested permission to conduct the research in the three schools from the Department of Education in the Free State (see Appendix B) after getting ethical clearance from the ethics committee of the University (see Appendix A), the researcher subsequently requested permission to collect data from the schools from the three principals (see Appendix D). Moreover, informed consent of all the participants (see Appendix E) as well as voluntary participation were two ways the researcher ensured the safety of all the participants. Learners who are underage were requested to complete assent forms (see Appendix F), and permission was also obtained from the parents of learners who are underage (see Appendix G) to ascertain the safety of the learners.

1.11 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was mainly aimed at exploring the influence that collaborative leadership can have in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools. The findings of this study can assist the members of school governance on how to ensure that all the members are actively involved, and able to execute their expected duties as members of school governance in full. Moreover, the information gained may provide the Department of Education officials with some insightful strategies on how to allow for a more participative engagement of all the members in school governance as established during the data collection stage.

1.12 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The study's chapter layout is as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

The background of the study and its scope are detailed in this chapter. Additionally, this chapter provides a highlight of the research problem statement, research questions and objectives, theoretical framework and literature review, methodology and ethical clearance.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, a detailed review of the literature is discussed, with a focus on the South African legislation on school governance, and an overview of international best practices and causes of poor governance. This chapter also provides an outline of the adopted theoretical framework.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter, an outline of the research's methodology and design that is followed in the execution of this study is given. It describes the qualitative methods embedded in the interpretivist paradigm, together with the convergent research design. Moreover, the data collection, design and interpretation techniques are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Interpretation

This chapter was focused on the presentation, discussion and analysis of the data collected. The collected data were analysed, and the findings were compared against the existing literature to either disagree or agree with the findings.

Chapter 5: Research Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter provided the summary that emanated from the data collected and provides the recommendations thereof. The conclusions drawn from the study are also presented in this chapter.

1.13 SUMMARY

The introductory chapter provided the study's background and basis for the conducting of research. The research problem statement, questions and objectives were

formulated, and a brief overview of the research methodology and design was highlighted.

Chapter 2 explores the literature review and theoretical perspectives of effective school governance, and measures to promote such.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature review plays a very important role in a research study, as it helps to gather the available knowledge and investigates the state of the research field (Linnenluecke, Marrone & Singh, 2020:175). Paul and Criado (2020:1) also postulate that a literature review supplies an extensive overview that relates to the study's themes, theory as well as methods and then incorporates prior studies to expand the foundation of knowledge.

This study conducted an extensive search for literature using academic journals, books, articles and online sources. The literature review equipped the researcher with necessary information to identify important themes and arguments around the topic of interest. The researcher was therefore able to discover sufficient information to have a proper understanding of school governance in South Africa. The information also led to adequate information on the composition of the School Governing Body (SGB) members, the challenges they face, their functions as well as the roles of each SGB member. Furthermore, information related to effective governance in some countries was established, and finally, South African laws and policies on governance were well reviewed.

The literature review in this chapter also examined a theoretical framework related to the main issue of the subject matter which is leadership. The study aimed to draw connections to the existing theories of leadership and incorporate them into the challenges in schools, which can lead to poor participation of other stakeholders. This could potentially cause poor academic performance and lack of good discipline from the learners.

The facilitation of the arguments centred around the importance of including everyone in schools' policy implementation processes as well as any decision-making processes that includes other stakeholders. This was supported by the identified theory, which asserted that, for good organisation outcomes to be achieved, team members have to be brought together, be equipped with necessary content and information, and share

the same values and objectives. In this case, the team members would include the members of the SGB.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.2.1 Definition of School Governance

Connolly and James (2022:3) defines governance as a process of controlling and decision-making for a particular social entity. According to the authors, the significance of effective school governance is to ensure the legitimacy of schools as institutions and further oversee and enable school processes (Connolly & James, 2023:2).

2.2.2 Regulation of School Governance – Law and Education in South Africa

Access to education across the world translates into every child being able to obtain important knowledge that can allow them a chance to live and adapt in the ever-transforming world (Mestry, 2017:2). Similarly, the South African government's mandate, especially within the democratic dispensation, is to ensure that marginalisation and inequalities of the past play no role in the education of children nowadays. This is made possible by a number of acts and policies that are going to be discussed in the section below.

2.2.2.1 The South African Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996

Chapter 2 of this constitution is the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996a). Section 8(1) stipulates that this Bill of Rights is applicable to everyone and puts together laws, the administrative, judiciary, and all structures of the government. This Bill of Rights furthermore promotes important values such as "*freedom of expression, human dignity, freedom of association, education, and human dignity*", to name a few. Consequently, everyone in this country, including the government, should respect and uphold all the values of this constitution.

2.2.2.2 The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996

The establishment of this Act was to come up with improved national system for education in South Africa, which would assist to address all the injustices created by the past apartheid system by ensuring a provision of progressively good-quality education for all the learners, which would consequently advance transformation and

eradicate all forms of discrimination, intolerance and ensure the economic well-being of everyone (RSA, 1996a:5).

2.2.2.3 Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998

“The purpose of this act is to regulate the employment of educators by the government, the administration of the conditions of service, educators’ discipline, their retirement, discharge, and matters connected to this”.

2.2.2.4 The National Education Policy No. 27 of 1996

The provision of this act is to primarily allow the amendment of the previous National Policy for General Education Affairs Act of 1984, and to provide afresh for the resolution of the policy on the salaries and employment conditions of educators, as well as other matters related therewith. This Act further aims to administer the democratic transformation of the South African national education system into a system that focuses on serving the interests and needs of the South Africans, and consequently upholds their basic human rights.

2.2.2.5 Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM)

In accordance with section 4 of the *Educators’ Employment Act* (RSA, 1998), the PAM document sets out the terms and regulations of the employment for educators. This document is applicable to all school educators, and serves as a guide to the expected conducted of the teachers in South Africa.

2.2.3 Governance and the South African Democracy: Democratisation of Education

An SGB is a statutory body which compromises four elements of representatives, namely the parents, the teaching staff, non-teaching staff and the learners (Nxumalo, Gamede & Uleanya, 2021:578). Nwosu and Chukwuere (2017:3) add that this statutory body is mandated by the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b) to set the policies and rules aimed at governing the school and ensuring an efficient running of the school among other responsibilities.

The inception of democracy in 1994 brought about a number of changes in the South African Constitution. One of the changes included the decentralisation of the education system in which parents, educators, non-teaching staff and learners were granted the

authority to govern the schools as per Section 20 of the *South African Schools Act 84* (RSA 1996b:14). According to this section, the functions of the SGB includes the promotion of the best interests of the school through a provision of good and standardised education for all the learners. Consequently, the decision-making processes in schools are now defined by the participation of all stakeholders who have been elected democratically to serve in the School Governing Body (Mokoena & Machaisa, 2018:139).

Tan, Lyu and Peng (2020:241) set forth that many policymakers, educators and school leaders advocate for the idea of parents working together with schools and being actively involved in the education of their children. It is believed that this will not only enhance the school-family communication between the two parties, but it will also help to alleviate learner disciplinary challenges and ultimately contribute positively towards learner academic achievement. Gcelu (2019:2) asserts that stakeholders' collaboration in organisations tends to yield positive results. Similarly, Malluhi and Alomran (2019:88) further reveal that relationships between the members of the community and the school play a massive role in the development of successful schools. This development will only be realised if there is a common understanding between the different stakeholders, and if the common goal is for the betterment of the learners.

Anderson and Stephenson (2021:14) define democracy as a technique of mutual decision-making that involves equality in the process. These in-school setups would involve participation in establishing and implementing policies to govern the school. Policies such as the learner's code of conduct, safety and security policies and financial policies of the school, to name only a few.

In establishing the *Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b), the South African government aimed to empower the previously marginalised groups by ensuring their involvement through active participation. The main aim was to have a more inclusive education system, which was contrary to what the previous education system of the apartheid advocated. The aim was also to ensure that decision-making was decentralised as per the legitimate powers that the governing bodies have been vested with, to regulate the administration of schools, although the principal remains the accounting officer for the institution (Naidoo, 2019:2). Naidoo (2019:1) further argues that poor leadership

displayed by principals have the potential of contributing to poor learner performance and low educational outcomes.

It is for this reason that this study aims to establish the relationship between good collaboration of the stakeholders and the results which can be yielded in terms of not only the learners' academic performance, but the general learner discipline as well.

2.2.4 Composition of the School Governing Body

The *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b) commissions institutional leaders and office bearers such as school principals, educators, learners and parents through the establishment of the School Governing Body to formulate and implement school policies (Mathebula, Runhare & Marishane, 2021:170). Consequently, section 23(1) of the *South African Schools Act* (RSA 1996b) stipulates that SGBs in schools should consist of the following members:

“The principal – By virtue of their official capacity, principals become ex-officio members of the SGB.”

“The parents or guardians of learners at school” – According to SASA, parents or guardians of learners are primarily responsible for their children's education (RSA 1996:16). However, a parent who is employed at the school cannot serve as an SGB member of the same school.

The teacher – As remarkable figures in the educational sphere who possess the potential to influence the educational outcomes (Kim, Jorg & Klassen, 2019:163), teachers are also involved in the governance of the school, and as a result, they are also elected to the SGB.

Non-teaching staff members – This includes personnel members who work at the school but are not actually teaching the learners in the classrooms, thereby not involved in the teaching process directly.

The learners – Section 11(1) of SASA sets forth that a representative council of learners must be put in place in all public schools that enrol learners in Grade 8 and higher. Such learners that are democratically elected by their fellow learners may be eligible to serve in the SGB.

2.2.5 Functions of the SGB Members in School Governance

According to Kruger, Beckmann and Du Plessis (2022:312), SASA and its introduction of the SGB changed the functions of the principal as the sole decision maker at public-school institutions. The legislation gave effect to a more participatory form of leadership in which there is more redistribution of power between the other stakeholders including the community, teachers and the learners.

Setlhodi (2020:1) highlights the importance of cooperation between the School Management Team (SMT) and the SGB in schools as a way of establishing desirable services to the clients, which in this case would be good learner results. Lumphoko (2019:55) concurs and asserts that the difficulty of the current society requires a close collaboration or partnership between the school and home as a measure to ensure the achievement of educational goals and improvement in learner academic outcomes.

However, Aina and Bipath (2020:3) put forth that, the involvement of other stakeholders in decision-making is often to a bare minimum, if any at all. This is due to the notion of some principals that the involvement of other stakeholders is a waste of time, especially if the members of the SGB have low levels of education (Aina & Bipath, 2020:3).

The SGB has a number of responsibilities they are obliged to carry out at schools. This includes managing and regulating school properties such as buildings, furniture and grounds that are used by the learners. Furthermore, the SGB is entrusted with the responsibility of supporting the principal and staff in tasks such as recommending the appointment of the staff in schools in accordance with the *Educators Employment Act* (RSA, 1998) and the *Labour Relations Act* (RSA, 1995c).

One other important task that is assigned to the SGB that this study will also focus on, is their responsibility to put in place and maintain a learner code of conduct in schools. The above-mentioned responsibilities have the potential of either making or breaking the school. This research's focus is on the ability to ascertain effective school governance as a result of collaborative effort. According to Khuzwayo (2019:13), positive partnerships between stakeholders can reduce problems by finding solutions collectively.

In the following section, the discussion will be on the roles of each member of the SGB. The aim of this discussion is to establish thoroughly whether the other stakeholders are well aware of their importance, and if their participation in school governance is maximised, thereby establishing the importance of ensuring effective school governance.

2.2.5.1 The Role of the Principal

In terms of section 16(3) of the *SASA* (RSA, 1996b), “*the professional management of a public school must be spearheaded by the principal under the authority of the provincial Head of Department*”. Furthermore, section 23(1) (b) identifies the “*principal as an ex-officio member of the SGB*”. It is for these reasons that the principal is seen as the most significant role-player in both school governance and school management.

Nhlapo (2020:3) asserts that it is the duty of the principal to ensure that appropriate policies are established and that decisions are taken in an objective and collective way. To achieve all of this, the principal has to see to it that formal meetings are arranged in which matters concerning the running of the school are addressed regularly and when the need arises. Principals are also expected to ensure that teaching and learning are maximised in schools and that all the resources needed to see this through are available as much as possible. Ensuring that all the planning and implementations are in the best interests of the school is another vital responsibility of the principal.

Jansen (2019:19) states that by implication, it is vital that principals are innovative and visionary, are able to take calculated risks, and always promote collaboration by building trust among stakeholders and ensuring cooperative goals. Furthermore, Dimakstso, Modise and Themaba (2022:155) posit that accountability refers to taking responsibility for one’s own actions in an organisation, and this can include providing an explanation to other stakeholders for performance, actions and decisions taken.

Principals are often faced with the challenge of poor contribution and participation from the other stakeholders in terms of proper school governance. Majority of the members in the SGB are the parents, and Heystek (2011:461) suggests that it is the responsibility of the principal to ascertain the functionality of the SGB by taking practical decisions when other members find it difficult to execute their expected functions.

2.2.5.2 The Role of the Parents

The SGB composition in South Africa consists of democratically elected parents or guardians who can either be the biological parents of the child or people who are legal guardians and are legible legally to take full custody of the child (Mngomezulu, Lawrence & Mabusela, 2021:218). These authors further state that the chairperson of the SGB should be a parent member and should be assisted by the principal. This leadership position by default gives the parents a very pivotal role in the governance of the school.

Prior to 1994, parents had minimal participation and very little recognition in the education of their children (Kern, 2022:41). The introduction of SASA in 1996 recognised parents as integral partners in the learners' education. This new recognition embraces the importance of parental participation by creating a more inclusive system in which there are shared values and where responsibilities and decision-making process are more decentralised. According to Obadire and Sinthumule (2021:6), the school that works together with the community in school discipline is greatly supported by parents and, consequently, has fewer disciplinary issues and high levels of academic performance.

There is, however, evidence of literature that suggests that the involvement and participation of parents in school governance is very little and, in most cases, very insignificant, despite the new dispensation of decentralised education as per the SASA. Such literature includes that of Segoe and Bisschoff (2019:165), who allude that, according to their research, the insignificant and minimum participation and involvement of the parents in school governance are due to poor comprehension of their roles as stakeholders.

Similarly, the fact that some of these parents, especially those from disadvantaged areas such as townships have little schooling, also contribute to poor participation. Triegaardt and Monamoleli (2021:91) concur with these findings and also posit that parents with poor backgrounds often do not have enough time to focus on their children's education because, due to their illiteracy, they are subjected to working long hours, at hard labour work with a low income.

Parents are, however, obliged to be fully responsible and engaged in their children's education if the goal is to achieve good discipline and maximise learner performance.

This statement is supported by section 23(2)(a) of the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b), which stipulates that the membership of the SGB for an ordinary school should comprise the parents of learners at school. Zenda (2021:125) agrees and explains that the parental involvement policy can only be successful if sufficient effort is taken to ensure effective parental participation in school activities.

Myende and Nhlumayo (2022:490) also postulate that enhancing and constantly developing the relations between parent members and teachers is fundamental for the personal and academic growth of the learners. The authors however also set forth that despite what the policy might mandate and the possible benefits of the collaboration between all the stakeholders, the involvement of parents presents a number of complexities. It is therefore essential that parents are assisted by all means to participate actively in school governance. The discussion of this will be provided more in detail later in the paper.

2.2.5.3 The Role of the Teacher

According to the *Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998* (RSA, 1998), an educator refers to any person who trains, teaches or provides information to other people. Similarly, Wermeke, Rick and Salonkangas (2019:306) regard a teacher as a multidimensional role-player in the education of a learner, and this includes in domains such as educational and developmental social spheres. Fauth et al. (2019:2) concur with this statement and add that teacher competence may serve as a vital lever that can be used for the improvement of quality education and better student outcome. Furthermore, Chapter 23(2)(b) of *SASA* (RSA, 1996b) clearly states that the membership of a school governing body should consist of elected members, including educators at the school.

Despite this significant role played by the teacher, the representation of teachers in the SGB is quite minimal, when compared to that of the parents. Research, however, suggests that the role played by educators in school governance is pivotal. A supportive relationship between the learner and the teacher has a great potential of ensuring less exclusionary school discipline, repeating of a grade and even fewer referrals to schools for learners with special needs (Redding, 2019:505). Among all the members in the school governance, the teachers have a more direct relationship

with the learners with regard to their learning, and consequently, they could potentially have an upper hand in the influence of their effective learning and good discipline.

The direct role that teachers have on learners is attributed mainly to the fact that they are the ones who deliver the content to them, and as a result, this determines their academic performance. Furthermore, learners spend majority of their time in the classroom with the teachers and consequently, the process of instilling discipline will primarily come from the teachers.

Leithwood, Sun and Schumaker (2020:575) identified four types of teacher commitments in their research on how leadership can influence learning. These authors found that teachers can be committed to teaching, committed to students, committed to the organisation and committed to change. The commitment, however, is often received from individuals with a sound belief in the organisation, full involvement and the desire to continue being part of the organisation.

2.2.5.4 The Role of the Learner

The *South African Schools Act* (RSA 1996b) mandates all public secondary schools to establish a Representative Council of Learners (RCL), which should be democratically elected by the learners, two of which will have representative seats in the SGB, mostly the president and the secretary (Eke, 2022:251). Having RCL members on the SGB by default gives the learners some power and influence in the decision-making and drafting of certain policies. Like any other member of the SGB, the learner's mandate is to represent their constituencies, which are other learners, and to voice out their concerns to the governors of the school.

Chapter 8 of the *SASA* (RSA, 1996b) stipulates that, in alliance with the appropriate provincial law, a learner code of conduct has to be adopted in all public schools, and this process should be in engagement with the learners, teachers at the school and parents of the learners. The primary focus for the establishment of this section is to ensure discipline, a conducive learning environment and quality learning outcomes. Some of the tasks that learners are required to carry out include maintaining order in schools, liaising and establishing good relations between the learners, the management and teachers, as well as reducing any form of ill-behaviour that goes against the learner code of conduct (Eke, 2022:252).

Well over 27 years since the pronouncement of SASA, learner governance still faces a lot of challenges in schools. This statement is supported by Gamede (2020:2), who argues that learners' contributions to school governance are not recognised by adults as significant or effective. This lack of contribution has more to do with the cultural background of the learners, especially in township and rural areas where children are raised with the notion and understanding that it is inappropriate and maybe even disrespectful to challenge adults.

Equally, Mathebula (2018:8) expands this point and adds that learner governance is mostly focused on form, which is the articulation of the rules, roles and the responsibilities as opposed to the active and essential participation of the learners.

The objective of this study is to investigate if whether the involvement and full participation of other stakeholders, including the learners, would have any positive effect on the promotion of effective school governance, with the main focus on good academic performance and good learner discipline.

2.3 EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE – PRACTICES ACROSS THE WORLD

Literature provides a broad definition of what governance is. Yuner and Burgaz (2019:374) define governance as the unity of public entities, private sectors, and non-governmental organisations. Fukuyama (2013:350), on the other hand, describes governance as the ability to create and enforce rules while ensuring that there is a delivery of the service. However, the focus of this study is on effective governance, not just any governance. The introduction of the *South African Schools Act 84* (RSA, 1996b) has a number of mandates such as redressing the inequalities of the apartheid system by creating a rather inclusive education system. One of the mandates as stipulated in section 20(1)(a) is that the SGB of a school must at all times advocate and promote the best interests of the organisation and aim for the school's development by providing quality education for all the learners at the school.

This section will briefly examine school governance in other parts of the world with the primary focus on The United States of America, the United Arab Emirates and Singapore. The reason for the selection of these countries is because they are among some of the highest rated countries worldwide in terms of performance comparisons according to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is a

programme for Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The programme measures the ability of 15-year-old learners in three main domains, which includes reading skills, mathematical literacy and scientific knowledge (Hopfenbeck et al., 2018:334).

The importance of outlining and reviewing the practices in other countries is to investigate and comprehend how they handle those vital areas, being effective governance, and the role it plays in good academic performance and good learner discipline. Furthermore, the goal is to assist South African policymakers and government authorities in reviewing some of the legislation and policies in school governance for better educational outcomes if necessary.

2.3.2 United States of America

In the United States of America, school boards, which are almost the same as SGBs, play a very important role in the political landscape, as they have been entrusted with the authority of running the educational system (Schueler & Bleiberg, 2022:162). The authors further explain that historically, education in the United States of America has been a local affair, largely such that local school boards are the ones with the primary responsibility of governing the schools. These school boards are bestowed with the power to hire and fire the principals responsible for the management of the school. Honingh, Ruiter and Van Thiel et al. (2020:65) add that it is the responsibility of the school boards to make positive contributions to the school's quality performance.

In the United States of America, school governance responsibilities are often in the hands of school boards that are democratically elected (Ford & Ihrke, 2016:87). According to Honingh et al. (2020:165), using a multilevel approach, which entails involving people from the broader community in which the school operates in such as the community members and parents as a board's working method has a positive indirect contribution to the learners' well-being. Although there are not enough empirical studies to explain the expected role that school boards should play in addressing student achievement (Gawlik & Allen, 2018:102), the authors assert that equipping board members with increased knowledge and skills to help improve their duties can greatly assist the schools in terms of quality learner outcomes.

2.3.3 United Arab Emirates

In the United Arab Emirates, school leaders make use of various effective collaborative, transformational and shared leadership practices as a way of improving parental volunteering and community engagement, which is regarded as effective factors for making schools a better place (Malluhi & Alomran. 2019:88). The authors emphasise the importance of parental involvement and collaboration in the educational process as a way of achieving desired educational goals (Malluhi & Alomran, 2019:89).

Although Ibrahim (2022:251) highlights the complexities of collaborative school culture and questions its feasibility, some of his findings reveal that schools that are characterised by a culture of collaboration normally have positive quality learning outcomes and improved teacher professional practice. Hammadi and Noor (2023:123) concur with these claims and add that collaborative learning helps to improve student motivation and has been found to create a positive working and learning environment. As previously mentioned, it is still vital in this case that members of school governors are sufficiently trained to enhance their knowledge of their roles and duties, since the country is already practising collaborative leadership in schools.

2.3.4 Singapore

According to Kim (2020:316), most countries in East Asia do not include parental involvement as part of their policy discourse, nor is parental involvement encouraged. The author further explains that in East Asia, most countries tend to make use of institutional characteristics that limit the influence of parents in school governance such as standardised school systems. These systems are mostly centrally managed by the state, as opposed to more decentralised and open systems such as those in the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

These findings are supported by O'Brien, Ng and Arshad (2020:442), who maintain that home literacy practice in countries in Eastern Asia, including Singapore, can easily be influenced by contextual factors such as the belief of parents about their children's academic development, their availability, and language barriers. Furthermore, although Singapore, like various other countries across the world, values the importance of the evolution of education, the phenomenon of Professional Learning

Communities (PLCs) remains very infant both in practice and in concept (Hairon & Dimmock, 2012:407). Contrary to the above findings, Wang, Gurr and Drysdale (2016:8) assert that Singaporean principals have engaged in collaborative partnerships as a measure to build quality relations with the other stakeholders including students, parents, the school board and the staff at schools.

2.4 CAUSES OF POOR GOVERNANCE IN SCHOOLS

2.4.1 Challenges for the Parents

Effective leadership plays a very pivotal role in ensuring that schools achieve and maximise their teaching goals. It assists to avoid learners' performance from being impacted adversely (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018:2). The authors further posit that the participation of parents in their children's education can be correlated with good academic performance, the enjoyment of school by the learners, improved school attendance, and fewer behavioural challenges. Sibanda (2015:27) further notes that the description of parental involvement goes beyond the participation of parents in school activities, but includes their involvement in their children's education at home.

Despite the abovementioned importance of parental involvement, research reveals that parental involvement in their children's education and their participation in school governance is limited to a minimum, which is due to parents' inability to carry out their roles as stipulated in the SASA (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018:4). Below some of the challenges that are faced by the parents that may lead to poor participation in school governance are discussed.

2.4.1.1 Lack of Training for Parents' Component

According to Xaba (2011:202), parents in the SGBs lack training and this results in uncertainties in their duties, and poor confidence to fulfil their tasks. It is important for parents to be well informed on the matters relating to school governance and the legal requirements thereof, as stipulated in the SASA, in order for them to carry out their mandate. Training by the Education Department is one way in which this knowledge can be imparted to such parents (Kern, 2022:57). Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018:4) argue that parents often shift their governance responsibilities and roles to the principal, which will continue to yield the misunderstanding and poor compliance of

SASA in South African schools. Moreover, the researchers suggest that parents find it very complex to implement the policies as part of their responsibilities. This statement is supported by Nxumalo et al. (2021:577), who add that SGB members have difficulty in keeping up with the legislation.

It is therefore clear that the SGB members should be trained by professionals in order for them to possess the required knowledge and consciousness of their roles and responsibilities. It is also essential for SGB members to have a clear comprehension of the constitution and other relevant policies emanating from it, to enable them to fluent themselves when being consulted in decision-making processes (Labuschagne, 2021:8). Masai and Kirwok (2021:48) reiterate the importance of capacitating and training of the members of the SGB. This will also assist them in setting targets and goals for the schools, and consequently assigning duties.

Section 21 of the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b) contains a number of roles that need to be accomplished by the SGB. These roles include the purchasing of textbooks, school equipment, educational material, and paying for school services. Furthermore, SGBs are entrusted with the role of administering, maintaining and taking control of school property such as buildings, the grounds and other assets. Labuschagne (2021:8) adds that one other crucial responsibility of the SGBs is to advance the school's mission statement to implement and execute a learner code of conduct of the school after consultation with the relevant stakeholders, and to determine the admission and school language policies. These responsibilities require a good knowledge and comprehension of legislation.

According to Ngobeni (2015:4), SGB members from previously disadvantaged communities are faced with a number of problems such as poor knowledge regarding the formulation of school policies, poor financial management, and the inability to come up with reasonable solutions to problems faced by stakeholders. Lumphoko (2019:65) concurs with these findings and adds that some of the SGB members feel that they are not adequately prepared to carry out their tasks; consequently, they often feel afraid to raise their opinions, because principals are more educated than they are. Kekana and Makura (2020:442), however, suggest the use of inclusive language during meetings as a way of creating spaces for debates and discussions among all the members of the school governance. The researcher believes that all these

challenges can be addressed and avoided if proper training is conducted for parents in the school governing bodies.

2.4.1.2 Poor Commitment from Parents' Component

Mestry (2020:4) postulates in his findings that most SGB members commit themselves to their governance role and make effective contributions to managing the school. Sibanda (2021:3), however, disagrees and sets forth that in townships, most parents have very low literacy levels with an absence of a reading culture. Such parents, including those in the SGB, according to the author, and are often faced with very high levels of poverty. Consequently, they spend most of their time preoccupied with survival strategies and often disregard school-related activities.

Section 20(1)(a) of the SASA (RSA, 1996) mandates SGB members to promote the best interests of the school at all times. However, poor commitment by parents to their governance roles and responsibilities will not yield such results. According to Mohapi and Chombo (2021:1), school governors are faced with a number of issues regarding their working relationships and failure to collaborate. According to their research, these challenges include low attendance of meetings by the parent governors. Slabbert (2021:40) suggests that one of the reasons for poor meeting attendance by the parent governors is due to having to choose between going to work, which would yield some form of income for them, and attending to school matters, which will not benefit them financially in any way.

2.4.1.3 Lack of Knowledge, Competence and Skills

Parental involvement is a service that is voluntary for the parents either at school or at home, with the objective of improving the child's education (Samuel-Okoyel, 2021:16). One other issue that may be deemed as a challenge for the parents' component is the lack of the knowledge, competence, and skills required to govern the school efficiently and effectively.

Mokwebo (2021:27) has found that there are some deficiencies in school governing bodies, particularly the parent members, when it comes to the required comprehension and skills needed to govern the schools. The author further postulates that for the academic achievement of learners to be possible and maximised, both the school and the parents have to work together to ensure a conducive learning environment for the

learners. However, Mavuso (2022:17) argues that lack of effective parental involvement sometimes can be attributed to the parents' attitude over certain issues. The author adds that parents are normally under the impression that their involvement in their children's schooling does not bring any change or positive effect, and they then distance themselves as a result.

2.4.2 Challenges for the Learner Representatives

2.4.2.1 Lack of Training for the Learner Representatives

As previously indicated, schools that have Grade 8 and above are mandated by the SASA to establish an RCL council in which there has to be a representative of such learners in the school governing body. According to Pendlebury (2010:44), it is the responsibility of the RCL learners to promote cohesive and good relations and communication between the learners, teachers and the community, to help in the maintenance of order, and to ensure responsible leadership by not only being a perfect example but by also ascertaining that learners abide by the school rules.

The goal of this study is to establish the extent to which learners and other stakeholders are allowed to fully carry out their duties as part of the school governors, and lack of training is considered to be one of those barriers.

Yu and Shay (2022:1) set forth that learner participation in school governance increases the variousness of perspectives and enhances the quality of decision-making and processes. Furthermore, according to the authors, a Teacher Liaison Officer (TLO) should be chosen by the school's principal to mediate between the learners and other stakeholders, as well as to oversee the training of the learners as per the updated roles and duties. Phaswana (2010:114) agrees and adds that in her findings, she established that there is a need for learners to learn some skills while in the RCL, and this includes leadership skills, conflict management skills, communication and negotiation skills.

Research, however, indicates that learner participation in school governance is very limited and artificial and that the learners are usually not taken seriously (Gqeba, 2021:38; Duma, 2014:1807; Dumako, 2019:27). According to Dumako (2019:29), it is important that all members of the school governance are trained on their roles and responsibilities, and that emphasis should be put on training on the implementation of

duties and making sure that there is an adherence to the stipulations of the relevant legislation. This training of stakeholders, particularly learners in this case, should be done in such a way that the objective is not only to fulfil the legislation requirements but to capacitate the stakeholders with the necessary skills to be good governors, and to ensure sustainable engagements and fulfilment of the organisation needs.

2.4.2.2 Duration of Learners in the RCL

Section 31 of the *South African Schools Act* highlights the term of office for members of the School Governing Body. Unlike other participants in the SGB, learners are the only component who have a limited term of office of only one year (RSA, 1996b). According to Mokoena and Machaisa (2018:139), although the SASA advocates active participation of the members of the SGB, some principals allow little, if any at all, of the subordinate participation in the decision-making processes of the school.

Despite these findings, Obadire and Sinthumule (2021:3) suggest that RCL members should be engaged and involved in the drafting of the school's learner code of conduct as a strategy to try and address disciplinary challenges of the learners. From a similar point of view, Radebe (2019:22) also asserts that the engagement and cooperation in the formulation and implementation of the learner code of conduct can assist greatly in the identification of challenges and solutions, because learners have special knowledge regarding their school, teaching and learning and general schooling.

However, with only a duration of one year, learners' contribution will be the least expected to make any productive contribution. This statement is supported by Pendlebury (2010:45), in her findings that this term of office provides very little time for the learners to familiarise themselves with the processes and procedures of the SGB and to participate actively and confidently in school governance.

2.4.2.3 Learners not Taken Seriously in Governance

Although learners are recognised by SASA as legitimate members of school governance as already mentioned above, one major challenge that the learner governors are faced with is not being taken seriously by other participants. This is supported by Yu and Shay (2022:8); Gqeba (2021:38) and Radebe (2019:28). According to Magadla (2007:10), it is evident that learners are deprived of their democratic right to take part in the governance of the school as they are often told to

focus on their studies and not governance. Furthermore, the author sets forth that learners are sometimes excluded from the decision-making processes, even in situations where they could be included (Magadla, 2007:8).

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP SKILLS MODELS RELATING TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

2.5.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework is an expression of theories conducted by experts within the research field that a researcher aims to embark on, which should assist to structure and summarise the concepts and theories and help make meaning of the data analysis and the interpretation of the results (Kivunja, 2018:46). According to Lederman and Lederman (2015:597), a theoretical framework is crucial to all research work, in qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research, as it helps to justify the significance of the work that is being researched.

Mensah, Agyemang, Acquah, Babah and Dontoh (2020:53) explain that a theoretical framework is taken from existing literature, and it provides a structure for what the researcher is looking for in the provided data. The framework can help the researcher to discuss their findings in a more sensible manner in accordance with what the existing theories put forth. Khuzwayo (2019:44), on the other hand, posits that the importance of a theoretical framework is that it firstly provides the reader with the basic research concepts and gives direction to the significant questions. Secondly, theories can assist the reader in creating sense of the data collected. Thirdly, theories can help make meaning of information found and contributed by other researchers. Fourthly, theories can make the researcher aware of the interconnections of the important data and lastly, they can help us comprehend issues which could be of use in arriving to certain research decisions and creating a sense of the world.

This study drew on and integrated the Collaborative Leadership Theory by David Chrislip and Carl Larson of 1994. This is a leadership theory which the researcher believes can assist the researcher to explore the relationship that exists between collaboration leadership skills among the governance participants as well as the effect it can have on effective school governance. In this case, the focus is on maximised quality education outcomes for the learners and good discipline.

2.5.2 Collaborative Leadership Theory by David Chrislip and Carl Larson (1994)

2.5.2.1 Defining Leadership

There have been many attempts by numerous researchers across the world to try and bring the concept of leadership to life by defining it. Consequently, leadership has become a challenging, multi-faceted topic globally nowadays. According to Rosari (2019:18), the definition of leadership is usually according to the perspective of the researchers and the aspect of the research phenomenon they are interested in. The author in his own right defines leadership as a procedure in which one member of a group is modifying and motivating the competencies of other group members.

In their paper Gandolfi and Stone (2016:216) adopted the definition of leadership, which states that leadership is a process of one or more people who influence, train, equip and select one or more followers with various abilities. The followers have to share a similar organisational mission and objective, causing the followers to take an effort in achieving the organisational objectives. The authors again posit that leadership is related to how a leader decides to lead and the impact their behaviour has on the organisation and its people (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016:216).

Similarly, Reed, Klutts and Mattingly (2019:1875) discovered that the most commonly used definition of leadership involves a process of motivating, empowering, influencing and enabling others with the intention of achieving a specific goal.

The abovementioned definitions of leadership construct an understanding that firstly, there should be a common goal that must be achieved in an organisation. The belief is therefore that the common goal should be well-defined and understood by all the participants. It is sometimes very difficult for one to play their part if there are any uncertainties in the expected roles required from each individual. This reiterates the matter discussed earlier in this chapter that if the members of the school governance are not well informed on their roles and responsibilities, it becomes difficult for them to execute these roles.

Secondly, the aforementioned definitions generate a comprehension that leadership is a continuous process and as a result, it is expected that it will not be as tranquil as one may think. Thus, Reed et al. (2019:1873) emphasise the issue of motivation as

one of the competencies required from a leader. The followers may sometimes deviate from the goal, and sometimes this might be caused by demotivation as a result of delayed expected results. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the leader to bring back the followers on the trail.

Lastly, the leadership definitions discussed above draws attention to the importance of a collective nature of a good leadership trait. Doerfel and Taylor (2017:920) highlight the importance of good communication across organisations as a way of working cohesively together to achieve good outcomes in the organisation. One measure that can assure collectiveness in leadership is ensuring that there is a good flow of communication between the participants. Similarly, in a school setup, for all the members of school governance to work harmoniously, one factor that can contribute to this is informing the members of school governance of any changes that may occur, which involves them.

2.5.2.2 Defining Collaborative Leadership

In the above section, leadership in its general sense was explained according to a number of authors. This section aims to dig deeper into the type of leadership that forms part of the theory that underpinned this study. The researcher will try and define collaborative leadership in his quest to make a connection between the concept of collaborative leadership and the effect it has on effective school governance.

According to VanVactor (2012:555), collaboration is an interdependent working environment in which numerous parties get to work together harmoniously towards a specific organisational goal. Similarly, Lawrence (2017:91) explains collaborative leadership as a leadership style that is characterised by common vision and values, synergy, shared responsibility, effective communication, and ambiguity. Jordan, Chrislip and Workman (2016:3) assert that the purpose of collaborative leadership is to solve challenges by creating a shared vision and establishing joint strategies.

2.5.2.3 Explication of Collaborative Leadership Theory: Origin and Development of the Theory

In 1994, an American Vice-President of the American Leadership Forum, David Chrislip, and a Human Communication Professor at the University of Denver, Carl Larson established the collaboration leadership theory. The main principle of this

theory was to bring together the dual aspect of the people and governance, using what he described as collaborative premises (Weaver, 2023:1). This study is thus rooted in the collaborative leadership theory of David Chrislip and Carl Larson of 1994.

The idea of collaborative premises is based on the belief that, by bringing together people with the same concerns for an organisation, and furnishing them with appropriate content and information, the outcomes will include authentic visions and strategies for addressing the identified concerns.

Chrislip (2002:1) acknowledges that working with a diverse range of stakeholders may pose a great challenge but at the same time can yield positive value to the intended outcomes. This suggests that in an organisation, there is often a diverse range of individuals with different skills, who can contribute differently to the success of the organisation.

According to Chrislip (2000:4), collaboration is impossible without powerful, facilitative leaders in the group who can assist to promote and safeguard the process by ensuring that participants are guided through frustrations and uncertainties, acknowledging good work and successes as well as enforcing the rules and group norms.

2.5.2.4 Importance of Collaborative Leadership Theory

Literature on collaborative leadership reveals that there is a very high prevalence of school success if there is a culture of collaboration among the participants prevailing (Liu, Sukru & Gumus, 2020:434). Gcelu (2019:3) also posits that collaborative leadership can prevail when appropriate people with good information are brought together constructively. Dlamini (2022:6) agrees with these findings and asserts that learner behaviour can be attributed to the social space that learners engage in and those behaviour could be unlearned through the collaborative interactions of the stakeholders tasked with the responsibility of managing discipline in schools.

Collaborative leadership entails having a deeper understanding of what is expected to be done, and as a result, such leaders should possess a more comprehensive and visionary basis for action. According to Fernandez and Shaw (2020:40), organisations using a collaborative leadership model benefit greatly with regard to factors such as flexibility and innovation. The authors purports that such leadership styles are

adequate when an organisation is faced with some complexities and uncertainties (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020:40).

Challenges will always prevail in an organisation, and most of the time, these are challenges that can hinder progress. It is pivotal to have the employees and the team members on board when such issues arise. Torres (2019:111) discovered that in a study conducted in the United States of America, teachers' perceptions of collaborative and distributed leadership were quite positive in association with job satisfaction. This clearly proves that if employees are engaged and included on what is happening around them, they are bound to maximise their potential.

2.6.2.5 Relation of the Theory to the Study

The theory of Collaborative Leadership was considered appropriate for the use of this current study, because the problem that was investigated was whether collaboration amongst the school governors can have any positive impact on the learners' academic achievement and their general discipline. This theory under its collaborative premises explanation concludes that bringing together people who share the same values, equipping them with resources, and supporting them has great potential for yielding positive intended outcomes.

We established earlier in this chapter that, within the South African schools' context, decentralisation plays a massive role in governance; hence the establishment of school governing bodies as per the regulation of the SASA (RSA, 1996b). Setlhodi (2020:1) highlights the importance of all stakeholders in an organisation working together as means to achieving the intended organisational outcomes. In the same way as the collaborative leadership theory findings, the expectations are that, if all the school governors are brought together, and are well-equipped for their roles and duties, this might see an achievement of the goal of this study, which is improved academic achievement and good learner behaviour.

This study, therefore, examines how the implementation of the collaborative leadership theory might be used to equip members of the SGB on the importance of working together towards the common goal and objectives of the organisation. Moreover, the focus is on the principals who are regarded as the accounting officers of their respective schools. This is to try and point to them the significance of involving

all the other stakeholders in policy implementations and decision-making where necessary.

Some of the challenges as identified earlier in this study is that lack of training, poor knowledge and competency, poor commitment, and not taking learner representatives seriously as well as lack of commitment are some of the attributes of poor participation among some stakeholders. The assumption is that the use of this kind of leadership approach and equipping such stakeholders with those challenges with the knowledge derived from the theory can assist greatly and help achieve the intended outcomes.

2.7 SUMMARY

Knowledge from related and relevant literature was presented in this chapter. It was established that researchers are mostly in agreement that the success of schools and learner performance and discipline in particular, depend on the involvement of the important stakeholders in school governance. There is furthermore agreement that there are challenges concerning the full participation of stakeholders, especially parents and learner participation.

The chapter also highlighted the importance of making use of the country's laws and legislations relating to education and school governance. It was established that although the participation of other stakeholders is well legislated within the South African laws, the main challenge is regarding implementation. The biggest challenge for the lack of involvement of parents was poor training, less knowledge and competence as well as poor commitment. Similarly, poor training for the learners and not being taken seriously by other members also emerged as some of the challenges.

In the next chapter, methods that were used to collect data will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter focused on a literature review that is related to school governance, the reasons for ineffective participation of other governors, and measures which can be taken to improve collaboration in schools for improved learner academic performance and better general behaviour of the learners. Emphasis was put on the South African legislations and policies with regard to effective governance and other international best practices.

This study also reviewed a theory by David Chrislip and Carl Larson named the Collaborative Leadership Theory. The theory provided clarity on the importance of working together in an organisation, with clear information and similar vision and goals, for positive organisational outcomes.

Chapter 3 presents the methods and processes that are used to generate, discuss and analyse data. Moreover, this chapter reviews a justification of the suitable research paradigm, and interpretivism has been identified as the most relevant paradigm. Secondly, the study's research design is described, namely the exploratory case study design. Thirdly, the chapter discusses the research methodology, which will clarify the motive for choosing a qualitative approach as the most suitable approach for the study. This section further covers the sampling procedure, research data collection methods, research analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sileyew (2019:27) purports that research methodology is the path that researchers have to take in order for them to conduct their research. According to the same author, research methodology assists researchers to formulate their research problems and objectives, presents the results that they have obtained from their study and indicates how the research outcomes will be met in accordance with the set objectives of the study. Mishra and Alok (2022:1), on the other hand, define research methodology as the approach used to solve research problems and a way of studying how research is conducted, as well as all the techniques and methods attached to the study.

This study was informed by the following primary research question and sought to discover the relevant responses to it:

What influence can collaborative leadership have in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools?

This research question enabled the researcher to reflect on the importance of teamwork and the working together of the school governance stakeholders, with a common goal of achieving the optimum academic performance and learner behaviour in township secondary schools.

Furthermore, the objectives of this study were to discover and highlight the experiences of the other governors, particularly the learners and parents in the school governance, to examine the current practices that can be adopted to improve collaborative leadership, and to investigate the role of each member as stipulated by South African legislation.

The problem highlighted earlier in this research is that, in most township schools, the vital decisions in governance are primarily made by the principal and teacher component in the SGB, and there is consequently poor involvement of parents' stakeholders and learners.

The reasons for this vary, and they have been identified in Chapter 2. Those reasons included lack of commitment by the parents, lack of knowledge and competence (Mokwebo, 2021:27), and poor training and development (Xaba, 2011:202). With regard to the learners, the duration they spend in school governance, not being taken seriously by adult members, and lack of training have been identified as some of the challenges relating to their poor participation in school governance. Thus, it was discovered that lack of involvement by other stakeholders in school governance can result in poor academic performance by the learners and even ill-disciplined behaviour.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM ADOPTED: INTERPRETIVISM PARADIGM

According to Kamal (2019:1389), a research paradigm is a representation of a researcher's values and beliefs about the world they are working in. A paradigm

consequently helps to direct the researcher's investigation, with data collection and analysis as the main tools (Kamai, 2019:1389).

In a quest to try and accomplish the aims and objectives of this study, an interpretivist research paradigm has been adopted. Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:41) define interpretivism as a paradigm that has more to do with in-depth variables and factors that are related to a particular context. According to the authors, the interpretivist paradigm considers human beings as different from a physical phenomenon, as they are able to provide further depth in meanings.

This study aims to pay considerable attention to what the teachers, learners and parents in the SGB do and say, and how they feel about the matter under investigation, which is the importance of collaborative leadership as a tool to ensure effective school governance. As a result, the interpretivist paradigm will allow the researcher to develop a sense of comprehension of the meaning provided by the participants to the phenomena that are being researched.

3.3.1 Aims and Characteristics of the Interpretivist Paradigm

The interpretative paradigm seeks to focus on the comprehension and interpretation of a discourse rather than using numbers to interpret the data. According to Williams (2020:81), interpretivism pertains more to the 'how' and 'why' questions of the investigated phenomenon. It aims to clarify how the members of a particular society relate to the various kinds of social phenomena that are investigated. Singh (2019:10) sets forth that the importance of the interpretivist paradigm is that it allows the researcher to be part of the participants that are being studied to understand their contextual meaning much better.

Table 3.1 below outlines and differentiates the characteristics of interpretivism.

Table 3.1: Characteristics of Interpretivist Paradigm

	Ontology	<i>Epistemology</i>	Methodology
Meaning	<p>It refers to the nature of reality as according to the researcher (Killiam, 2013:7),</p> <p>Kamal (2019:1390) describes ontology as the way in which the researcher defines the reality and truth.</p>	<p>It refers to the way the researcher gets knowledge of what they know (Killiam, 2013:8).</p> <p>Kamai (2019:1390) explains epistemology as a process that assists the investigator to know the reality and truth.</p>	<p>It refers to a systematic way in which the researcher gets to obtain knowledge and information (Killiam, 2013:9; Kamal, 2019:1391).</p>
Application	<p>Different realities may be explored using human interaction, and meaningful actions can be achieved.</p> <p>Researchers embrace the idea of a number of realities, with the intention of reporting these numerous realities (Cresswell & Poth, 2016:71).</p>	<p>The researcher obtains subjective evidence from the participants by getting closer to them and makes use of time spent with the participants and their quotes to get the necessary knowledge (Cresswell & Poth, 2016:70).</p>	<p>It involves the researcher's experience of data collection and analysis process following an inductive procedure (Cresswell & Poth, 2016:72).</p>
Example	<p>The belief of the researcher of the reality of the investigated phenomenon.</p>	<p>The belief of the researcher with regard to the relationship they have with the participants.</p> <p>Should it be subjective or objective?</p>	<p>Using interviews and questionnaires to obtain data.</p>

3.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

3.4.1 Defining Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative research approach is social science research that uses non-numerical data that aim to analyse the meaning of these data to help understand the intended study's social life (Aspers & Corte, 2019:145). The above statement implies that qualitative research has more to do with the day-to-day activities of the participants; thus, the outcomes of the investigation are considered to be truthful because the respondents' real ideas and perspectives are established. Furthermore, the implication is that this kind of research paradigm focuses mainly on the interpretation of how members of the society interact with each other and how they relate to different types of social phenomena.

This type of approach adds an advantage to the ability of the researcher to explore and investigate their studies. According to Alase (2017:09), the qualitative research approach furnishes the researchers with an opportunity to comprehend the first-hand lived experiences of the participants. As a result, the qualitative research approach will not only enable the researcher to establish what people think, but also why they think that way. The approach will further allow the researcher to probe and seek clarity when interacting with the respondents. Therefore, understanding the respondents will assist the researcher in reaching a particular research conclusion for the study.

3.4.2 Justification of Qualitative Research Approach

There are a number of advantages that can be associated with the qualitative research approach. As already mentioned above, the qualitative research approach allows the researcher to learn more about the social interactions of the respondents. This research approach grants the researcher the opportunity to understand better how the respondents think and why they think that way with regard to the phenomenon under investigation. These are some of the advantages of a qualitative research approach.

Below are some of the important features of a qualitative research approach, according to Rahman (2020:104).

Table 3.2: Features of the qualitative research approach

Features	Description
Human experience	The physical interaction and human experience that the researcher gets to have with the respondents produce a more detailed description of how the participants feel, their lived experiences and opinions of the matter that is being investigated.
Ideographic research	Qualitative research is regarded as a study of individual cases or events. This presents the researcher with an advantage of understanding different individuals' perspectives on the matter, thereby enhancing their knowledge through different versions.
Structure of the research design	The researcher has an advantage of utilising many different research designs, since the qualitative research design has a rather flexible structure. This advantage can assist the researcher to make meaning of data more comprehensively.
Data collection methods	In a qualitative research study, methods such as participant observations, interviews and direct observation are used as data collection methods. Such methods allow the researcher to interact with the participants more directly, and consequently, the data collected are more subjective and detailed.

According to Rahman (2020:104), as much as there are advantages to using a qualitative research approach, there are some evident limitations as well. Table 3.3 below discusses some of the disadvantages of using a qualitative research approach (Rahman, 2020:105).

Table 3.3: Limitations of Qualitative Research Approach

Limitations	Descriptions
Low credibility of results	Some policymakers often give low credibility to quantitative research results, mainly because they usually want to quantify the results, and they believe that qualitative research alone may disregard variables that have been studied.
Smaller sample size	The smaller sample size used in quantitative research is said to raise the issue that the findings cannot be used to generalise to other contexts.
Difficult data interpretation and analysis	Using a qualitative research approach often makes it difficult to interpret and analyse the data. According to Rahman (2017:105), developing an undeveloped question may be difficult and continuous throughout the research process.
Time-consuming	The analysis of data and cases when using a qualitative research approach can take a considerable amount of time, and the generalisation of the results to a wider population can be very limited.

3.4.4 Reasons for Adopting the Qualitative Research Approach

With all the positives and negatives of the approach being discussed in the above section, the reason why this approach seems more appropriate for this study is because the nature of the research questions. The research questions were more exploratory, in the sense that they aimed to explore the participation of all the stakeholders in the school governance. The research also aimed to establish the impact that this participation would yield in terms of improved school learner performance and general behaviour. With this in mind, more understanding of the perspective of all participants has been gained.

3.5 CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

3.5.1 Defining Case Study Research Design

A research design is a vital plan that includes several decisions regarding what topic to study, using which population, which methods, and for what purpose (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018:248). Nayak and Singh (2021:61) further add that a research design is a well-detailed plan for a study that aims to answer particular research questions or test a specific hypothesis.

According to Hancock et al. (2021:15), case study research design provides the researcher with a much broader category for analysis, and consequently, the author has identified the following factors as important characteristics of case-study research design.

3.5.2 Characteristics of Case Study Research Design

3.5.2.1 Individual Representation of a Group

The author explains that, when using a case study research design, the identified participants that have been sampled for the study often represent a much larger group, with similar characteristics of concern for the researcher. The reason for having a limited number of representatives is because it is sometimes impossible to use the whole group of interest for various reasons.

3.5.2.2 Natural Context of the Investigated Phenomenon

According to the author, context plays an important role in case-study research designs, and the context has to be a natural setting and surroundings for the participants. This allows the researcher to explore different strategies if the observation takes place within the subject's natural environment.

3.5.2.3 Descriptive Nature of the Design

Exploratory research provides the researcher with more detailed information that not only assists to describe the collected data in a real-life environment, but further assists with the difficulties of real-life situations, which could be difficult to get through experimental or survey data. The author further notes that case-study research designs employ quotes directly from key participants, such as from the original interviews.

3.5.3 Types of Case Study Research Designs

There are a number of case-study research designs that one can utilise for a study. According to Ebneyamini and Moghadam (2018:03), these case-study research designs are made different by the focus and the intent of the analysis. The author further notes that there are primarily two types of case studies, namely single-case study and multiple-case studies. This is in consideration of the other various case studies as identified by different authors, including descriptive case studies, exploratory case studies and explanatory case studies.

3.5.3.1 Reasons for the Selection of the Exploratory Case Study Design

The research design proposed for this study is an exploratory case-study research design. An exploratory case-study research design is a type of case study used to explore situations in which there is no single outcome to the intended intervention (Baxter & Jack, 2008:548).

According to Swedberg (2020:14), an exploratory research design can be defined as an attempt to unearth something different and interesting while working through a topic of interest. This research design was utilised because it gave the researcher an advantage of learning the experiences of participants more vividly. It also allowed the researcher to identify the patterns and trends of behaviour, and how they have been

used to assist with the improvement of learners' academic performance and behaviour.

The researcher's aim was to explore different schools with different performance levels; hence exploratory research is a more relevant design. The cases in this study were the collaboration of the different stakeholders and the role each stakeholder plays in the effective governance of a township secondary school.

3.6 RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Moser and Kortsjens (2018:10) describe sampling as a formal plan that stipulates the methods, sample sizes, and procedures that are used to mobilise the participants in the study. Research population and sampling are essential for any research, because they help one to reach a particular conclusion by generalising the findings from the sampling of the population. According to Slabbert (2021:68), the selection of participants is a very crucial procedure in research, as it assists the researcher to choose a sample that can be a representation of the total population. The importance of population sampling is based on the fact that it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to investigate an entire population of the research interest, purely because of their diversity and how they could possibly be spread across a big geographical area.

When selecting the population for a research study, it is of great importance that the researcher identifies and combines elements such as the people and any characteristic which could be relevant to the investigated phenomenon. The participants in this study were purposefully selected. According to Bhardwaj (2019:161), purposive sampling is a data-gathering method in which the participants are selected according to the purpose of the study.

For this particular study, a purposive sampling method was deemed more relevant because the researcher aimed to collect data directly from individuals who can contribute to effective governance in schools. Three schools were purposively selected within the Botshabelo area, one with a high-performance level (School A), one with average performance (School B), and the other with lower performance (School C).

From each school, one principal and one teacher in the SGB were interviewed. One RCL president and one SGB chairperson from the three schools were given

questionnaires to complete. Codes were used to protect the identity of the participants and their respective institutions. Table 3.4 will provide an explanation to the codes that were used during the analysis of the study.

Table 3.4: Codes and its Explanations

CODE	MEANING
SAPR1	School A, Principal 1
SBPR2	School B, Principal 2
SCPR3	School C, Principal 3
SAT1	School A, Teacher 1
SBT2	School B, Teacher 2
SCT3	School C, Teacher 3
SAP1	School A, Parent 1
SBP2	School B, Parent 2
SCP3	School C, Parent 3
SAL1	School A, Learner 1
SBL2	School B, Learner 2
SCL3	School C, Learner 3

All the participants who were selected for sampling are serving in the SGB, and the reason for this is because their contribution is likely to be more valuable, as they have a direct impact on the governance of the school. The belief is that the information that they provided is more concrete and feasible with their knowledge and their direct contribution to school governance. Table 3.4 provides a thorough description of the participants.

Table 3.5: Research participants' information and description

School	Participant Role	Participant Number	Code	Data Collection Tool
School A	Principal	1	SAPR1	Interview
	Teacher	2	SAT1	Interview
	Parent	3	SAP1	Questionnaire

	Learner	4	SAL1	Questionnaire
School B	Principal	1	SBPR2	Interview
	Teacher	2	SBT2	Interview
	Parent	3	SBP2	Questionnaire
	Learner	4	SBL2	Questionnaire
School C	Principal	1	SCP3	Interview
	Teacher	2	SCT3	Interview
	Parent	3	SCP3	Questionnaire
	Learner	4	SCL3	Questionnaire

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection involves a process of collecting and generating data and information on variables of interest (Sutton & Austin, 2015:02). It is an extensive and rigid process in which the researcher uses different methods to get hold of the evidence that can support and assist them to find answers to their research questions. To collect data in this study, the researcher made use of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix G) for the three principals and three SGB teachers, one from each school. Open-ended questionnaires (see Appendix H) were used for the three SGB chairpersons and three RCL presidents serving in the SGB. The questions were primarily based on the participants' involvement in school governance and decision-making.

3.7.1 Interviews

An interview is defined as an interaction between two or more people in which the aim is for one party to gather information and learn something from the other party (Brough, 2018:95). McGrath, Palmgren and Lijedahl (2019:1002) add that interviews provide researchers with an opportunity to explore matters that are distinctive to the experiences of the respondents; therefore, allowing insights into various investigated phenomena of interest as per the perceptions and experiences of the interviewees. Interviews are therefore important, because researchers are allowed access to the respondents' opinions, judgements and recollection of the exact words during analysis

of data. In addition, Silulwane (2021:72) puts forth that interviews can assist with research productivity since they are able to pursue certain issues and suggestions.

3.7.1.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

According to Adeoye-Olatunde and Olenike (2021:1361), semi-structured interviews are mostly relevant when dealing with research issues that are related to more complex socio-behavioural issues, in which the questions aim to understand more regarding the different perspectives of the respondents. Furthermore, Ahlin (2019:2) suggests that although the semi-interviews are begun with a set of preorganised questions aimed at the respondents, this method can also be guided by new information, arising from the interactive discussion between the interviewer and the respondent.

For this particular study, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were utilised as a data-gathering method. This method allowed the researcher to probe if the answers provided by the principals and teacher SGB members were too brief. This assisted the researcher in understanding and exploring the viewpoints, behaviour and experiences of the respondents better. The interviews were all recorded, transcribed and documented as a way of ensuring reliability and legitimacy.

The interviews with the teacher SGB members were aimed at discovering the responses relating to their involvement in the SGB. Furthermore, the interviews were aimed at getting an understanding of the teachers' perspectives on the role of the other governors and their contribution towards the academic success of the learners and their general behaviour. Similarly, the interviews with principals, on the other hand, were aimed at finding out the views of the principals regarding the roles and responsibilities of the other governors in the SGB. Moreover, the interviewer aimed to discover the extent to which the principals were involved and took measures to ensure maximum participation of all the governors in school governance.

3.7.2 Characteristics and Justification of Face-to-Face Semi-Structured Interviews

The following were identified as some characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of semi-structured interviews (Ahlin, 2019:8; McIntosh & Morse, 2015:7):

3.7.2.1 Characteristics

Predetermined Questions

Although semi-structured interviews are considered to be participatory inasmuch that both the interviewer and the interviewee have the liberty to engage interactively on the topic, it is vital that a set of interview questions are developed prior to the interview. These are the same questions that will give specific direction to the conversation and, as a result, oftentimes lead to other questions arising.

Basic Knowledge of the Topic

As already explained, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to probe and seek clarity, where necessary. Similarly, the respondent is also allowed to have certain questions that may channel them to their response. Therefore, it is important that the interviewer has some basic knowledge on the subject matter to allow for a good flow of the interview, which may require certain expertise and valuable inputs on the phenomenon investigated.

Interview Proficiency

Like any other data collection method, interviews have a number of techniques that the researcher should possess in order to ensure a smooth interview. Interview proficiency, according to the author has to do with being well-versed in interviewing (Ahlin, 2019:8). It is important that the interviewer know when to probe and follow up on a particular answer without making the respondent feel pressured. This is a skill that can assist the researcher in gaining additional information that can add data, which can assist in answering some of the research questions.

Number of Questions

Because it has already been established that semi-structured interviews allow both the researcher and the interviewee to have interaction based on the predetermined questions, it is vital that the number of interview questions is limited to those that are more important. The types of questions asked should not be interrogative by nature, but should rather be generative. This means that the questions should provide a chance for the multiple responses and follow-up questions that may arise from both parties without extending the interview time too long.

3.7.2.2 Justification of Face-to-Face Semi-structured Interviews

Optimum Communication

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews allow for a good flow of communication, since both verbal and non-verbal communication is possible. The presence of the interviewer in a semi-structured interview also creates a better structure of the interview, because the interviewer is able to clarify any misunderstandings and confusions of the respondent. This is the case, especially in situations where the interview questions are a bit complex and require more elaborate responses from the respondents. Some participants may also feel inhibited to respond to sensitive questions and rather decide to give more conventional responses rather than displaying their honest opinions. The interviewer in this regard is therefore able to assure the respondent of their safety and influence their responses positively.

Ethical Perspective

Some interviews may have the potential to put emotional strain on the participants and cause them discomfort. Part of ethical research behaviour is to ensure that the respondent feels as comfortable as possible. As a result, face-to-face semi-structured interviews will allow the interviewer to discern any type of discomfort and emotional distress of the participant and consequently offer the necessary support if the need arises.

Reliability

Interviews are normally done individually and independently without any influence from third parties. This consequently results in rather objective responses from the participants, free from any bias. As a result, this type of data collection method produces more reliable data, which can be very easy to analyse for the researcher.

Inasmuch as interviews were highly recommended during the data collection process of this research, it was equally important to note some of the limitations of this data collection method which could pose a hindrance. They included:

Time Constraints

Because the semi-structured interview allows the freedom of interaction and flow of conversation, it can sometimes be difficult to keep the interview within a manageable

length. This can be a disadvantage to the respondents as, in most cases, the interview would take place during their working hours.

Cost Implications

Conducting semi-structured interviews can have certain cost implications for both the interviewer and the participant. The costs include both time and financial costs. It is expected that the interviewer and the respondent would have to travel to the agreed meeting place, and this can be one of the costs implicated, which could have been avoided if an online interview was conducted, or a questionnaire method was used. With regard to time costs, both the interviewer and the interviewee have to take time from their schedules.

Lack of Support from Participants

This type of interview method requires major knowledge of the investigated phenomenon and great competency in expressing oneself. Although some participants may have great knowledge on the investigated phenomenon, some may be reluctant to take part in the research purely because they are less expressive by nature. Consequently, there could be a great need for more support from such individual when it comes to semi-structured interviews.

Interview Direction

One other disadvantage of conducting a semi-structured interview is that the duration and the direction of the interview are determined by the depth of the responses of the individuals being interviewed. If the participants do not give in-depth responses to the questions asked, this can create a challenge for the interviewer in getting the required data for their research.

3.7.3 Data Generation Tools

The semi-structured face-to-face interviews were posed to the principals and SGB teacher members.

For this study, two main tools, namely a notebook and an audio recorder, were used as data generation tools. The researcher used the notebook for taking down important information, such as key facts mentioned by the participants, and any questions posed by the participants. The audio recorder was primarily used for capturing the responses

of the participants and any clarity-seeking questions which arose from the interview. This was to assist the researcher during the data interpretation and analysis.

3.7.4 Data Collection Setting

To ensure that the validity of the findings was not compromised, the researcher ensured that all the interviews took place in a location that was free from any distraction and any noise levels which could possibly have hindered the audio recording discussion. All the interviews took place at the three different schools respectively, and a designated office was provided.

Regarding the seating arrangements, the participants were seating diagonally to the interviewer. The seats were situated in such a way that the participants could relax and be able to respond and express themselves and their views freely and in a comfortable manner.

3.7.5 Open-Ended Questionnaires

The second data collection method used in this study were open-ended questionnaires (see Appendix J). A questionnaire is a document that contains a set of questions with a choice of answers used to solve an identified research problem (Aithal & Aithal, 2020:03). According to Phellas, Bloch and Searle. (2011:183), questionnaires are more suitable in cases where there are only a few questions that are quite clear and have a simple meaning that will make it easier for the respondent to answer.

There are different types of questionnaires in the same way as there are various types of interviews (Slabbert, 2021:77). For this particular study, open-ended questionnaires were utilised, and one learner and SGB chairperson from the three schools were asked to fill in the questionnaires. Open-ended questionnaires require of the participants to provide their own answers and not restrain their answers to “true or false” and “yes or no” questions. According to Dörney and Dewaele (2022:1), questionnaires are easy to construct, they are very versatile, and they are able to gather a substantial amount of information in a unique and quick manner. The author puts forth that there are three types of data that can be yielded by questionnaires, which include factual, behavioural and attitudinal data.

According to Borbgobello, Pierella and Pozzo (2019:4), there are very low-cost implications when using questionnaires. Substantial information can be gathered within a short space of time, and it is relatively easy to obtain, interpret and analyse the data. Moreover, there is the elimination of any intimidation that could be faced by the respondents and anonymity can be guaranteed, as no names were written on the questionnaires.

For the purpose of this study, three RCL presidents and three SGB chairpersons were chosen to respond to the open-ended questionnaires because it was believed that the individuals would be able to answer the questions freely, without any pressure from anyone, like in the case of an interview. Furthermore, the belief was that the participants, especially the learners, would respond secretly and anonymously, without any fear of being judged. Therefore, important and reliable information could be obtained from the participants.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

3.8.1 Introduction

Data analysis involves interpreting the collected data through logical reasoning to determine the relationship, trends, and patterns of a study (Aguilera et al., 2016:286). Lester, Cho and Lochmille (2020:95) add that qualitative data analysis helps the researcher bring meaning to a data set.

According to Mezmir (2020:15), data analysis provides consistency and some form of structure to the collected data, while at the same time keeping intact the original information and observation obtained from the data collection. In other words, data analysis has more to do with the transformation of raw data through reorganising data, finding patterns, coding and establishing trends, with the aim of discovering the underlying meaning (Mezmir, 2020:15).

The method chosen to use in the analysis of this study's data is thematic analysis. A thematic analysis has more to do with observing and recording patterns in the data collected (Clark & Vealé, 2018:02). Brough (2018:213) further explains that the goal of thematic analysis is to create a story from a text of interest. For the purpose of this study, coding of the gathered data from the principals, learners, SGB chairpersons

and teacher components was done. Themes were identified to make meaning from the different data that will be collected through recordings, data transcription and grouping of the data thematically.

3.8.2 Data Analysis Process

During the analysis process of this research, the following steps were undertaken, drawing from the work of Jassim and Abdulwahid (2021:01), Jayasankar, Thirumal and Ponnurangam (2021:120) and Jassim and Abdulwahid (2021:01).

3.8.2.1. Step 1: Data organisation and preparation

Data preparation and organisation is essentially one of the most important stages of the data analysis as it assists remove randomness and clutter in the data and helps create a concise and concealed data pattern (Jassim and Abdulwahid, 2021:01). Themes were developed to assist the researcher in organising the research findings through the identification of the phenomenon and the problem that needs to be investigated. The phenomenon that is being investigated is the influence that collaborative leadership can have in ensuring effective school governance in secondary schools.

3.8.2.2. Step 2: Data transcription

Using the recorded interviews and completed open-ended questionnaires, this process entailed a thorough reading and listening of the information. Repeated observation thorough listening and reading of the information assisted the researcher to in the development of ideas necessary for the analysis of the data.

3.8.2.3. Coding of data

The process of data translation into a collection of cohesive categories is called data coding. According to Jayasankar, Thirumal and Ponnurangam (2021:120), data coding plays an important role in the data analysis as it helps reduce the information redundancy and manages to eradicate clutter and irrelevancy by compressing the information.

Literature review can also assist the researcher with the coding process. This can be done through an observation of the research that has already been done by other

scholars on the study topic that is related. Literature can help the researcher on the confirmation and discoveries of certain phenomenon (Slabbert, 2021:81).

3.8.2.4. Classifying codes into themes

The process of classification of codes into themes included the summarisation of facts in order to produce a systematic description of the investigated phenomenon. This classification was done in accordance with the research questions and objectives. Finally, this process assists the researcher in presenting and summarising facts.

3.8.2.5. Presenting interpretation

The researcher at this point minimises the data and information that is received and gathered from the various sources. Interpretations were drawn on in order to respond to the research questions and objectives

3.8.2.6. Conclusions

Finally, the researcher examines and gives the key findings of the study and its results. Moreover, judgements are drawn, and recommendations are given.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Qualitative research oftentimes involves working with people and their social activities. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016:377), it is vital that the researcher understands the importance of using approaches that entails humility at all times.

The process of ethical considerations commenced with a simultaneous request of permission from the ethics committee at the University of the Free State and the Free State Department of Education. The Free State Department of Education granted the researcher permission to collect data from the identified schools (see Appendix C). Consequently, the permission letter was submitted to the ethics committee of the university. The University of the Free State then granted the researcher permission to conduct the research (UFS-HSD2022/1755/23 – see Appendix A).

The ethical measures that served as guiding principles throughout the duration of this study are the following:

3.9.1 Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Permission to conduct research in schools was sought (see Appendix D), and as a result, all the participants, including principals, educators, parents and learners were furnished with informed consent forms to fill (see Appendix E), and learners were given both parental consent forms (see Appendix G) and assent forms (see Appendix F). The reason for parental consent forms was because the learners were minors during the data collection period. The full knowledge regarding the research allowed the participants to express their willingness to participate voluntarily in the research or not.

The respondents were also informed that they could withdraw from the research process at any point when they no longer felt comfortable, and that there would not be any ramifications as a result of the withdrawal.

3.9.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Confidentiality and privacy played a very critical role in this research journey. The researcher ensured that all the information shared and the participants' responses were presented anonymously to protect the identity of the participants. The names of the schools and participants were not to be revealed during the process of analysis and reporting of findings.

To conceal the identities of the participants and schools, codes were used during the research analysis stage (see Chapter 4). The use of codes ensured that, although the information regarding this research will be made available for the public, the public will not be able to link the school and participants to any of the codes used.

3.10 RESEARCH QUALITY ASSURANCE

To address the quality assurance of this research, trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability and were utilised. These factors are thoroughly discussed in the next sections.

3.10.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in research consists of concepts such as the study's quality, how authentic the study is, and the truthfulness of the study's findings. According to

McGinley et al. (2020:10), trustworthiness also entails the ability to establish the same constructs and same ends in different ways. The author also posits that trustworthiness in qualitative research helps to improve the accuracy of the inferences made in the research.

In qualitative research, different tools are used to establish the metrics of the study's truthfulness. Below, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability will be described in detail as some of the elements that constitute the trustworthiness of a study.

3.10.2 Credibility

One of the ways to establish trustworthiness is credibility. According to Nassaji (2020:428), the concept of credibility in qualitative research has more to do with the extent to which the study findings can be found to be truthful; therefore, in other words, believable by the reader of the document. This implies that the credibility of a study is more concerned with how congruent the findings of the research are and how well they reflect the reality of the investigated phenomenon (McGinley et al., 2020:10).

To ascertain the credibility of this study, the researcher made use of verbatim transcriptions of the interviews conducted with the principals and teachers. The credibility in this study was ascertained by the precise interpretation of the answers as provided by the learners and parents in the SGB through the use of open-ended questionnaires. To achieve credibility for the study, the researcher furthermore ensured that their understanding of the participants, their thoughts, context and process was as accurate as possible as a way of making inclusive interpretation.

3.10.3 Dependability

McGinley et al. (2020:10) define dependability as a strategy that can be used to ascertain that a study has sufficient information which can allow it to be reproduced in the future. According to the author, dependability is a reliability technique that assists to check if whether the research done can be repeated, with similar results being obtained, by using the same methods and the same participants. This verification process is, however, in most cases, not possible. Therefore, an audit, which is

explained as a well-structured and rich description that other researchers are able to understand and follow its trial, can be used.

3.10.3.1 Techniques to Ascertain Dependability

According to Slabbert (2021:85), in order to achieve dependability, the following techniques are provided:

- Thorough explanation of how the data were collected to allow for an audit trail.
- Proper provision of assumptions and theories behind the study.
- The use of various methods of data collection and analysis (triangulation).
- Dependability as a concept clearly emphasises the importance of the researcher to account for any changes in the context within which the research has been conducted (Maluleke, 2014:49).
- To ascertain dependability for the study, the data collected, and its descriptions are elaborate and extensive.
- Furthermore, alterations were made as a result of any new information emerging during the data collection process.

3.10.4 Transferability

Daniel (2019:104) sets forth that the notion of transferability in qualitative research is congruent with the concept of reliability. It suggests that research findings received from one particular study can be applied in a different research setting with a different set of participants and contexts.

In other words, transferability refers to the extent to which research results can be transferred to other research contexts with different participants. From a qualitative point of view, the primary responsibility of transferability lies entirely in the hands of the person doing the generalising (Maluleke, 2014:49).

A thorough description of the methodology that I have used in this research process, a description of the research context, and the application of the sampling process used in this study will help to ascertain the study's transferability.

3.10.5 Confirmability

Haven and Van Grootel (2019:238) define confirmability as a process that checks whether the data analysis was logical and whether fair interpretations were made based on the collected data. This process can be confirmed if the results discovered can be corroborated by others or backed up by relevant information. In other words, confirmability assists the researcher in proving that the information obtained was indeed derived from the data collected and not made up.

According to Meihami (2020:50), confirmability in research furthermore entails processes that ensures that the research is free of any bias and is, as a result, equivalent to objectivity. To ascertain the study's confirmability, the researcher safely archived all the data collected and stored them in a safe place in an organised manner. The data are easily accessible and retrievable if the study findings are challenged.

3.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Ross and Zaidi (2019:261), all research studies, irrespective of their nature, do encounter some limitations at some point. The authors define limitations as some weaknesses that may have a negative influence on the general outcomes and conclusion of the study.

It is, however, important for the author to try and lessen the range of the potential limitations throughout the study. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that, once the limitations have been identified, they are acknowledged with honesty. An explanation of why the limitations did not prevent the researcher from following through with the study also needs to be highlighted.

Limitations of this research study included the fact that not all participants were able to participate in the study as anticipated. One principal and one teacher were no longer willing to take part in the interviews after numerous attempts.

The biggest challenge for the researcher was that the scheduled meetings with the participants were not always honoured by the participants, resulting in various reschedules of appointments. Work interruptions, especially for the principals and teachers, as they were the ones used for the interviews, were other identified limitations, although appointments were made.

Financial constraints were also evident during the course of the research. Petrol costs to visit the schools and participants were one limitation experienced by the researcher. Cell phone bills when arranging to meet with the participants also played its role as a financial limitation.

The identified limitations did not, however, have a massive impact on the completion of the study, especially the withdrawal of the participants from the study. The information obtained from the remaining participants was enough to thoroughly respond to the research questions.

3.12 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the study's research design was presented, starting with interpretivism as the research paradigm that was adopted. Using a qualitative approach, governance in schools was explored and studied within its natural settings. Following that, the case-study research design was discussed, highlighting aspects related to population-sampling procedures and data-collection methods. A proper explanation was given on the reasons for the use of the particular sampling procedures and the methods used for data collection. The chapter also presented a description of the research sites and the demographics of the participants. A further detailed description of ethical procedures and the compliance thereof, quality assurance through trustworthiness, and some of the limitations of the study and how they were addressed, where possible, were also presented.

CHAPTER 4:

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to explore the influences of collaborative leadership in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools. Chapter 3 included a presentation of the research design and methodology, which discussed the processes used to select participants, the methods used for data collection, quality assurance of the study as well as measures undertaken to ensure ethics thoroughly. This chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and interpretation. A presentation of three township secondary schools' case studies will be discussed. The discussion is firstly about the presentation of each school's context, followed by the review of each phenomenon.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

To try and definitively answer the research questions identified in this study, data were collected primarily using two methods: semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The questionnaires were completed by six participants from three schools, namely the SGB chairperson and one learner SGB member elected to the SGB as a member of the RCL. Interviews, on the other hand, were conducted with six participants as well, namely one teacher in the SGB and the principal from each of the three schools.

To ensure the researcher's discovery of similarities in certain aspects of the research, the focus of the study was on all 12 participants, their experiences and views. Furthermore, the variety of participants assisted the researcher in ensuring the study's credibility by employing multiple data-generation processes. The inclusion of the two data-collection methods also assisted the researcher in generating multiple themes that complemented one another.

4.3 CONTEXTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

According to Vaismoradi and Snelgrove (2019:04), the use of a context-based framework in research allows for a more standardised system for the analysis of data, which are more dependent on the personal experiences and knowledge of the participants and that can be incorporated into the data analysis as well as the developments of the research themes.

Furthermore, Korstjens and Moser (2017:275) posit that context in qualitative research is very important, because a researcher needs to understand the participants' context to be able to interact effectively with them, hence being able to analyse the data and report correctly on their findings. Moreover, the researchers are of the view that a researcher can be able to obtain a 'behind-the-scenes' picture of the participants' feelings and get an in-depth understanding of their real-world problems if their natural settings are taken into consideration, which may result in the intended discoveries.

It is for this reason that the point of departure in this chapter was to present a clear description of all the participating schools, including the locations in which they are all situated as well as their general neighbourhoods (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1: Context Description of the Participating Schools

School Code	Location of the School	Level of performance	Description of the school	Description of the Neighbourhood
School A	It is in between houses, near the main road.	Low Performance	It is a very large school – both old and new buildings. The school is tidy, although the garden is not well-looked after.	It's a low-income neighbourhood, with most houses being government four-roomed houses or shacks. The neighbourhood is quite tidy and looks safe.
School B	In between houses, secluded from the main road.	High Performance	A very small school. Old buildings that could do with some paint inside. The school is very tidy, although the playfields and garden are not looked after.	It's a low-income neighbourhood, with most houses being four-roomed government houses and very few big houses. The environment is quite tidy and looks relatively safe.
School C	Near the main road, secluded from houses.	Moderate Performance	A large school with poor infrastructure, although well-looked after buildings. The school is very tidy, but the playfields and gardens are not well-taken care of.	A low to middle-income neighbourhood with bond houses surrounding. The environment is very neat and looks safe.

In addition to the contextual description of the schools, the researcher saw the importance of providing a much clearer picture of the demography and detailed information of the participants. Table 4.2 illustrates that information.

Table 4.2: Demography of the participants and types of schools.

Participant Code	Capacity	School Type		Gender		School Quintile
		Fee-Paying	Non-Fee-Paying	Male	Female	
SAPR1	Principal		X	X		Quintile 3
SBPR2	Principal		X	X		Quintile 3
SCPR3	Principal		X	X		Quintile 3
SAT1	Teacher		X		X	Quintile 3
SBT2	Teacher		X	X		Quintile 3
SCT3	Teacher		X	X		Quintile 3
SAP1	Parent		X		X	Quintile 3
SBP2	Parent		X	X		Quintile 3
SCP3	Parent		X		X	Quintile 3
SAL1	Learner		X		X	Quintile 3
SBL2	Learner		X	X		Quintile 3
SCL3	Learner		X	X		Quintile 3

Based on the data, it is evident that all three of these schools are situated in areas where there is a high prevalence of poverty. All the three schools are quintile three schools, and according to Ogbonnaya and Awuah (2019:106), quintile one to quintile three schools are generally non-fee-paying schools and they receive more funding from the government, as opposed to quintile four and five schools. The authors further indicate that the categorisation of these schools is based on its socio-economic status. Some of those statuses include, but are not limited to, the geographical area of the school, unemployment levels, crime, average income and the literacy levels of the population in which the school is situated. In other words, quintile four and quintile five

schools are situated in geographical areas where the standard of living is more improved. It made sense for the researcher to compare schools that are of the same contextual factors and socio-economics statuses, to solidify the findings and to make sure that the outcomes of the data collection are fair and consistent.

In their study, Ogbonnaya and Awuah (2019:113) found that learners from the quintile four and five schools have higher academic achievement when compared to the learners from quintile one to three schools in all of Bloom's taxonomy's cognitive levels. As a result, some of the contextual challenges that are associated with such communities where quintile one to three schools are found creates some problems for some of the members to fully carry out their duties as expected, leading to the members failing to give direction to the governing of the schools.

All three schools did not have an appealing infrastructure, but they could have been better maintained. According to Barrett, Treves, Shmis, and Ambasz (2019:12), access to a safe and healthy school environment can affect the learners' academic outcomes positively. As a result, the relationship between the physical infrastructure of the school and pedagogical practice is very important. Furthermore, Tokan and Imakulata (2019:1) set forth that quality education can not only be achieved through good lecturers, but through processes, facilities and good infrastructure. All these factors can play an incredibly important role in the education of scholars.

Therefore, it can be argued that effective school governance is determined by the competence of the teachers and curriculum substance, and how easy it is for the learners to access it. Furthermore, other factors such as feeling safe, a sense of belonging, enjoyment and good and healthy relationships can help to create an atmosphere where everyone is able to fulfil their duties and thrive at them.

4.4 THEMATIC PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AND OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES

Table 4.3 illustrates the categories and themes that emerged from interviews and questionnaires.

Table 4.3: Research themes

Themes	Categories
4.4.1 Theme 1: Roles and experiences of the stakeholders in collaborative leadership.	4.4.1.1 Principals' roles 4.4.1.2 Teachers' roles 4.4.1.3 Learners' roles 4.4.1.4 Parents' roles
4.4.2 Theme 2: Extent of stakeholders' participation and support in school governance.	4.4.2.1 Principals' participation and support 4.4.2.2 Teachers' participation and support 4.4.2.3 Learners' poor participation and support 4.4.2.4 Parents' moderate participation and support
4.4.3 Theme 3: Current practices adaption to improve collaborative leadership.	4.4.3.1 Principals' strategies 4.4.3.2 Teachers' strategies 4.4.3.3 Learners' strategies 4.4.3.4 Parents' strategies

4.4.1 Theme 1: Role and Experiences of the Stakeholders in Collaborative Leadership

The themes emanating from this category were based on how each stakeholder is expected to represent their constituency in school governance as their primary role and their experiences thereof.

Representation of Stakeholders in the SGB

According to the theory utilised in Chapter 2 of this study, the collaborative leadership theory by Carl Larson and David Chrislip, it is important to bring together people who have the same vision, equip them and support them in an organisation to achieve good organisational outcomes. The same applies in this regard. To be able to achieve good academic performance and learner discipline, all stakeholders are expected to fully carry out their duties and be in support of one another.

Each participant was asked to elaborate more on his/her role in the school governing body. The main aim of this question was to establish whether the participants were well equipped for their roles or not, and if they were aware of what is expected of them as the members of the SGB. This was done in an attempt to respond to the main question of this research and try to understand the impact that collaborative leadership could have on ensuring effective school governance.

In response to that question, the following was discovered as per the different participants:

4.4.1.1 The role of the principal

When responding to the question of their roles in school governance, most principals portrayed a clear understanding of their expected roles. All three principals answered that they had all attended training on their roles and responsibilities as members of the SGB. The principal of School B (SBPR2) further indicated that he had taken it upon himself to train the other stakeholders regularly, especially the parents' stakeholders, using the experience he has gained from attending workshops on management and governance for the principals. The principal said,

We must not strictly rely on the district as a schools, even myself as the principal, I must be proactive in ensuring that I develop SGB within our environment, it must not be the sole responsibility of the district.

The principal from School A (SAPR1) concurred and indicated that the main role of the principal in the SGB is to work together with the SGB members and to ensure that there is an efficient running of the school. He added,

It is of the utmost importance that me as the principal, liaise with all other relevant stakeholders such as the district office and other departments on matters relating to the smooth running of the school.

The principal of School C (SCPR3) also showed a great understanding of his role, although he was not as articulate as the other two principals. He indicated that his role is to support the other SGB members in carrying out the mandate of the organisation. Furthermore, it is important that the best interests of the school are promoted, with quality results at the core of the school goals. This statement is in line with the *South African Schools Act* (RSA,1996b:15), which stipulates that the school's best interests must be promoted at all times by the SGB to ensure development.

Interestingly enough, Luschei and Jeong (2021:359) found that the influence of school principals on learner performance and discipline is less impactful when compared to that of the other members of the school governance, especially the teachers. Their findings revealed that learner achievement in schools is mostly as a result of a positive relationship between the teacher and the learners. Moreover, these researchers had

initially hypothesised that there is a direct relationship between the principal's leadership styles, his actions and attitudes, and the ability of the teachers to produce excellent learner achievement. Their findings established that teacher involvement is critical, irrespective of the principal's leadership styles and attitude.

4.4.1.2 The role of the teachers

Some very insightful information was found from the interviews with the teachers. When responding to the question of the awareness of their roles in the school governance as the teacher representatives, all three teachers seemed to be well-trained on their roles and responsibilities as members of the school governance. For example, the teacher from School B (SBT2) indicated that his role as a member in the SGB is to make sure that the needs of the school are well-attended to, in order to ensure that there is optimum performance of the learners. He said,

as a teacher, because we as teachers we want our school to be the best, we do all we can for the school to become the best, so my role is to encourage other teacher to do their best.

This statement sounded more like a management characteristic rather than a governance characteristic. The teacher also alluded to the supporting of the principal and the parents in the SGB as one of his roles. Most importantly, he indicated that even though this may be perceived as the main role of the teacher representative in the SGB by other educators, representing the other teachers in the SGB is only one of the other roles, but not necessarily the sole responsibility of the teacher representative in the SGB. Reporting back to the teachers on certain matters and decisions that the SGB took was another role that the educator indicated as his responsibility.

Additionally, SCT3 felt that his role was

to ensure that there are systems in place to ensure effective teaching and learning in terms of policies, in terms of resources, in terms of procurement.

The teacher highlighted the importance of ensuring that the school environment is conducive to all the stakeholders, including the teachers and learners. The teacher emphasised the importance of governing documents as an important critical way of

ensuring a conducive environment for the stakeholders to promote good discipline and maximum learner performance. He said,

one other important role of SGB members, myself included, is to develop the code of conduct for the learners, such that they know what is expected of them and what is not.

This statement is supported by Section 20(1)(d) of the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b:15) which clearly highlights one of the functions of the SGB of adopting a code of conduct for the learners at school.

Furthermore, in agreement with SBT2, the teacher highlighted the misconception that the other teachers usually have that the teacher representative's main responsibility in the SGB is to represent the other teachers' views and report back to them on the matters discussed and agreed upon. He said,

when we are in the SGB, we no longer consider ourselves as teachers, but as the members of the school governance, therefore, we normally have the same voice, and we are mostly in agreement and unison.

Consequently, it appeared that the teachers are quite conversant about their functions, and this could be a result of being more literate in relation to their documents of empowerment, such as the *South African Schools Act*. The importance of being familiar with the documents of empowerment and legislation is supported by Mngomezulu et al. (2021:218), who emphasise the obligation of teacher recruitment as one of the roles of the SGB. According to the authors, as a result, such obligation, requires great acquaintance of the legislation and government policies related to labour. Surprisingly enough, only one of the participants mentioned the recruitment of educators as one of their roles, although it has a direct link to the performance of the learners.

The data revealed that, even though the chairperson of the SGB should have more influence on the recruitment of the teachers and other staff members, it is usually the principal and the teachers who are predominantly active in this role. These findings are supported by Mngomezulu et al. (2021:218), who found that in most cases, the parents in the SGB in township schools are uneducated. Consequently, they may lack some requisite skills, thereby, have less knowledge when it comes to carrying out their

expected roles. This lack of knowledge was picked up by the teacher from School A (SAT1). She indicated that, among her roles as an SGB member, staff recruitment is also one of the functions that she jointly carries out with the rest of the governing body.

One of the most important functions of the SGB that has a direct link to the performance of the school is the shortlisting and interviewing of the teachers.”

She added that if incompetent teachers are appointed, that could have dire effects on the performance of the learners and their general discipline; hence, it is important that the process of recruitment is followed thoroughly and efficiently.

Moreover, the teacher also touched on the procurement issue as one of the most important responsibilities of the SGB. She indicated that

resources play a very important role in determining the educational success of the learners, and is it the responsibility of the SGB to ensure that proper resources such as textbooks and furniture are bought and well maintained.

This was supported by SCT3, who indicated that, as teachers, they have a more direct engagement with the learners in class. As a result, they are the ones who know the needs of the learners with regard to the resources that are needed. He further said,

it is our responsibility as teachers to make the school governing body aware of the learners’ needs, and I as the teacher in the SGB, I have to make it a point that they SGB is aware of such needs.

4.4.1.3 The role of the learners

Emerging from the data collected from the three learners, it was interesting to note that all three learners had similar responses and experiences about their roles in the SGB. This could have been attributed to all three learners being in Grade 12 (cf. 3.7.2.2). As a result, all three of them were in the SGB for the first time. Moreover, two of the three learners were elected to the RCL for the first time. It was evident from the questionnaire responses that there was poor participation of the learners in school governance at all three schools. The learners’ responses were vague and lacked substance, indicating they had limited participation in school governance. This, of course, is despite the fact that learner participation in school governance is not only

vital, but obligatory as per section 23(29)(b) (RSA, 1996b). At this point, the researcher could partly arrive at a response to the research question of whether the learners' participation in governance or lack thereof has any impact on the overall learner academic performance.

This finding was supported by the fact that the three schools were all performing at different levels, as initially anticipated during the sampling of the schools. As a result, even the school performing at 100% still did not allow for maximum learner participation, according to the data received from all participants.

In response to the question of their roles in the SGB, all the learners showed a fair degree of understanding of their roles, although they needed to elaborate more on their role in ensuring effective school governance. Feedback from SAL1 when responding to a question about her main role as a member of the school governance, indicated that she is in the SGB to represent the needs of her constituency, which are the fellow learners who elected her to the RCL. This is slightly in disagreement with the two educators who made it clear that, although they were elected to the SGB by other teachers, their primary function is not to present the views of other teachers, but to ensure that the school's best interests are always at the forefront.

Similarly, SBL2 shared the same sentiments with SAL1, highlighting that

my role is to ensure that the learner issues are taken into SGB meetings and that my fellow learners are always satisfied.

It is evident that the two learners are not familiar with the functions of the school governing body as stipulated in section 20 of the *South African Schools Act* (RSA, 1996b:17). As a result, there was a clear distinction in the knowledge or lack thereof, of legislation between the learners and the other members of the governing body, especially the principal and the teachers. These findings are supported by Dumako (2019:110), who indicates that learners are inadequately trained compared to other stakeholders in terms of their roles and responsibilities as well as on legislation such as the *SASA 84 of 1996*. He further indicates that inviting learners to meetings regularly is also one aspect that can help to empower learners to participate more effectively in school governance.

On the other hand, SCL3 had a different view of his SGB role. This is the learner who had been in the RCL before, and there was a clear distinction between him and the other learners when responding to the question of his role in school governance as a learner representative. In response to the question, the learner said,

there are a number of roles that I have to play as a member of the SGB, such as attending meetings and giving my inputs on matters relating to fundraising and keeping the environment of the school clean.

This response gave a different perspective from that of the other two learners in that the learner did not focus on his role as a representation of the other learners, but on his role as an SGB member. These findings again were supported by Section 2(1)(a) of the SASA (RSA, 1996b:17).

One disappointing finding from the data collected from the learners was that, of the three learners, none of them raised the most important function of the SGB, which is to promote the best interests of the school as per the *South African Schools Act* Section 2(1)(a). Although there is already a feeling that learners' lack of involvement in the SGB does not have a direct impact on the academic performance of the schools, there is, however, a serious concern that these learners are somehow not informed on the essential documents that highlight some very vital information regarding the governing of schools.

Moreover, it was concerning to note that none of the learners made reference to the development of the school's mission statement and the learner code of conduct, which, in my opinion, is one of the most critical roles of the learner representatives in the SGB. The learners' involvement in the adoption of these documents in consultation with their constituencies is very crucial as they get to have an input in what is best for the learners in many aspects.

4.4.1.4 The role of the parents

The data collected for this section aimed to display the awareness, or lack thereof, of the parents as the most important stakeholders in the SGB. As a result, one SGB chairperson and a deputy SGB chairperson could complete and return their questionnaires. Unfortunately, one questionnaire from School B could not be retrieved

as the participant SBP2 stayed at work and did not get the chance to return the questionnaire.

From the data collection overall, there was a clear lack of knowledge on the role of some of the parents as members of the SGB. The researcher intentionally chose to work with the SGB chairpersons because of their important role as office-bearers, hoping to arrive at conclusive findings. The responses from the SGB chairpersons, however, displayed very minimum substance, indicating either a lack of knowledge of the roles of the parents as a result of poor training, or disinterest in the operations of school governance. This finding is supported by Setlhodi (2020:06), who explains that the ability of the governors to lead and govern effectively is entirely dependent on their continuous development through workshops and training.

For example, SAP1 shared that

my role in the SGB is to make decisions on behalf of the parents who have voted for me to be they (their) voices.

This response seemed rather one-sided and lacked substance, as the researcher tends to believe that the SGB chairperson's role is much more significant than just representing the parents' structure in school governance.

Due to the unavailability of the SGB chairperson of School C, the principal suggested that the researcher use the deputy chairperson for data collection. This made sense because it is the responsibility of the deputy chairperson to carry out the duties of the chairperson, where possible, in the absence of the chairperson. Similarly, the response from SCP3 was one-fold, suggesting that the main interest of the SGB chairperson is to represent the parents. This was quite concerning, considering the amount of influence an SGB chairperson has. Again, the two schools were performing at two different academic levels, which could mean that the parents' involvement or lack thereof in school governance could have a very minimal impact on academic performance.

Regarding the learner discipline, both parents highlighted ill-discipline amongst the learners, especially learners in Grade 8 and Grade 9, which could pose a challenge and barrier to achieving good academic results. SCP3 said,

in terms of discipline, our biggest problem is the Grade 8s. Those learners are always outside of the classrooms and is always fighting.

Both schools start with Grade 8, and as a result, the transformation from primary school to high school could be the reason for ill-discipline dominating in those lower grades.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Extent of Stakeholders' Participation and Support

Even though all the participants attempted to respond to the question related to the awareness of their roles in the SGB, the researcher deemed it crucial to find out the extent to which the other stakeholders are carrying out their duties and, most importantly, the collaborative measures taken to ensure effective school governance.

Data collected revealed that, again, there is minimal participation of the parents and the learners in carrying out their governance duties. This was expected, considering that, emerging from Theme 1, it was clear that the parents and learners could possibly have less knowledge on their roles as members of the SGB.

4.4.2.1 Principals' participation and support

When the findings of Theme 1 were considered, there was a clear indication that the principals are well aware of their expected functions in school governance; consequently, it would be easy for them to participate fully and support the other stakeholders.

In response to the question of their participation and support to the other stakeholders, the three principals gave an overall impression of full participation and support. For example, the principal from School B (SBPR2) highlighted the importance of establishing and maintaining a year program as a vital aspect of good school governance. He further indicated that

you can't run a school without a program, a program is a guide on what are you going to do on that particular year.

This response aligned with one of the functions of the SASA, which stipulates the importance of convening a meeting at least once a term. It is believed that the dates on which meetings are to be convened should be included in the SGB year program. As a result, this would make it easier for the members of the SGB to attend meetings

if they are made aware of them well in advance, thereby helping with maximising the collaborative participation of all the stakeholders.

It was, however, unavoidable to note that SBPR2, in his response to his participation and support in school governance, included his management roles instead of sticking to his role as a member of the SGB. This was picked when the principal further said,

and other critical matter is element of academic plans. Academically, each and every department must submit its academical program, which we combine together to form a school academical program.

This finding is supported by Nhlapo (2020:01), who indicates the role of the principal in the SGB as twofold. The principals' roles in the SGB include being a member of the school management team (SMT) and being a member of the SGB. It therefore becomes difficult to separate the two roles when in the SGB.

Another principal (SAPR1) interestingly touched on his responsibility of convening parents' meetings every term in order to discuss the learners' performance among other things. He indicated that,

after each and every examination session, the SGB convenes a parents meeting. Now, the core business of that parents meeting is for the principal to give the academic performance and report of the school.

This statement is supported by the findings of Basson and Mestry (2019:8), who allude to the fact that there usually are good academic results and learner discipline when parents are involved in their learners' education. Parent meetings is one effective way of involving parents in their children's education.

One other issue that this research aims to establish, and the effect that effective governance could have on, is the issue of learner discipline. In response to the question on his participation and support in school governance, SBPR2 highlighted the issue of good discipline as one factor that can lead to good academic performance of the learners, which is also a responsibility of the SGB. The principal indicated that

discipline is multifaceted and does not only involve the element of punishment. In our school, any deviation, we apply the code of conduct to ensure that learners really abide by the school rules.

From this response, it can be noted that the principal is quite familiar with the governing documents, especially the SASA, which clearly highlights adopting a learner code of conduct as one of the functions of the SGB. The involvement of the RCL learners in the SGB during the establishment of the code of conduct is one way the researcher believes could help to improve the learners' voices as the most inactive members.

SCPR3, on the other hand, suggested a peer-teaching strategy as one measure that can lessen the issues of ill-discipline from the learners. He indicated that

one aspect of discipline is to encourage our learners to be self-initiatives. Wherever there is an academic problem, we encourage peer teaching. Peer teaching is discipline on its own as there is no level of disruption when the teacher is not in class.

It is evident from this finding that principals might have the upper hand in maintaining discipline in schools as they have both the management and governance power. It obviously would not be easy for a parent to initiate such a strategy, although not entirely impossible.

4.4.2.2 Teachers' participation and support

Similar to the principals, the data in the above paragraphs, especially with regard to their roles as the members of the SGB, revealed that the teachers are quite aware of their roles and are very familiar with the documents that are deemed necessary to govern the schools. As a result, it is expected that the teachers would know what is expected of them in terms of their participation and support. Therefore, the expectation is that there will be maximum participation and support in school governance from the teachers.

The teachers' feedback indeed presented a rather positive response regarding their participation and support in school governance. All three teachers touched on the issue of compulsory attendance of meetings and workshops. SBT2, when comparing the teachers' attendance of meetings to that of the parents, indicated that most of the SGB meetings would be during working hours. However, they normally overlap to after working hours. He suggested that this could be the reason why it might be easier for the teachers not to miss important SGB meetings. This consequently sheds light on

why teachers could possibly display better participation and support than other stakeholders.

Similarly, SCT3 said,

as teachers, we deal directly with the learners in the class, and as a result, we know what are the needs of the learners that needs to be attended to by the SGB, for example, in our school, we only introduced Grades 8 and 9 two years ago, and because of that, those learners most of them don't have textbooks. It is my responsibility as member of the SGB to raise such issues to the principal and other SGB members.

This statement by the teacher spoke directly to one of the functions of the SGB as stipulated in section 20(1) of the SASA (RSA, 1996b), which highlights procurement of resources as one of the functions of the SGB.

Additionally, SCT3 added that they had recently attended a training on recruitment that the Free State Department of Education organised. He said,

the training was very fruitful and, as a result, we have gained a lot of knowledge with regard to the processes of shortlisting and conducting interviews for the purpose of recruiting the right candidates.

SAT1 held a very important role as an office-bearer in the SGB. She indicated that she is the secretary of the SGB, and this immediately provided an overview of her participation and support in the SGB. The teacher said,

as a secretary, the role that I play is very important since I am the one who keep the records of all the documentation, including policies and minutes of the meetings. I am even responsible for the circulars for the convening of the meetings.

The teacher further supported this statement by saying,

it is very difficult for me as the secretary to miss any meetings because all the important documentation that could possibly be needed for the meeting would be with me.

She pointed out that her main role of recording the minutes was the most important, which made it difficult to have minimum participation. These findings suggest that the

members of the SGB who are office-bearers by virtue of their positions are, in most cases, inclined to maximise their participation, which means that, during elections of the SGB, the members need to ensure that they have availability before being elected to the executive committee.

4.4.2.3 Learners' participation and support

As explained in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.7.5), learners were requested to complete open-ended questionnaires as part of the data collection method. Similar to the question relating to their awareness of their roles in the SGB, learners showed poor participation and support when asked about that matter. This was not surprising because it would not make sense for the learners to show sufficient support and participation in the SGB when they do not even know much about their roles as members of the SGB.

There was an immediate feeling of exclusion of the learners in the SGB while going through the questionnaires. Of the three learners, none indicated sufficient participation in school governance, as compared to the other stakeholders, and according to Dumako (2019:64), this lack of participation involvement is often because learners are excluded because they are seen as minors. Moreover, the researcher indicated that cultural norms also have a great contribution towards the poor participation of the learners in the SGB because, according to the African culture, learners are children. It is viewed as inappropriate to deliberate with the elders.

In responding to the question of their last attendance to an SGB meeting, it was surprising to learn that SAL1 and SCL3 had never attended any meeting of the SGB. SAL1 responded that,

as a Grade 12 learner, I was always too busy to attend SGB meetings and my secretary would be the one representing me.

Unsurprisingly, this response was equivalent to that of the principal of School A. The principal said,

honestly, at our school, learner participation is quite to the minimum. The president of the RCL is in Grade 12, and because of that, he seldom attends any meetings as he is mostly in class when meetings are conducted.

This immediately raised a question with the researcher about the convenience of the meetings for the other members of the SGB.

However, the principal of School B was in agreement with the learner in that, in terms of the attendance of meetings, there is a great level of attendance of the RCL learners. SBL2 responded that,

the last time I attended a meeting was last term before the schools closed.

The principal also indicated that,

for example, in our SGB meetings, the learners raised the issue of, uhh, the incentives, the academic incentives, that as a school, it has been very long that, learners who are performing quite well, it has been a very long time since they have been incentivized.

This was rather an interesting point raised by the learners that the researcher believes could have a more direct impact on the academic performance of the other learners. Especially when taking into consideration the findings of Mbiti et al. (2019:1629), who found that school learning may improve as a result of intrinsic motivation and external incentives. This means that learners may be motivated to work hard if they know that there is an incentive like getting a certificate for their outstanding performance. As a result, there was an indication that at this particular school, learners have the potential to contribute to the school's academic performance. It is also important to note that this is a school that performed at 100% for the 2022 academic year.

SCL3, on the other hand, gave a very clear and unequivocal response when asked about some of the reasons why he believed the other members of the SGB did not give them as learners a chance to participate in the SGB meetings. The learner said,

they (other members of the SGB) probably don't believe we have anything valuable to add to their meetings as we are only children.

This response gave a clear contradiction of the SGBs in that they agree to the involvement of the learners in the SGB, but at the same time exclude them from making any valuable impact. This proved that the main issue could not even be about the lack of involvement of the learners in school governance, but relatively poor

observation and unconsciousness of the adult stakeholders in the viewpoints and expressions of the learner governors.

4.4.2.4 Parents' participation and support

Considering the responses from Theme 1, it would be overreaching to anticipate maximum participation and support from the parents compared to the other governors and the SGB processes in general. In response to their participation in the SGB meetings, SCP3 responded,

yes, the principal always updates us on matters about the school performance and how the learners are behaving.

The response from the parent did not, in any way, give the impression that she is also involved in the discussion of the learners' academic performance and discipline. It sounded as if the principal only updated them. This assumption was supported by the teacher at the same school (SCT3), who indicated that, in most cases, parents are less interested in any matters relating to school governance except for finances and procurement of resources. The teacher said,

you will find in most cases, they (parent members) are only interested in things regarding issues of finances and procurement in terms of someone will be getting a tender or something.

This statement by the teacher was somewhat surprising considering the findings of Aina and Bipath (2020:01), who found that it is vital for the members of the SGB who are in charge of finances to have some financial skills and knowledge that would help them to carry out their financial management responsibilities. This was, therefore, surprising to note, because research found that the lack of parental involvement in school governance is primarily because of illiteracy and poor knowledge of legislature (Baker, 2018:77; Samuel-Okoyel, 2021:18; Khumalo, 2023:276). The surprising part was, how parents are mostly interested in the finance part of things if the possibility is quite high that they may lack the financial literacy and skills to ensure effective management of finances.

Moreover, during the interview, SBPR2 highlighted that lack of parental involvement in the SGB can result from two main factors. The first factor was the issue of the time that is normally scheduled for SGB meetings. It was established that all three schools

usually have their SGB meetings during school hours. Hence, it is easier for the teachers to attend the meetings at their convenience. It is, however, a different story for the parents. The principal from School B indicated that most parents are working, and they find it difficult to attend the SGB meetings convened during working hours. He further added that,

so, one way of ensuring that parents are included in the decision-making and that they fully participate, it is to call the SGB meetings on Sundays.

This statement is supported by Mtiya and Kariyana (2023:105), who found that most parents in the 21st century are quite entrusted with several responsibilities that make it difficult for them to be invested in their children's education at all times."

The second factor, which was outlined by SBPR2 as a challenge to parental involvement in school governance, was the issue of the language barrier. According to the principal, English as a medium of exchange in most schools remains a challenge for the parents to be confident enough to participate fully in decision-making and to support the other stakeholders. This lack of participation mostly results from parents feeling intimidated by the teachers if they do not have good academic achievements and curriculum knowledge, thereby limiting their engagement (Mtiya & Kariyana, 2023:105).

It is because of this reason that the principal from School B has initiated the usage of vernacular in their SGB meeting. The principal said,

I have therefore introduced an element of using Sesotho as a language of communication in our meetings to try and ensure that everyone is actively involved and does not feel any form of intimidation.

Additionally, one other aspect highlighted by the principal is that it is a challenge for the parents due to the language barrier, to read the documents of empowerment. Effective school governance requires some knowledge of legislation and policies, as already mentioned earlier in this chapter. According to SBPR2, it is, therefore, difficult for parents with fewer academic achievements to engage in such documents if they have limited comprehension as a result of the language barrier. The principal consequently recommends that the training for SGB members and manuals used

during training be in Sesotho in order to accommodate parents with limitations in English as a language.

SAP1, on the other hand, gave a more convincing response to the question of her participation and support of school governance and the members of the SGB. She indicated that her role includes attending meetings regularly and discussing measures to improve the learner's results, such as implementing incubation camps for the Grade 12 learners.

Seemingly, the participation of the SGB chairpersons in school governance at the three schools is relatively better when compared to the other parent members of the SGB. This is understandable, considering the fact that factors such as signatories of the school finances typically require the SGB chairperson, and schools need money from time to time. As a result, it is believed that the SGB chairperson's engagement with the school is quite more than that of the other ordinary members of the SGB.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Current Practice Adaption to Improve Collaborative Leadership

Now that there is some relatively clear indication of the awareness of the roles of all the participants in the SGB of the three schools, as well as the extent to which each participant gets to participate in school governance, it is important for the researcher to try and discuss some of the strategies that were suggested by some of the participants, that could assist in making sure that there is full participation of all the stakeholders as legislated in Chapter 3 of the *South African Schools Act*, Section 23(2) (RSA, 1996b:18). Consequently, the data revealed some approaches that can be used as ways to try and improve the participation of the other stakeholders, thus helping to ensure more effective school governance.

It was clear to note that parents are the most important stakeholders in the SGB, as they are the majority and even occupy some very influential executive positions like the chairperson by default. However, they have very minimal participation in collaboration with the learners. It is for this reason that this theme included some strategies that could help improve the involvement of the other stakeholders.

4.4.3.1 Strategies for the principals

The data revealed that all three principals from the three schools are not only aware of the poor participation by the learners and parents' stakeholders, but that it is a matter of concern to all of them as well. It is for this reason that, in responding to the question related to the criteria of considering the academic achievement of the parents before electing them to the SGB, SBPR2 agreed that although it should not be the sole criteria for electing members into the SGB, it would really assist in having more capable parents, who would actively participate in school governance and help to make some decisions. For example, the principal said,

“the problem with electing parents on the basis of their academic achievement is that, some parents could have a lot to contribute and have leadership skills, although not educated, whereas the other parent is educated without the necessary leadership skills.”

This statement was in addition to the suggestion the principal made of using a language that the parents understand when communicating in meetings as well as during training. The principal explained that he has adopted the usage of communicating in Sesotho during his meetings, and as a result, parents are now able to engage more effectively. However, it is still a challenge when the discussion is about curriculum matters.

Additionally, the principal recommended that the material that is used for training the SGBs should be in a language that the parents can understand. He said,

using vernacular in the training materials will help and improve the parents' participation, and this can lead to a more collaborative leadership in school governance.

The common strategy, however, that was suggested by all three principals was the improvement in the training of the parents and the learners as the least participative members in the SGB. SCPR3 was also in agreement with SBPR2 and said,

one other measure that can assist our members is the constant developmental trainings that I as the principal need to take upon myself from time to time.

Furthermore, SAPR1 also, in not so many words, agreed with the other two principals when he said,

it is my responsibility to make sure that the TLO (Teacher Liaison Officer) provides proper training to the learners.

It can therefore be noted that improving and encouraging training for the SGB members are one strategy that can help to ensure effective school governance.

4.4.3.2 Strategies for the teachers

The interviews with the teachers revealed that the teachers are more conversant with their duties and responsibilities as the members of school governance. Their lack of support for the other stakeholders was the issue that the researcher picked up, which can create a barrier to collaborative leadership. One of the learners in their questionnaire responded that they are not taken seriously by the older members, and teachers form part of these members. As a result, it is important that the teacher members show support to the learners and assist with their training where possible, as suggested by SBPR2.

4.4.3.3 Strategies for the learners

The feedback from the learners highlighted two main points that are predominantly the reasons why there is such poor participation of the learners in school governance. The first issue was the term of office for the learners in the SGB. When responding to the question of their duration in the SGB, all three learners responded that they had been in the SGB only since the beginning of the year. The reason for this answer is that learners only have a one-year term of office in the RCL unless they are re-elected. It is even harder to be in the SGB as a learner because most schools only elect the RCL president and secretary to represent the other learners in the SGB, with the requirement of the president to be in Grade 12. This means that the duration which the learners are allowed to be in the SGB is quite problematic. These findings are supported by Yu and Shay (2022:05), who established that, although the involvement of learners in the SGB is supposed to enhance the diversity of perspective and to allow an overall representation of decision-making, the limited time for learners on the SGB, as opposed to other members, makes learners' participation superficial.

To remedy this, SAPR1 agrees with the researcher that a one-year term of office for the RCL learners in the SGB contributes a lot to their minimum participation due to several reasons, such as poor knowledge of the systems and policies. Therefore, the

principal believes that, since it would be difficult to change the rules as per SASA, it would make more sense if the learners who are elected to the SGB are from the lower grades. Electing them at lower grades would afford the learners more opportunities to be re-elected to the SGB and, consequently, the learners would be familiar with the operations of the SGB, which could also allow them to gain more confidence to engage more.

SBPR2 agrees and further suggests that seeing it is a general requirement in the Botshabelo education circuit to have Grade 12s as the presidents. For the other executive members, it can be suggested that the learners in the lower grades be elected to enhance their chances of being in governance for a number of years like the other stakeholders. Yu and Shay (2022:07) support these findings by explaining that the overrepresentation of Grade 12s in the RCL provides a false understanding that age can be linked with a greater capacity for decision-making and logic.

Another barrier identified was the learners' poor attendance to meetings. Similarly, to the parents who can't attend during the week, SCPR3 suggested that

it would be better if the meetings were called during the weekends, especially on Sundays, where it wouldn't be a problem for the learners to attend as a result of being in class.

The recommendation makes perfect sense because, as much as the SASA renders learners as juridical persons equal to other stakeholders, the learners' education and classroom attendance are more vital than any other activity at school, of course, without deliberately compromising the co-curricular activities.

SBPR2 alluded to the importance of inviting learners to meetings as a way of also developing them besides having their inputs on certain matters. He said,

having them (learners) in our meetings also allows them a chance to be developed as leaders and to learn about how the school is run.

Regular attendance of meetings ought to allow the learners to feel a bit more comfortable around elders. This is normally regarded as a challenge, namely that most learners feel intimidated having to engage with their elders, especially if they are of a different view or bring up matters that the older stakeholders do not know anything about because they were not discussed before (Yu & Shay, 2022:06).

4.4.3.4 Strategies for parents

According to the participants, one major issue that emerged as a challenge for parents, which has the potential to prevent them from fully participating in school governance, is the lack of content knowledge, among other things. This lack of knowledge is mainly attributed to poor language comprehension by most parents, thereby making them unable to understand the policies of governance and other legislature. According to Pakade and Chilenga-Butao (2021:34), this ends up putting unnecessary strain on the principal, resulting in the principal having to carry out both management and governance tasks all by themselves. Ultimately, principals are tasked with making important decisions singlehandedly.

The data revealed that electing more outspoken parents into the SGB is one strategy that can be used to try and ensure more participation by the parents. The researcher uses the word outspoken intentionally to avoid using the word 'educated', because SBPR2 highlighted the dangers of electing parents to the SGB according to their level of education. Furthermore, it would not make sense democratically to elect parent members based on their education level, as it would contradict the aim of the *South African Schools Act* of democratisation of education.

SAPR1 was in agreement with SBPR2 in that, although it shouldn't be the main criteria for electing parents to the SGB, their level of education can be something to be taken into consideration to allow for more communicative and cogent discussions during SGB meetings and decision-making processes. Once more, the researcher would like to highlight that this would be against the idea of democratisation of education, and would rather the participants have used the word "astute", which means parents who would have the ability to understand processes more clearly, which would allow them to engage more, therefore, enable more collaboration.

The second issue which was brought about by the principal of School B and a teacher from School C was the issue of using vernacular language during the SGB training and during the meetings. The two participants argued that some parents could have a lot more to offer during discussions, but because of the language that is being used, this can create a situation where the parents are a bit reluctant to participate in any discussions of the SGB. To empower the parents further, the data revealed that, during

training, the language used should be one that can accommodate everyone, and there should be an option for using training manuals written in vernacular language.

4.5 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED DURING DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The data collection process was more challenging than anticipated. The anticipation was to collect data during the first term of 2023, since this is usually the time when all the participants are not so busy. Owing to the time that the researcher was able to obtain ethical clearance, which was only in May 2023, data could only be collected in the third term, as the schools were busy with examinations during May.

The data collection process then commenced during the first week of school reopening for term three. Again, another stumbling block was because most of the teachers and principals were very busy with post-exam paperwork, including the analysis of results, capturing of marks and getting the reports ready for the learners. In line with this, the researcher had to reschedule most of the interviews in order to find the time most suitable for the participants. However, it was important to note for the participants that the researcher only had until the end of term three to collect data, as the permission granted by the Free State Department of Education only allowed the data collection process until the end of term three.

The other challenge included meeting with the parents in the SGB. The researcher furnished the principals with all the necessary documentation and requested them to arrange meetings with the parents to give them questionnaires and consent forms. In most cases, the principals would be so busy that they end up forgetting to arrange the meetings for the researcher with the parents. Regarding the learner-members of the SGB, the biggest challenge was that they only had one year of office, and as a result, all three of them were new in the SGB. Consequently, it was somewhat difficult for them to be helpful, because of the limited time they had been in school governance, especially considering that they were all in Grade 12, which prohibited them from attending meetings regularly.

The data collection process ensured utmost confidentiality and anonymity at all times, and all participants were assured of their safety during the process. Interviews were conducted at the respective schools, and as a result, some interview recordings were

slightly impacted by low levels of noise by learners outside, which were not that distracting.

The language barrier also posed a challenge, especially with regard to data collection from the parents in the SGB. All three schools are situated in a Sesotho-speaking area, which created a challenge for the researcher because the questionnaire was written in English. This could easily have been one of the reasons why some of the SGB parent members were a bit reluctant to participate in the study.

4.5 SUMMARY

Chapter 4 dealt with the data analysis and interpretation of the results and findings that emerged during the interviews and from the open-ended questionnaires completed by the participants. The main aim was to explore the influence of collaborative leadership in ensuring effective governance in township secondary schools. Themes were identified in pursuit of establishing some challenges that the stakeholders in school governance face that may limit their participation. Consequently, an exploration and engagement of the data were revealed, and strategies to address those issues of poor participation by other stakeholders were discussed as well. The last chapter of the study will have a look at the findings and recommendations for effective collaborative school governance.

CHAPTER 5:

RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter's focus was on the analysis, interpretation of the data with the aims, objectives and questions of the research study in mind. The data were collected from 3 schools and three themes were used to analyse, with 12 categories. Chapter 5 gives an outlook of the summary by firstly providing an overview of the first four chapters, then giving the researcher recommendations. Finally, this chapter will present the limitations and conclusion.

5.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW: SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This research was conducted under the title, "Exploring the influence of collaborative leadership in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary schools". The main research question was "What influence can collaborative leadership have in ensuring effective school governance in township secondary school?" was the guide of the entire study. Chapter 2 firstly focused the South African legislation on school governance, and what the different policies stipulates. Secondly, a review of the international best practices was conducted, looking at different countries, how they promote collaboration in school governance, and the effects the collaboration has had on improved governance in those schools. Furthermore, this chapter reviewed some of the challenges that other stakeholders have with regards to fully executing their duties as member of school governance. Moreover, Chapter 2 also presented the underpinned theoretical framework. This study drew on and integrated the theory by David Chrislip and Carl Larson, the Collaborative Leadership Theory, which main principle is to bring together people with the same vision, equipping them with resources and expecting positive outcomes for the organisation.

Using an exploratory case-study design, the researcher applied purposive sampling because the intention was to collect the data purposively from the individuals directly linked to school governance. The issue investigated in this research was the influence that collaboration could have on the improvement of learner performance and discipline and thus effective school governance. As a result, collaboration in this case

constituted all the stakeholders in school governance, particularly in the SGB. The sampling procedure, therefore, included three RCL learners, three parents, three teachers, and three principals as ex-officio members.

Because the researcher wanted to be part of the participants being studied and was more interested in the “how” and “why” questions of the investigated phenomenon, the interpretivist paradigm was adopted. Consequently, the researcher chose interviews as the first method to collect the data. However, learners and parents’ data was collected using open-ended questionnaires. The researcher decided in this method because it gives the participants more freedom to answer without any fear and discomfort that probing of questions might bring. Parents and learners could be the least educated stakeholders when being compared to the teachers and the principal, hence, the researcher choose this type of method. This data collection process was conducted with utmost privacy and confidentiality.

For data interpretation and analysis, the researcher made use of thematic analysis approach, using three themes and twelve categories. These themes that led to the findings and proposed recommendations that will be thoroughly deliberated below.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES

This research’s themes were formed keeping in mind the problem statement, objectives and research questions.

5.3.1 Theme 1: Knowledge of the Stakeholders on their Roles and Responsibilities and their Experiences on Collaborative Leadership

The themes emanating from this discussion indicated that, out of all the four stakeholders in school governance, the principals and the teacher representatives in the SGB were the stakeholders with the most comprehension of their roles in school governance. This theme was backed up by the fact that both the principals and the teacher representatives revealed that they had all attended training organised b, among other by the department (cf. 4.1.1.1). The data also indicated that principals and teachers were more familiar with the legislation related to school governance. All three principals spoke about the importance of putting the schools’ interest before anything at all times as one of their most important duties (cf. 4.1.1.1). This statement

was in line with most literature (cf. 2.2.5), and such knowledge suggested the two stakeholders were well equipped on their roles and responsibilities.

It was interesting to establish that all the teachers had mentioned the importance of supporting the principals as one of their roles (cf. 4.1.1.2). This support was in a quest to try and ensure that the systems were in place to achieve effective teaching and learning. It can therefore be argued that the teachers were also well-trained and conversant judging from their responses. Moreover, it was discovered that, similar to principals, the teachers also showed a significant level of cognisance on matters related to the country's legislation on school governance (cf. 4.1.1.2). These findings suggested that, indeed, there is some level of collaborative leadership among the members of the SGB.

According to the data, it was discovered that that the RCL members and the parents, on the other hand, portrayed less knowledge and engagement in meetings (cf. 4.1.1). SASA (RSA, 1996b:22) "*stipulates that only a parent member can be elected as the chairperson of the SGB*" (cf. 2.2.5.2). Furthermore, the Act promotes the involvement of learners in school governance by stipulating that all schools with Grade 8 and above, should have an RCL structure, which should be represented in the SGB (cf. 2.2.5.4). Those requirements clearly indicate the importance of the participation of all the stakeholders, which speaks to the issue of collaboration. Unfortunately, the revelations of the data on the participation of the parents' members and learner members show a lack of collaboration.

5.3.2 Theme 2: Extent of Stakeholders' Collaboration and Support in School Governance

It is evident from the findings above in 5.3.1 that, of the four stakeholders entrusted with the duty of school governance as elected in the SGB, learner members and parent members are the least knowledgeable when it comes to their roles and responsibilities. On the contrary, teacher members and principals have more knowledge and comprehension of their expected roles. This section provides findings related to Theme 2 (cf. 4.4.2), which reveals the findings on the attempt of the stakeholders in trying to collaborate and support school governance, despite the minimum knowledge of legislation by the parents and learner members as discovered in the findings above.

It is without any doubt that the knowledge and the competence of the members had an impact on the extent of collaboration in the schools. The research confirmed that the principals and the teacher members make a vast contribution to collaborative leadership and support school governance due to their immediate working relationship and availability to attend meetings in most cases. According to the data, the teachers and principal as ex-officio, and as someone who is responsible for the running of the school, they are all obligated by their work descriptions as regulated in the PAM document, which is a subordinate legislation of the *Employment for Educators Act* (76 of 1998) (cf. 2.2.2.3 and 2.2.2.5). As a result, the study found that their support and collaboration was influenced by their direct involvement in the need to ensure effective learner performance and good learner discipline as the basic requirements of a functional school. Although the three schools were performing at three different levels according to the 2022 matric final results (cf. 3.6), there seemed to be a commonality regarding the collaborative leadership and support of school governance from the teacher members and the principals. This finding, therefore, suggested that there could be quite minimum influence of collaborative leadership by teachers and principals on school performance. It was important to note, however, that School B was performing at 100% for the 2022 matric results. It was clear from the interview that SBPR2 tried by all means to include both the learner and parents in school governance (cf. 4.1.1), by regularly training them and involving them in the decision-making as often as possible. This finding suggests that the attempt by the principal to involve all the stakeholders in school governance helped improve the school academic outcomes.

There was, however, a notable difference when it comes to the parent members and the learner members serving on the SGB regarding collaboration and support. Despite the great importance of parents' role of having to be the chairperson as stipulated in SASA, parent members portrayed more of a follower role, as opposed to a leader role (cf. 4.4.2.4). This fact was noted especially in matters concerning academic outcomes and learner discipline, which is the main focus of this study. An interesting finding about the parents was that, despite their poor administrative and financial literacy, their main concern was on school finances, especially on matters related to the purchasing of school resources. Furthermore, parents, as SGB members, have to develop and

maintain the school learner code of conduct (cf. 2.2.5). The data, however, revealed very little about their involvement in this regard.

From the responses in the questionnaires, there was an immediate feeling of exclusion of the learners in school governance, which obviously yielded less support and collaboration from the learners as members of the SGB. The study found that all three learners who are RCL presidents in their respective schools and, therefore, in the SGB were in Grade 12 (cf. 4.4.2.3). The fact that they were all in Grade 12 contributed to their lesser involvement in school governance, thereby providing less support to the other stakeholders. This finding, therefore, suggested that there was not any collaboration between the learners and the other stakeholders. Furthermore, learner members felt that their contribution was less valued (cf. 4.4.2.3), and they did not feel the need to be as active as possible. The researcher found it very interesting to note that the poor support and collaboration by the learners were attributed to the discrimination by the other stakeholders. The learners' responses did not in any way suggest that it was their decision not to attend meetings and to contribute less when attending.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Adaptation of Current Practices to Improve Collaborative Leadership

Upon discovering the challenges that some stakeholders have in carrying out their duties, the researcher saw it vital to investigate some current practices that can help improve collaboration in secondary schools. These practices are assumed to have some positive influence and contribution to these challenges that are limiting the implementation of collaborative leadership, thereby on the performance and discipline of the learners. These findings are related to Theme 3 (cf. 4.4.3).

Data collected revealed several strategies recommended by the principals to help and improve the collaboration by all the stakeholders in school governance. Emerging as the most common strategy was the improvement in the training of the most marginalised members of school governance. This strategy came out quite strongly as a recommendation by the principals. The principals' stance indicated that training plays a pivotal role when it comes to the issue of the improvement of one's abilities (cf. 2.4.1.1), and it can help the stakeholders to have more knowledge on their expected duties.

These findings, therefore, demonstrated that the principals are of the belief that, if the parents and the learners were to be trained more effectively and regularly on their roles and responsibilities, this would increase their knowledge on various matters related to governance and leadership; therefore, improve their participation in school governance. Furthermore, the researcher discovered that, sometimes, the Department may have challenges in organising these developmental training for the SGB members. As a result, the principals should take it upon themselves to train the members where possible.

Another important finding that the researcher found was that language barrier can sometimes hinder the participation of the other stakeholders. During the interviews, the researcher established that majority of the parent members of the three schools are not educated, and the fact that the language of communication during training is English creates some level of reservation from participation by the parents' members. Consequently, the data revealed that a language which the parents could easily comprehend should be used as mode of communication. This would, without a doubt, improve their engagements in meetings and, consequently, allow them to collaborate with the other stakeholders.

Lastly, data collected from the interviews with the principals revealed that more knowledgeable parents should be elected to school governance (cf. 4.4.3.1). Although one of the principals quickly highlighted discrimination as one negative impact of using the level of education as a criterion for the election of the SGB members, it was, however, notable that it would be advantageous to the development of the school governance if more knowledgeable and outspoken parents were to be elected.

Regarding the teachers, the researcher found that teachers need to guide the learners more as the members of the SGB. The fact that, in most cases, cultural norms create an issue of lack of participation by the learners because they are seen as minors when compared to the other stakeholders (cf. 4.4.2.3) is a serious challenge, which should be avoided at all costs. If anything, the teacher members, being one of the most conversant components, should see to it that the learners are treated fairly and, in fact, assist with their development.

Term of office for the learner members was another issue that was discovered to be creating problems of learner involvement and participation in the school's governance.

By virtue of having only one term in the RCL structure, the learners only have one term as members of the SGB (4.4.3.3). The data revealed that this one-year term of office for the learners creates a situation where learners are, in most cases, not informed on most matters and can hardly see through most planned projects of the SGB. As a result, this research found that it would be very helpful to elect the learners in lower grades, seeing that they qualify to be in the SGB as long as they are in Grade 8 and above. This would allow the learners more time in school governance, provided that they are re-elected as members of the RCL.

This strategy would also assist with the second issue that was discovered to be a barrier to learner participation, which is the issue of poor attendance of meeting by the learner members. One of the learner members responded that the fact that they are in Grade 12 contributed to their poor attendance to meetings (cf. 4.4.2.3); therefore, being in lower grades would allow the learners more opportunity to attend meetings and be kept abreast of any developments.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Continuous Development

The researcher discovered that the continuous development for the learner-members in the SGB is quite minimal when compared to the other stakeholders. This is why the learner members could not fully execute their expected duties.

The researcher, therefore, recommends constant and continuous training for the learners throughout their duration in school governance (cf. 2.4.2.1). It is further recommended that the training is carried out not only by Department, but also by the more experienced members, which are likely to be the chairperson and the principal. Teacher Liaison Officers (TLOs), who are the teachers responsible for the RCL members in their schools, should also intensify the training of the learners on their functions.

Recommendation 2: Increase in the Duration of Term in School Governance

One other factor that was found to be a challenge, particularly for the learners, was the duration they have as the members of the school governance, especially when compared to the other stakeholders. It was discovered that, learners only have a

maximum of one year on the RCL, therefore, limiting their time in school governance. This factor could also be the biggest contribution to why learners are less conversant with their roles and responsibilities because they have very limited time, less than a year, as members of school governance unless they are re-elected.

The researcher therefore recommends that the learners that are elected should be in a lower grade (preferably Grade 10) (cf. 2.4.2.2). This would allow the learners two more years to be re-elected to the RCL, i.e. the school governance.

Recommendation 3: Convening of Meetings on Weekends

During data collection, the researcher discovered that one of the reasons why there is less participation and therefore poor collaboration from the parents and learners' side, was due to the convening of meetings during the week (cf. 2.4.1.2). This is a disadvantage to learners and working parents who are engaged in classes and work, respectively.

The researcher therefore recommends that the SGB chairperson and principal should always convene meetings on weekends to afford all members an opportunity to attend the meetings, unless there is a need for an urgent meeting that needs to be convened during the week.

Recommendation 4: Use of Vernacular Language during Training and Meetings

One factor that was raised as a challenge for the parents was using English as a language of communication during meetings and workshops. Parent-members who are less educated are often reluctant to participate in meetings and training where English is used as a language of communication (cf. 2.4.1.3).

It is therefore recommended that, in a situation where there is a common vernacular language used by all the stakeholders involved, the meeting and the training should be conducted using the language that majority of the stakeholders can comprehend in order to allow for their maximum participation.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This study was conducted with the assumption that learners and parents are often marginalised as members of the school governance and that this could have a direct

impact on the effective governance of schools, particularly on academic performance and learner discipline. It was, however, discovered that, although there is a dire need for more participation and collaboration from the learners and parents in school governance, there was poor evidence that their lack of participation contributes to the effectiveness or lack thereof of school governance. The study suggested that, although the involvement and participation of the parents and learners in the SGB are compelled by legislation, particularly the *SASA*, due to poor training and other reasons, these stakeholders' participation is quite questionable. This poor empowerment therefore requires urgent attention.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

19-May-2023

Dear Mr Tshediso Khantsi

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP IN ENSURING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN TOWNSHIP SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2022/1755/23

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

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APPENDIX B: RESEARCH FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Sir/Madam

I am doing research and would like to request permission to conduct my research at schools in the Matheo District.

DATE

17 March 2023 – 23 March 2023

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Khantsi Tshediso Kenneth 2015085068 083 324 5350

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

*Education
Education Post Graduate*

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

*Dr Joleen Hamilton (0092387)
082 351 4141*

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study aims to definitively answer the question regarding the correlation between collaborative governance in schools and optimum academic performance and discipline. It intends to establish if all the members of school governance are actively carrying out their duties as per the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, and if whether their optimum participation or lack thereof, has any influence on the academic performance and learner discipline. The research study also aims to recommend strategies and measures that can be used to assist the stakeholders to optimise their duties, and furthermore to assist the policymakers in making any necessary amendments to the legislation to ensure full participation of the school governors.

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

The study will be conducted by Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.



HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study has received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/1765/23

WHY IS YOUR INSTITUTION INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Your School has been identified as a school suitable for this research project because of its academic performance. I have realized that the school has performed at a 100% for the 2022 matric academic year, and I therefore believe that some of the good practices to help enhance my study can be obtained from the school.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study will involve interviews and questionnaires as data collection method. The interviews will be for the staff members (principal and Departmental Heads), while learners and members of the SGB will use questionnaires. The questions on both the interviews and questionnaires will primarily be based on the participants' involvement in the school governance, and if whether they believe that their involvement or lack thereof, has any effect on the school results and learner discipline. Interviews are expected to take a minimum of 30 minutes per participant, while the questionnaires can be completed within 15 minutes. No harm at all will be inflicted on any participants, and participants are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any point.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The benefits of participating in this study includes and not limited to, the recognition of the institution making a change in the educational fraternity of the province, and the school will also be provided with a copy of the dissertation once the study has been completed. Describe the presence or absence of possible benefits for participants and/or society. The participation in this study will be kept confidential, the information will only be given to the study supervisor.

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL RISKS TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if any participants seem to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped immediately.

WILL THE INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Confidentiality plays a very important role in this study. The identity of the participants will be revealed to the principal researcher and the supervisor. Participants will be given fictitious code numbers, and as a result, no one will be able to connect the answers and contribution of the

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study has received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/1755/23

WHY IS YOUR INSTITUTION INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Your School has been identified as a school suitable for this research project because of its academic performance. I have realized that the school has performed at a 100% for the 2022 matric academic year, and I therefore believe that some of the good practices to help enhance my study can be obtained from the school.

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Confidentiality plays a very important role in this study. The identity of the participants will be revealed to the principal researcher and the supervisor. Participants will be given fictitious code numbers, and as a result, no one will be able to connect the answers and contribution of the

participants to their real identity. Participants' answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify participants will be available only to people working on the study, unless participants give permission for other people to see the records. The participants' anonymous data will be used for publications such as research reports, journal articles and even for the purpose of conference presentations. Once the parents have signed parental consent forms, minor participants cannot refuse to participate. They can however still withdraw from the research study should they feel uncomfortable.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

All the hard copies of the of the answers from the interviews and questionnaires will be safely kept in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office at his workplace. The copies will be kept for a minimum of five years, to which they will then be destroyed using a shredder. Electronic data like recording of the interviews will be safely kept in a password protected laptop. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

WILL THERE BE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will not be any payment or incentives for the participants. The study might be of inconvenience to the participants as the interviews and filling of the questionnaires might be during school hours. The process will however take place during break time and free periods of staff members to ensure convenience of the participants.

HOW WILL THE INSTITUTION / ORGANISATION / COMPANY BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If the school or the participants would like to be informed of the final research findings of the study, kindly contact me, Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi on 082 324 5350 or on my email address Kennethkhantsi@gmail.com. Should there be any concerns regarding the way the research was conducted, kindly contact the Dr Joleen Hamilton on 082 351 4141 or Hamiltonj@ufs.ac.za, as the Supervisor of the study.

Yours sincerely
Khantsi TK



APPENDIX C: APPROVAL FROM THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Enquiries: M.Z. Thango
Ref: Research Permission: T.K.Khantsi
Tel. 051 404 8808
Email: MZ.Thango@feducation.gov.za



958 S Section
Botshabelo
9781

Dear Mr. T.K. Khantsi

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: MOTHEO DISTRICT

This letter serves to inform you that you have been granted permission to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education within the Motheo Education District. The details in relation to your research project with the University of the Free State are as follows:

Topic: Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective Governance in Township Secondary Schools.

1. **List of schools involved:** Lefikeng Secondary School, Lenyora La Thuto Secondary School and Reamohetse Secondary School.
2. **Target Population:** Three Principals, three Departmental Heads, three learners doing grade 11-12 and three SGB members at the selected schools.
3. **Period of research:** From the signature of this letter until 30 September 2023. Please note that the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year. Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension. The researcher is expected to request permission from the school principals to conduct research at schools.
4. The approval is subject to the following conditions:
 - 4.1 The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.
 - 4.2 A bound copy of the research document should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education, Room 101, 1st Floor, Thuto House, St. Andrew Street, Bloemfontein or can be emailed to the above-mentioned email address.
 - 4.3 You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
 - 4.4 The ethics documents must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
5. Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. MZAMO W. JACOBS
DIRECTOR: QUALITY ASSURANCE, M&E AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

DATE: 01/03/2023

Enquiries: M.Z. Thango
Ref: Notification of research: T.K. Khantsi
Tel. 051 404 8808
Email: MZ.Thango@fseducation.gov.za



District Director
Motho District

Dear Mr. Moko

NOTIFICATION OF RESEARCH: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT IN MOTHEO DISTRICT

This letter serves to inform you that Mr. T.K. Khantsi has been granted permission to conduct research in the Motheo District under the auspices of the University of the Free State. The details in relation to the research project are as follows:

Topic: Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective Governance in Township Secondary Schools.

- 1. List of schools involved:** Lefikeng Secondary School, Lenyora La Thuto Secondary School and Reamohetse Secondary School.
- 2. Target Population:** Three Principals, three Departmental Heads, three learners doing grade 11-12 and three SGB members at the selected schools.
- 3. Period of research:** From the signature of this letter until 30 September 2023. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year nor during normal school hours. The researcher is expected to request permission from the school principals to conduct research at schools.
- 4. Research benefits:** This study aims to provide knowledge and equip the School Management Teams and policymakers on strategies that can be utilised to enhance effective governance in township secondary schools. Furthermore, the study aims to increase the knowledge on the importance of SGBs' maximum participation in school governance, consequently improving their role.
- 5. The Sub-directorate of Research and policy will make the necessary arrangements for the researchers to present the findings and recommendations to the relevant officials in the Department.**

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. MZANTHO-WI JACOBS
DIRECTOR: QUALITY ASSURANCE, M&E AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

DATE: 01/03/2023

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE PRINCIPALS



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Principal

I am doing research and would like to request permission to conduct my research at your school.

DATE

26 July 2023

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Khantsi Tshediso Kenneth 2014085068 083 324 5350

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

*Education
Education Management and Leadership*

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Dr Joleen Hamilton (0092387) 082 351 4141

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study aims to definitively answer the question regarding the correlation between collaborative governance in schools and optimum academic performance and discipline. It intends to establish if all the members of school governance are actively carrying out their duties as per the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, and if whether their optimum participation or lack thereof, has any influence on the academic performance and learner discipline. The research study also aims to recommend strategies and measures that can be used to assist the stakeholders to optimise their duties, and furthermore to assist the policymakers in making any necessary amendments to the legislation to ensure full participation of the school governors.



WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

The study will be conducted by Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study has received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/1755/23

WHY IS YOUR INSTITUTION INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Your School has been identified as a school suitable for this research project because of its uniqueness. I have realized that the school is the only technical school in Botshabelo, and has great learner discipline. As a result, I believe that some of the good practices can be gained from engaging with the stakeholders in the school.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study will involve interviews and questionnaires as data collection method. The interviews will be for the staff members (principal and Departmental Heads), while learners and members of the SGB will use questionnaires. The questions on both the interviews and questionnaires will primarily be based on the participants' involvement in the school governance, and if whether they believe that their involvement or lack thereof, has any effect on the school results and learner discipline. Interviews are expected to take a minimum of 30 minutes per participant, while the questionnaires can be completed within 1 minutes. No harm at all will be inflicted on any participants, and participants are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any point.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The benefits of participating in this study includes and not limited to, the recognition of the institution making a change in the educational fraternity of the province, and the school will also be provided with a copy of the dissertation once the study has been completed.

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL RISKS TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if any participants seem to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped immediately.

WILL THE INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Confidentiality plays a very important role in this study. The identity of the participants will be revealed to the principal researcher and the supervisor. Participants will be given fictitious code numbers, and as a result, no one will be able to connect the answers and contribution of the participants to their real identity. Participants' answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is

done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify participants will be available only to people working on the study, unless participants give permission for other people to see the records. The participants' anonymous data will be used for publications such as research reports, journal articles and even for the purpose of conference presentations. Once the parents have signed parental consent forms, minor participants cannot refuse to participate. They can however still withdraw from the research study should they feel uncomfortable.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

All the hard copies of the of the answers from the interviews and questionnaires will be safely kept in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office at his workplace. The copies will be kept for a minimum of five years, to which they will then be destroyed using a shredder. Electronic data like recording of the interviews will be safely kept in a password protected laptop. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

WILL THERE BE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will not be any payment or incentives for the participants. The study might be of inconvenience to the participants as the interviews and filling of the questionnaires might be during school hours. The process will however take place during break time and free periods of staff members to ensure convenience of the participants.

HOW WILL THE INSTITUTION / ORGANISATION / COMPANY BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If the school or the participants would like to be informed of the final research findings of the study, kindly contact me, Tshediso Keneth Khantsi on 083 324 5350 or on my email address Kennethkhantsi@gmail.com. Should there be any concerns regarding the way the research was conducted, kindly contact the Dr Joleen Hamilton on 082 351 4141 or HamiltonJ@ufs.ac.za. as the Supervisor of the study.

Yours sincerely

Khantsi TK



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Principal

I am doing research and would like to request permission to conduct my research at your school.

DATE

24 July 2023

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Khantsi Tshediso Keneth 2014085068 083 324 6360

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

*Education
Education Management and Leadership*

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Dr Joleen Hamilton (0092387) 082 351 4141

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study aims to definitively answer the question regarding the correlation between collaborative governance in schools and optimum academic performance and discipline. It intends to establish if all the members of school governance are actively carrying out their duties as per the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, and if whether their optimum participation or lack thereof, has any influence on the academic performance and learner discipline. The research study also aims to recommend strategies and measures that can be used to assist the stakeholders to optimise their duties, and furthermore to assist the policymakers in making any necessary amendments to the legislation to ensure full participation of the school governors.



WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

The study will be conducted by Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study has received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/1755/23

WHY IS YOUR INSTITUTION INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Your has been identified as a school suitable for this research project because of its academic performance. I have realized that the school has performed at a 88% for the 2022 matric academic year, and I therefore believe that some of the good practices to help enhance my study can be obtained from the school.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study will involve interviews and questionnaires as data collection method. The interviews will be for the staff members (principal and Departmental Heads), while learners and members of the SGB will use questionnaires. The questions on both the interviews and questionnaires will primarily be based on the participants' involvement in the school governance, and if whether they believe that their involvement or lack thereof, has any effect on the school results and learner discipline. Interviews are expected to take a minimum of 30 minutes per participant, while the questionnaires can be completed within 1 minutes. No harm at all will be inflicted on any participants, and participants are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any point.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The benefits of participating in this study includes and not limited to, the recognition of the institution making a change in the educational fraternity of the province, and the school will also be provided with a copy of the dissertation once the study has been completed.

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL RISKS TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if any participants seem to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped immediately.

WILL THE INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Confidentiality plays a very important role in this study. The identity of the participants will be revealed to the principal researcher and the supervisor. Participants will be given fictitious code numbers, and as a result, no one will be able to connect the answers and contribution of the participants to their real identity. Participants' answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify participants will be available only to people working on the study, unless participants give permission for other people to see the records. The participants' anonymous data will be used for publications such as research reports, journal articles and even for the purpose of conference presentations. Once the parents have signed parental consent forms, minor participants cannot refuse to participate. They can however still withdraw from the research study should they feel uncomfortable.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

All the hard copies of the of the answers from the interviews and questionnaires will be safely kept in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office at his workplace. The copies will be kept for a minimum of five years, to which they will then be destroyed using a shredder. Electronic data like recording of the interviews will be safely kept in a password protected laptop. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

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There will not be any payment or incentives for the participants. The study might be of inconvenience to the participants as the interviews and filling of the questionnaires might be during school hours. The process will however take place during break time and free periods of staff members to ensure convenience of the participants.

HOW WILL THE INSTITUTION / ORGANISATION / COMPANY BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If the school or the participants would like to be informed of the final research findings of the study, kindly contact me, Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi on 083 324 5350 or on my email address Kennethkhantsi@gmail.com. Should there be any concerns regarding the way the research was conducted, kindly contact the Dr Jaleen Hamilton on 082 351 4141 or Hamiltonj@ufs.ac.za. as the Supervisor of the study.

Yours sincerely

Khantsi TK



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear *Principal*

I am doing research and would like to request permission to conduct my research at your school.

DATE

21 July 2023

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Khantse Tshediso Kenneth 2014085068 083 324 5350

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Education Education Management and Leadership

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Dr Joleen Hamilton (0092387) 082 351 4141

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study aims to definitively answer the question regarding the correlation between collaborative governance in schools and optimum academic performance and discipline. It intends to establish if all the members of school governance are actively carrying out their duties as per the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, and if whether their optimum participation or lack thereof, has any influence on the academic performance and learner discipline. The research study also aims to recommend strategies and measures that can be used to assist the stakeholders to optimise their duties, and furthermore to assist the policymakers in making any necessary amendments to the legislation to ensure full participation of the school governors.

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?



The study will be conducted by Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

The study has received ethical clearance from the University's Ethics Committee.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/1755/23

WHY IS YOUR INSTITUTION INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Your School has been identified as a school suitable for this research project because of its academic performance. I have realized that the school has performed at a 100% for the 2022 matric academic year, and I therefore believe that some of the good practices to help enhance my study can be obtained from the school.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study will involve interviews and questionnaires as data collection method. The interviews will be for the staff members (principal and Departmental Heads), while learners and members of the SGB will use questionnaires. The questions on both the interviews and questionnaires will primarily be based on the participants' involvement in the school governance, and if whether they believe that their involvement or lack thereof, has any effect on the school results and learner discipline. Interviews are expected to take a minimum of 30 minutes per participant, while the questionnaires can be completed within 1 minutes. No harm at all will be inflicted on any participants, and participants are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any point.

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WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL RISKS TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if any participants seem to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped immediately.

WILL THE INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

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There will not be any payment or incentives for the participants. The study might be of inconvenience to the participants as the interviews and filling of the questionnaires might be during school hours. The process will however take place during break time and free periods of staff members to ensure convenience of the participants.

HOW WILL THE INSTITUTION / ORGANISATION / COMPANY BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If the school or the participants would like to be informed of the final research findings of the study, kindly contact me, Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi on 083 324 5350 or on my email address Kennethkhantsi@gmail.com. Should there be any concerns regarding the way the research was conducted, kindly contact the Dr Joleen Hamilton on 082 351 4142 or Hamiltonj@ufs.ac.za, as the Supervisor of the study.

Yours sincerely

Khantsi TK



APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORMS FOR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND LEARNERS



Consent to participate in this study

I, the undersigned,

_____ (participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in
relation to

and which Study is being conducted by

_____ (Tshediso Keneth Khantsi), (the "Researcher").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that—

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.



I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the interview.

Full Name of Participant:

Signature of Participant: _____ Date:

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): Tshediso Kenneth
Khantsi

Signature of Researcher:



Date:



APPENDIX F: ASSENT FORMS FOR MINORS



Participant Information Leaflet and Assent Form

Title of the research project: Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools Researchers names:

Address: 958 Section S Botshabelo 9781

Contact number: 083 324 5350

What is Research?

Research is something we do to find new knowledge about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about disease or illness. Research also helps us to find better ways of helping sick children.

What is this research project all about?

This research study is trying to find out if whether the results of the school as well as the general discipline of the learners would improve if all the stakeholders of the school governance (RCL Members, Teachers and the SMT) were involved in the running of the school as they should.

Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?

As an RCL president at the school, your participation in this study is going to assist me in answering some of the research questions I have for my study, and ultimately assist me in arriving at my goal of contributing to the betterment of the Free State Education fraternity.

Who is doing the research?

The study will be conducted by Tshediso Keneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.

What will happen to me in this study?

You will be given a questionnaire, which is a printed paper with a set of open-ended questions that you would have to answer regarding your participation in the school governance. You will then be given some time to answer this questionnaire, and submit it back to me.

Can anything bad happen to me?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if you seem to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped



immediately. You are also allowed to inform your parents of any pain or discomfort during the process.

385 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P. O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)51 461 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



Can anything good happen to me?

The benefit of your participation in this study is having a contribution in making a change in the educational fraternity of the province.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

The information we discuss will be confidential, and will only be known by me and my study supervisor.

Who can I talk to about the study?

Kindly contact the following people:

Khantsi Tshediso Keneth (Principal Researcher) 0833245350

Dr Hamilton Joleen (Study Supervisor) 0823514141

What if I do not want to do this?

You are allowed to refuse to take part in this study, and nothing bad will happen to you if you do so. You are also allowed to stop participating in the middle of the process if you feel any discomfort.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES	NO
-----	----

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

YES	NO
-----	----

Do you understand that you can pull out of the study at any time?

YES	NO
-----	----

Signature of Child

Date

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)51 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



APPENDIX G: PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS



Research Study Information Leaflet and Parental Consent Form

Date

21 July 2023

Title of the research project

Exploring the Influence of Collaborative Leadership in Ensuring Effective School Governance in Township Secondary Schools

Researcher's name(s) and contact number

Khantsi Tshediso Keneth 2014085068 083 324 5350

Name of Faculty

Education

Name of Department

Education Management and Leadership

Study leader's name and contact

number Dr Joleen Hamilton (0092387)

082 351 4141

What is this research project all about?

This study aims to definitively answer the question regarding the correlation between collaborative governance in schools and optimum academic performance and discipline. It intends to establish if all the members of school governance are actively carrying out their duties as per the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, and if whether their optimum participation or lack thereof, has any influence on the academic performance and learner discipline. The research study also aims to recommend strategies and measures that can be used to assist the stakeholders to optimise their duties, and furthermore to assist the policymakers in making any necessary amendments to the legislation to ensure full participation of the school governors.

Why has your child been invited to take part in this research project?

Your child is the RCL president at the school, and as a result, they are part of the School Governing Body. Their participation in this study is going to assist me in answering some of the research questions I have for my study, and ultimately assist me in arriving at my goal of contributing to the betterment of the Free State Education fraternity.

Who is doing the research?

The study will be conducted by Tshediso Kenneth Khantsi, a second year Master's student at the University of the Free State, under the supervision of Dr Joleen Hamilton.

Has the study received ethical approval?

This study has not yet received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UFS. A copy of the approval letter will be submitted once ethical clearance has been granted, before data can be collected.

What will happen to your child in this study?

The child will be given a questionnaire, which is a printed paper with a set of open-ended questions that they would have to answer regarding their participation in the school governance.

Can anything bad happen to your child?

The study does not involve any kind of potential harm to the participants, however, if the child seems to be uncomfortable during the data collection process, the process will be stopped immediately. They are also allowed to inform their parents of any pain or discomfort during the process.

Can anything good happen to your child?

The benefit of your child participating in this study is having a contribution in making a change in the educational fraternity of the province.

Will anyone know your child is part of the study?

Confidentiality plays a very important role in this study. The identity of the child will be revealed to the principal researcher and the supervisor. Participants will be given fictitious code numbers, and as a result, no one will be able to connect the answers and contribution of the participants to their real identity. Participants' answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify participants will be available only to people working on the study, unless participants give permission for other people to see the records. The participants' anonymous data will be used for publications such as research reports, journal articles and even for the purpose of conference presentations. Once the parents have signed parental consent forms, minor participants cannot refuse to participate. They can however still withdraw from the research study should they feel uncomfortable.



Who can you talk to about the study?

Kindly contact the following people:

Khantsi Tshediso Keneth (Principal Researcher) 0833245350
 Dr Hamilton Joleen (Study Supervisor) 0823514141

What if you do not want your child to do this?

As a parent, you are at liberty to stop the child from participating in the study even if the child had agreed to take part. No consequences will be suffered by the child for not taking participation.

Please return this section

Name _____ of _____ child:

Name of Parent: _____

- Do you understand this research study and are you willing to let your child take part in it? Yes No
- Has the researcher answered all your questions? Yes No
- Do you understand that the child can withdraw from the study at any time? Yes No
- I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from my child's participation Yes No

Signature of Parent

Date

- I, the undersigned Parent, further confirm that-
1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
 2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;



APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPALS



Interview Questions (Principals)

1. Please briefly describe your main role as a principal in ensuring effective school running.
2. What is your understanding of collaboration in general and collaborative leadership?
3. What are some of the challenges that the school is faced with, with regards to poor performance and ill-discipline by the learners?
4. What are the expected roles of the RCL presidents, teacher SGB components and SGB chairpersons as members of the school governance with regards to learner's discipline and effective learning?
5. Do you believe that the school governance has any impact on the school learner discipline and the academic performance of the learners?
6. Do you believe that the other stakeholders, including the teacher SGB components, RCL learners and the SGB members are fully carrying out their expected roles in ensuring proper school governance?
7. If not, what do you think are some of the reasons why other stakeholders are not fully participating and carrying out their expected roles?
8. When was the last time the School Governing Body attended any training on leadership or governance?
9. What do you think needs to be done in order to improve the participation of the other stakeholders in school governance?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS IN THE SGB



Interview Questions (Teacher Component)

1. Please briefly describe your main role as a teacher in the SGB in ensuring effective school running.
2. What is your understanding of collaboration in general and collaborative leadership?
3. What are some of the challenges that the school is faced with, with regards to poor performance and ill-discipline by the learners?
4. In your view, what are the expected roles of the Principal, RCL presidents and SGB chairpersons as members of the school governance with regards to learners discipline and effective learning?
5. When was the last time you attended any training on leadership and governance
6. Do you believe that the other stakeholders, including yourself as a teacher component, RCL learners and the SGB members are fully carrying out their expected roles in ensuring proper school governance?
7. If not, what do you think are some of the reasons why other stakeholders are not fully participating and carrying out their expected roles?
8. What do you think needs to be done to improve the participation of the other stakeholders in school governance?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX J: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR RCL MEMBERS IN THE SGB



Open-ended Questionnaire (RCL Presidents)

1. Please briefly describe your main role as an RCL President in ensuring effective school governance.

2. What is your understanding of collaboration in general and collaborative leadership?

3. What are some of the challenges that the school is faced with, with regards to poor performance and ill-discipline by your fellow learners?

4. In your view, what are the expected roles of the Principal, Departmental Heads and SGB chairpersons as members of the school governance with regards to learners discipline and effective learning?



5. How often do you attend SGB meetings?

6. Are you ever given a chance to give any inputs in the SGB meeting with matters concerning learner discipline and academic performance?

7. If not, what do you think are some of the reasons why the principal and other members of the SGB members are not giving you a chance to contribute in the SGB meetings?

8. What do you think needs to be done in order to improve your participation as an RCL President in the school governance?

9. Do you think one year term in the RCL leadership is sufficient to carry out all the projects? Please elaborate.

APPENDIX K: SGB CHAIRPERSONS' QUESTIONNAIRES

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Open-ended Questionnaire (SGB Chairperson)

1. Please briefly describe your main role as an SGB Chairperson in ensuring effective school governance.

2. What is your understanding of collaboration in general and collaborative leadership?

3. What are some of the challenges that the school is faced with, with regards to poor performance and ill-discipline by your fellow learners?

4. In your view, what are the expected roles of the Principal, SGB teacher components and RCL Presidents as members of the school governance with regards to learners discipline and effective learning?



5. So far, have you attended any training on code of conduct, labour relations or any aspect? Please elaborate.

6. Are you ever given a chance to give any inputs in the SGB meeting with matters concerning learner discipline and academic performance?

7. If not, what do you think are some of the reasons why the principal and other members of the SGB members are not giving you a chance to contribute in the SGB meetings?

8. What do you think needs to be done in order to improve your participation as an SGB chairperson in the school governance?

9. What are the common responsibilities that you are often assigned as the chairperson of the SGB?

APPENDIX L: CONFIRMATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

CORNELIA GELDENHUYS

☎083 2877088
corrieg@mweb.co.za

15 July 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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ENSURING EFFECTIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN TOWNSHIP SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

by

Tshediso Keneth Khantsi: 2014085068

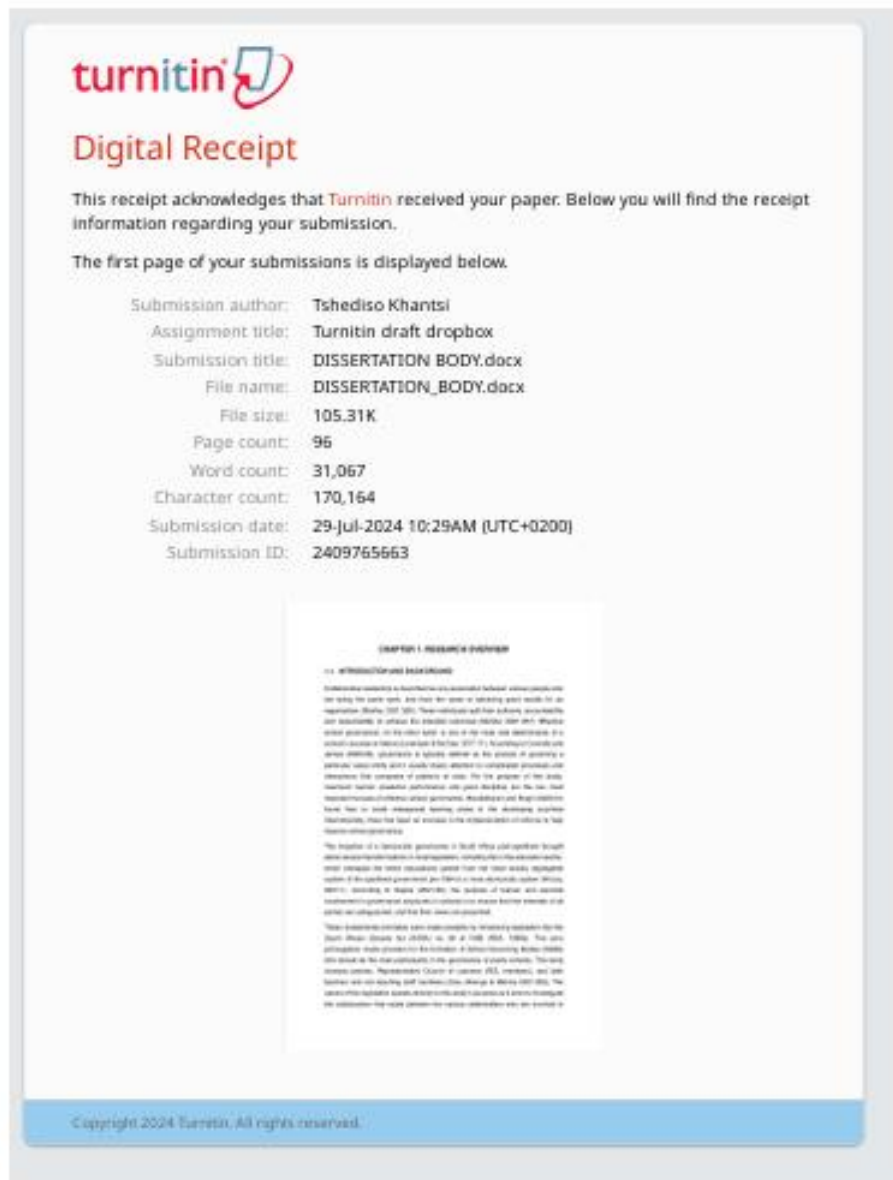
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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The research is conducted to investigate the impact of digital technology on the learning process. The study aims to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with digital learning environments. The research is structured as follows: Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Literature Review, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Data Collection and Analysis, Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion.

The research is conducted in a qualitative manner. The data is collected through interviews and focus group discussions. The data is analyzed using thematic analysis. The research is structured as follows: Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Literature Review, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Data Collection and Analysis, Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion.

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