

Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies

N.A. Khoza

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8441-8102>

Thesis accepted for the degree *Magister Educationis* in
Education Law at the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof W.J. van Vollenhoven

Co-supervisor: Dr I. van Deventer

Graduation Ceremony: May 2021

Student number: 22958142

VERKLARING / DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation / thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed within a dashed rectangular box. The signature is stylized, starting with a large 'G' and ending with a flourish.

Datum / Date

29/10/2020

Kopiereg©2018 Noordwes-Universiteit (Potchefstroomkampus)

Copyright©2018 North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus)

All rights reserved

PREFACE

It is my desire to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who walked beside me on the road towards a Master's in Education Law, and those who contributed to this study.

Firstly, I thank God, who led my steps and prepared my path with the following people:

My supervisor Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Co-supervisor Dr Idilette van Deventer for the support, guidance and leadership throughout this study. Thanks for giving me a golden opportunity. Your patience, love and support will never go unnoticed. You are highly appreciated. May God bless you.

Special appreciation to the learner-members, SGBs, principals and parents for giving me the opportunity to conduct the interviews and the valuable insights you provided.

Thanks to my colleagues and my principal, Mr TV Thebane, for undivided support and words of encouragement throughout this study.

A special acknowledgement goes to my late parents, Nana Nelly Shabangu and Solomon Mahalose Khoza, thanks for believing in me. Special thanks to my mother who raised us as a single mother and taught me respect, love and humbleness, and most importantly for teaching me never to give-up and keep on working hard.

To my daughters, Sibonakaliso Vailent Khoza and Neliswa Thobeka Khoza, and to Gaopalewi Lerato Pheko, my life partner, thanks for keeping me going and for being my cheer leaders. I have stolen a lot of time that should have been dedicated to you, however, you supported me to invest this time to my studies, thanks for being supportive.

To my family, especially my sisters, Thulisile Phephelaphi Khoza, Thandi Irena Khoza and Suzan Liya Khoza, and cousin Mxolisi Shabangu, who were confident that I am destined for more in life.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was conducted to “explore the governance role of learner-members in the School Governing bodies in schools situated in North West Province, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District in the JB Marks municipality”. The descriptive phenomenological study was conducted by using twelve learner-members in the SGBs of six different schools through purposeful sampling. To ensure the variety of the schools, three schools were fee-paying schools and the other three schools were non-fee-paying schools. Each school provided two participants. Data were generated by face-to-face in-depth interviews. Data generated in this study were analysed following the six thematic basic analysis by Nowell *et al.* (2017).

The findings indicated that learner-members are recognised as members of SGBs, but they only have one year to participate in school governance because they have less responsibilities and accountability in the SGB structure. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is not clear about functions of the learner-members of SGBs. Furthermore, some of the learner-members were not involved in SGBs decision-making processes of the SGBs due to their legal status of being minors.

This study recommends the amendment of section 20 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996) to provide a clearer legal determinant of each SGB member in a school. The study further recommends that SGBs’ learner-members should be elected in a two-year cycle serving in SGBs and they must be provided an accredited certificate after completion of their two-year cycle.

Key terms

- School Governing Body
- Representative Council of Learners
- SGB Learner-members
- School Governance
- Legislation

OPSOMMING

Hierdie kwalitatiewe studie is uitgevoer om “die beheer- en bestuursrol (*governance*) van leerdervteenwoordigers in skoolbeheerliggame (SBL) in skole in die Noordwesprovinsie, Dr Kenneth Kaunda-distrik in die JB Marks-munisipaliteit te ondersoek.” Die beskrywende fenomenologiese studie is uitgevoer deurdat daar van doelgerigte steekproefneming gebruik gemaak is om twaalf leerderlede van skoolbeheerliggame uit ses verskillende skole te kies. Om die insluiting van verskillende kwintiel-skole te verseker, is drie skoolfonds-skole (*fee-paying schools*) en drie geen-skoolfonds skole (*non-fee-paying schools*), doelgerig gekies. Uit die doelgerigte steekproefneming, is twee deelnemers per skool aangewys. Data is gedurende diepgaande een-tot-een in-diepte onderhoude gegenereer. Data wat in hierdie studie versamel is, is aan die hand van Nowell *et al.* (2017) se ses tematiese basiese ontledings geanaliseer.

Die bevindings het aangetoon dat leerlinglede van SBLs as lede erken word maar hulle het slegs een jaar om aan skoolbeheer (*school governance*) deel te neem omdat hulle mindere verantwoordelikhede en aanspreeklikhede in die SBL- struktuur het. Verder is bevind dat die SA Skolewet (84 van 1996) nie duidelik is oor die funksies van leerlinglede van SBL's nie. Verder was dit duidelik dat sommige leerlinglede van SBLs nie betrokke was by sommige van die besluitnemingsprosesse van die SBL nie omdat hulle regstatus die van minderjariges was. Hierdie studie het die wysiging van artikel 20 van die SA Skolewet (86 van 1996) aanbeveel ten einde 'n duideliker regsbepalings van die skoolbeheer- en bestuursfunksies van elke SBL- lid van in 'n skool te bepaal. Die studie beveel verder aan dat leerderlede van SBLs in 'n tweejaarsiklus in SBLs moet dien en dat hulle 'n geakkrediteerde sertifikaat moet ontvang na voltooiing van hul tweejarige siklus.

Sleutelsterme

- Skoolbeheerliggaam
- Verteenwoordigende Raad van Leerders
- SBL-leerlinglede
- Skoolbeheer
- Wetgewing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EMELTEN-REC	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
TURNITIN COVER PAGE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PREFACE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
OPSOMMING.....	iv
 CHAPTER 1 RESEARCH OVERVIEW	 1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Problem statement	2
1.3 Rationale and literature gap.....	5
1.4 Purpose statement	6
1.4.1 Overall intent of the study	6
1.4.2 Research objectives	6
1.5 Primary and secondary research questions.....	7
1.5.1 Primary research question	7
1.5.2 Secondary research questions.....	7
1.6 Conceptual framework	8
1.7 Research method.....	8
1.7.1 Epistemology	9
1.7.2 Ontology	9
1.7.3 Research sites.....	10
1.7.4 Population and sampling.....	10
1.7.4.1 Population	11

1.7.4.2	Sampling technique	11
1.7.4.3	Sample size	11
1.7.4.4	Inclusion and exclusion criteria	12
1.7.4.5	Recruitment of participants	13
1.7.5	Data generation and data analysis	13
1.7.5.1	Individual interviews.....	13
1.7.5.2	Method of data analysis	14
1.8	Ethical considerations.....	14
1.9	Trustworthiness, rigour, validity and reflexivity.....	15
1.10	Synthesis.....	15
CHAPTER 2	THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	17
2.1	Introduction.....	17
2.2	Concept clarification	18
2.2.1	School Governing Body (SGB)	18
2.2.2	Representative Council of Learners (RCL).....	18
2.2.3	SGB learner member	19
2.2.4	School governance	19
2.3	The three sources of Education Law.....	20
2.3.1	Legislation	21
2.3.1.1	The South African Constitution	21
2.3.1.2	The South African Schools Act (84 of 1996)	22
2.3.1.3	The National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996)	24

2.3.1.4	The Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) (EEA)	25
2.3.2	Legal functions of members serving on SGBs	25
2.3.2.1	Balance of power	25
2.3.2.2	Participatory democracy and training of SGB learner-members.....	27
2.3.2.3	The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM)...	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.3	Common Law	29
2.3.4	Case law.....	31
2.4	The value of Wildemeersch <i>et al.</i>'s social learning theory	33
2.5	Trends of learner participation in SGBs.....	35
2.5.1	National trends of learner participation in the SGB.....	36
2.5.1.1	Participatory democracy	36
2.5.1.2	Lack of training of SGB learner-members	37
2.5.1.3	SGB election procedures and a national SGB structure.....	39
2.5.2	Provincial and district trends of learner participation in the SGB	39
2.5.2.1	Provincial Departments of Education trends of learner participation in the SGB.....	40
2.5.2.2	District trends of learner participation in the SGB.....	41
2.5.2.3	Sub-district trends of learner participation in the SGB (JB Marks)	42
2.6	The role of the SGB and learner-members in schools	42
2.6.1	Composition of school governing bodies of ordinary public schools, by type and learner enrolment.....	43
2.6.2	Involvement of learner-members in decision making	49
2.6.3	Discourse on learner-members' role in the SGB	55

2.6.4	Strategies to involve learners.....	56
2.6.5	Challenges of learner-members of SGBs.....	57
2.6.6	Achievements in learner involvement.....	58
2.7	Synthesis.....	60
CHAPTER 3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	62
3.1	Introduction.....	62
3.2	Empirical research design	62
3.2.1	Epistemological premise	63
3.2.2	Ontological premise	65
3.3	Research methodology	66
3.3.1	Sampling	68
3.3.1.1	Sampling strategy	68
3.3.1.2	Ideal <i>versus</i> reality.....	70
3.3.2	Data generation procedures	72
3.3.2.1	Setting for data collection.....	72
3.3.2.2	Face to face in-depth interviews	74
3.3.2.3	Data generation tools.....	75
3.3.3	Ethical considerations	76
3.3.3.1	Permission and informed consent.....	77
3.3.3.2	Process of obtaining informed consent	77
3.3.3.3	Recruitment of participants	79
3.3.3.4	Anonymity and confidentiality	80

3.3.4	Trustworthiness, rigour, validity and reflexivity	81
3.3.4.1	Trustworthiness	81
3.3.4.1.1	Establishing credibility	81
3.3.4.1.2	Transferability	81
3.3.4.1.3	Dependability and reliability	82
3.3.4.1.4	Establishing confirmability.....	83
3.3.4.2	Rigour.....	83
3.3.4.3	Validity.....	83
3.3.4.4	Reflexivity Error! Bookmark not defined.	
3.4	Synthesis.....	84
CHAPTER 4	DATA ANALYSIS	85
4.1	Introduction.....	85
4.2	Challenges experienced during the data generation phase	85
4.3	Data analysis process	87
4.4	Data-analysis phases	92
4.4.1	Theme 1: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role.....	92
4.4.2	Theme 2: SGBs learner-members and their decision-making role	96
4.4.3	Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members	102
4.4.4	Theme 4: Contribution made by learner-members to SGBs.....	105
4.4.5	Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance	108
4.4.6	Theme 6: SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance.....	111

4.4.7	Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance	113
4.5	Synthesis.....	115
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		119
5.1	Introduction.....	119
5.2	Summary of the research.....	119
5.3	Findings	120
5.3.1	Theme 1: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role.....	120
5.3.2	Theme 2: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role	122
5.3.3	Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members	123
5.3.4	Theme 4: Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs	124
5.3.5	Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance	125
5.3.6	Theme 6: Concerns of SGB learner-members in governance	126
5.3.7	Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance	127
5.4	Recommendations.....	129
5.5	Limitations of the research	131
5.6	Further research	132
5.7	Conclusion	132
REFERENCES.....		133
ANNEXURE A: DISTRICT DIRECTOR PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS		145

ANNEXURE B: DISTRICT DIRECTOR – CONSENT LETTER DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL	146
ANNEXURE C: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS	147
ANNEXURE D: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – CONSENT LETTERS.....	149
ANNEXURE E: SGB CHAIRPERSON – PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL.....	152
ANNEXURE F: SGB CHAIRPERSON GRANTING PERMISSION.....	154
ANNEXURE G: PARENT OF SGB LEARNER-MEMBER (MINOR) – PERMISSION REQUEST & SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT	155
ANNEXURE H: SGB LEARNER-MEMBERS (MINORS) – REQUESTING PARTICIPATION & INFORMED CONSENT	160
ANNEXURE I: SGB LEARNER-MEMBERS (18 & OLDER) – REQUESTING PARTICIPATION & INFORMED CONSENT	186
ANNEXURE J: DATA GENERATION TOOL – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	199
ANNEXURE K: RAW DATA.....	202
ANNEXURE L: EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT	207
ANNEXURE M: NWU-EMELTEN-REC - ETHICAL CERTIFICATE - NUMBER NWU- 00353-19-A2	209
ANNEXURE N: LANGUAGE EDITOR DECLARATION.....	211

ANNEXURE O: TURNITIN-REPORT	212
-----------------------------------	-----

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1:	Sampling.....	12
Table 1-2:	The process of data analysis	14
Table 2-1:	Bill of Rights (Chapter 2): Three sources of Education Law and Sections of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) embodied in this study	21
Table 2-2:	The composition of SGB members.....	44
Table 3-1:	Description of the interpretive paradigm.....	65
Table 3-2:	Initial planned participants to this study	71
Table 3-3:	Sampling.....	71
Table 4-1:	The process of data analysis (adapted from Nowell <i>et al.</i> , 2017:4)	88
Table 4-2:	SGBs' learner-members and their governance role	93
Table 4-3:	SGBs' learner-members decision-making role	96
Table 4-4:	Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members	103
Table 4-5:	Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs.....	106
Table 4-6:	The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance.....	108
Table 4-7:	SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance	111

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1:	An adapted social learning model (Wildemeersch <i>et al.</i> , 1998:254).....	34
Figure 2-2:	The devolution of power for participatory governance and democracy in South African schools (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017:77)	36
Figure 4-1:	Data analysis and interpretation process (Frieze, 2014:115)	90
Figure 4-2:	Data interpretation of SGB Learner members' Governance role.....	91
Figure 4-3:	Democratic polarities of learner members serving on SGBs (adapted from Benet, 2013:31)	116

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations were used and explained in this study. The abbreviations associated with this study stand for the following:

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	Africa National Congress
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EMGD	Education Management and Governance Directorate
FEDSAS	Federation of Associations of Governing Bodies of South African Schools
GET	General Education and Training
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency virus
HOD	Head of Department
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NEP	National Education Policy
NGO	Non-Profit Organisation
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PED	Provincial Education Department
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SA	South Africa
SASAct abbreviation	South African Schools Act – most people use Schools Act or SASA as
SETA	Sector Education Training Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
TLO	Teacher Liaison Officer

CHAPTER 1 RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The South African education system was governed as an oppressive race segregated system during the Apartheid era between 1948 and 1994 (Carrim, 2006:177-178). Since 1994, a democratic dispensation introduced a change in the country's education system which gave rise to the initiation of changes in legislation of the education system in South Africa (SA) (Smith *et al.*, 2015:249). In terms of section 1(a)¹ of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa² (1996), the democratic state is founded on the values of "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom." The Constitution of 1996 allowed the winds of change to blow through an education system that pre-1996 embodied segregation, discrimination, inequality and white supremacy towards a non-discriminatory, equal and fair democratic system (Carrim, 2006:177).

The racially divided and stratified nature of the apartheid school system was done according to race and ethnicity. The education sector was divided into different race-based departments, including schools in independent homelands. This was done as part of the separate development plan of the apartheid regime. The concept of Bantu education – education for ethnic black communities in SA – was structured to educate black learners according to ethnicity. It is important to note that these education systems were different and had different purposes for the government (Giliomee, 2012). The word Bantu means "people", but in the sense of Bantu education, it specifically meant black learners and a separate black education system found in the pre-1994 separate development and homeland years (Giliomee, 2012). Albert Luthuli, the first president of the African National Congress (ANC), described this system as "a huge deceit" (Giliomee, 2012:68), referring to how the previous education system deliberately withheld the truth from black learners misleading them with poor information and poor education. During the 1980s, the education system was divided into four separate structures, you are referring to the wrong each serving members of a separate "racial" category, blaming your institution viz. African, Coloured, Indian, and White. A further division provided for categories of different "ethnic" groups such as Africans being categorisit is the task of theed as Venda, Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Xhosa, and others (Johnson, 1982:214).

White learner education, as well as black Bantu education was structured to meet the capitalist needs of the National Party-led government (Chisholm, 1983:369) to provide a society constituting either white- or blue-collar workers (Mariotti, 2012:1101). These learners subsequently needed

¹ Section will be abbreviated as an 's' followed by the relevant section in legislation, e.g. s1(a).

² The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa will be referred to as the Constitution. of 1996

resilience and determination to rise and protest against the authorities, to get access to the quality education that should have been theirs by right. This would not have been possible if learners were not cautioned that revolution only takes place if one knows, loves, and understands who one is (Arnold & Biko, 1984). The revolution of education started at school level, as it was initiated by school learners in 1976 (South African History Online, 2017). Action was taken by learners to stand up against being looked up to as the difference between ordered and taught in Afrikaans as the medium of instruction under Bantu-education. Therefore, illegal, or revolutionary action had to be taken before new legislation was promulgated (meaning black learners had to be rebellious and take a stand against the previous government law, to be able to receive the education they desire). This revolutionary movement of learners and other partners within the country, amongst other things, ultimately resulted in the drafting of the Constitution of 1996 and the South African Schools Act³ (84 of 1996) after South Africa's democratic transition.

The process of change towards a unitary South African education system started slowly and, since 1996, the thinking behind schooling and education shifted the parameters to the design of a new educational system. According to Carrim (2006:176), the idea of a "people's education" formed the basis for the new educational system and "connoted the right to education as a matter of social justice" and "the establishment of a unitary, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic educational system, one which is based on critical thinking and active participation of all school actors". One of the expectations created by this period of change towards a unitary South African education system was that a new democratic dispensation – post-1996 – would introduce compulsory democratic elections of School Governing Body (SGB) representatives in accordance with the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996) that stipulated the enhancement of democracy at school level in s16(2).

Consequently, the revolutionary movement of learners was one of the driving forces behind the eventual creation of a platform for democracy at national level, but also ultimately for learners at school level. Learners could now participate in schools' governance under the current legalised democratic school system. In line with this aspect of a democratic schooling system, this study was conducted to explore the governance role of the learner-members on the SGB within the borders of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

1.2 Problem statement

The preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) section 1(a) emphasises the constitutional values of a society based on democracy, social justice and fundamental human

³ The South African Schools Act will be referred to as SA Schools Act

rights as well as the improvement of the quality of life for all citizens to free the potential achievements of each South African citizen. In section 1, the values are identified as human dignity, achieving equality and advancement of human rights in all aspects of citizens' lives. The Constitution of 1996 (1996) served as a driving force for the promulgation of general legislation for a democratic SA, for education and, of note for this study, the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). In terms of s23 (1) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). It is stipulated that: subject to this Act, the membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school comprises-

(a) Elected members

(b) The principal, in his or her official capacity;

(c) Co-opted members

(2) Elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of each of the following categories:

(a) Parents of learners at the school;

(b) Educators at the school;

(c) Members of staff at the school who are educators and

(d) Learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school

A school must have a governing body that comprises of all the above-mentioned stakeholders to instil transparent, democratic and collaborative decision making. In any democracy it is important to also give a voice to learners and to give them a role in school governance. This was not done so that governors will account to those who elected them, but rather, to provide the structure that will support education in public schools as mentioned in SA Schools Act s20. Hence, this study aimed to explore learners' perceptions of the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies (SGBs).

In terms of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s11(1), a Representative Council of Learners (RCL⁴) must be established in every public school. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) therefore gives specific meaning to the abovementioned Constitutional values. This was a signal from the Department of Education of their intention to adhere to the value of democracy and to show that there is an understanding

⁴ Representative Council of Learners will be referred to as RCL.

of the importance of practising democracy in education by allowing learners to be part of leadership through fair elections of RCLs. It is important to note that RCL members are not *per se* SGB members or equivalent to SGB members but may be elected to be members of the SGB (Squelch, 1997) through fair elections by the learners of their schools. Section 23(2)(d) of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) mandates secondary school learners to participate in the governance of their schools by proclaiming that “learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school can be elected members of the SGB in public schools.

Notwithstanding the legal imperative of learners as part of school governance, one must consider the fact that the learner-members in SGBs are mostly still minors in the eye of the law. The question, thus, is steered by the aim of this research to explore perceptions of the governance role of learner-members of SGBs and furthermore by the question whether the level of learners’ participation or contribution is determined by their age and experience.

Diskiēne and Pauliēne (2014:152) argue that managing institutions without including the views of the current generation may lead to consequences that are undesirable and will hamper the progress of any institution. Therefore, it is imperative that the contribution of learners in school governance is considered because the inclusion of learners is part of democracy since co-operative governance is considered essential as stipulated in the constitution of 1996 s41 (1) “all spheres of government and organs of the state within each sphere must:

- (a) Preserve the peace, national unity and the indivisibility of the republic;*
- (b) Secure the well-being of the people of the republic;*
- (c) Provide effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for the republic as a whole;*
- (d) Be loyal to the Constitution, the republic and its people;*
- (e) Respect the constitution status, institutions, powers and functions of government in the other spheres.*
- (f) Not assume any power or function except those conferred on them in terms of the constitution;*
- (g) Exercise their power and perform their functions in a manner that does not encroach on the geographical, functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere;*
- (h) Co-operative with one another in mutual trust and good faith.*

It is fundamental to see all spheres of school governance within the SGB working together and allowing the room for participation without limits except those that are prohibited by the legislation in some of the SGB members such as learner-members. Thus, there was a need to explore the learner-members' governance role through this study.

1.3 Rationale and literature gap

Since SGBs legally play a significant role in the governance of schools, studies conducted on various aspects of SGBs and their duties include, amongst others, a focus on the SGB and finances (Mestry, 2006), issues of social justice and the voice of learners (Mncube, 2008), SGB elections (Mncube, 2009:84), members of the SGB (Smith *et al.*, 2015:249), SGB members' level of literacy (Heystek, 2014), their capacity (Maluleka, 2008), and also their ability to perform the tasks assigned to them (Heystek, 2014).

However, it seems as if little has been published on the governance role of learner-members of SGBs, except for Pendlebury (2011) who studied the relation between children's representation, participation and power. Karlsson's (2002:327) study focused on school governance and the role of democratic governing bodies in South African schools, which concluded that democratic SGBs have "fallen short of their transformation vision" as governors. Oni and Adetoro (2015) studied student involvement in decision-making in schools and universities in general. Nwosu and Chukwuere (2017) contend that participatory democracy is part of the worldwide trend to increase accountability of public institutions towards the broader public and state departments. Mncube (cited in Nwosu & Chukwuere, 2017:6) argues that "learners should play a role in policy making and implementation, as they constitute a major stakeholder group". However, learner-members of SGBs are experiencing barriers where the learner-members bring 'more heat than light' to SGB discussions. Learner-members lack experience in educational matters and learners, being mostly minors, also lack the proficiency to take part in meaningful decision-making. Nwosu and Chukwuere (2017) believe that the student uprising of the 70s, during the liberation struggle, eventually afforded them the legal right to take part in matters affecting their education and therefore learners' – in general and learner-members of SGBs specifically – voices must be heard.

The primary reason for conducting this study was because the researcher believed that there is a puzzling absence of legal and policy directives to guide our understanding of learners' roles in school governance.

All other members in the SGB, such as parents, educators, non-teaching staff and the principal are active, visible and properly functioning in some schools, but it seems as if the role of learner-members remain invisible regarding their participation or duties in SGBs, as noted by Nwosu and Chukwuere (2017). The invisibility of learner- is not a good idea; members of SGBs is evident from the different forms of implementation in schools when it comes to learner-members (par. entire SGB, including the learner members. Your conclusion is therefore incorrect3.2).

Thus, this study assumed that learner-members are neglected and not taken into consideration. They are only elected by the schools to qualify for approval from the Head of Department (HOD). In fact, schools are mandated to have representative SGBs in secondary schools that include all the stakeholders, including learners, to qualify for approval.

A brief discussion of the purpose of this study will follow.

1.4 Purpose statement

An indication of the broader intent of the study will be discussed, followed by the demarcation of the research objectives and research questions.

1.4.1 Overall intent of the study

Every study is conducted with a specific purpose in mind. Creswell and Poth (2016) see the purpose as the overall intent of a study. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the governance role of learner-members of SGBs in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda Education District in the North West Province in SA. The governance role of learners is defined as democratically elected learner-members – as partners – on SGBs, who are co-responsible for the school as organisation, its governance and funding as determined by law in the preamble of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). This co-responsibility comes with significant decision-making powers.

To explore this phenomenon, the purpose was to explore the following research objectives:

1.4.2 Research objectives

The research objectives of this study were:

1. To explore the legal determinants of the governance role of learner-members of SGBs (Chapter 3 2.1-2.4).
2. To determine the conceptual framework of learners' governance role in SGBs (Chapter 3 2.5).

3. To determine learner-members' perceptions and experiences of their role in SGBs (Chapter 3).
4. To investigate the similarities between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs (Chapter 5).
5. To investigate the differences between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs (Chapter 5).
6. To explore learners' views of possible guidelines to support learner-members of SGBs in fulfilling their roles (Chapter 5).

From the purpose and research objectives, the research question and sub-questions were determined.

1.5 Primary and secondary research questions

A primary research question was established to steer this research and served to inform the secondary research questions.

1.5.1 Primary research question

The central or primary research question demarcated the purpose statement by providing specific questions that guided the qualitative data collection and analysis of the data processes (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The central research question that steered this study was: What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in SGBs in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda education district?

1.5.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary questions assisted the researcher in delving deeper and to find more information to answer the primary research question. Bryman (2015:7) views secondary questions as complementary questions and, also, as the questions that will provide explicit information of what the researcher intends to discover or explore. These questions thus relate to the primary research question. In this study, the secondary research questions were:

1. What are the legal determinants for the roles of learner-members of school governing bodies? (Chapter 3 2.1-2.4).
2. What are the determinants of the governance role of learner-members of SGBs? (Chapter 3 2.5).

3. What are learner-members' perceptions and experiences of their roles in SGBs? (Chapter 5).
7. What are the similarities between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning the perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs? (Chapter 5).
4. What are the differences between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning the perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs? (Chapter 5).
5. What are learners' views of possible guidelines to support learner-members of SGBs in fulfilling their roles (Chapter 5).

1.6 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is specifically useful when planning and organising strategies in empirical research (Creswell, 2014:28). Conceptual frameworks are intellectual demonstrations linked to the research project's intent, objectives and questions that give direction to the collection and analysis of data (Creswell, 2013:56).

For this study the concepts, literature, research design, sample, data collection and analysis, and findings, were linked to the purpose of exploring the governance role of learner-members of SGBs in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda Education District (par. 2.2).

The following section focuses on the way the researcher wanted to gain knowledge and understanding through direct contact with learner-members of SGBs to answer the research questions.

1.7 Research method

A research method is a strategic plan which assists researchers in reaching predetermined goals. It is a compass that gives direction to the researcher in finding answers to the research question and secondary questions (Creswell, 2014:78). Qualitative research is regarded as an umbrella term which overarches various research designs, including amongst others historical research, ethnographic studies and case studies (Creswell, 2014:111). For this study, a phenomenological research design was used because I wanted to know the perceptions and experiences of the learner-members of SGBs regarding the governance role of the learner-members within the body of governance.

1.7.1 Epistemology

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007:9), epistemology is the primary source of where people acquire knowledge from a position where they are situated. Epistemological assumptions are based on how knowledge can be established, acquired, and transferred from one person to another (Scotland, 2012:9). Scotland (2012:11) further contends that “the interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism which is based on real world phenomena.” Epistemology is the world and life view of an individual. The researcher is thus expected to know that the participants have different views in any given situation. Therefore, the researcher needed to expect anything from them as their view of life differed due to their individual differences, experiences, and circumstances. This study focused on the subjective epistemology of the learner-members of SGBs within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda Education District (par. 3.2).

1.7.2 Ontology

According to Crotty (1998:9) ontology is answering a philosophical question on “the nature of being, becoming, existence or reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations.” The assumptions of ontology are based on what is considered or accepted to be real and existing like the fact that there are men and women in the world, that rain sometimes falls. Therefore, research needs to take place on how people view things and accept their existence (Scotland, 2012:9). The ontological aspect of this study was based on exploring reality through the lenses of learner-members in their governance role in SGBs of secondary schools situated in Dr Kenneth Kaunda School District (par. 3.2). The ontological aspects explored in this study is that learner-members are regarded as governors who lack life experience thus, they should always be provided with less responsibility in their governance role.

The difference between epistemology and ontology is illustrated in figure 1.1 below.

ONTOLOGY VERSUS EPISTEMOLOGY

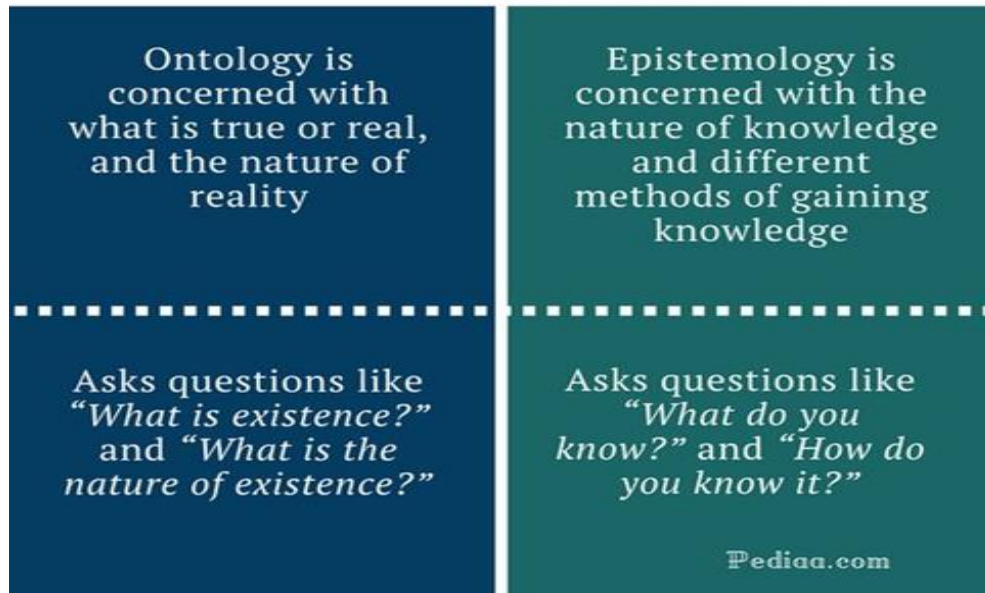


Figure 1.1: Epistemology vs ontology

1.7.3 Research sites

A research site is a place where the research is going to occur. For this study, it was considered as the source of information where the researcher was able to generate data.

Six secondary schools situated in Dr Kenneth Kaunda district in the North-West province were sampled as research sites. To ensure a variety of schools, three schools were non-fee-paying schools (Non-fee-paying schools) and three schools were schools where fees were levied by the SGBs. The primary reason for the variety of schools was to investigate similarities and differences between the governance of fee and non-fee-paying schools as viewed by learner-members of SGBs in these schools, and how they understood their role in these schools located within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda School District (Chapter 5).

1.7.4 Population and sampling

As the researcher, I needed a sample of participants that would allow me to answer the question that I had for my study: "What is the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in the school governing bodies in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district?"

1.7.4.1 Population

Boeije (2010) believes that it is usually impossible to include everyone in a study even if they are part of the relevant group. This assumption is primarily due to time and financial constraints. Therefore, a sample of the chosen participants must be taken (Creswell, 2014:43). Yet, these participants should be legally able to participate in research. Hence, ethical considerations allow individuals who are eighteen and above to be included as research participants without their parents' or guardians' permission (par. 3.3.4). Legally, this is regarded as the age of majority which Cavrić *et al.* (2015:1109) defines as the age of maturity or a transition from being a child to a young adult. Minors are juvenile children aged between 14 and 17 (Cavrić *et al.*, 2015) and are individuals regarded as vulnerable participants. Therefore, the researcher did not only need to acquire their consent but also their parents' consent to participate in social studies, as was the case in this study. Some of the sites would have learner-members who were not in the same age group as the majority. The sampled group for this study was twelve learner-members in SGBs of fee-paying schools and Non-fee-paying schools, situated in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda Education District (Potchefstroom).

1.7.4.2 Sampling technique

There is a variety of methods that can be used to sample participants for research. In this study I used purposive sampling to assist me to find an in-depth understanding of the learner-members of SGBs (par. 3.3.1). The selected individuals (learner-members) were purposefully selected because I wanted to gain a holistic understanding of what their perceptions and experiences as learner-leaders and members of SGBs were. These participants were members of the promulgated functional governance structure in schools situated in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda Education District in the North West Province.

1.7.4.3 Sample size

It was my hope that I could have more participants in this study, since more participants would have meant more perceptions of different participants to boost the validity and reliability of data that were generated in this study. Initially my aim was to have eight schools with 16 participants (par. 3.3.1) – two per school – but due to data saturation. Therefore, the research was limited to six schools with twelve participants of both fee-paying schools and Non-fee-paying schools. Table 1-1 depicts the participants in this study. Data saturation is a stage in the data collection process where participants provide similar responses in most of the questions (Creswell, 2016:79). This stage in this study started in interview number 8. Participants were gradually providing answers like the once already provided by other participants. And no new perceptions were added. As a

researcher I did not see the necessity to continue with the interviews because I could then predict the possible answer in each question.

Table 1-1: Sampling

School A (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School B (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School C (Fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School D (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School E (Fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School F (Fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
Total number of participants:		12

Hence the focus moved to the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in this research.

1.7.4.4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

In this study, only learner-members who were in grade 8 and above were permitted to participate in the study, as they were legally elected members of SGBs (par. 3.3.1).

Under normal circumstances a grade 8 learner turns 14 years of age during or at the end of his/her grade 8 year. According to The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) they are still young and viewed as minors and therefore not fit to take part in research without the consent of their parents/legal guardian. Primary schools were excluded from this study because legally they cannot have learner-members on their SGBs as cited in section 23(2) (d) Elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of each of the following categories (d) learner in the eighth grade or higher at the school. Schools with special needs were excluded in the study due to its conditions regarding learner-members in the SGB. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s24(d) stipulates that schools with special needs may only have learner-members of SGBs if it is reasonably practicable. This means that there is a possibility that you might have a special needs school

without learner-members on the SGB because it is not reasonably practicable at that school and the school will still be acting within the law.

After the inclusion and exclusion criteria were determined, the process of participant recruitment followed.

1.7.4.5 Recruitment of participants

As the researcher, I visited each research site to recruit participants for the study. Firstly, I requested permission to conduct my research from the District Director of the District Department of Education, since the study was intended to be conducted within Dr Kenneth Kaunda School District (Annexure A). After getting permission from the District (Annexure B), I communicated with the school principals to ask their permission to recruit participants to take part in my study. I drafted a formal letter of recruitment to the principal to request permission (Annexure C), which was granted (Annexure D). I also wrote a recruitment letter to the SGB chairpersons to request permission to conduct my study (Annexure E) and consent from the SGB chairpersons was granted (Annexure F). I wrote a letter of recruitment to the parents of minors serving as SGB learner-members, and after receiving their consent (Annexure G), I invited the SGB learner-members (minors) to take part in the research and received their signed consent (Annexure H). The SGB learner-members who were 18 years and older, also received an invitation to take part in the research, and they gave informed consent (Annexure I) (par. 3.3.1).

After the recruitment processes were attended to, the process of data generation could begin.

1.7.5 Data generation and data analysis

Data generation is the moment of reality where the researcher has direct contact with the participants to hear their views and opinions on the phenomenon. This cannot be done if the fundamental principles of conducting research are not adhered to as discussed in (par. 1.7.4).

The confirmation letters from various stakeholders stipulated that I was welcome to conduct the research at the various sites.

1.7.5.1 Individual interviews

Individual interviews offer researchers the opportunity to be the primary drivers of the interviews (Boeije, 2010:61). Interviewing is a trustworthy method to explore people's perceptions, meanings and their understanding of different aspects of life as well as how they view phenomena in their specific reality (Creswell, 2014:144). Creswell (2014) further stipulates that individual interviews are one of the most powerful tools to understand others. Hence, it is one of the most used forms

of data generation in qualitative research (par. 3.3.2). For this study, individual interviews were conducted using an interview schedule (Annexure J) to enhance trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, rigour, validity, and reflexivity (par. 3.3.3).

1.7.5.2 Method of data analysis

Boeije (2010:76) defines data analysis as the process of scientifically searching and arranging interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that the researcher accumulates, to increase his or her understanding of what has been discovered. Data can be analysed in various ways. There is no one correct way of analysing data (Maree, 2007:28). Maree claims that data analysis can be done inductively and deductively. Data in this study were analysed inductively after the researcher had read the raw transcribed data several times (par. 3.2). The researcher established 125 codes which resulted in various categories that led to seven themes which were discussed in detail in Chapter 4 (par. 4.4). Table 1-2 illustrates the procedure on how data were analysed in this qualitative study during the data collection phase of using interviews (Chapter 3, Table 3.4).

Table 1-2: The process of data analysis

Interrelating Themes / descriptions
Themes
Categorising
Coding the data
Reading all the data
Organising and preparing data analysis
Raw data (transcripts)

(adapted from Creswell, 2014:197)

Ethical considerations were attended to prior, during and after the research process.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Research cannot be conducted by anyone anywhere (Maree, 2007:300). Boeije (2010:43) contends that social scientists need to apply ethical rules and regulations to prevent them from harming participants and to protect themselves from being implicated for following unlawful procedure in case anything goes wrong in the process of research (par. 3.3.3). The most critical issues to consider when doing research are the privacy of the research participants and the signing of the informed consent by the participants and their parents or guardians. The parents

and legal guardians of learners younger than 18 years (Annexure G), and those who were already 18, signed the informed consent forms (Annexure I). This served as the agreement between the researcher and the participant (Roberts & Allen, 2015:98).

Therefore, a procedural form for conducting research was followed by obtaining consent and permission from various gate keepers such as the North West Province Department of Education (Annexure B), school principals (Annexure D), SGBs (Annexure F), parents (Annexure G), participants (Annexure H & I), as well as from NWU-EMELTEN-REC ethic committee (Annexure M) (par. 3.3.3).

The researcher received ethical clearance from the NWU-EMELTEN-REC Committee with number **NWU-00353-19-A2**.

The dissertation was submitted to Turnitin as an “originality checker” (Univ. of Reading, 2020) and received a 16% similarity score (see Annexure O)⁵. Although a similarity score of lower than 20% is acceptable, one needs to point out that in legal dissertations’ similarity scores are normally higher than other dissertations, as there is a specific legal convention that needs to be followed and a high percentage of referencing to legislation and policies, are to be expected. The probability of plagiarism in this dissertation is very unlikely as the one single source referred to the most has only received a 2% similarity score.

1.9 Trustworthiness, rigour, validity and reflexivity

The main purpose of conducting this research was to find results which readers, who are interested in the same field of study, can reflect on. This could not be achieved if trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, validity, rigour and reflexivity were not thoroughly addressed when the reported research. These aspects were addressed using various processes e.g., data were collected from learner-members of various schools and it was possible to capture a diverse spectrum of learners’ perceptions by including fee-paying schools and non-fee-paying schools (par. 3.3.4).

1.10 Synthesis

This phenomenological study used an authorised procedure to conduct social scientific research in six selected public secondary schools situated in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district (par. 3.2). Qualitative research methodology was the driving force to answer the research question of this

⁵ Annexure O does not follow logically, but it could not be added prior to the finalisation of the dissertation.

study: What are “the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members on the school governing bodies?”

The twelve participants of the study were purposefully selected at the six purposefully selected sites. Data were obtained by means of twelve face-to-face in-depth interviews with learner-members (par. 3.3.2). Most importantly, the study followed all the necessary ethical procedures to avoid harming the participants and for the protection of the researcher and participants. Data were analysed inductively, keeping in mind that the information had to be valid and reliable and - above all - trustworthy. In this chapter I introduced the study with the aim of producing a picture of what this study constituted. I discussed many vital points about the study, including the research questions that steered this research, the way in which data were generated and analysed. Most importantly, I introduced the participants and where they were situated.

In the next chapter, a literature review will be presented. Firstly, an overview of the findings and the contributions made by other researchers in the same field will be provided. This discussion provided proof that there was a need to conduct this study especially in the research entity of EduHRight because little has been written about learner-members of SGBs and expectations regarding their legal role.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced the intention of the study regarding the field of education law and gave an overview of the reality that transpired in all the stages of this research. The literature review in this chapter dealt with the body of knowledge which is already available within this research reality departing from a legal perspective on the role of learner-members in SGBs. More emphasis was placed on the implementation and an in-depth critique on current education legislation with specific reference to the role of SGB learner-members in general. In the process, the critique led to identify the gap in the literature to determine the status of SGBs' learner-members' participation from national to sub-district level. Legislation such as The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and other policies of the Department of (Basic) Education as well as the existing literature conducted by other researchers such as Mafora (2010), Xaba (2014) and others, within the same field of research were scrutinised to attempt to answer the primary research question "what are the perceptions of the governance role of the learner-members of SGBs?".

SA is a constitutional democracy, as enshrined in the Constitution of 1996, based on the principles of a sovereign state, human rights, constitutional supremacy, and the rule of law. According to s2 of the Constitution 1996, the Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic of SA and is the highest law in the country. It continues to provide that no one in SA is above the law. Any law or conduct inconsistent with the Constitution is therefore deemed invalid. Legislation such as the SA Schools Act and related gazetted amendments as some of the cornerstones of this study, must therefore be in line with the Constitution of 1996 (1996) otherwise it is invalid because there is no person or law that is above the constitution of the country.

This education law study was informed by legislation covering three sources of education law and which directly affect the governance role of learner-members in SGBs. Three sources of education law informed this study: first, the Bill of Rights in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of 1996, national legislation, and subordinate legislation; second, case law and, third, common law.

At this stage I need to clarify concepts of the study which will lead to the three sources of education law – legislation, common law, and case law – that gave direction to the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study.

2.2 Concept clarification

The following concepts needed to be clarified as they were crucial elements and frequently used in this study.

2.2.1 School Governing Body (SGB)

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) defines a SGB as the stakeholder in the school which is vested with the power to govern the school (s16(1)), stands in trust towards the school (s16(2)) and is a juristic person with legal capacity (s15). Waring (1999:180) defines a stakeholder as “those who have a legitimate interest in the continuing effectiveness and success of an institution”, in this case a secondary school in SA. This body comprises all the role players in an institution such as the principal, educators, non-teaching staff, parents and “learners in the eighth grade and higher” (s11(1)).

For this study, the SGB is defined as the body that governs the school. Thus, SGBs comprise the principal who is an ex officio member of the SGB, possible co-opted members and legally elected members in terms of s23(2)(a)-(d) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

This study focused on the role of learner-members on the SGB and will be discussed in-depth.

2.2.2 Representative Council of Learners (RCL)

Carr and Williams (2009:69) define the RCL as the council of learners which is democratically elected by other learners. The functions of the RCL needs to be determined by the MEC. For this study, the RCL is the legally elects learners to serve as SGB members. However, one should not turn a blind eye to the fact that any learner who is not part of the RCL can be elected as an SGB member (Squelch, 1997). This definition only applies in this study. Mabovula (2009:219) states that The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s11 provides for the election and constitution of an RCL at schools, and of importance for this study, that “means that a school governance structure” i.e., SGBs must include amongst others, all school stakeholder groups, in accordance with the principles of participation and cooperation, which “lies at the heart of this Act.” If the RCLs are to provide “a voice to the voiceless through deliberative democratic school governance” for learner expression, the problem lies according to Sithole (as cited by Mabovula, 2009:219-220) with the non-compliance with the key principle of a democratic school, which should embrace “consultation, collaboration, cooperation, partnership, mutual trust and participation” of all role players in the school community, and more-so at governance levels, such as the SGB.

Such a participative democracy includes visions of engagement, collaborative dialogue and debate that provides for participation and cooperation in governance structures in schools. Mabovula's (2009:220) critique on the directives found in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) includes that the Act and other policy documents are supposed to guide schools in this democratisation process. However, the Act specifically, and the Guide for RCLs (1999, cited by Mabovula), hold a narrow conception of democratic participation. Mabovula (2009) further says the lack of conception-building of what participatory democracy entails, is superficial, unimportant and inconsequential and could be labelled, a-nice-to have, and does not provide sufficient guidance to RCLs. Mabovula's (2009:220) statement that "[i]t is only the preamble to the Schools Act that comes close to the pronouncement of democratic co-operation, but it is silent on democratic participation" is an important conclusion to his argument on the lack of guidance on the side of the Department of Education and the current Department of Basic Education.

Although some members of RCLs sometimes serve on the SGB, this is determined according to the way democratic elections have unfolded at the school level. It does not mean that they are the same. An RCL is a representative council of learners, elected by learners from Grade 8 to 12 in secondary schools to help in the smooth running of the school (Carr & Williams, 2009) while SGBs are structured for the involvement of parents, learners and staff members of the schools (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996) to govern the school. Unlike RCLs, SGBs are in primary, secondary and combined schools and special schools where reasonably practicable, and these are members of the governing body elected by all stakeholders to govern the schools.

2.2.3 SGB learner member

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) defines a learner-member as an individual who receives education at a school level just like any ordinary learner in school. For this study, a learner-member is defined as a learner in the school with two responsibilities which are to learn, and secondly, legally elected to assist in school governance for the purpose of promoting the best interest of the school. This individual represents the voice of the learners and, as an individual SGB member, must be heard and take part in the major decision-making of the school in relation to all the learners of a school.

2.2.4 School governance

According to the Department of Education (2011:13) school governance is defined as the involvement of private citizens, parents, and different groups of stakeholders at school in executing public policy at local school level and district or regional levels including the

responsibility of specified policymaking, implementation and oversight in a formalised collective setting – a school. A government agency – the state – decentralises certain powers functions to SGBs (Graaff, 2016:10).

The study now turns to the three sources of law as the theoretical framework of the research. One needs to realise that these are not the only sources of law in South Africa, there is more such as customary law, indigenous law and writings of modern authors. For the purpose of this study only three sources of law relevant to this study will be discussed.

2.3 Three sources of education law

SA as a constitutional democracy, came to be after the apartheid regime ended, and South Africans went to voting stations on 27 April 1994. This election was still conducted under an interim Constitution, which, like the final 1996 Constitution, very liberally provided for the reformation of an inclusive and transformed society, based on the values and rights enshrined in the Constitution of 1996 such as human dignity, equality, democracy and basic human rights.

Three sources of education law – within the ambit of the South African Constitution – are found in legislation (parliamentary and subordinate legislation) common law and case law.

A *Constitution* according to Sartori (cited by Maddox, 1982:805), is a guarantee of human rights to individual citizens of a country bound by the right to limitation of government power. In the South African context, De Waal et al. (2001:390) refer to a constitution as a regulatory instrument to control the power of the State, determine basic law-making principles and determine citizens' conduct towards each other (Rossouw, 2020:247-248) as determined in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of 1996 (Chapter 2). Legislation, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2016), is a law or set of laws proposed by government, debated at different fora of, and promulgated by parliament, signed by the State President, and published in the Government Gazette, as is the case in SA. Common Law is defined by Roos et al. (2020:111) as uncodified legal principles and traditions found in Roman-Dutch and English law that over time have been incorporated in the South African legislation and justice system. Case law in the form of court case reports, offers a clear indication of how different higher courts in the person of a judge, interpret, apply and make legal decisions based on legal principles and legislation, known as the doctrine of precedents (Rossouw, 2020:257). For the purpose of this study a constitution is a set of rules and regulations drawn to develop uniform ways of living that promotes equality in the country.

Table 2-1 provides an overview of the three sources of Education Law introduced in (par. 2.1): legislation, case law and common law bound by the Constitution of 1996 (1996). The lists of Acts, cases etc are not exhaustive.

Table 2-1: Bill of Rights (Chapter 2): Three sources of Education Law and Sections of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) embodied in this study

South African Constitution (1996)		
Constitution of 1996 Chapter 2 Bill of Rights	Parliamentary and subordinate legislation	Three Sources of Law
Section 1: Values Section 7(1): ... is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa ...	Educational legislation (par. 2.3.1)	National Education Policy Act SA Schools Act Employment of Educators Act
Section 9: Equality Section 10: Human dignity Section 12: Security	Subordinate legislation (par. 2.3.2)	Personnel Administrative Measures Provincial Schools Act Government Gazettes School policies School rules and School Codes of Conduct
Section 14: Privacy Section 16: Expression Section 23: Access to information	Common law (par. 2.3.3)	The rules of natural justice The <i>ultra vires</i> and <i>intra vires</i> doctrine <i>In loco parentis</i>
Section 28: Children Section 29: Education Section 30: Culture Section 31: Cultural, religious and linguistic communities	Case law (par. 2.3.4)	Court Cases Precedent doctrine <i>Stare decisis</i> Ermelo case
South African Constitution (1996)		

The next paragraph contains a discussion of national legislation, common law, and case law.

2.3.1 Legislation

Legislation is the legally promulgated set of laws or regulations that governs the whole country. This set of law relevant to education directs the education of the country and is monitored by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in collaboration with provincial members of cabinet (MEC).

2.3.1.1 The South African Constitution

The Constitution of 1996 (1996) is regarded as one of the most advanced constitutions in the modern world and contains “a Bill of Rights second to none” (SAHO, 2019). The values are vested

in the Constitution. The preamble to the Constitution of 1996 (1996) declares the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic, and is paraphrased to link to this study, to:

*Establish a (school) society based on **democratic values**, social justice and fundamental human rights.*

*Lay the foundations for a **democratic** and open (school) society in which government (school governance) is based on the will of the people (SGB members including learner-members on the SGB).*

s7(1) informs South Africans that:

*This Bill of Rights is a cornerstone of **democracy** in South Africa. It enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the **democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom**.*

While the focus of this study is on learner-members in the SGB, it is important to take note of s28 which protects the vulnerability of children and which ensures that every child in SA has a legal right to education.

s28(2) and s29(1)(a) determine that:

28(2) 'A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child'.

29(1) everyone has the right— (a) to a basic education.

2.3.1.2 The South African Schools Act (84 of 1996)

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is the driving force for this study. Details will follow where the SA Schools Act is discussed with specific reference to sections that have a direct impact on learner-members as governors and the SGB as the structure of school governance.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) supports the Constitutional ideal of democratic values that should lay the foundations for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The preamble to the SA Schools Act announces that the achievement of democracy in SA is of paramount importance and has consigned to history the past system of education which was

based on racial inequality and segregation. Regarding the role of SGBs and democratisation of education specifically one should take note of:

Section 8(1) that determines that all the members of the SGB *must*:

8(1) ... adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school.

Section 9(1) deals with the role of the SGB that they *may* play:

9(1) ... the governing body of a public school may, after a fair hearing, suspend a learner from attending the school.

This means that learner-members as governors on the SGB must be involved in a hearing conducted by the SGB and school management before a learner can be dismissed or suspended.

Of importance is s16(1-2) which addresses the duality of governance and s(3) on the professional management of public schools. For this research only s16(1) and (2) are stated:

16(1) ... the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body including secondary school learner-members on the SGB.

(2) A governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school.

Section 18(1)(2) determines that a governing body *must* function in terms of a constitution which should include *inter alia* that the SGB *must*:

18(2)(a) meet at least once every school term

(b) an annual meeting with parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school; (c) record and minutes keeping of governing body meetings;

(d) making available such minutes for inspection by the Head of Department, and

(e) report annually on its activities to parents, learners, educators and other staff.

Some of the functions of SGBs – without excluding learner-members on the SGB – are determined in s20(1)(a-k) of SASA in that the governing body of a public school must promote the best interests of the school and ensure its development through quality education for all learners (1(a)); adopt a SGB constitution (1(b)); develop a mission statement (1(c)) and adopt a code of conduct for learners (1(d)); support the principal, educators and other staff in the performance of their professional functions (1(e)); encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff to render voluntary services to the school (1(h)); recommending to the HOD the appointment of educators and non-educator staff (1(i-j)) and allowing the reasonable use under

fair conditions of the school's facilities for educational programmes not conducted by the school (1(k)).

Albeit not applicable to learner-members serving on SGBs, the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) (EEA) does refer to the appointments made by SGBs.

2.3.1.3 The National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996)

In consonance with the Constitution of 1996 the National Education Policy Act's (27 of 1996) preamble stipulates that:

It is fundamental to integrate the legislation to implement the democratic transformation of the national system of education to the one that serves the interest and needs of all the people of South Africa and raises the flag of their fundamental human rights.

One of many post-1996 expectations was that the state would ensure increased participation and building a democratic society based on the values of human dignity, equality, and freedom (Sayed, 2002:38). Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi (2017) refer to the building of a democratic society as “participatory democracy”. Bucek and Smith (2000:4) noted that participatory democracy “includes citizens in decision-making at the local level but in general does not lead to formal final decisions” for the purpose of this study local level I refer to schools. In agreement with Bucek and Smith (2000), Smit and Oothuizen (2011:60) states that participatory democracy is power sharing with an organisation (schools) which improves a system of participatory management and governance in-order to acquire joint decision-making. This means that people should be involved in decisions which affect them directly, and in this study, this notion is applicable to learner-members on the SGB. Meaning that learner-members, as lawfully elected members of SGBs, must be given opportunities to contribute to decisions made by the school together with the other governors or stakeholders of the schools in which they serve.

Sections 2(b-c) of the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) stipulate that the objectives of the Act are to provide for:

s2 (b).... “the consultations to be undertaken prior to the determination of policy, and the establishment of certain bodies for the purpose of consultation.

(c) the implementation of national education policy”

To build a participatory democracy in SA, learners and specifically SGB learner-members in collaboration with other members on SGBs, must among other things “have a say in learners’ right to education” and other aspects such as sports (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017:78). This

must be implemented with a particular purpose in mind, which is to promote the best interests of learners in the school. Learners should for example be allowed to have a say in sports they are interested in at their various schools, as it serves their best interests. In doing so, it is a simultaneous implementation of the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) s2 (a-c) as it promotes the principle of consultation before any education policy is promulgated. This implies that stakeholders in education such as SGBs, educators, principals, learners, unions, and the Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools (FEDSAS) must be consulted before education policies are promulgated. This implies that learner-members as representatives of the SGB are automatically consulted in the promulgation of education policies such as government gazettes and provincial policies as named in the Schools Act since they form part of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996) (s 23).

2.3.1.4 The Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) (EEA)

The Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) s6 clarifies the powers of the employer to balance SGBs' functions in terms of s20 of the Constitution of 1996:

s6 (1) "stipulates that the appointment of any person, or the promotion or transfer of any educator –

(a) In the service of the Department of Education shall be made by director general"

(b) in the service of a Provincial Department of Education shall be made by the Head of department.

The question, however, is whether s20(1)(a-k) covers all the functions of all the SGB members, including learner-members, or will learner-members serving on the SGB, be acting *ultra vires* if accorded exactly the same functions as that of adult members on the SGB?

2.3.2 Legal functions of members serving on SGBs

2.3.2.1 Balance of power

The above national legislation makes it clear that there is a balance of power between SGBs and the employer (Department of Education) in terms of the employment of educators. SGBs are not the employer for educators in the education sector. However, as a recognised stakeholder of SA schools, The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) grants SGBs an opportunity to recommend to the HOD any candidate of their choice after interviews have been conducted. Yet, the appointment is done by the employer with the power vested in the HOD. In other words, this means that SGBs can recommend a candidate to the HOD and the HOD can

overrule or take the recommendation of SGBs as it is. In terms of the employment of educators, the final decision-making power rests on the shoulders of the HOD and not on SGBs.

The stipulated function in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) in s20 goes with the responsibilities assigned to SGBs in s36 (1-2):

(1) The governing body of a public school must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school.

(2) The governing body of a school may enter into a loan or overdraft to supplement sub-section 1.

However, it seems as if s36 (1-2) is limited by s32 (1-3), stipulating that:

32. (1) A member of a governing body who is a minor may not contract on behalf of 25 a public school.

(2) A member of a governing body who IS a minor may not vote on resolutions of a governing body which impose liabilities on third parties or on the school.

It is evident that the abovementioned legislation was promulgated with learner-members of SGBs in mind. Thus, being recognised as a full member of SGBs, learner-members must fully participate in all functions of the SGB without restrictions; however, a learner-member must be protected against financial discussion taken by older members of the same structure. Learner-members as minors in the SGB structure do not have the same level of responsibility and accountability as compared to other members of SGBs. They are only accountable to issues that are of direct interest to them, such as e.g., sports activities and not to financial matters.

This section does not separate the governance power as learner-members or other members of the SGB. It considers SGB members, which includes learner-members, therefore according to this section learner-members will be acting *intra vires* if they contribute to anything provided by s20 of SA Schools Act. Bush and Heystek (2003:127) illustrate that the democratic rationale for SGBs is a powerful illustration of a commitment to democratic institutions – affirmative action – to address the injustices and inequities of the past. Bush and Gamage's (2001:39) underlying philosophy of democratisation is a movement towards "stakeholder participation", which Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi (2017) refer to as "participatory democracy". Bush and Heystek (2003:128) emphasise the importance and need for capacity-building of SGB members, including

learner-members, because of the inability and incapacity of many members of SGBs, because of South Africa's historical legacy.

The inclusion of learner-members of SGBs should also be viewed from a political-historical background where many learners were and still are over-aged, 18 and above, and is consistent with the democratisation of education at grassroots level (Bush & Heystek, 2003:132). The inclusion of learners as part of school governing bodies in today's education system was directly informed by political history such as the Soweto Uprising of June 1976, where some learners lost their lives, because of the stance they took, to take a lead in getting better education that would allow them to have a say on how they want to receive their education. This action was one of the driving forces of the promulgation of s28 of Constitution of 1996 (1996). All decisions taken in schools must be in the best interest of learners.

From the discussion of the Constitution of 1996 (1996), the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) and the SA Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998), it is evident that the expectation is that all members that are elected by specific interest-groups, parents, learners and educators *must* be heard and *must* be involved in matters that concern the SGB as set out in s20(1)(a) of SASA, and in a broader sense, all SGB members as a legal entity, are collectively responsible and accountable to ensure that the functions are dealt with in an equitable and fair manner (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017:78).

There is one *proviso* and that is that the SGB *must* not abuse their power – *ultra vires* principle – by interfering in the professional management of the school.

2.3.2.2 Participatory democracy and training of SGB learner-members

Smit (2013:348) argues that democracy is dynamic, ever-changing, and developing within spheres of time, space and environment. The SA Schools Act is based on participatory democracy and authority is devolved to SGBs at school level. Smit (2013:350) states that “as forums, SGBs have the makings of a great and unique South African democratic tradition.”

However, the training of SGB members remains problematic. Nwosu and Chukwuere (2017:2) quote Mabasa and Themane's 2002 report which states that “SGBs are not trained before they start their work and this manifests in problems such as unfamiliarity with meeting procedures” and the *status quo* remains because in most schools, especially rural schools, SGBs are still not functional due to their state of understanding their role. This may be due to most of the SGB members not having the privilege of receiving basic education and, not to mention, further education. There is still a lack of appropriate legislation and education specific language used in meetings. Low literacy levels render many SGB members unable to read large volumes of

documents and are exacerbated by a feeling of inferiority in the company of seemingly more knowledgeable members.

This may also be applicable to many learner-members of SGBs, as they are still young and have minimal education, although the law legalises their membership. For Mncube and Naicker (cited by Nwosu & Chukwuere, 2017), overtly or covertly silencing the voice of learners is a threat to democracy, participation, and social justice, as they are not acting on behalf of the school. The lack of training of members of the SGB, who serve for a period of three years only, and the difficulties with understanding and executing their functions and duties, remain problematic. This could be even more problematic for learner-members of SGBs that only serve a term of one year, because they are still young, lack life experience and understanding to effectively execute their duties as stipulated in s20 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). Maluleka (2008:42) contends that the advantages of SGB training are capacity building, knowledge and understanding of their roles in and the functions and responsibilities of SGBs which are equally needed by all SGB members including the SGB learner-members.

The participation of learner-members on the SGB is provided for in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s23(2)(d) which states that elected members of SGBs shall comprise of a member or members of each of the following categories: parent-members who comprise the majority, educators, non-teaching staff and learners in the eighth grade or higher at secondary schools.

According to Mathebula (2008:189), SA, as a country, went through dramatic and drastic changes since the first democratic election on 27 April 1994. Among the changes that took place, was the desegregation of education and introduction of democracy in the wider spectrum of the South African education system (Mathebula, 2008:190). The inclusion of parent- and learner-members in school governance is a symbol of broader participation in school based decision-making processes (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:100) and of democracy in practice (Heystek, 2011:455). Lewis and Naidoo (2004:100) argue that these legitimate school-level members of the SGB is evidence of two dimensions of governance, i.e., participation and representation. Furthermore, by including learners in the governance structures of schools, the principle of inclusion is served which gives effect to the implementation of learner participation in school policy which is a worldwide phenomenon (Thornberg, 2010:924). In common law, learners' right is probably contained in the principle that they have a stake in the school and therefore can expect to be included in decision making.

In 1999 the South African Department of Education, which in 2009 became The Department of Basic Education, issued a mandate for the RCL to be established in terms of The South African

Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)(Mathebula, 2008:189). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s11(1) provides for the election of the RCL to be established in every state secondary school. The council should comprise potential learners in the eighth grade and higher, with two learners who are designated through fair and open elections to serve on the SGB. The RCL is the only recognised and legitimate representative learners' body at a school (SA Schools Act 84 of 1996 s11).

It is important to note that RCL members are not SGB members as the two do not have the same powers and do not function the same. SGB members are responsible for school governance, they are elected separately from the elections of the RCLs, to become learner-members of SGBs. In most cases learners prefer to vote for two RCL learners to represent them in the school's SGB. However, it is not prescriptive that an SGB learner-member must be elected from the RCL.

Young people, as future leaders, are part of the community and play a significant role in the development and evolution of education, community, and the country at large (Phaswana, 2010:106). Therefore, it is advisable that when any decision is to be taken and implemented by any member of the community, young people should also be involved, because any decision taken will affect them soon (Mncube & Naidoo, 2014:489). The participation principle applies to schools as organs of state and learners (young people) as beneficiaries in education. Learner-participation in decision making at schools alleviates unnecessary conflict between learners and school management (Phaswana, 2010:109).

2.3.3 Common Law

Nationally, the South African education system is driven by three sources of education law which are legislation, case law and common law. Legislation as a source of law has been discussed above. In this part of the chapter, common law as applied in this study is discussed.

Common law is clarified as a body of legal rules that have been established by judges and law made by legislature or official statutes, it is uncodified legal principles and traditions taken from Roman-Dutch and English law that have been established and adapted to the South African legal background and context (Oosthuizen *et al.*, 2016:4). SGBs, as recognised structures of schools, are often required to be signatories of different documents. These documents include binding policies related to sport policy, health policy and safety policy, that govern the school.

SGBs learner-members would in all circumstances be legally immature as they would make decisions that might hurt others or themselves (Ngidi, 2004:261). However, s23 of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) still stipulates that learner-members must be considered as elected members of SGBs that have functions and

responsibilities towards their respective schools (SA Schools Act s20). The only section that is prohibiting the learner-members to participate in some actions devolved to be the responsibility of SGBs is s32(a-b) of the SA Schools Act. These 2 subsections stipulate what SGB activities learner-members may not participate in as minor members of an SGB:

- (1) *A member of a governing body who is a minor may not contract on behalf of a public school.*
- (2) *A member of a governing body who is a minor may not vote on resolutions of a governing body which impose liabilities on third parties or on the school*

S32(c) refers to the something that is related subsections 32(a-b) namely that -

- (3) *A member of a governing body who is a minor incurs no personal liability for any consequence of his or her membership of the governing body.*

The other members of SGBs may incur personal liability for a consequence of his or her membership of the SGB.

According to the Department of Basic Education (2014:49), the teacher liaison officer (TLO) must prepare ballot papers to make sure that learners votes are kept secret. This means that learners cannot be forced to vote for someone they do not wish to vote for. One cannot turn a blind eye to other learners being bullies in schools and can consequently manipulate others into electing them. Most vital is the fact that, legally, learner-members who may participate in all SGB discussions and decisions except for the two provisions in subsection 32(a-b). Their juvenile nature might lead to decisions that would not be in their own interest and would therefore violate s28 of the Constitution of 1996, because their decisions might not be in their best interest and that of other learners.

Nonyane (2016:106) notes that SGB learner-members have limited knowledge of school governance because of their level of education and life experience. This might lead them to make decisions that could require emotional intelligence which is still developing and may lead them to make legally inappropriate decisions. Therefore, SGB learner-members are prohibited from partaking in decisions contemplated in subsection 32(a-b). except the school code of conduct, which directly affects them because they are still minors. Moreover, a large volume of the documents handled by SGBs must be signed by someone older than eighteen years (Ngidi, 2004:262). The reason behind this act is the issue of responsibility and accountability. Learner-members are still young. Therefore, they cannot be given powers that will require a large level of accountability (e.g., SA School Schools Act s20(j) making a recommendation of the employment of educators – which might require them to enter a contract with SGB appointees). Sometimes,

educator positions are disputed either by the applicant, SGBs or by unions. This aspect of the employment of educators requires SGB members who have insight and understanding of educators and parent representatives on the SGB, to assist the Department of Basic Education (DBE)'s officials – tasked with investigating the appointment process – to make one decision or the other.

The third source of legislation pertaining to this study case law, and the verdicts or decisions or judgments of the courts which become law and may serve as precedents regarding similar cases that may arise in the future. Only one court case will be used to demonstrate the importance of case law for this study as it sheds light on the role of learner-members in the SGBs.

2.3.4 Case law

The court case of the *Head of Department: Mpumalanga Department of Education and Another v Hoërskool Ermelo and Another (2009)* is the only court case discussed in this study in line with the Constitutional Court judgement; *Head of Department: Mpumalanga and Another v Hoërskool Ermelo and Another (CCT40/099) [2009] ZAACC 32*. This court case was based on the language policy of the school, which happened to be Afrikaans, which was the decision of the SGB of the school directed by s6(2) of the SA Schools Act.

The HOD and others wanted to change the language policy of the school to be parallel medium of instruction to admit 113 learners, who were said to be stranded without a school to attend in January 2007. The parents of these learners wanted their children to be taught in English.

The HOD invoked s22 of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) as it stipulates that *the HOD is entitled to revoke in appropriate circumstances on urgent basis any function of the SGB*. Hence the HOD decided to establish an interim committee to perform the duties of the SGB that was existing so that, the learners who were in need of space to learn could be granted with space as soon as possible, guided by s25 of the SA Schools Act. It states that after the HOD has revoked any function of the SGB, he/she can appoint someone appropriate to perform the duty for three months. The High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the SGB. According to the High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal, the HOD relied on the wrong section to overrule the firm decision of the school's SGB in terms of their preferred language policy. The HOD can only apply s22 on the functions of the SGB as stated in s20 of the SA Schools Act, not in s6(2). Therefore, the decision taken by the HOD and the interim committee of changing the language policy of the school was set aside. Eight learners who were already admitted by the school based on parallel medium of instruction pronounced by the interim committee, continued to learn in English until they finished their matric.

One of the driving forces behind the Supreme Court of Appeal making its decision, was that the HOD's decision to appoint an interim committee was taken without following reasonable procedures, of which one of them was to consult all school stakeholders, including others (the parents, learners and the community at large). Before any decision taken by the HOD, consultation within current structures that are involved in the school leadership, both management and governance, which includes learner-members in the SGB is required. Learners are the primary recipients of education and, therefore, they must be consulted before language policy can be changed in the school. They too, must be given an opportunity to have a say in any changes that may be made, as this decision would have violated s(11) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). The school code of conduct must change automatically if other learners are expecting to receive education in a different medium of instruction from the current one. This on its own requires consultation with the SGB, which includes the learner-members as well as the parents who represent the community.

This court case, according to the Supreme Court of Appeal's ruling, demonstrates the importance of learner-members in SGBs and SGBs in general. It demonstrates that learner-members are serving within structures that have a sensitive duty in the school, in that they require that all SGB members be involved to make decisions in the best interests of the learners, as stipulated in s28 of Constitution of 1996.

This form of participatory governance and democracy – allowing learner-members to be part of a legal entity, the SGB – is of importance. The Constitutional Court's judgement was that the democratisation process and design of applicable legislation to establish SGBs, was indeed a participatory democratic initiative and, expanding the membership to learners, even more so. The emphasis on democracy in the report on this court case, illustrates the importance of cooperative governance (a partnership relationship between the state, parents, educators and the learner-members in secondary schools). This partnership is essential for the responsible governance of schooling institutions.

The Constitutional Court found that a governing body is democratically composed and is intended to function in a democratic manner. Therefore, this form of early exposure and experience of learner-members of SGBs is an example of 'grassroots democracy' because they allow the people who are directly affected by the right to education to be involved in achieving this right (*Head of Department: Mpumalanga Department of Education and Another v Hoërskool Ermelo and Another* 2009; Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017:80).

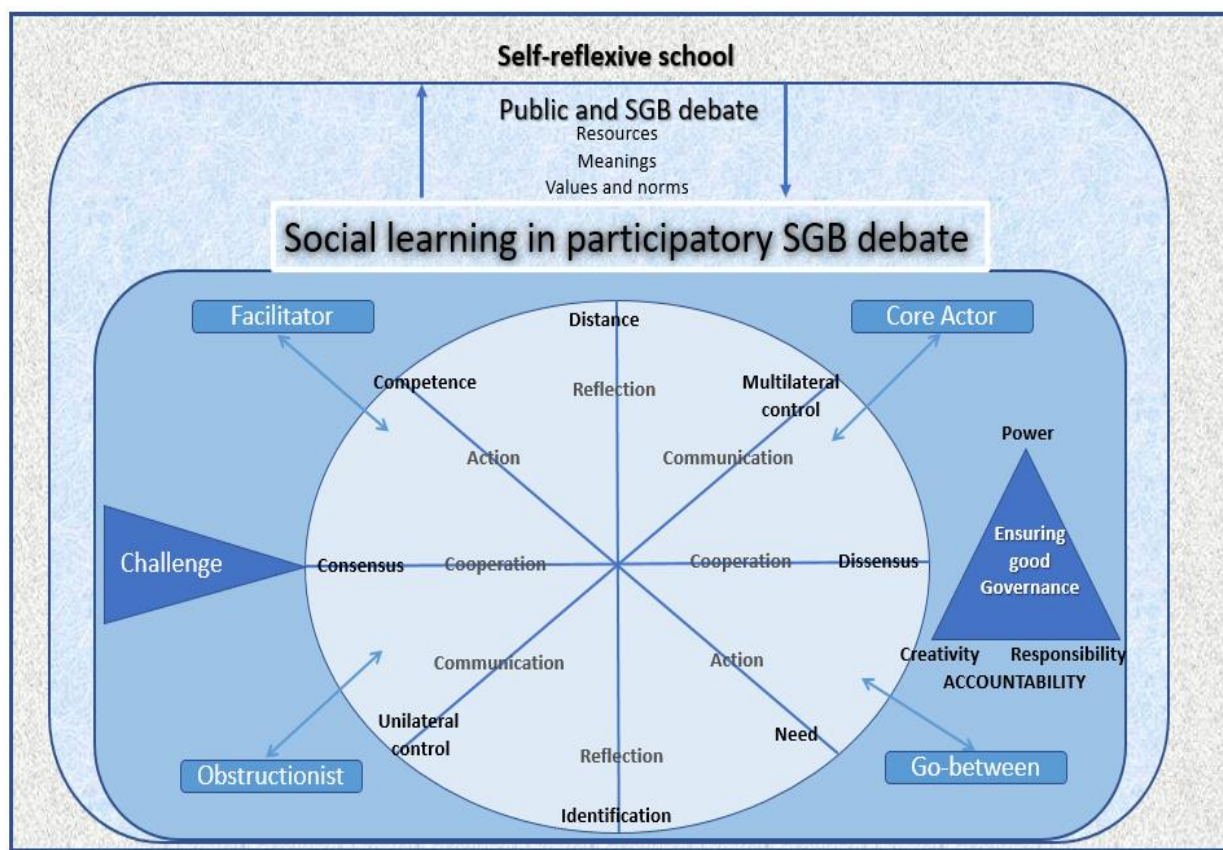
Further to what became known as the Ermelo case, it was found that SGBs have a primary function, which is to serve the best interest of the school and, by extension, the best interest of

the school-going child as learner. It is believed that the decentralisation and democratisation of school governance are beneficial, as it allows decision-making at grassroots level by a school community via the SGB which is best suited to ensure that learners of a specific community receive the education that is rightfully theirs as enshrined in the Constitution. This must occur within the boundaries of educational policies to ensure good governance and good education for all learners attending South African schools.

2.4 The value of Wildemeersch *et al.*'s social learning theory

The social learning theory of Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998:251) adds to the theoretical framework of this study. Although this theory was established in relation to adult processes in participatory systems, it can also be relevant to understanding the relationships between learner-members and adults in a school governance relationship. This theory recognises that people can learn through interaction with one another (Wildemeersch *et al.*, 1998:253). In other words, learners can learn through interaction with more experienced people in the school governance structure, i.e., the adults of the SGB. According to Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998:255), "social learning takes place when people strike a balance between different tensions that influence decisions and directions of the learning system". Arguably, participation in school governance is a learning experience for both adults and learners. Creating dialogue, using principles of learning from one another, irrespective of age and gender, can be helpful in promoting meaningful participation (Wildemeersch *et al.*, 1998:255). Such a group's maximum potential can assist in clearing uncertainties and making decisions to serve the best interest of the child and, in addition, of the school in the context of school governance.

Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998:254) provide a model of their social learning theory adapted for the purpose of this study (Figure 2-2). Central to the concept of social learning are processes of action, reflection, communication, and cooperation. These are called the four axes of social learning. "Each of these processes is characterised by tensions and contradictions, or pull and push forces, which are never simple or consistent in themselves. Action moves to and from between need and competence, whilst reflection is the product of the opposition between distance and identification. Communication fluctuates between unilateral and multilateral control and, finally, cooperation alternates between consensus and dissensus" (Wildemeersch *et al.*, 1998:253). Social learning therefore revolves around finding an optimal and dynamic balance between oppositional processes in accordance with the peculiar conditions and needs of concrete contexts and challenges.



1996)) is that they are co-responsible to co-govern schools as SGB learner-members. This is collectively done with adult members who concurrently should go through the processes of mutual action, reflection, communication, and cooperation, which forms the basis of the four axes of social learning.

Each of these four processes is constantly caught up between personal, social and economic tensions and contradictions or pull and push forces which are never simple or consistent in themselves. Action moves in a tug of back-and-forth between the needs and competencies of learner-members and that of the adult-members on SGBs. Reflection is the result of the tension and opposition between distance – in age and experience – and identification with either the learners in the school or the staff and parent community.

Communication fluctuates between unilateral or one-sidedness and, therefore, an imbalance of power relations and multilateral or joint and consensual control and, finally, cooperation alternates between consensus or agreement and disagreement. In applying social learning theory to the role of learner-members of SGBs, this research seeks to find an optimal and dynamic balance between oppositional – pull and push – processes in accordance with the distinctive school environments and educational needs of learners in the context of schools to ensure that challenges are addressed, thus allowing for good governance in schools.

From the social learning theory of Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998:25 that you are quoting 6) the scope of learner participation in SGBs, is embedded in the Constitution, national and provincial legislation and decentralised to provincial districts and schools.

That the inclusion of this lens adds value to the dissertation. It just seems that you are quoting or, at least, paraphrasing

2.5 Trends of learner participation in SGBs

The focus of this section is on the trends of learner participation in SGBs from a national, provincial, district and sub-district level. Figure 2-2, from Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi (2017:77), gives an overview of the devolution towards participatory democracy in South African schools.

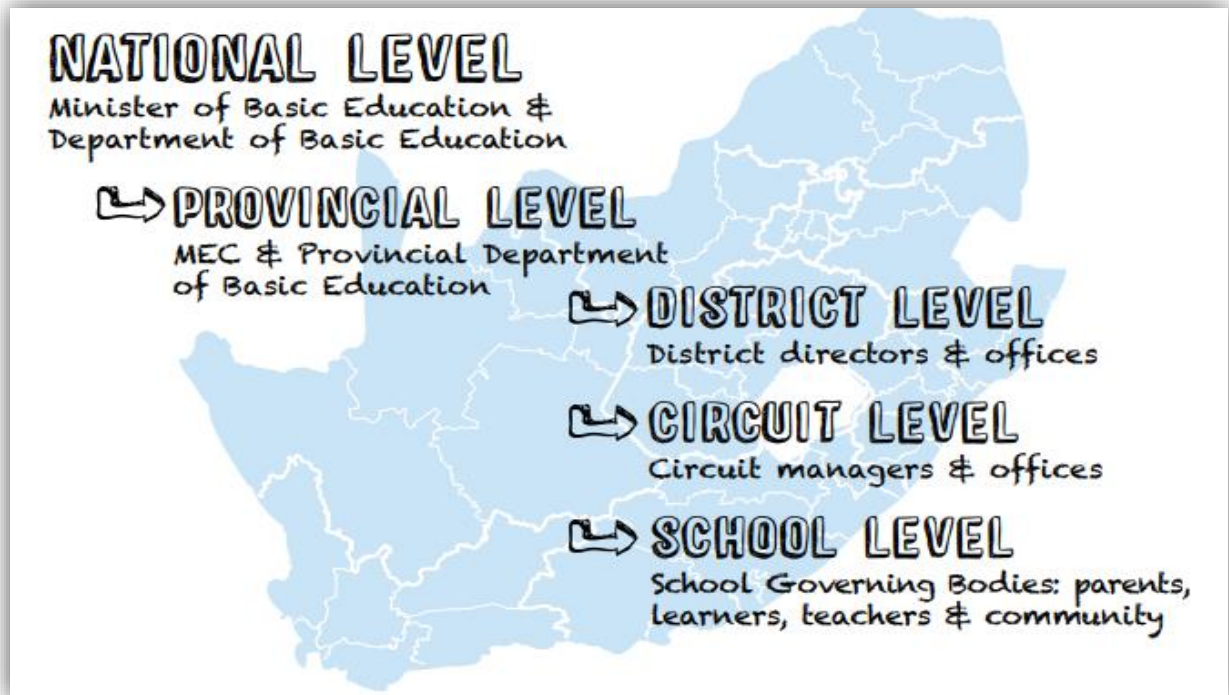


Figure 2-2: The devolution of power towards participatory governance and democracy in South African schools (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017:77)

Have these two authors not taken this diagram from another source?

2.5.1 National trends of learner participation in the SGB

The Constitution of 1996 (1996) determines all other national and education specific legislation. s1 states that SA is one sovereign, democratic state founded on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms (s1(a)). This led to the promulgation of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) with the aim to provide for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools and thus SGB members are part of the governs and operations of the education sector.

This legislation was also promulgated to ensure that the right to human dignity is obeyed in the education sector. This includes the dignity of learner-members in SGBs as stipulated in s23(1)(d) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

2.5.1.1 Participatory democracy

A major criticism of the participation argument is that, due to the normal age of grade 8 learners, they are minors due to their age and, therefore, learner-members might be immature in their understanding of power and the power relationships that exist between central and local actors

within local groups (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:101). It should, however, be mentioned that minors from the age of twelve can be legally accountable and liable. This indicates that the law views them as human beings who have the capacity to participate in decision making. For this study, the central level of power will be the Department of Basic Education, whilst the local level of power will be the school management team, other members of the SG, and learner-members. Another barrier, according to Johnny (2006:17), is that learner-members do not possess the emotional and cognitive stability needed to make informed decisions at the level of SGBs. This is actually a misconception as learner-members do not have to make decisions but can indeed take part in discussions and decision making.

Notwithstanding the immaturity argument, the status of learner-members on the SGB and, by extension those RCL elected members of secondary schools, are evidence of the social changes in post-apartheid SA. These changes are visible in the democratic schooling processes of election of RCL members and learner-members of SGBs based on the principles of accountability, fairness, transparency, and equity (DBE, 2011:3). In the Manual of Constitutional Values for SGBs and RCLs, Mrs A.M. Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, states that “the current education policy regime places particular emphasis on SGBs in their role as gatekeepers of the progressive intentions of our national policy framework.” Speaking on the role of RCLs, and not to learner-members of SGBs, she emphasised that RCLs must develop and entrench a democratic ethos based on Constitutional values.

The Manual of Constitutional Values of SGBs (DBE, 2011:6) is discussed here as it relates to SGBs and RCL members, many of whom also serve on SGBs. The primary purpose of the training manual is capacity building to understand the Constitution of 1996 and the Bill of Rights and, secondly, SA’s Constitutional values and how they relate to school governance and leadership practices. The third purpose of this Manual is for RCLs and SGBs to implement the DBE’s vision to ensure high quality education based on the values of non-discrimination, social justice and fairness. Furthermore, these learner-leaders on the RCLs and SGBs should know how to develop and strengthen participatory democracy, should embrace a human rights culture at their school through SGB policies and practices, and should “know how to govern their school in line with the laws of the land, and in a manner that provides all on school grounds with a safe and caring environment” (DBE, 2011:6).

2.5.1.2 Lack of training of SGB learner-members

Of significant importance for this study, is the DBE’s acknowledgement (Motshekga in DBE, 2011:3) that, notwithstanding the wish of SGBs and RCLs to make a difference, “the hard reality is that many SGBs and RCLs do not have the benefit of adequate training in the sphere of values,

human rights and attendant obligations that the human rights framework imposes on them.” The lack of training is not limited to understanding values but extends to leadership training as well. In Minister Motshekga’s (DBE, 2011:3) words “some SGBs still feel disempowered to effect meaningful change to their schools” which will include learner-members serving on SGBs. Whereas SGB members are elected by their peer groups as stakeholders, these members might not know what is expected of them and how to function within legal parameters (Xaba, 2011:209). Heystek (2011:455) agrees with Xaba’s statement that the governing bodies are less successful in their endeavours of participatory democracy because of factors such as literacy levels of parents, learners and often educators as well. However, s19 of SA Schools Act mandates the government to provide continuous training for all SGB members. The puzzling issue is that after 25 years of democracy SGBs are still lacking in understanding participatory democracy in a form of their governance role.

Even though s20 of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) deals with the main functions of SGBs, it seems to be focussing on adult members, i.e., school staff and parents. Many parent-members on SGBs have low level of education and could be addressed through training. However, it does not prevent them from being able to have opinions on matters and being able to participate in discussions and decision making. All members of SGBs have the same functions except for the principal who acts *ex officio* (in his official capacity)(s23(1)(b)) and represents the HOD (s16A) and learners who are excluded from 2 functions in s32(a-b).

In view of the low levels of education of some parent-members serving on SGBs, action plans on SGB training are tabled at all government levels – from national to district to school levels – to capacitate SGBs with knowledge and understanding of what is expected of them and what their functions (section 20) and their allocated functions (section 21), responsibilities and accountabilities are (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996) when new SGB members are elected, serving a three-year term.

The main purpose of training – which should take place immediately after the SGB election – is to develop SGBs as a unit (North West Province Department of Education, 2015:7), yet it seems that learner-members in SGBs and structures which represent learners in school governance, such as the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) are left behind in the DBE training programmes (Xaba & Nhlapo, 2014:254). The problem of SGB learner-members and their non-training does not contradict the claim made by Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi’s (2017:78) Basic Education Rights Handbook on School Governance that the “different jobs that these role players have are set out in the law, such as the Schools Act and its regulations” but it emphasises the juxtaposition of elected learners who act as governors, yet the law recognises the fact that

children older than 12 have the ability to "make up their own minds" and participate in discussions and decision-making being legally minors.

2.5.1.3 SGB election procedures and a national SGB structure

SGB election procedures are determined in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s28, whilst the term of office is dealt with in s31(1) which determines the term of office of a member of SGBs as a maximum period of three years, whilst the term of office of learner-members on the SGB , may, according to subsection 31(2) not exceed one year. According to the North West Province Department of Education (2015:14), every province elects two representatives to serve on the national SGB structure. The national SGB structure meets twice a year. The deputy director-general leads and guides this structure through the school Management and Governance Directorate, which also serves as the secretariat to the structure. All the basic education branches such as the elected provincial structures, regional structures, district structures and sub-district structures have access to the structure for consultation and sharing of information through the deputy director general. It is envisaged that the Minister of Basic Education (currently Minister Angie Motshekga) will also meet with the national structure when available. From national to district level there is no direct representative(s) from learner structures such as that which serves to represent the interests of learners.

From the discussion on national trends, the following section focuses on provincial trends.

2.5.2 Provincial and district trends of learner participation in the SGB

The Constitution of 1996 (1996) guides all legislation in SA. It goes without saying that legislation on school governance, be it national, provincial, or school policy levels, must be consistent with the Bill of Rights in the Constitution (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi's (2017:82). Any legislation or policy at any of these levels, that contradicts the Constitution of 1996, can be taken to court and may be declared invalid. Serfontein (2010:93) is of the opinion that the state on its own "cannot provide a high quality of education to all":

To lighten the State's burden, the Constitution provides, inter alia, for the establishment of organizations of structures and institutions (sections 91 and 92) as well as the distribution of its functions (section 104). Basic education has, accordingly, been designated as a concurrent functional area or which both national and provincial governments are responsible while complying with the constitutional principles of cooperative government when exercising their authority over education (section 40(2)). In Ex Parte Chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly the Constitutional Court stated that cooperative government is implicit in any system where the same powers have been allocated to different levels of government.

The Constitution of 1996's Bill of Rights (1996) s29(1) determines every citizen's right to a basic education, including adult basic education whilst the equality clause, s9(2), includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. Therefore, the right to basic education cannot be realised if the responsibility to govern is not devolved to provincial and district levels.

2.5.2.1 Provincial Departments of Basic Education trends of learner participation in the SGB

Provinces elect a team from its SGB structures to attend to matters or challenges arising within the school, the district and the province. These challenges are then brought under the attention of the provincial Department of Basic Education to be attended to at provincial level (North West Province Department of Education, 2015:13).

The MEC of each province, is responsible for basic education at provincial levels and has the authority to ensure school governance. Each provincial department has a governance directorate. The directorate is responsible to coordinate the activities of the provincial governance structure. The province will determine the size of the provincial structure depending on its needs (North West Province Department of Education, 2015:13). The second legislative level is found at provincial level where province-specific legislation is applicable in-line with national legislation to help provinces to implement national legislation according to their needs. It is lawful for a province to draw up its own legislation that is in-line with the Constitution of 1996 (1996) and national legislation, if the legislation aims to achieve the national objective. The provincial structures can meet anytime depending on the circumstances in a province.

The participation of learners at provincial levels, representing SGBs, seems to be insignificant, taking into consideration the kind of training which the provinces are coordinating (Xaba, 2011:158). In a later study, Nonyane (2016:v) found that not only are the learner-members disadvantaged in terms of training, but most of the SGB members had minimal knowledge of the impact they had on the schools that they governed. Furthermore, the training was offered at an *ad hoc* basis conducted by individuals who were themselves not sure about the interpretation of school policies and The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) specifically. This lack of training provided an *ad hoc* basis is insufficient. However, it is claimed that the purpose of the Education Management and Governance Directorate's (EMGD) training is to develop and train SGB members such as parents, educators and non-teaching staff, however, of importance for this study is that there are no regulations or policies to develop learner-

members specifically for their role in SGBs as per the EMGD manual (North West Province Department of Education, 2015).

The Department of Basic Education (2018:5) states that “over the years the Department has received complaints that newly appointed SGB members receive little guidance regarding their roles and responsibilities.” The Department (2018:5) confirms that most SGB members – referring to adult members – only come to understand what their role in the governance of schools is “towards the end of their three-year terms”. Clearly it is not the learner-members that this 2018 Guidelines document aims to assist. Instead, it focuses on providing Provincial Basic Education Departments (PEDs) with support guidelines for SGBs in a more meaningful way, to facilitate these bodies’ responsibility toward schools’ ultimate success and, further, bring about accountability to parents and learners at a school (Department of Basic Education, 2018:4 & 5).

Additionally, it is evident that if adult members of the SGB, who is provided with training, only get to master their main objective in governance in their exiting year. One wonders how bad it must then be for learner-members who are only granted one year, as stipulated in SA Schools Act s31(2), with no evidence of training to be an active and consequential member of an SGB. Learner-members are legally part of SGBs, but because they are minors, they do not have the legal responsibility and accountability of adults. They are elected to serve one year. One can thus deduce that learner-members do not have the responsibility and accountability as adult members would have.

2.5.2.2 District trends of learner participation in the SGB

According to the North West Province Department of Education (2015:13), the district structure of SGBs is composed of elected chairpersons from all circuits. However, the Department of Basic Education (2018:12) confirmed SGB members’ lack of capabilities to govern schools at the required level, especially in poor communities in rural areas.

Of importance for this study is that the SA Schools Act, s19 mandates the HOD and the provincial legislature to allocate funds for capacity building of SGBs. The capacity building programmes involves the assurance that all SGBs should “receive the necessary training and development to perform their functions optimally”, whilst “Provincial Education Departments through Districts” are implored to use the Department of Basic Education “SGB Functionality Tool” to assist in a needs analysis per SGB of all elected SGB members in all schools (DBE, 2018:12). It is noteworthy that no reference is made in this document to the training needs of learner-members of SGBs (DBE, 2018). However, the document claims that the SGB Functionality Tool “is meant to assist districts in drawing up programmes that meet the needs of particular schools and not to develop a “one-

size-fits-all” programme” (DBE, 2018:12). In their deliberations, the DBE considered areas of challenges in schools to inform further areas of training. “Such areas of challenge are those that are not covered in the previous guidelines” are discussed in the 2018/2019 document but no reference is made to the training of learner-members of SGBs (DBE, 2018:12).

The number of members of the district structure is determined by the number of circuits in that district. This implies that each circuit is represented by one member (chairperson) to serve in the district structure. The main purpose of this structure is to deal with school governance matters arising in different circuits and to report all issues to the provincial structure, so that proper intervention by the upper structure can be done, if there is a need (North West Provincial Department, 2015:17). The district director, who must hold regular meetings to discuss governance issues affecting schools in the district, leads the district SGB structure (DBE, 2018:14). The district director may delegate this responsibility to the manager responsible for circuit management at the district level.

2.5.2.3 Sub-district trends of learner participation in the SGB (JB Marks)

There is little detail available that provides information about the participation of learner-members of SGBs at district level.

According to the North West Province Department of Education (2015:13), schools in the district must be clustered according to the circuits controlled by the circuit manager. The circuit manager is tasked with building the capacity of SGBs in his/her cluster and needs to monitor and support their activities. Meetings with individual SGBs are viewed as a crucial support mechanism. The circuit manager can meet with SGBs for support whenever there is a need. This means that they can meet at any time depending on the needs and matters arising within SGBs of the schools situated within the parameters of his/her circuit. In these meetings the circuit manager can highlight some of the roles and responsibilities of SGBs in schools (North West Province Department of Education, 2015:13).

From the above discussion, the role of learner-members of SGBs is not seen as important and mostly disregarded in official documents at national, provincial and district levels. Does this mean that learner-members in SGBs are only good on paper, or are learner-members in SGBs simply a waste of time and not needed for the progress and welfare of schools?

2.6 The role of the SGB and learner-members in schools

Educators and researchers are apprehensive about the approach of parental involvement that constructs and restricts roles for parents in the education of their children (Williams & Sanchez,

2011:2). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s23(2)(a) mandates parents to be involved in the governance of schools that their children are attending. Yet in some schools it is still not clear what the implementation of parental involvement at school level entails.

2.6.1 Composition of school governing bodies of ordinary public schools, by type and learner enrolment

The number of members per category varies according to the type of school and learner enrolment set out in columns 1 and 2 (Department of Basic Education, 2017:17-18). In a school that does not have a non-educator member of staff, the number of parents in column 5 and the total number of members in column 8 shall both be reduced by one. The number of members in an SGB of a school are set out for each category of membership in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: The composition of SGB members

Type of school	Learners enrolled at school	Principal	Number of educator members	Number of parent members	Number of non-educator members	Number of learner-members	Total number of members
Primary schools	1 to 159	1	1	4	1	0	7
	160 to 700	1	2	5	1	0	9
	701 and more	1	3	6	1	0	11
Secondary school	1 to 649	1	2	7	1	2	13
	650 and more	1	3	9	1	3	17
Combined school	1 to 499	1	2	7	1	2	13
	500 and more	1	3	9	1	3	1

(adapted from Department of Basic Education, 2017:17)

According to South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s20(a-e), the primary purpose of SGBs is to promote the best interests of their respective schools and to strive for the provision of quality education for all learners, including learners with disabilities and other barriers to learning, to adopt a constitution, to develop the mission statement of the school and to adopt a code of conduct for the school.

The first function of the SGB is found in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s20(a) which stipulates that the SGB of a public school must – imperatively – promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school and, by extension, the child. The protection of learners’ human dignity is entrenched in the Constitution of 1996 and, therefore, the education they receive should be embedded in the same values found in the Constitution of 1996’s (1996) s10 “everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”. To this end. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) protects learners from being ill-treated in the name of providing education, corporal punishment is abolished as it is degrading to humans, adults, and children. However, for school learners specifically, human dignity is not found in the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), except in the 1998 Government Notice 776, *Guidelines for the consideration of Governing Bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners* (Department of Education, 1998: B-35).

In s4 under the heading Principles and Values: the rights of learners, s4.1 refers to democracy as found in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of 1996 (108 of 1996) that enshrines the rights of all people and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

Of importance for this study, the following excerpts are applicable to schools, learners and partners (interest groups): the school must protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights *inter alia* learners' right to democracy, make decisions on matters affecting them, and must be heard (4.1); non-discrimination and equality underpins the right not to be unfairly discriminated against and learners shall enjoy equal treatment and protection (4.2); privacy, respect and dignity apply to the recognition that every learner has inherent dignity and has the right to have his/her human dignity respected, implying mutual respect (4.3) and human dignity, respect and security underpins learners' right to non-violence, freedom and security (4.4.3).

These rights are applicable to school governance as determined in s16 in the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). However, s16(1) limits the rights of SGBs in that the "governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act." Based on what Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi, (2017) has stated about participation the ideals of participatory democracy and cooperative governance, appears to be only words on paper, as the reality at the micro level gives a different picture than what legislation and policy documents purport it to be.

School governance in SA is experiencing overwhelming challenges (Xaba, 2011:202; Graaff, 2016:4). Graaff (2016:4) and Xaba (2011:202) agree that the differential scale due to socio-economic factors such as high unemployment, crime rates and illiteracy in many communities in SA has a detrimental impact on the ideal of participatory democracy and cooperative governance on the effective functioning of SGBs. Furthermore, some schools lack basic functionality because the funds allocated by the DBE are not enough to sustain the school throughout the year and, consequently, that gap should be supplemented by the SGB, through fund raising as one of their duties. These socio-economic factors that impact on SGB members, lead to educator shortages, unprofessional conduct and often to gross negligence of financial management of school funds and resources.

More than two decades have passed since the promulgation of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), yet it seems that efforts to have effective school governance fall short of their intended outcomes (Xaba, 2011:206). Despite various training and capacity building policies and documents, such as the EMGD's Training Manual for School Governing Bodies (2015), envisaging capacity building of specific SGB members, such as parents, educators and non-teaching staff, it is important to note that little is being done to educate and train learner-members in the same

structure (Xaba, 2011:205). Graaff (2017:13) cites November *et al.*'s (date, page?) argument that the advantages of participatory democracy and cooperative governance must be learned through practicing democracy. However, the only SGB training model to build capacity and learning was and remains workshops (Graaff, 2017:13). It seems as if the Department of Basic Education is not using available resources, such as universities, non-profit organisations (NGOs), who specialise in capacity building to enable all role players in school governance to become active participants, including the Sector Education Training Authority (SETA).

The seemingly lack of focus on learner-members of SGBs is evident in the 2018 Department of Basic Education's document *Guidelines for capacity building of school governing body members* (DBE, 2018). In this document, no reference is made specifically to the capacity building of learner-members of SGBs, except that this cohort of learners must be democratically elected to serve on SGBs in high schools. One should, however, remember that in the eye of the law, learner-members are view as part of the SGB and therefore don't need be specified specifically as they are included as members of the SGB.

All other references to learners are made to refer to the concept of school learners. This neglect on the part of the Department of Basic Education stands in contrast to the ideal purported in this document. One example is on social cohesion, which specifically speaks to learners: "[i]t is the believe (*sic*) of the Department of Basic Education that through informed and trained SGBs communities can be assisted to be tolerant of one another" (DBE, 2018:21). Furthermore, the document states that at the end of the programme, SGB members (inclusive of learner-members) should have a sound knowledge and understanding of social issues relating to the Bill of Responsibilities, school uniforms, religion and language in education, prevention and management of learner pregnancy, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), sexual violence and harassment in public schools, building an inclusive education and training system, and social diversity and multiculturalism (DBE, 2018:21).

In a process of mobilising community ideas, creativity, skills, initiatives and expertise, a greater volume of organisational change and improvement is or should be unleashed (Mitchell, 2017:49). Participation and engagement of social partners such as communities and NGOs will not only reflect an individual's development, but also that of the school and the school community's views on values and priorities of the community (Mitchell, 2017:49), which is also encouraged by s7 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)determines the roles of SGB members in s20 and s21, which include recommending the appointment of educators and non-teaching staff, determining the language policy of the school and stipulating school fees if the school is not a Non-fee-paying school. It is important to note that these functions which are said to be the functions of SGBs are clearly aimed at parent

members on SGBs, because a learner cannot be given the power to employ or to recommend government employment, although and should they do so, it shows a clear indication of transgressing the *ultra vires* principle.

Mncube and Naidoo (2014:486) believe that in giving vocal powers to parents by providing that the SGB chairperson must be a parent, is the way in which issues of democracy are advanced in the South African education system *versus* an autocratic form of governance during the previous dispensation. Yet, the challenge is that many SGB chairpersons do not understand their power in school governance (Mncube & Naidoo, 2014:484). Thus, it is fundamental to familiarise them legislation and its implementation together with other government gazettes as it is building democracy from school level and is feeding the principle of democracy into society through the parent and learner-members of SGBs.

Mafora (2013:1) illustrates that the only possible way that the governance part of SASA can be implemented is to ensure that the SGB members – who are in charge of the governance-leadership of schools –develop their own support systems such as research about how best they can implement school governance policies to suit their situation, without deviating from primary legislation. Such a strategy is acceptable and legitimate because the South African education system is both centralised and decentralised, providing input from the national Department of Basic Education, provincial Departments of Basic Education, districts, and school governors. This means that each school can individualise the implementation of policies to fit their school environment. This fit for democracy and purpose on an individualised school basis, is according to Phaswana (2010) the result of the implementation of democracy as sanctioned by the Constitution of 1996 (1996). The Constitution encourages and promotes democracy at all levels of society for all citizens, including those who participate in school governance.

The Constitution of 1996 (1996) s7(1) and (2) enshrines the Bill of Rights as “the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa” of “all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.” Sub-section (2) stipulates that “the state must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights” whilst sub-section (3) makes provision for the limitation of rights in s36. However, the Constitution does not specifically refer to the role of SGB members, but by implication provides broad guidelines on which The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)based the principle of democracy when provision was made for both parent and learner-members of SGBs. The Constitution of 1996 and The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) played a significant role in legalising the practice of democracy in South African schools (Mncube & Naidoo, 2014:485). This was done to improve the relationship of the partnership in South African schools.

Heystek (2006:473) contends that a good relationship between the school management team and parents promotes effective functioning and ensures effective teaching and learning in schools. Yet, Graaff's (2017:4) research indicates that the challenge of socio-economic realities, are not conducive for SGBs to effect effective teaching and learning at the schools they serve. Rather, Graaff (2017:4) refers to the Department of Basic Education's own data over the last two decades that indicate "that on the whole learner outcomes have not improved in the low socio-economic status schools".

Graaff (2017:4) further states that the SGB should not interfere with the professional management of the school such as deciding on learner and teacher supporting materials (LTSM) and teaching methods. These matters are the responsibility of the principals and professional staff and should adhere to The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s16(3) that states that "subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal under the authority of the Head of Department." Baquedano-López *et al.* (2013:151) affirm that the basic responsibilities of parents are linked to academic development of a learner to ensure school readiness, developing self-esteem and instilling values and norms. However, there is evidence that SGBs can play a significant role in schools and communities to establish a democratic foundation as well, which will lead towards sustainable high-quality education for all (Heystek, 2011:455). In other words, for the smooth running of a school all parties should act within the legal boundaries set out in legislation. interfering on others' legal terrain would be an *ultra vires* action (Roos *et al.*, 2015:131). Professionals, such as principals and educators, must manage everything that has to do with teaching and learning whilst parents and learner-members in the SGB form part of the governance of the school to ensure the best interest of the school. This 'separation of powers' is embedded in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s20 that determines SGBs' support role towards the professional activities of a public school:

SGBs must promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school (s20(a) and (s20(e)) must support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions. Section 16(1) subject to this Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and may perform only such function and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act

Heystek (2006:474) stresses the fact that one of the duties of parent-members of SGBs must be to help govern the school and they must perform these duties with honesty and reliability. Van Wyk (2014:49) agrees with Heystek (2006) that SGB members must act within their parameters with the primary role of being responsible, honest, consistent, and reliable when carrying out their duties such as taking the lead in school governance.

Because of a lack of training, many SGB members, not only the learner-members, may act *ultra vires* without even knowing what the concept means – acting beyond one’s power – or doing absolutely nothing because of fear that they could be held liable for acting beyond their power. This situation exists notwithstanding provincial departments’ obligation to provide training to members of SGBs after SGB elections.

2.6.2 Involvement of learner-members in decision making

It is evident from s7(1) of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) that the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom are vital when implementing any task. Thus, I found it imperative to consider learner-members of the SGB as one of the important stakeholders that must always be taken into consideration when decisions are to be taken on matters that concern them as learners and the school as such. However, Moorosi, Bantwini, Molale, and Diko. 2020 (1) reveal that there is a “relatively small body of research spread across local and international journals that mostly investigates issues around democratic participation and representation”. This indicates that participation of learner-members in school governance is not only a challenge in South African schools only but seem to be overlapping to other countries as well. This emphasises the need to investigate democratic participation and representation in South African schools, which prove the vitality of this study at large. The right to equality on its own is indicative of how a school should adhere to the Constitutional values, and the learner-members should be valued as important stakeholders who are shown human dignity, respect and that they are equally important stakeholders like any other member of SGBs. According to Hornby (cited by Mabena, 2002:12) the verb “involve” means to include someone when a particular activity is being performed, whilst “involvement” is the act of being involved in an activity. For this study it refers to learner-members being involved in all the stipulated activities of school governance as per the mandate in s16(1) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

Johnny (2006:17) mentions that one of the guiding principles of involvement holds that young people (over 12 years of age) have the right to express themselves on issues which directly affect them. Section 16(1) of the Constitution advocates that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, thus as stated by Johnny (2006) learners must be given an opportunity to express themselves on issues that directly influence them, as long as they, in the process of expressing themselves, do not violate other people’s rights e.g. as in the famous “*Fees must fall*” campaign more often than not students were violating other peoples’ rights by using strong language and burning down buildings – public buildings – there for many other South Africans to use. The campaigners indeed violated human rights, thus the limitation clause, s36, of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) should have overruled – limited – their right to freedom of expression. By not adhering to the limitation of rights section, some of the activists such as Mosibudi Rassie, were

jailed not for being one of the activists, but for promoting and acting out violence during the strike. The involvement of learner-members in the SGB is regarded as a vital area of modern education, because it assists young people to understand their role in school governance and the right to democracy (Wilks, 2010:25), which will further assist young people to become active participants in the activities that are taking place in their communities.

The Constitution of 1996 (1996) s10 stipulates that every person has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. s10 includes every person in SA, also young people such as learner-members on the SGB participating in school governance as per the mandate of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) at national level. At international level, policies such as the United Nation's Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1990) which unequivocally states the need to adhere to the right to inherent dignity of all – including children – to ensure freedom, justice and peace in the world, fundamental human rights without distinction or discrimination of any kind and that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance, such as SGB training.

Lewis and Naidoo (2004:101) assert that due to a variety of factors, school governance discussions are received, implemented, and enacted differently by individual SGB members. These factors include trust, transparency, and adult members' attitudes towards learner participation. However, Mathebula (2008:190) argues that there are adult-members on SGBs and some educators who reject the idea that learner-members should have a role to play in school governance. These adults and educators find it overwhelming to be dealing with learners on matters of their employment. The fact of the matter is, that learner –members on the SGB indeed do and should have a say in educators' employment.

Duma (2011) found that some educators are of the opinion that the RCLs are providing enough learner representation and therefore learners should not take part in school governance as well. Duma points out that educators are feeling that learner participation in school governance infringes on educators' professional terrain. One should, however, bear in mind that learners should be trained and skilled in participating in democratic principles; they do have a right to freedom of expression, but since they are legally minors, they would indeed not have the same responsibilities and accountabilities as their co-SGB members. One should also bear in mind that the RCL doesn't govern the school.

However, the participation of learner-members in the decision-making processes in school governance is not new, rather it is a long-standing process (Mager & Nowak, 2012:39). Mager and Nowak further state that the idea of giving learners a "voice" or platform to voice matters of concern, is evident in the student uprising of the 1960s and 1970s. Flowing from these uprisings,

the democratisation of schools and society is found in policies since 1996. The democratisation of learner-voice policies supports and promotes the concept of learner involvement in decision-making processes in schools (Mokoena, 2011:119; Mager & Nowak, 2012:39). Mabena (2002:16) claims that learner-members' voices should be considered if they are able to master the few steps of decision-making, notwithstanding their inexperience as governors.

To this end, some African countries promulgated policies on learner participation in school governance (Mitchell, 2017:49). An example is found in Ethiopia, where the rapid transformation of the school system happened because the Ethiopian government instituted policies aimed at increasing participation of partners in schools. These measures include policies of cost sharing and the establishment of a parents-students-teachers association (Mitchell, 2017:49). The term 'learner involvement' includes many ways in which learners can actively participate in decision-making (Mager & Nowak, 2012:39). Moreover, Phaswana (2010:340) indicated that learners and adults are working together in decision-making processes, ensuring that the voice of the learners is heard in the process.

Xaba (2004:313) notes that the legislative framework mandates learners to participate for one year in the governance structure of a school as stipulated in SA Schools Act s31(2), which he considers to be unfair because other members such as parents, educators and non-teaching staff, serve for a three-year period. One could agree with Xaba, that The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) determining SGB learner-members' service of one year only, compared to the three years of other members, seems to contradict the Constitution of 1996 (1996) s9, where it stipulates that everyone must be equal and they must all fully enjoy all rights and freedoms. The Constitution of 1996 (1996) s2 deals with Constitutional supremacy "any law or conduct which is against the constitution is deemed to be invalid".

Therefore, since there is no equality in terms of the number of years served by the SGB learner-members and other members of the SGB, this section in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) seems to contradict the Constitution and may contravene s28 of the Constitution of 1996. Yet, this is caused by the fact that learner-members are minors therefore they cannot be given significant responsibilities to deal with in their governance role. Xaba (2004:314) believes that the fact that learners have less life experience and are inexperienced in decision-making matters should serve as a motivation for the extension of learner-members, where practical, to serve the same time as other governors.

Despite legislation and related policies in place, such as SA Schools Act s21 stating that the governance of schools is vested in SGBs and other policies found in Government Gazettes, Heystek (2011:123) and Mafora (2013:8) determined that most principals in schools are still

undemocratic and hampering the process of transformation in schools for all stakeholders to fully participate in decision-making and democratic school governance. Mncube and Naidoo (2014:484) contend that other stakeholders in SGBs play little part in the school processes besides being passive participants who receive rules and information from the people who are responsible for the management and professional roles in schools.

Mncube and Naidoo (2014:484) concur with Heystek (2011:124) and Mafora (2013:10), that there is still not a good working relationship between principals and other SGB members. This unfortunate situation is especially found in quintile 1 to 3 (no fee) schools where most parents are not educated and informed about what is expected from them in school governance, compared to well-equipped schools in affluent communities where parents are well educated and informed. This may be the same with the participation of learners in school governance. Yet, Mokoena (2011) argues that the introduction of SGBs in schools was a revolutionary act in terms of participative governance and decision-making in schools. Furthermore, Mokoena (2011) contends that parents are not directly involved in the curriculum, but their discussions with educators are indirectly applied in the classroom. The implication is that educators do consider the input of parents in the education of their children as a form of intervention strategy. If this is the case that parental interventions are considered reasonable, then it could also be assumed that the input of learners in their education can be used as a form of intervention strategy in the classroom as learner-members of SGBs. This links back to what Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998) said about social learning theory, i.e., senior citizens learning from junior citizens and juniors learning from seniors, should be the normal and not the exception to the rule.

Bourke and Loveridge (2016:62) observe that the voices of young people are trapped by other governors based on age and life experience as adult governors believe that they cannot take directives from learners since they know little about life issues.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s23 stipulates the membership of SGBs but does not indicate that learner-members are additional members who have a limited role to play in school governance. This section gives the impression that all members that are legally elected are equal and must play an equal role as school governors but since learner-members are still legally minors, the same level of accountability cannot be expected of them. Therefore, it is unlawful for other governors such as the educator component, principal and parents for side-lining the learner-members in governance due to their age. However, they must be involved with caution, due to their developing cognitive ability. In this sense it could also be argued that this stipulation contravenes the non-discriminatory stipulation in the Constitution (1996) s9(2) that no unfair age discrimination is allowed. However, this is balanced by legislation to protect minors from making decisions that might harm themselves and

others around them. Hence currently, young people in SA, find themselves in difficult public spaces (Malila, 2014:15). They were born free of the weight of growing up in a racially divided society, yet they find that things have not changed to the extent they might have expected.

The society in which learner-members of SGBs live is still largely structured according to race and inequality. This reality contravenes the Constitution of 1996 (1996) s9(3) which states that no person, organisation or the state may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone *inter alia* age discrimination and others. Moreover, the legacy of apartheid is still very much theirs to deal with (Malila, 2014:21). Young people still have a battle to fight just like the youth of 1960s and 1970s. Mafora (2013) stipulates that young people were co-incidentally burdened with the responsibility to take a stand in fighting against injustice based on race in the education system. Due to the injustices of the past, it seems that young people of SA still feel that they are living under oppression albeit an age oppression.

This, seemingly goes against Constitution of 1996 (1996) s7(2) stipulating that the state must respect, protect, promote, and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights. Minors, however, find themselves as immature members in society on their way to adulthood, and should thus legally be protected, even from their own harmful decisions. Malila's (2014:10) argument that the new generation oppression, however, is not a racial oppression but a psychological oppression based on age, should be heard but should be balanced by other legislation in the best interest of the child. In other words, some of their rights, such as s16 on freedom of expression might seem to be violated as SGBs' learner-members are unable to apply their minds to school governance to the same level as fellow adult members. It is sad though that, in some instances, SGBs are solely dependent on the school principal to ensure that the governance roles of SGBs are fulfilled (Mafora 2013:9).

The core reason for learner participation is to holistically develop learners, including an opportunity for learners to develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Mager & Nowak, 2012:41). This reason alone, shows how vital s10 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) is for the protection of human dignity of the learners by involving them in decision-making where applicable (Phaswana, 2010:105; Checkoway, 2011:340). They argue that youth participation in school governance and other decision-making organisations in society is fundamental because it draws upon the youth's expertise, enables them to effectively practise their legal rights and to play a major role in a democratic society. Phaswana (2010:106) states that it is important to consider the experience and age gap before a learner-member can be fully recognised in the structures of governance. In June 1976, a young man by the name of Hector Petersen died in a struggle for better education for all South Africans, and the young South Africans were successful to capture the attention of the ruling party of those days. Aspects that are important to determine participation

of SGBs learner-members are derived from the Constitution of 1996 s32, stipulating that everyone has the right of access to information held by the state and any information that is held by another person and that is required for exercise or protection of any rights. Learner-members, like any other member of the SGB, have the right to access to information about their school, such as financial information, amendment of policies, or newly promulgated school policies.

Furthermore, learner-members of SGBs must have in-depth information about their schools' major policies such as its disciplinary policy and procedures and the reasons for the stipulations in it. According to the Constitution of 1996 s1(a) and s7(1) the importance of human dignity in creating a non-violent South African society, is highlighted. These sections are expanded in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s10, that deals with the abolition of corporal punishment. According to the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) s17 1(d), an educator may be dismissed if found guilty of serious assault of a learner. This not only relates to physically hurting their learners, but also degrading the dignity and basic human rights of the learner. The 1995 Constitutional Court case between *S v Williams* is a case in point where the Constitutional Court prohibited corporal punishment and was no longer allowed in SA as a form of punishment. Section 10 in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is further extended in the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act (33 of 1997). Knowledge of schools' codes of conduct is therefore based in the Constitution of 1996, the SA Schools Act and case law. Applying corporal punishment as a form of discipline is degrading and infringes on the right to human dignity of learners, as stipulated by s10 of the Constitution of 1996. Therefore, learner-members of the SGB must have all the necessary information on the education sector or school in which they serve in, to be able to empower other learners in the school about the standing disciplinary policies in a school.

Mabena (2002:16) maintains that learner-members should meet with other SGB members in identifying a problem and solving it through brainstorming. The learner-members should understand that the best solution is not always the easiest solution. Thereafter the SGB members – learners included – should be trusted to implement the solution and evaluate the solution after implementation. Learner-members' involvement in problem-solving and decision-making processes and being allowed to voice their opinions, are fundamental to consider when internal school policies are being established. In decisions on a school's policies, the involvement of learners is non-negotiable at secondary school level. The SGB learner-members' inputs should be duly considered because it is not only a section in the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), but also a fundamental democratic value of human dignity, equality, and freedom (Constitution of 1996, 1996 s7).

2.6.3 Discourse on learner-members' role in the SGB

Section 16 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) emphasises freedom of expression for everyone in the country. Thus, one of the SGB learner-members' roles is to express their views and opinions without fear or favour during SGB meetings. Yet learners must guard against violating other peoples' right in the process of expressing themselves. It means that learner-members' freedom of expression must be balanced by s7 of the Constitution of 1996, which promotes the democratic values of others, equality and the promotion of human dignity. Otherwise, their democratic human right to freedom of expression may be limited according to s36 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) which deals with the limitations of rights should the learner-members act *ultra vires*. Wilks (2010:27) notes that young people should be granted the liberty to freely express themselves, including the liberty to search, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds regardless of the boundaries set by social norms such as culture. In this sense, liberty and the right to freedom of expression, will enable learner-members to fully participate in school governance without fear or favour.

Depending on their background and diverse worldviews, the extent of learner participation in the decision-making processes of SGBs is debatable, with conflicting viewpoints of different partners in education (Heystek, 2001:208). Aukot (2017:2) formulates three views on learner roles: firstly, learners must only listen and receive instructions from parents and educators, following the rules and principles formulated by adults; secondly, he suggests that learner engagement is very limited in that their engagement is limited to matters that directly affect them such as playground arrangements and disciplinary matters, and thirdly, learners are often differently affected by decisions taken on their behalf in schools. In most cases learners are the final recipients of non-negotiable verdicts made in schools (Duma, 2011). Often, learners are the victims of disciplinary actions and other school rules without having any say in the formulation of these rules. The implementation of these rules is a threat to administrative and procedural justice because learners are faced with the implementation of decisions taken without their having any input.

In view of this lack of participation, Thornberg's (2010:203) findings are disheartening as South African school leaders and governors "are far removed from reaching their goal to engage learners to play their governance role in the school as organisation". These school leaders and governors' disregard for learners as stakeholders in general, and for learner-members of SGBs specifically, is disturbing because of the apparent violation of s31(1)(a) of the Constitution of 1996 "to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language" especially in on traditional and rural societies where most of the Non-fee-paying schools are located.

Traditional African law does not consider the views of children when making house rules; rather a child should merely listen and implement what adults or elders have decided and instructed them. Mncube and Naidoo (2013:244) believe that this African tradition is partly responsible for the difficulty that SGB learner-members experience to bridge the gap between tradition and the right to be heard. This traditional viewpoint is in direct contrast with the UNICEF publication *Every child's right to be heard* (Lansdown, 2011:iii, 24).

Other organisations in SA, such as political organisations (e.g., ANC and the ANC Youth League), are active at all levels and are fruitfully using/abusing young people's voices to bring their needs to the attention of the public, such as the "*Fees must fall*" campaign (Thornberg, 2010:203). Others include the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) who are also supporting the mandate of young leadership in parliament. Compared to schools, it is found that opposing values between learners and the school (educators and parents) are contributing factors to hostility and disagreements (Thornberg, 2010:202). Therefore, an urgent need exists for learners to be involved in school governance, as stipulated in legislation, such as South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and other policies.

The role of learner-members is not visible in schools due to many factors such as cultural traditions and lack of proper implementation of school policies or the lack of establishment of school policies that will assist with the roles and responsibilities of learner-members of the SGB in a particular school. It is still exceedingly difficult to reach the goal of participatory democracy at SGB level in South African schools, especially, because The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s23 and other government policies are silent in terms of the role of learner-members serving on behalf of all other learners on SGBs.

2.6.4 Strategies to involve learners

According to the Department of Basic Education (2014:11) strategies to involve learners in governance include the nomination and election of learner-members on the SGB. Moorosi *et al.* (2020 :1) noted that "redressing the the education system was viewed as one of the major catalysts in restoring the values necessary for a socially just and democratic society". The DBE (2014) further notes that such elections are coordinated by the TLO (North West Provincial Gazette, 2015:119). The DBE (2014:11) stipulates that the RCL should be elected from its ranks, and it follows that SGB learner-members shall be members of the governing body. It is important to note that elected RCLs are not automatically SGB members, since fair and open elections must take place to elect learners to serve on SGBs. The TLO shall act as the school electoral officer for all electoral procedures relating to the election of learner-members in SGBs (North West Provincial Gazette, 2015:19). The TLO must be an educator who is tasked with the responsibility

to determine the place, date and time where nominations must be lodged, which must be the date 14 days before or after the nomination deadline for parent members (North West Provincial Gazette, 2015:20).

The SA Schools Act, s20 and s21, provides that learners must be legally involved in school governance and they are tasked with the responsibility to assist in school discipline, helping in decision-making which directly involve learners and to set a good example to other learners in academic excellence within their legal capacity.

More still needs to be done in terms of empowering the learner-members after elections (Thornberg, 2010:203). The journey starts immediately after the beginning of their term of office. Yet, the journey of learner-members in governance is full of frustrations which lead to learners acting beyond their reasonable legal limitations (Heystek, 2011; Mafora, 2013; Mncube & Naidoo, 2014).

2.6.5 Challenges of learner-members of SGBs

Section 9 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) promotes equality amongst the citizens of the country. Equality includes being equal before the law regardless of colour, gender and race. Although s9 of the Constitution of 1996 promotes equality, it is practically impossible to apply equality in the SGB governors because learners are minors, therefore they have less legal responsibility and accountability which puts this argument in a juxtaposition. However, Moorosi *et al.* (2020:17) call for high level of social justice on democratic participation and representation in South African schools. According to them there is a huge gap in social justice in school governance in South Africa schools,. Therefore, they call for high quality questions from researchers to explore the issues of social justices in schools, which seem to impact negatively in South African schools.

Modisaotsile (2012:1) is of the opinion that an educated nation that includes all stakeholders in its education system – in both management and governance – remains a vital platform for meeting the twenty-first century developmental goals. Modisaotsile (2012:1) further argues that this means to encourage wisdom shared from one generation to another through the involvement of learner-members in school governance. Applying this to the fullest in schools means promoting s23 of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) as it stipulates membership of SGB without discrimination. This reflects the traditional heritage of South Africa's older generation developing younger generations for the future (Modisaotsile, 2012:2). Moreover, it promotes s7(1) of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) because it deals with the democratic human values for all South Africans such as dignity, equality, and freedom. Freedom for learners to be involved in school governance, freedom to be part of decision-making as a form of defending their dignity in representing the learner body of a school and therefore their voice must be heard.

There is a national outcry for learners to take up their rightful place as learners in SGBs (Malila, 2014:27), but Heystek's (2001:486) argument that learner-members lack the expertise to perform their duties, is still valid. Moreover, Heystek's (2001:486) recommendation still stands that all SGB members, especially the learner and parent components, need proper training to be able to perform their duty to the best interest of the learners and the school.

This statement is also advocated by Modisaotsile (2012:1), Nonyane (2016) and Graaff (2017), who state that SGBs, including learner-members, were established in SA schools as per legislation, i.e., The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) to oversee the administration and governance of a school at micro level of the education system. However, the management of the school is not considering learner-members' opinions due to the lack of continuous training to equip them with proper skills to perform their obligations and their intended duties on SGBs, notwithstanding the requirement in s23 of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) which recognises learner-members as full members of SGBs. It means that learner-members, like any other member of the SGB, must play all the necessary governance roles in the schools as none are allocated duties to only one representative group on SGBs. Heystek (2001:2010) contends that SGB learner-members' full participation, functions and responsibilities are regarded as experiences in democracy, practicing and building of innovative citizenship for future generations.

2.6.6 Achievements in learner involvement

The promulgation of the Constitution of 1996 was the first achievement to award all South Africans the right to equality, s9(1) and specifically the stipulation that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. This Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic; law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled. The supremacy of the Constitution of 1996 did not exist during the Apartheid regime and is a result of the liberation processes which lead to the adoption of the Constitution of 1996 and SA became a representative democracy. The Constitution of 1996 (1996) informed the legislative process of drawing up The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) which governs the education sector.

This indicates that learners must contribute their views on their education without fear or favour at grassroots level. Before 1996 school governance in SA was centralised and structured as a top-down approach (Modisaotsile, 2012:3; Duma, 2014:105) where all schools were implementing a uniform strategy provided by the then ruling party and those in leadership

positions. Duma (2014:1807) argues that educators, learners, parents, and communities were excluded from making important decisions about the schools and education system of the country. This indicates that before SA became a democratic country there was no s16 which promoted freedom of expression by the primary receivers of education who were the parents and learners.

Principals and inspectors were the main dominant individuals responsible for decision making in schools (Modisaotsile, 2012:3). With the introduction of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), transformation in the South African education took place to ensure that all parties and beneficiaries of the schools were included as per s23 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). Section 23 stipulates how education should be provided for and stipulates the governance of schools to be in the hands of professional staff, parent body, and learner representatives, to ensure that the best interest of the learners and schools should be at the heart of these partners, and should be placed before any personal interest. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s23 also serves as the cornerstone to ensure democracy based on parent and learner-membership and their involvement in school governance. Karlsson (2002:329) contends that the Education White Paper 2 (Department of Education, 1996:25) was one of the first policies developed following the promulgation of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

According to the Department of Education (2011:20) White Paper 2 encourages the re-organisation of the school system, establishment of democratic SGBs throughout the country and, importantly, requiring the development of a comprehensive capacity building programme management and governance, “especially at school and district levels”. White Paper 2 envisaged an inter-school programme to share expertise, developing provincial capacity-building units, and a National Education Management Training Institute. Not many of these were realised and especially no evidence exists of a national training institute to enable participative governance in schools. Van der Westhuizen and Mosoge (1998:47) refer to this ideal as participation in action where all the stakeholders in a school ought to contribute and should be involved. The core value of democracy underpins Education White Paper 2 (Department of Education, 1996:16) stating that “A school governance structure should involve all stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles, encourage tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making. National and provincial policy should allow for the fact that such capacities may be underdeveloped in many communities and therefore need to be built”.

For Karlsson (2002:329) these values are involvement, participation, tolerance, discourse, participatory democracy and co-operative governance at grass roots level. The DBE nationally, in collaboration with provincial and district government levels, developed training manuals to train newly elected SGB members (Department of Basic Education, 2015:13; 2018:12). The 2018 training manual declares that “the Head of the Department and the provincial legislature should

allocate funds for the capacity building of SGBs”, without exclusion of learners. “These capacity building programmes must ensure that all SGBs receive the necessary training and development to perform their functions optimally” (DBE, 2018:12).

The election of SGB members every three years, is determined in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and the decision to hold these elections are devolved to provincial departments of education. Section 31(1) determines the term of office of all members of a governing body – excluding learner-members – as not exceeding three years. Section 31(2) focuses on the term of office of learner-members, which may not exceed one year.

Follow-up and continuous training are necessary as mandated by law, for SGBs to be fully capacitated. Forums where all SGB members meet should be established. The purpose of such forums will be to discuss practices and challenges with other SGB members falling in a specific school circuit to improve SGBs’ capacities and the overall approach of doing things correctly under various school circumstances. In this sense the ideal of participatory democracy will be enhanced amongst SGBs as co-partners and co-learner-members through sharing of best practices of school governance.

2.7 Synthesis

Although legislation such as The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and policies published in Government Gazettes are in place to involve learners in school governance, it seems to be better on paper than in practice (Mafora, 2013:201). This might be the case as there is a juxtaposition between learners’ membership on SGBs and their legal status as minors. This reality calls for a different approach in terms of learner participation and involvement in decision making and democratisation as learner representatives on SGBs. As it stands, it seems as if this approach was followed to give learners an opportunity among others to voice their views as stipulated by s16 of the Constitution of 1996 that everyone has a right to freedom of expression. Section 2 determines that “This Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic; law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled.” The question arises whether national, provincial and local school departmental officials are in breach in this section in that they are not fulfilling the obligations placed on them by the Constitution, the SA Schools Act (1996) and the policy regime published in Government Gazettes

The term of office of learner-members in SGBs and strategies to improve learner-members’ competence to fully grasp and execute their duties should again be considered and aligned with the Constitution, the SA Schools Act and policy documents. Although the SA Schools Acts (84 of

1996) and other policies such as White Paper 2 are in place, it is silent on matters such as learner's role in school governance (Karlsson, 2002:331).

In Chapter 3, the research methodology that was followed will be discussed in detail.

3 Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

During the process of conceptualising the research problem as reported in Chapter 2, the literature review, researchers such as Mathebula (2008), Wildemeersch *et al.* (2010), Heystek (2011), Xaba and Nhlapo (2014), Department of Basic Education (2018), Mafora (2013) and others, informed the problematising of the governance role of learner-members in school governing bodies. Chapter 2 contributed to my understanding of the importance of this study to indicate the gap in the literature and the need to investigate learner-members' participation in SGBs within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, JB Marks Municipality.

The focus of Chapter 3 is on the real-world execution of the research plan (par. 1.7.5) (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The execution of the plan is a moment of interaction between the researcher and the participant (Creswell, 2014) and validates or refutes the researcher's assumptions (par. 1.7.8). This process can also be called field work (Babbie, 2013), which requires leaving the office or academic site, such as a library or study, and going into the field to engage in a discourse with the participants, and in so doing dealing with what is dictated by the research design (par. 1.7.5).

Chapter 3 explains the research process. It provides information on the research method and justification for the decisions on the methodology chosen. Chapter 3 also reports on the various stages of the empirical research process, such as the selection of participants (par. 1.7), the data generation process (par. 1.7.5) and the ethical process followed by the researcher before and during the process of data generation. Furthermore, Chapter 3 also reports on the role played by me, the researcher in qualitative research in relation to reflectivity (par. 1.7.6) and concludes with a discussion of validity and reliability (par. 1.7.6) and illustrates the way in which these two vital requirements were met in the current study. The purpose of this chapter is not to present a comprehensive discussion of various methodological aspects involved in empirical field work (Mouton, 2001), but it is to identify the issues that should be taken into consideration when doing field work as it is relevant to my study.

3.2 Empirical research design

A research design is the researcher's strategy of conducting a study. This includes establishing the research title and research question(s) (par. 1.5.1) to construct meaning from the participants' raw generated data (Annexure K) in this study (Schurink, 2009:803).

A research design is the scaffolding that is used to construct research to find answers to the research questions (Duma, 2014:1809) as the type of research design describes the type of study.

There are various types of studies in social and educational scientific research from which I could have chosen, such as comparative, experimental, observational and descriptive (Creswell 2014:56). But for the purpose of this study, a phenomenological research was used to explore the governance role of learner-members in SGBs.

As the lens used to do research has an influence on a researcher's data, I needed to state my epistemological and ontological stance.

3.2.1 Epistemological premise

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007:9), epistemology is the primary source of how knowledge is acquired from people where they are situated. Epistemological assumptions are based on how knowledge can be established, acquired, and transferred from one person to another (Scotland, 2012:9). Scotland (2012:11) contends that interpretive epistemology is overtly subjective based on real world phenomena such as the governance role of learner-members of the school governing bodies. Epistemology is the science of getting knowledge and verifying it. It means that epistemology is closely related to s16(1)(b and d) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) dealing with the right to freedom of expression. It stipulates that "everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom to receive or impart information or ideas", whereas epistemology is the idea of an individual on a phenomenon. It therefore deals with the individual's interpretation of legislation or the world around him/her from his/her own perspective.

In this study the ideas of the learner-members of SGBs and my right as researcher, that "everyone has academic freedom and freedom of scientific research" as provided for in the Constitution of 1996 (1996) s16(1) are applicable. This section was relevant to foreground the rights of the learner-members of SGBs to take part in this study so that they were able to express their emotions, frustrations, and achievements as SGB governors in their various schools. This statement equally includes the right of the researcher to embark on the journey to research the experiences of learner-members in various SGBs from the participants' viewpoint. This tells me that, as the researcher, my participants had different views and experiences of their governance role as learner-members in their schools' SGBs.

Therefore, I was required to expect anything from them as they view life differently due to their individual differences and exposure to the phenomenon. In addition, SA, as a democratic country, guarantees people freedom of expression to encourage them to express their views on life as they experience it, without violating other people's rights.

This implies that my working assumption about learner-members could have been right or wrong. This was mirrored by the responses in the data (that were generated in this study (Annexure K)).

All through individuals' experiences of learner-members of SGBs (par. 1.7.5). In this study an interpretive epistemology was based on subjectivism (Scotland, 2012:11).

As a researcher, I am more of an interpretivist. I believe in direct contact with my participants to discover their subjective views of the research phenomenon. This is because I do not view people as robots and therefore, they are not programmed. They see life differently and they also saw this phenomenon differently. As much as I regarded the reality of my participants to be subjective, I as the researcher, also interpreted my participants' reality through my own subjective lenses.

It is fundamental to note that interpretivist research tends to jeopardise reliability because participants are sometimes biased (Greyling, 2004:443). Owing to these characteristics, interpretivists tend to involve emotions and bias in their views, but this is not beneficial as it may interfere with what is really observed (Scotland, 2012:12). However, these disadvantages were avoided by me when data were generated. Although I interpreted my participants' realities through my own lens, I was not directing or influencing my participants to give answers according to what I perceived to be real. I drafted specific questions (Annexure J) to avoid leading participants to say what my assumptions were.

Furthermore, as a researcher I needed to bear in mind reflectivity in my own working assumption, which was not turning a blind eye to the fact that a portion of my participants were still young and might easily be influenced by me as a researcher. Therefore, because I needed reliable information – valid data – I did not lead my young participants to be biased. Rather, I was asking questions that would not lead them to support my assumptions in data generation. If they supported my assumptions, it was not the fact that I influenced them to support what I perceived to be true, but it was what they saw and interpreted through their own lenses.

Researchers such as Creswell (2014:121), Stenius *et al.*, (2017) and Dobinson and Johns (2017) claim that using an interpretative approach yields an elevated level of validity (par. 3.2.3.3) and, therefore, data were more trustworthy and honest (par. 3.2.3.3), which happened to be the case in this study (par. 1.7.6). A qualitative research approach was followed as it provided in-depth information of what was really happening because each answer had to be substantiated (Stenius *et al.*, (2017:159). The qualitative data of this study were indeed the detailed experiences of learner-members of SGBs and provided their views without fear or favour (Annexure H & I). This led me (researcher) to better understand the phenomenon of perceptions and experiences of the role of learner-members in the SGB and helped in answering the primary research question.

Since I wanted to explore the governance role of learner-members of SGBs in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district in the North West Province, interpretivism was a suitable research paradigm for

this study. The interpretative paradigm provided me with an opportunity to have direct contact with my participants, thus ensuring an in-depth view of the phenomenon to be studied, yet I ensured that the right to privacy of the SGB learners was of a high standard. I had one-on-one sessions (face-to-face interviews) with the purposefully sampled participants which were the learner-members in SGBs of various schools in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District. As there was direct contact between me and participants, the data can be considered more valid, since an answer was not given in one sentence, but were in-depth answers attained during the interviews, as participants had to substantiate their statements based on their experiences. Table 3-1 depicts the characteristics of the interpretative paradigm as it was applied in my research (Creswell, 2014:126).

Table 3-1: Description of the interpretive paradigm

Characteristics	Interpretive (constructivist) view
Purpose	The researcher interviewed the stakeholders and recognised the value and depth of individual content. <i>(The researcher had in-depth, face-to-face interviews with twelve learner-members of six various school, which yielded enough information to a point of data saturation)</i>
Beliefs	Truth and realities. Different people have different perceptions, needs and experiences. <i>(All the learner-members in SGBs provided answers to the questions using their own knowledge and understanding in terms of what they practically do as their governance role. Although most of the answers had the same meaning according to my interpretation, however learner-members viewed the phenomenon from different truths and realities all</i>
Research method	Qualitative. <i>(Qualitative researcher methodology following the phenomenological research design was used in this study. This was a suitable research method because my intention was to get to understand the phenomenon as it would describe itself if it could talk. In other words, I wanted to get to understand the entire phenomenon and push through to its roots and origins.)</i>
Studies are based on	Descriptive, exploratory and contextual words from interview data to be collected. <i>(In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with learner-members in SGBs. The researcher explored the data after the transcription and a descriptive interpretation of data had been developed by the researcher)</i>
Study sample	Participants who can provide expertise from different points of view. <i>(Twelve participants from six schools were the actual sample of this study as against the anticipated 16 participants from 8 schools that were initially planned by the researcher). The sample group of this study was twelve learner-members in SGBs from fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools.</i>

3.2.2 Ontological premise

According to Crotty (1998:9,) ontology is the philosophical study of “the nature of being, becoming, existence of reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations.”

In my research, the assumption of ontology was based on what was regarded to be real as my working assumption. Therefore, the research was conducted to determine how people viewed a

phenomenon in their reality (Stenius *et al.*, 2017:43) which was done through face-to-face engagement with the SGB learner-members. I discovered the participants' perceptions reflected their experiences of the role they played in the governance of their various schools. The ontological aspect of this study was based on exploring reality through the lenses of learner-members in their governance role in SGBs of secondary schools situated in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District. The ontology (proven reality) was to be found in learners' participation in SGBs.

Creswell (2014:99) contends that "the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism." Relativism is subjective since reality is subjective and therefore people's view on the phenomenon might differ from one person to another (Scotland, 2012:11). I discovered that reality is different from one learner-member to another, even if they served on the same SGB of a school. However, there were little differences compared to learners serving in different schools and of different statuses (Non-fee-paying schools and fee-paying schools). Ontological aspects of the phenomenon in this study were discovered by the subjective responses given by my participants (learner-members). Reality unfolded when different learner-members expressed their opinion. I therefore believed that there is no single truth but that individuals interpreted the world around them through their own lenses and understanding.

In the section above, the research design which drove this chapter was discussed. Attention was given to the research paradigm, epistemology and ontology that underpinned the qualitative phenomenological research methodology. One should note that this qualitative research was conducted using procedures aimed at obtaining quality results. It was vital to recognise that data had to be generated in a specific and reasonable population as the sample size.

The next sub-paragraph will be providing information about who participated in this study, how many participants participated and why they were included as participants of this study.

3.3 Research methodology

This study was driven by qualitative search methodology which Nowell *et al.* (2017:1) describe as a paradigm of investigation and puzzle that is found around research with the aim of providing authentic results. Nowell *et al.* (2017:1) cited Sandelowski and noted that qualitative research focuses on generating information which is found in human experiences.

Stenius *et al.* (2017:156) contend that qualitative research is a study conducted to understand human behaviour regarding a phenomenon. Thus, this method of research best suits this study because I intended to acquire knowledge and understanding from learner-members of the SGB regarding their governance role. Learner-members in the SGB are human participants and therefore the use of qualitative research methodology was ideal to acquire good and anticipated

results because one of the main objectives of qualitative research methodology is to get information from humans. According to Nowell *et al.* (2017:1), qualitative research is continuously scrutinised, and therefore it is fundamental to conduct it following rigorous procedures to yield meaningful results.

For this study, a descriptive phenomenological research design was used (par. 1.7.1), which was the process of examining social experiences through descriptions provided by the participants. The social experiences of this study were the real-life experiences of the learner-members in SGBs of six fee-paying schools and Non-fee-paying schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District. Participants shared their experiences and validated some of my assumptions and brought new information to my attention (par. 5.3). In other words, my participants' data spoke to me and resulted in new findings.

I used descriptive phenomenology following the empirical transcendental phenomenology which Chinedu and Van Wyk (2015:175) define as a philosophical approach in research seeking to understand human science. It focusses less on interpretation of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of the participants (par. 1.7.1). I firstly identified the working assumption about the phenomenon, then deliberately set aside what I believe about the phenomenon I investigated, and I therefore, focused more on what was provided by the participants (par. 1.7.8). As a researcher I needed to develop the textual description of the experiences of participants and the structural description of how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014:185). This was done through direct contact with participants by conducting face to face interviews that were conducted on various sites (par. 1.7.5.1).

To obtain data that would answer the research question participants were needed. The collection of data is the empirical part of the research (Creswell, 2014:132). Dobinson and Johns (2017:20) noted that what makes a study empirical, is that it must be based on observation of the world, in other words data must be based on the facts of real-life situations and is applicable to qualitative and quantitative research.

The phenomenon I researched, was the governance role of learner-members of SGBs. The data in this study were extracted from the experiences and the actions of learner-members in real life situation or in the world.

Furthermore, Dobinson and Johns (2017:20) are of opinion that this data may be historically or contemporarily based on legislation or case law. For this study, this data were triangulated legislation.

The next part of this study was participant sampling.

3.3.1 Sampling

Sampling in this qualitative study was done in a manner that best assisted me in answering the research question. The purpose of sampling is to get a relevant group of people that are currently involved in the phenomenon that the researcher is trying to figure out or discover (Nakkeeran 2016:40). As a researcher I needed a sample of participants that would assist me to answer the research question that I had for my study: “What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members of School governing bodies in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district?”

3.3.1.1 Sampling strategy

There are several sampling strategies from which I could have chosen. These included random sampling and probability sampling. These types of sampling would not have ensured that the primary research question would be answered, because the two do not complement the type of research design chosen by me with a specific objective in mind. For this study, I noted that purposive sampling would have been the best to assist me to find the in-depth understanding of the learner-members’ governance role in SGBs.

According to Nakkeeran (2016:43), purposive sampling implies a group of people in different places performing the same duty chosen with the purpose in mind. Nakkeeran (2016) contends with Maree and Pietersen (2007:178) as they define purposive sampling as the method chosen with a particular purpose in mind that drives the researcher. For this study, I defined purposive sampling as a target group of people invited to be part of this study to acquire their insights, experiences and understanding about their current role and obligation as SGB learner-member and in the role played as school governors. This form of sampling was vital because I was doing this study with a specific purpose in mind, which was to explore the governance role of the learner-members on the SGB. I wanted to holistically understand what they think about their governance role in schools. Furthermore, the reason for purposive sampling was that it was probably the only way in which I could make sure that the learner representatives I sampled would be able to contribute meaningfully to my research.

Nakkeeran (2016:44) argues “that in this form of sampling, the researcher relies on his/her specialist judgment to select units that are representative or typical of the population”. The general strategy is to identify important sources of variations in the population and then to select a sample that reflects this distinction. Thus, this study was conducted using purposive sampling because I had a specific objective in mind.

Sampling was similarly applied to fee-paying and non-fee-paying schools, based on the assumption that there was a possibility that the schools might differ in how the SGB learner-members perceive their status as SGB members and to exercise s9 of the Constitution of 1996 which stipulates that everyone is equal in balance with other legislation and rights. Therefore, I made sure that all my participants were treated equally and with the same dignity regardless of their site and status of their school (Quintile 1-5). This sampling helped me to understand the current perceptions about the governance role of learner-members in SGBs. It also assisted me to find out whether the participants achieved their objectives by using a specific legitimate role to take part in discussions, and how they influenced SGBs.

Following this form of sampling and to make an informed choice of cases, required broad knowledge of the population before the sample could be drawn (Dobison & Johns, 2017:25). Nakkeeran (2017:43) argues that different researchers may proceed in different ways to acquire such a sample and one could, therefore, not assess to what degree these samples are a delegation of the relevant population. The advantage of this form of sampling is that the researcher and the chosen neutral collaborator were able to interact immediately with the participants and reached a positive agreement on how and when in-depth information, in the form of data, could be obtained.

In this study, only learner-members who were in Grade 8 and above were eligible to participate in the study as they are legally the members elected on SGBs. Under normal circumstances a grade 8 learner is turning 14 years during or at the end of the academic year. The SA Schools Act s23, stipulates the legible stakeholders to be part of the SGB structure which includes learners without the specification of age. However, underage participants (meaning under 18 years) were regarded as minors, and not fit to take part in research without the consent of their parents or legal guardian. This consent was received (Annexure G) and minors being elected members on the SGB were part of this investigation.

Yet the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s23 and s11 requires learners in Grades 8 and higher to be part of the RCL and SGB. It therefore means that I had to acquire consent from the parents/guardians of all the participants who were younger than eighteen years at a specific site. This was successfully done by the neutral person, Ms Silungile Khudwayo. Cavrić *et al.* (2015) identify the policy normally called the “age of majority” – this is the moment when a young person (minor) ceases to be a child and resume legal duty without the consent of their parents or legal guardians. This study also included eighteen-year-old individuals who were mature enough to take responsible decisions and could take part in research without consent of their parents or legal guardians.

Participants (learner-members) were only included if they were democratically elected to the SGB and thus enrolled as learners in the specific school. All learner-members, irrespective of their age or gender were excluded for this study if they were not democratically elected by the learners and not registered learners of that school in the academic year. Participants under eighteen years were regarded as minors and minors were described as vulnerable individuals in research, yet ethics allow researchers to use vulnerable individuals in research, but extra caution was to be taken into consideration so that they can be protected from any form of harm (par. 3.2).

Lastly, schools with special needs were excluded in the study due to its conditions regarding learner-members in the SGB (par. 1.7.4.4). In terms of s24(d) of the SA Schools Acts (84 of 1996), schools with special needs may only have learner-members in the SGB if it is reasonably practicable. This means that there is a possibility that you may have a special school without learner-members in the SGB because it is not reasonably practicable at that school and the school would still be acting within the law.

3.3.1.2 Ideal *versus* reality

It was my hope that I could have more participants in this study as more participants means more perceptions of different participants to boost the validity and reliability of data that would be generated in my study. As this is, however, a qualitative study, it is not important how many participants said the same thing but rather what is said by anyone plays (Boeije, 2010:59). Also, in qualitative research data saturation is not determined by numbers, but by the point at which enough data is gathered to enable a study to be continued, when no new information could be obtained by more participants or when further coding is not timewise nor research-wise beneficial to the findings of a research project (Fusch & Ness, 2015:1408).

I initially planned to have eight schools with sixteen participants. But data saturation occurred when participants started to provide similar answers in each question posed. This trend started from participant 8. Even though the answers were not exactly the same they contained the same meaning. The experiences of SGB learner-members regarding their governance role in the SGB became repetitive. No new or interesting information was provided by the participants other than what was already provided by the other participants that were interviewed before. This gave me no choice but to stop the interviews to avoid duplication of data.

See the number of planned participants in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Initial planned participants to this study

School	Position on SGBs	Number
School A (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School B (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School C (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School D (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School E (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School F (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School G (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School H (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
Total participants:		16

Owing to data saturation, stipulated, and explained (Fusch & Ness, 2015:1408), this study was conducted in six schools. With two learner-members per site as participants, the total of participants amounted to twelve (par. 1.7.4.3). Table 3-3 depicts the actual participants who took part in this study.

Table 3-3: Sampling

School	Position on SGBs	Number
School A (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School B (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School C (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School D (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
School E (fee-school)	Learner-members	2
School F (Non-fee-paying school)	Learner-members	2
Total participants:		12

The total number of the participants in this study was twelve learner-members in the SGB of six various schools (1.7.4.3). All selected schools provided learner-members in SGBs who were serving as SGB learner-members at the time when data were generated.

This section dealt with the method of sampling that was used by me. Generally accepted reasons were provided for using purposive sampling as the sampling method. The sampling size was discussed including the in-depth discussion of number of participants who participated in this study.

The next section indicates how the researcher generated data including the method that was used to generate data from the participants.

3.3.2 Data generation procedures

The previous sub-section dealt with my chosen sampling method and the reasons therefor. This section provides information about data generation. Data generation is the moment of reality where the researcher is in direct contact with the participants to hear their views and opinions on the phenomenon. This could not be done if the fundamental principles of conducting research were not done such as having the confirmation letters from various stakeholders which stipulated that one is welcomed or accepted to conduct the research at a site (par. 1.8). According to Marcy *et al.* (2004:107), data generation is the process of collecting information on a phenomenon of interest in an established organised fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions. In line with this, Maree (2016:37) defines data generation as a joint package that includes the generation and data analysis processes because both are part of the procedure of gathering information that will be necessary to help find a solution to a problem and to provide answers to the research question, or to provide legitimate findings or to determine possible implications. In this study the research question was “What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in the school governing bodies in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District?”

3.3.2.1 Setting for data collection

According to the NWU Ethics Committee, all interviews must take place in a neutral venue such as a church or community hall where learner-members would not be recognised by any person as being involved in a study to protect them from any form of harm and victimisation as stated in the ethics approval letter I received with ethics number (**NWU-00353-19-A2**) (Annexure M). It was, however, difficult to follow this mandate to the letter because the researcher got the final ethics approval from the NWU Ethics Committee during crucial times, meaning times that were not suitable for research in schools (matric and lower grade final examination times). The DBE, in its approval (Annexure B), clearly stated that the research is permitted to be conducted only if it does not interfere with teaching time or interrupt the day-to-day business of the school. In most of the schools, SGBs' learner-members were in Grade 12. Further, as learner-members may only serve on the SGB for one year, one cannot ask them to reflect on their experiences earlier in the year.

All the schools needed to see that the learners attended school under their supervision, and I was warned that these learner-members were all in school preparing for their exams. Taking the learner-members out of the school would have been against the policy of the DBE as the gate keeper, and the schools' management would not have allowed me as the researcher to go that

route. It was difficult for the principals to release the matric learners to come to the neutral venues and it was difficult for the participants to be far from their studying stations, as these were the examinations that would determine their future. As a result, the principals understood that this study had a stipulated timeframe and that most of the current SGB learner-members would not be available in the following year.

The school principals, in good-will, decided to arrange a safe venue for me within the school premises on the dates when the learner-members were not writing any exams to respect the mandate of the DBE on its approval for this study, and, moreover, to protect the examination time and to avoid any form of grievance by the learner-member in case they did not do well in one of the exams. This study should not have to be one of the contributing factors for the learner-member to fail the exam. I made sure that the interviews did not exceed the maximum time for this study which was 45 minutes. The private room was provided to me to maintain a high level of confidentiality and to prevent the possibility of this study negatively influencing the learner-members' academic work. Learner-members who were not in Grade 12, the minority of participants, were interviewed at a neutral venue as per the mandate of the NWU Ethics Committee. As a result, only two learner-members out of the twelve were interviewed in the local community hall because they were in Grade 11 and they had completed their exams during the time of data generation.

Thus, due to the abovementioned reasons it was sometimes somewhat noisy during interviews. One could hear voices in the background of the interview sessions when interviews took place in schools. This does not mean that a high level of confidentiality was not maintained. Participants were comfortable in the interview-room and they were not intimidated by the learners outside because those learners were not even aware of what was happening in the interview room.

Participants gave detailed answers and I used follow-up questions to assist the participants to enrich their responses to the questions posed (Creswell, 2014:146). The interviews granted me an opportunity to have direct contact with my participants (learner-members).

I used open-ended questions where the participants were offered a chance to elaborate the meaning of their views. Most importantly, under these circumstances it did not lead to confusion as questions were asked and explained by me if not clear. As a researcher I ensured that I did not generate false data; therefore, face-to-face contact with the participants in an interview helped me to identify whether the participants were giving me their honest perceptions. I explored these impressions during the follow-up questions I asked among others to clear up misconceptions.

3.3.2.2 Face to face in-depth interviews

The above sub-section dealt with the process that was used to prepare for data generation, when, where and how data were generated. The sub-section above also introduced the method of data generation. This sub-section deals with the in-depth explanation of the method of data generation.

A face-to-face in-depth interview is a two-way communication between the interviewer and the participant (Chinedu & Van Wyk, 2015:299). The interviewer can ask and probe questions to the interviewee and the interviewees can give answers based on their experience and knowledge of the phenomenon.

I used face-to-face in-depth interviews when generating data from twelve learner-members of SGBs of 6 various schools. This form of data generation was chosen to promote confidentiality because there was a distinct possibility that data would be mostly generated from learner-members who were less mature, meaning they were not falling in the category of age of majority (par. 4). Under such circumstances, as a researcher, I could not be guaranteed that participants were protected from any form of harm if I had to use other forms of data generation such as focus group interviews as they then could have felt intimidated by other participants. The reason for this decision was because I wanted to generate data that would provide rich and informed data or information of the learner-members' role in SGBs.

The best way to do this was by using face-to-face in-depth interviews so that learner-members of SGBs could express themselves adequately without any intimidation from external forces. Using other forms of data generation would have been a big disadvantage, because some learner-members could not express themselves freely because they were shy even though there were only the participant and I in the interview-room.

In interviews, researchers are the primary drivers (Boeije, 2010:61). Interviewing is a trustworthy manner to assess people's perceptions (par. 3.2.1), meanings and their understanding of different aspects of life as well as how they view things and see reality (Creswell, 2014:144). Creswell further stipulates that interviews are also one of the most powerful tools to understand other people. As such, it is one of the most used forms of data generation in qualitative research. Boeije (2010:61) defines an interview as a discussion during which the researcher poses questions that have to do with behaviours, ideas, attitudes and experiences regarding a social phenomenon to participants. The advantage of interviews is that they provide the researcher with an opportunity to observe the reaction of the participants (par. 1.7.5.1). One of the disadvantages of interviews is that some participants are shy by nature, which could lead to low levels of information from the

participants. This occurred in some of the interviews held with some participants. I tried my level best to make the participants feel at ease, to interact with me.

I defined face-to-face in-depth interviews as the moment of engagement between the interviewer (the researchers) and the interviewee. This is the process where the interviewer poses questions to the interviewee (the participant) about the phenomenon and the interviewee is expected to answer the question based on their experiences and how they viewed the phenomenon through their own lenses. In this form of data generation, there is no wrong or right answers because participants convey their views on a phenomenon. One of the advantages from using face-to-face interviews was that participants spoke freely without intimidation or pressure that might have arisen if I had used focus-group interviews. The disadvantage was that, if a learner-member failed to answer some questions posed by the researcher, no one could assist the participant to better answer the question, as did indeed occur in some of the interviews.

I used face-to-face in-depth interviews for the two learner-members selected per school. It means that two interviews per site were scheduled with two learner-members in the SGB of each sampled school, who shared their perceptions about their governance role in the SGB with me. Learner-members were most likely to have similar responses in the way they perceived their governance role, an assumption proven by reaching data saturation early in the process of data generation. Face-to-face interviews with each learner-member assisted the learner-members to give rich in-depth responses by confidently giving their answers without fear, and adding towards their own answers through the follow-up questions which were asked by the researcher, a process called probing (Chinedu & Van Wyk, 2015:301).

Although face-to-face in-depth interviews were best suited for my study, it still had disadvantages which could include excessive costs because the interviewer had to see each participant during a one-on-one session or the interviewee might be influenced by the presence of the interviewer who asked the questions. Regardless of the disadvantages mentioned above, face-to-face interviews were still the best suited for this study because the advantages surpassed the disadvantages. Firstly, all the schools were situated within the borders of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district in Potchefstroom – although money for travelling was required, I did not need much because the schools were not too far apart, and the second disadvantage was countered by reflectivity on the part of the researcher (par. 3.3.3).

3.3.2.3 Data generation tools

In this study, an audio recorder, a notebook and the researcher, as interviewer, were used as data generation tools to generate data. The audio recorder was for capturing the responses of all

participants as they were, and to capture the questions posed by the researcher and the follow-up questions, that allowed the participants to add information to the given questions. The notebook was used for taking observational notes i.e., for the questions that were posed and writing some of the key facts mentioned by the participants as well as to make notes on body language. It was noted that some of the participants were shy to give their responses, although the researcher could not determine the reason behind the lack of boldness but the body language of some of the participants portrayed shyness, as they were failing to express themselves freely about some of the questions.

In this sub-section, I provided information about the methods of data generation. Interviews were used as a driving force for generating data. Face-to-face interviews were used to obtain data. A brief discussion on the instrument that was used to generate data was also discussed.

In the following sub-section, ethical matters will be addressed.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

The previous sub-section focused on the process of generating data from the participants. I discussed the in-depth face-to-face interviews and the data generation tools used in this study. This sub-section provides information about ethical considerations that were addressed before, during and after data generation.

According to Maree (2007:300), research cannot be conducted by anyone anywhere. Boeije (2010:43) contends that social scientists need to apply ethical rules and regulations to prevent them from harming participants and to protect themselves from being arrested in case anything goes wrong in the process of research. The most critical issues to consider when doing research is the privacy of the research participants and the signing of the informed consent by the participants.

This serves as the agreement between the researcher and the participant (Roberts & Allen, 2015:98). This critical aspect of the research was always kept in mind during the data generation process. This action in the study was informed by s14 of the Constitution of 1996 that stipulates that everyone has a right to have their privacy protected. With this legislation in mind, the researcher promoted a safe place where participants could not be seen by anyone that they were involved in an activity that requires them to share certain information about the school. The schools provided the safe place for the participants who were interviewed during exams and a safe place was provided for those who were participating in the community church. For the participants who were interviewed at churches, interviews took place in the church boardrooms.

No one knew about the interviews except the pastor who gave me permission to use the church. He was also not at the church on the actual date of the interviews.

Privacy was not only promoted by controlling external factors such as background noise created by other learners or community members while the interviews were conducted. It was also promoted even during the process of data generation as I told participants they were not compelled to answer a question. Even though their answers would help me acquire in-depth information, the learner-members had the right to skip some questions if they did not feel comfortable to provide an answer to some questions. As experienced during the first phase of data generation, some learner-members were indeed skipping some of the questions if they were uncomfortable to answer a particular question. As researcher, I respected their decisions and we moved on to the next question.

3.3.3.1 Permission and informed consent

Boeije (2010:45) emphasises that one of the most vital ethical requirements for the researcher's introduction in the field, is informed consent. Before the interviews were conducted with learner-members of the SGB in various schools, the chosen neutral person briefly explained to all participants the purpose of the research the researcher had to conduct and emphasised the fact that participants could withdraw at any time and that their personal information such as their names and the names of their schools would not be published and was regarded as confidential information and kept safe to avoid victimisation.

The neutral person obtained written consent from the participants before conducting the interviews as the method of data generation (Annexure J). Before data were generated, the researcher ascertained whether the participants were still available, and willing, to participate in possible follow-up interviews and to check if the learner-members still would take part in the study as it was previously requested by the neutral person. Before the commencement of the face-to-face in-depth interviews, I reminded the participants about some of the aspects of consent form that they had already signed, aspects such as confidentiality and voluntary participation as well as possible withdrawal if need be without fear or favour, prejudice or disfavour.

3.3.3.2 Process of obtaining informed consent

Boeije (2010) believes that it is usually impossible to include everyone to be part of a study even if they are part of the relevant group. This assumption is primarily due to time and financial constraints. Therefore, a sample of the chosen participants must be taken (Creswell, 2014:43). Yet, these participants should be legally able to participate in research. Hence, ethical considerations allow individuals who are eighteen and above to be included as research

participants without their parents' or guardians' permission. Legally eighteen is regarded as the age of majority, which Cavrić *et al.* (2015:1109) defines as the age of maturity or a transition from being a child to a young adult.

Children in the age group 14-17 years, are according to Cavrić *et al.* (2015), identified as juveniles, which includes individuals regarded as vulnerable participants. Therefore, as a researcher, I had to acquire both their consent as potential participants, as well as their parents or guardians' consent to allow their children to participate in social studies, as is applicable to this study. Some of the research sites had learner-members who did not fall under the majority age group.

Learners were not restricted to participate in the study based on age or gender if they were learner-members elected to the SGB in a purposefully selected site. In the situation where I found learner-members less than eighteen years and not legally allowed to sign a consent form and participate in research without the consent of their parents, a neutral person (par. 1.7.3) obtained consent from such SGB governors' parents and it was granted (par. 1.8).

Thus, as the researcher, I drafted a formal letter to the North West Department of Education (Annexure A) which served as a request to conduct my study in four fee-paying schools and four Non-fee-paying schools. As this was my initial plan before data were saturated in six schools, three fee-paying schools and six non-fee-paying schools (par. 3.2.3.3).

Subsequently I drafted a formal letter to the purposefully selected schools' principals (Annexure C) to make an appointment with all of them (my target group and the respective school principals) which allowed the neutral person, Ms Silungile Khuzwayo, who requested consent from participants on my behalf. The formal discussion was about what the researcher intended to do and requested consent in person from the principal and the sending a neutral person to obtain the consent of the participants. Through the principals, the researcher asked permission to write a formal letter to the parents to request their consent (Annexure G) in the event of learner-members of a research site being under-aged and less than 18-years old as stipulated in (par. 1.7.4.4). Learner-members were active and participated in the governance role within SGBs whilst this study was conducted. Therefore, they were most likely to have a clearer perception of the practical and governance role within their schools. During the meeting with the principal, I requested him or her to allow the neutral person, Ms Silungile Khuzwayo, to meet with SGBs learner-members in the school.

I explained my intentions to the neutral person to be able to explain the intention of the researcher to SGBs' learner-members and provide information on the personal benefits they or their successors would gain from participating in the study. The researcher explained to Ms Silungile

Khuzwayo the kind of change this research could bring to the participants' successors as SGB learner-members, and Ms Silungile passed this information on to the participants of SGBs. The researcher explained that this research would give them a voice and would provide more information on their role-expectations as learner-members of SGBs. Furthermore, it would help them to realise their rightful position in the structure as it is stipulated in legislation s20 of SA Schools Act. Section 20 stipulates that all governing bodies must strive to adhere to the best interest of the school to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. This motivated the learner-members to take part in the study.

According to Roberts and Allen (2015:99), "it is imperative to obtain clearance from an ethics committee when human subjects are involved in any kind of research." Since this study was conducted with human participants (the learner-members) the researcher requested ethical clearance from the NWU EMELTEN Ethics Committee to conduct the study using the selected participants. My ethics clearance certificate with ethics number **NWU-00353-19-A2** (Annexure M) took me a full year to obtain as it was firstly submitted to the wrong ethics committee. This confusion led the researcher to eventually submit to another ethics committee which dealt with medium risk participants. Getting ethical clearance was indeed a lengthy and frustrating experience which took up a lot of time. As a result, these unforeseen circumstances exceeded the timeframe.

The ethics certificate (Annexure M) was issued on the 25 October 2019, which almost coincided with the learner-members in matric to start writing exams. Nevertheless, I recognised that all procedures were done to protect all participants, the researcher and the reputation of the university. Whenever researchers are developing questionnaires with a view to generate data and publishing the findings, ethical clearance is obligatory to ensure that the institution as research entity, such as the EMELTEN-REC at the NWU, is protected but specifically to ensure the protection of vulnerable participants.

Above all, Boeije (2010:45) claims, that humanity in the researcher is the umbrella of all the principles in research. In the process of conducting the research after obtaining the ethics clearance from the EMELTEN-REC, I did my research constantly being aware of the spirit of humanity when I was generating data.

3.3.3.3 Recruitment of participants

The previous sub-section dealt with the process of obtaining consent from participants and parents/guardians if learner-members were minors. This sub-section deals with the recruitment procedure which got the learner-members to participate in the study.

Firstly, I had to request permission to conduct my research from the district Department of Education, since the study was intended to be conducted within Dr Kenneth Kaunda district (Annexure A). I nominated the neutral collaborator, Ms Silungile Khuzway, to assist me in sending emails and scheduling meetings with the principals and the participants (learner-members) at various schools. After obtaining permission from the district, I asked Ms Silungile Khuzwayo to communicate with the schools' principals to give her the permission to recruit participants to take part in my study. I had to draft a formal letter of recruitment to the principals to request permission (Annexure C). I sent this letter to the nominated neutral person, so that she could forward it to SGBs to request permission to conduct my study (Annexure E). Ms Silungile Khuzwayo forwarded the letter to the parents if learner-members/participants were still under-aged (Annexure G) as well as the letter of recruitment to all learner-members in SGBs (Annexure H & I).

3.3.3.4 Anonymity and confidentiality

The previous sub-section dealt with recruitment procedures. Details were given on how learner-members were recruited to be part of the study. This sub-section deals with anonymity and confidentiality of the learner-members who participated in this study.

According to Burns (2000:250), both the participants and I should have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. All participants' information and responses shared during the study were kept confidential and the results were presented in an anonymous manner to protect the identities of the participants. The information provided by my participants was presented but the public will not have the information about the source that provided the information. The participants remained anonymous to the public (Annexure I & J). This was done to prevent any harm to the participants.

I ensured that participants were not exposed to any physical or psychological harm (Boeije, 2010:111). During the study I remained honest, respectful and sympathetic towards all participants. As the content was not sensitive, it was not necessary to debrief participants or to refer anyone to a professional who would provide such a service (Creswell, 2013:372).

Since the participants took part in individual face-to-face in-depth interviews, anonymity in the reporting of the data, was a priority, as it was only the participant and the researcher knowing the identity of the interviewee. Anonymity in this study complied with s9 of the Constitution of 1996 (1996) which emphasises the necessity of privacy or anonymity for all citizens. In this study it was the researcher's priority to keep every participant's personal information a secret as a form of protecting the participants' constitutional rights as volunteers of the study and as citizens of the country.

The last part of Chapter 3 will address trustworthiness, rigour, validity, and reflexivity.

3.3.4 Trustworthiness, rigour, validity and reflexivity

The primary purpose of conducting research is to answer the research question and reach findings on which researchers in the same field of study can reflect. For qualitative researchers, the establishment of trustworthiness is of the utmost importance (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:123). This cannot be achieved if reliability, dependability, validity, rigour and reflexivity are not thoroughly checked when research is being conducted.

3.3.4.1 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) submit that trustworthiness of a study is important to evaluate its worth. Trustworthiness involves establishing **credibility**, confirms the researcher's confidence in the 'truth' of the findings. **Transferability** shows that the findings could be applicable in other contexts, **dependability** is determined by the consistency of the findings and suggests that the research can be repeated and **confirmability** determines the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not skewed by the researcher's bias, motivation or interest.

3.3.4.1.1 Establishing credibility

According to Lincoln and Guba (as cited by Nieuwenhuis, 2016:123), the researcher should be able to prove the credibility of his or her research in that the research findings are based on truth and accuracy by providing supporting evidence of the collected and disseminated data. Nowell *et al.* (2017:3) contend that a study's credibility is found when readers can identify with experiences that they can recognize. In my research this was achieved by posing the question 'How did I know that my findings are true and accurate?' as discussed in Chapter 5 of this research. The process of triangulation as described in Chapter 5 contributed to the credibility of my research findings.

3.3.4.1.2 Transferability

In qualitative research the data are generated from a small sample, and therefore it is difficult to claim transferability. Nieuwenhuis (2016:123-124) and Nowell *et al.* (2017:3) note that transferability is the possibility to generalise a research project to a broader audience for a study. This claim cannot be determined in advance, especially in a small-scale study such as this one. However, the researcher is responsible for issuing an in-depth description so that those who seek to transfer the findings, can make their own judgement (Nowell *et al.*, 2017:3). Transferability is based on proof that the qualitative researcher was able to demonstrate that his or her findings could be applied to other contexts by means of thick descriptions (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121).

Examples where research findings can be transferred are under the same conditions and in the same population from where the sample was taken to do future research on the same phenomenon. I made use of thick descriptions (par. 5.3) during the interpretation, analysis and the reporting of my research findings which could be applicable to similar situations and circumstances but with different participants and in different sites of research.

3.3.4.1.3 Dependability and reliability

Nowell *et al.* (2017:3), citing Tobin and Begley? Citation? State that dependability rests on logical, traceable and documented research processes because when readers are able to examine the research process, they are better able to judge the dependability of the research. Nieuwenhuis (2016:124) describes dependability as the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher claims they did, as demonstrated by the research design and the processes of implementation thereof. In this study, dependability was obtained through obtaining the views of the target group which were the learner-members in SGBs.

Choobineh and Kini (2000:10) define reliability “as a belief in system characteristics, specific belief in the competence, dependability and security of the system, under condition of risk.” Pietersen and Maree (2016:238) define reliability as the way in which the researcher can persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality. In this study reliability was obtained through following all the necessary research ethics procedures up to obtaining consent, interpreting, and transcribing processes exactly as it had happened, what the participants said and keeping the records of the original data generated, in a safe protected environment.

Dependability and reliability are inseparable because the reader needs to be certain that the information received is dependable as found in the reporting of the research design and the forthcoming operational processes the research entailed. This could be done by following the detailed information on the research design of this study (par. 3.2), the detailed data-analysis (par. 4.4) and the reporting of the findings (par. 5.3). I used a chosen neutral collaborator, whilst various researchers on the NWU EMELTEN-REC Committee provided valuable feedback on the research proposal submitted to gain my ethics clearance certificate. Their feedback assisted me with my research audit trail which established dependability, whilst my study leader and co-study leader reviewed and examined the research process and the data analysis to ensure the reporting of valid findings was consistent and could be replicated.

3.3.4.1.4 Establishing confirmability

Nieuwenhuis (2016:125) bases his definition of confirmability on Lincoln and Guba's 1985 seminal work, claiming that confirmability is known as the degree of neutrality or the degree to which the reported data and findings are that of the participants and not based on the bias of the researcher. Confirmability is demonstrated in par. 3.2. and par. 4.1, reporting on how I as the qualitative researcher remained neutral and, also, in the findings which proved my neutrality in reporting my study's findings.

Nowell *et al.* (2017:3) claim that confirmability is grounded in establishing that the researcher's explanations and findings are visibly extracted from the original data provided by the participants and by providing in-depth information on how the researcher reached his/her conclusions. As described in Chapter 4, the data analysis and Chapter 5, the findings of my research were based on my participants' responses to the questions posed during the one-on-one interviews and where I was careful to not display any potential bias or personal opinions on the role of learner-members of SGBs. During the ethics-application process I became aware of the problems with biased research and in my planning of the research design, I made it clear that I would at all costs avoid being biased during the data-collection, interpretation and reporting processes to ensure that my bias did not distort my interpretation of the data to fit a pre-determined discourse or narrative. In establishing confirmability, I adhered to the principles of establishing confirmability: I attached examples of an audit trail which Nowell *et al.* (2017:3) describe as evidence of the decisions and choices made by the researcher concerning the theoretical and methodological issues in the study, highlighting every step of the data generation, data analysis and data interpretation processes which enabled me to motivate my decisions.

3.3.4.2 Rigour

Rigour was obtained via a good and strategic format of data generation as presented in the discussion of the research design, the execution of the planned research, and processes of data collection (Johnson *et al.*, 2020:139). This included amongst others the time-limit on the face-to-face interviews whilst generating data. This was done to make sure that participants were not losing interest in the process of generating data. Although the interviews did not take more than 45 minutes, the researcher asked all the questions and follow-up questions to ensure rich data generation.

3.3.4.3 Validity

Validity is fundamental part of data where trustworthiness is concerned. According to Maree (2007:216), validity refers to the extent to which the instrument does what it is supposed to be

doing. I strived to produce findings that were trustworthy and convincing, also presenting negative or inconsistent findings to add credibility to the study.

3.3.4.4 Reflectivity

Furthermore, as a researcher I needed to consider reflexivity in my own working assumption, which was not turning a blind eye to the fact that a portion of my participants were still young and might easily be influenced by me as a researcher. Therefore, because I needed reliable information – valid data – I did not lead my young participants to be biased. Rather, I was asking questions that would not lead them to support my assumptions in data generation. If they supported my assumptions it was not the fact that I influenced them to support what I perceived to be true, but it was what they saw and interpreted through their own lenses.

3.4 Synthesis

In summary, this chapter described the empirical research design, the sampling methods employed, the data generation procedures and the data gathering instrument – face-to-face in-depth interviews – and elaborated on the ethical considerations applied in this interpretive phenomenological study, embedded in the Constitution of 1996 and other legislation and the ethical framework. Amongst others was the in-depth information on how informed consent was obtained from both participants and from some of the parents/guardians of juvenile participants. Trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, rigour and validity of the study was discussed in detail and how it was applied in this study. In Chapter 4, the researcher provided an in-depth overview on how the generated data were analysed.

The data analysis processes included codifying, categorising, and theming which are discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 explained the research design and methodology. Attention was paid to the research process and approach (par.3.2.1), the sampling (par. 3.2.2), the data generation process and the development of the research instruments (par. 3.2.3), trustworthiness (par. 3.2.4), as well as ethical considerations (par. 3.2.5). I provided a detailed motivation for the choices I made that would ensure that the generated data would aid in answering the primary research question “What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in the school governing bodies in Dr Kenneth Kaunda district.” The sampling and data generation were done at six schools, of which three were fee-paying schools and three were Non-fee-paying schools with a total number of twelve participants (learner-members in the SGB) within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda district.

Qualitative researchers generate data from participants who have first-hand information, knowledge or experiences about a specific phenomenon. Data are generated and analysed to answer a research question posed by the researcher to solve a problem faced by a target group. In this chapter, I provide information on the data-generation phase (par. 4.2), challenges experienced (par. 4.2), the data-analysis phase (par. 4.4), data-themes (par. 4.3) and a discussion of the themes (par. 4.5).

4.2 Challenges experienced during the data generation phase

It was a challenge to get participants to participate in the study, as I had planned to generate data during 2019. Owing to the time spent to receive ethical clearance, I had to collect data during the final examinations.

In line with this, principals were concerned about the time that might be spent during the interviews outside of the school. However, one must consider the fact that learners are leaving school after the matric examination, as in most cases, it is their final academic year in the General Education Training (GET) band and would not be returning to a school as SGB members. The principals understood that this study was granted a specific time frame to be completed, of which the year that data were collected should have been the last year. Further, while learner-members of the SGB are elected for one year only, the data collection phase during the latter part of the academic year, was more reliable than it would be if done earlier, as these SGB learner-members would have a longer time to reflect on their experiences as SGB members. Realising the predicament, they compromised and gave me a slot with a time-limit.

Most of the principals ended up suggesting that the interviews should only be conducted after the participants completed their matric exam papers. This posed yet another challenge as some of the learner-members, especially in the fee-paying schools, were staying in hostels and coming from different provinces and would head home after the examinations. They were obliged to leave immediately after exams due to the issues of transport and hostel policies. Some of the principals suggested that learner-members be interviewed a few days before they were to write another subject, especially those who stayed in hostels.

In the process of conducting the interviews, confidentiality was maintained at the highest level and learners felt safe and secure during the interview process. Because interviews had to be conducted at school, some noise by other learners outside the interview room was distracting, but not threatening. Some learner-members who were in grade 11 and lower were interviewed at the local church to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

For detailed and reasonable transparency of my participants or individuals who took part in this study, the table below represent the demography of the participants.

Participant number	School type		Gender		Grade					School quintile ⁶					Age					
	Non-fee	Fee - paying	M	F	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	x		x				x			X								x		
2	x		x						X	X									X	
3	x		x						X	X								X		
4	X			X					X	X									x	
5		x	x						X				X						x	
6		x		X				X					X					X		
7		x	x						x				X					x		

⁶ From the quintile number one can make reasonable deductions about the locations of the schools, 1 being in poor rural types of environments and 5 being in more affluent city or larger town areas.

8	x		x						x	x									X
9	X		x						x	x								x	
10		X	X						X					X				X	
11		X		X						X				X				X	
12	x			X					x			x				x			

4.3 Data analysis process

Boeije (2010:76) defines data analysis as the procedure of scientifically searching and arranging interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that the researcher accumulates, to increase understanding, which enables him or her to present what has been discovered. Data can be analysed in various ways. There is no “one right” way of analysing data (Maree, 2007:28). Maree claims that data can be analysed inductively and deductively.

Since interpretivism assumes that truth or reality is subjective, researchers therefore use inductive data analysis to reach the best possible understanding regarding the research conducted (Maree, 2007:28). Maree further claims that codes and categories should be constructed from data. This is called an inductive process with the aim, objectives, and research question of the study at the centre of the data analysis process because sometimes data contain information that is irrelevant to the purpose of the study. Since data was generated qualitatively, it should also be analysed qualitatively. For this study, a thematic analysis following the six phases of data analysis, described by Nowell *et al.* (2017:4), was utilised to analyse data.

Table 4-1 illustrates the procedure through the data were analysed after the data generation phase by means of interviews (par. 1.7.8).

Table 4-1: **The process of data analysis** (adapted from Nowell *et al.*, 2017:4) This is a useful table which enhances the quality of the chapter

PHASES	GETTING TO KNOW THE DATA, INITIAL CODING, THEMING, REPORTING AND DESCRIPTION
Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with your data	This study contained a large volume of information from the twelve participants through the interviews that were electronically recorded in different schools and one community church. Therefore, an excellent method of management of data was imperative to the success of this study. All data (raw data) transcribed were named to specify that it was extracted from a participant, transcribed data were coded respectively as participant 1-12). The raw data were stored on cloud (a secured software which needs a password to access and I was the only person who knew the password to the software). This software had chronologically arranged folders for each participant, meaning from participant 1 to 12. Data were archived with dates to provide an audit trail which demonstrates the name of the site and confirming that data analysis and interpretation was adequate. Data were transcribed using a flash book and later I typed all the transcribed interviews using Word document software. All the observations and field notes that were taken during the interviews were integrated when I was typing the raw data. I read the data several times. I did this to familiarise myself with the data and to find the most interesting transcript points and to highlight vital information using a colour highlighter. The purpose of this activity was to identify key points and emerging patterns (similarities and differences), which is fundamental to identify codes.
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:105), coding is a process of reading and carefully interpreting the given data. It includes reading line by line and dividing each into meaningful units. Thus, I coded important information that I identified whilst immersing myself in the data. Creswell (2014:197) concurs with Nieuwenhuis (2007), who describes coding as the process of organising data by bracketing chunks and writing a word representing a category. At this stage I first started by writing the codes randomly as they appeared while I was reading the raw data. I had a total of 57 codes as I was reading, e.g. I noted participant 1 on question 2 where he said that they never take any decisions because whatever they propose was never taken into consideration and participant 2 and 5 agreed, which led me to label one of the codes “decision-making”.
Phase 3: Searching for categories	I had a variety of concepts in my interviews. So, I started by utilising the conceptual framework to develop broad higher order codes to help me to organise the data, e.g., concepts such as “governance, roles, decision-making etc.” were on top of the list. These top codes formed the main themes. I logically organised the codes and the logic were informed by how close or related it was to the topic (In this study this process is called categories). All codes that had the term governance or related to governance were on top of the list in the researcher’s logical format (this was category 1), because the study was about the governance role of learner-members of SGBs. All codes that had decision making or related to decision making were also grouped together and were given the second preference on the list because one of the governance roles of the governing bodies of schools is to make decisions that will aid the smooth running of a school.

Phase 4: Creating themes	From the categories I created themes and reviewed the coded data to determine if a coherent pattern was apparent. It was evident that some of the themes needed sub-themes because they were broad, e.g., <i>Learner-members of SGBs and their governance role; Led to the sub-theme “the role of SGBs in schools”</i> . This was apparent when I started cross case analysis as the richness and diversity of the data became more transparent. To demonstrate that themes reflected the participant’s voice, I also returned to the raw data.
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	In this phase, I wrote a detailed analysis for each theme, indicating the story that each theme was telling (par. 4.3) in this study, in connection with the primary research question. I analysed each theme in detail to ensure that all aspects of the data were analysed. The themes were not considered to be final until all data had been read, and coding was scrutinised to ensure the credibility of the findings. I organised and re-organised the themes until I was certain that the data was presented in a logical and meaningful manner.
Phase 6: Producing the report	When I completed developing the final themes, I started writing the final report on the themes (par. 4.4.1). Both shorter quotes within the narrative and longer quotes were included in the report and all quotes were accompanied by a unique identifier to demonstrate that data were derived from various participants (e.g. participant 1-12) (par. 4.4.1). I also represented themes and categories in tables (par. 4.4.1). Most importantly, my discussion returned to the original theoretical literature used to inform the study, as well as literature that formed my argument. My findings were supported by literature and the promulgated legislation such as sections in the SA Schools Act and Constitution of 1996. I also ensured that some of my findings were not contradictory or adding to the new body of knowledge within the topic
TOTAL NUMBER OF:	Initial Codes: 57' Initial Themes: 7' Defining and naming themes: The high number of themes was a result of the proximity of the category to the research question, i.e., what were the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in SGBs in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda education district?

Table 4-1 gave a brief illustration on how I analysed data from this study. Figure 4-1 gives a diagrammatic reflection of the data analysis process from raw data, until the development of themes. The example of Frieze (2014:115) guided my process.

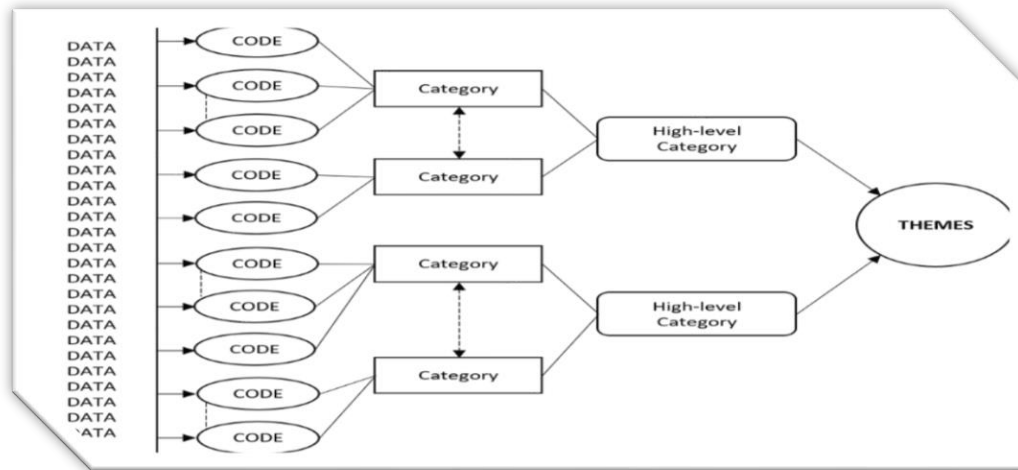


Figure 4-1: Data analysis and interpretation process (Frieze, 2014:115) This is a useful figure which enhances the quality of the chapter

The process I followed could be depicted as a pyramid as expressed in Figure 4-2.

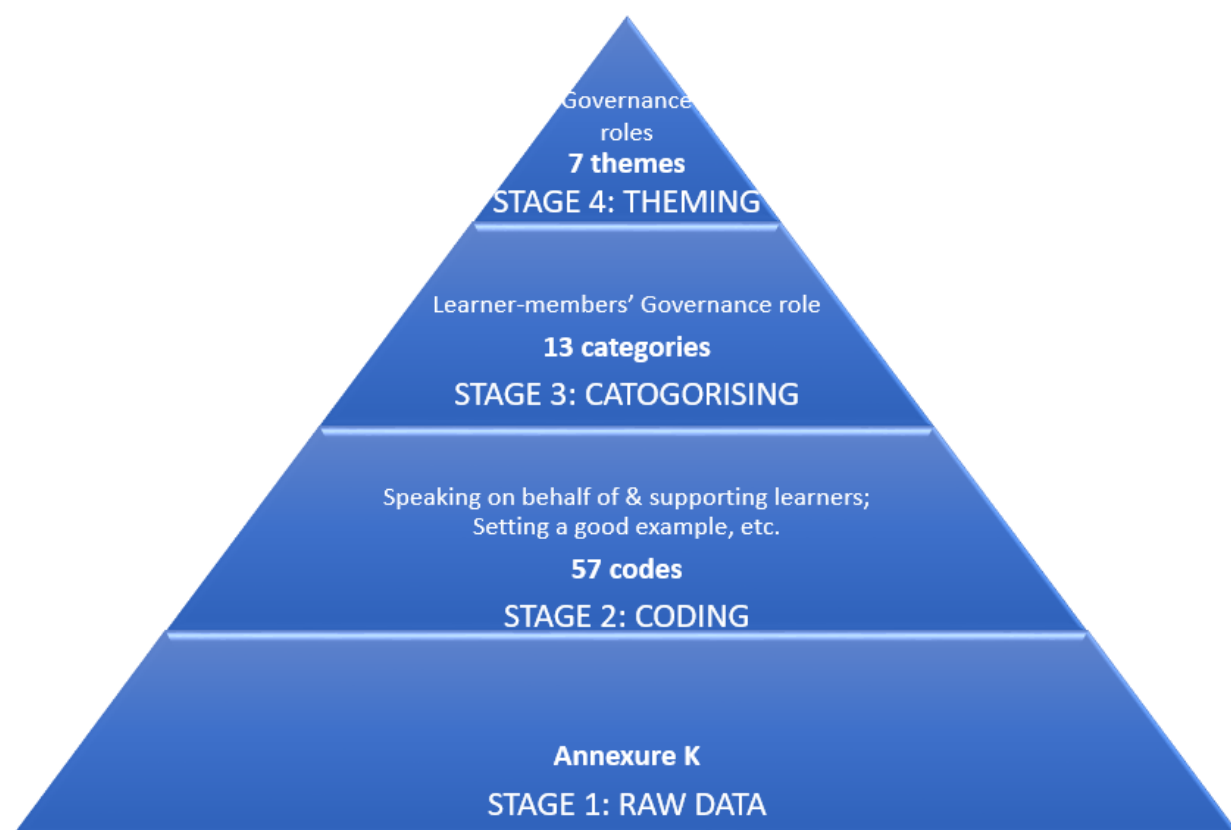


Figure 4-2: Data interpretation of SGB Learner-members' Governance role This is a useful figure which enhances the quality of the chapter "Governance" in Stage 3 should be a lower-case letter and please correct the spelling of "Categorising"

Data in this study were analysed using the above figure 4-2, following chronological steps (raw data, codes, categories, and themes), which finally led to the findings of this study. One example was provided which showed how codes led to categories and categories to themes. A detailed discussion of each stage in the development of the 7 themes may be found in Section 4.4.

This study focused on four stages of data analysis. Each bar represents the volume of data collected and interpreted during each stage, e.g., the bottom bar is largest, as it indicates the raw data that was given by participants during interviews. The second bar indicates the initial stage of data analysis where I extracted codes from the raw data.

The next stage is represented as a smaller bar than that of stage 1 and 2 to indicate that the data were narrowed to start communicating the language of this study, represented as categories. This means that stage 3 categories were narrowed to communicate the exact language of this study.

It meant that issues that needed to be discussed to answer the primary research question, “what are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in SGBs” were addressed. From the 57 codes identified in this study, 13 categories were derived, which then evolved into 7 themes that emerged from these processes after a careful consideration of the raw data, provided by the participants. A good exposition

4.4 Data-analysis phases

Data will be discussed according to the seven themes that emerged. These themes were: theme 1 - SGBs learner-members and their governance role, theme 2 - SGBs learner-members decision-making, theme 3 - difference between SGBs learner-members and other members, theme 4 - Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs, theme 5 - The importance of SGB learner-member in school governance, theme 6 - concerns of SGB learner-members in governance and theme 7 - role played by other governors to support learner-members.

4.4.1 Theme 1: SGBs’ learner-members and their governance role

Table 4-2 provides a brief description of how the codes led to categories, which became the source of Theme 1: SGBs’ learner-members and their governance role.

Table 4-2 also illustrates how raw data evolved to become Theme 1: SGB learner-members and their governance role and the emerging two categories. Category 1 that deals with the governance role of learner-members and category 2 deals with learner-members and their leadership roles, reported in the following discussion.

Table 4-2: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role

Theme 1: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role		
Codes	Category 1: Governance role	Category 2: Leadership roles
	Speak on behalf of learners. Supporting learners. Representing learners on SGB. Providing essential needs. Setting a good example. Being a role model.	Help in discipline. Protect school equipment. Provide opinions of learners. We wear full uniform

Learner-members of SGBs shared Mncube's (2008:77) views on the development of the South African democratic state since 1996. The objective of the White Paper 2 on the organisation and funding of schools was to ensure that there was full participation in democratic institutions, management, and governance. Participant 1 saw his role *"as a learner member in the SGB was to sit and talk on behalf of the learners in our school during SGB meetings"* and to *"support learners academically, social and economically."* He further said his role was to *"make sure that learners are learning in a conducive environment for learning."* Participants 2, 9 and 10 agreed with participant 1's statement *"that their role in the SGB is to help learners to improve their results in all levels (grade 8-12)."* Participant 3 saw her role as one of ensuring *"that all learners in the school have (access) to their basic school needs such as textbooks and other study materials."* However, the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) s21(1)(c) stipulates that:

Subject to this Act, a governing body may apply to the Head of Department in writing to be allocated any of the following functions. ... to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school.

Participant 3 did not understand her role and could act *ultra vires*, as this task of providing textbooks and other study material belongs to the parent members on the SGB and is not the task of learner-members of SGBs. This was advocated by the statement made by participant 10 who said, *"The decision we make is about the discipline of the learners"*. However, we cannot fully argue that learner-members are acting *ultra vires*, because they are legally elected and are full participants on SGBs and therefore entitled to participate in any action taken by SGBs. Yet this must be done taking into consideration that learner members are still young and have limited

responsibility and accountability. Thus, their participation was also limited in some instances. One should, however, remember that as a SGB member, learner-members may participate in decision makings.

The issue darkens when learner-members do not balance their legal right to be a member with their legal responsibility and accountability as being minors. Legislation such as the SA Schools Act s32, which stipulates that minor members (learner-members) of the SGB should not enter into contracts on behalf of the school, separates the level of governance role of learner-members of the SGB from that of the older members of the SGB in regard to two subsections of section 32.

Notice 776 of 1998, No. 18900, *Guidelines for the consideration of Governing Bodies in adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners* was published as a Schedule to The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and provides that a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct. The code of conduct must aim at establishing discipline and a purposeful environment to facilitate effective learning in schools. It means that participant 10 was correct, because he said his role was to ensure that there was discipline in the school. This also means that governors in this school had distributed roles for each stakeholder of the SGB, according to their levels of maturity and accountability, so that governors might act *inter vires* like the learner-member of the SGB in participant 3's school, because she believed that her role was to make sure that all learners had textbooks. However, learner-members are not allowed to enter into contract with the suppliers of the textbooks due to their accountability level. As stipulated by s32 of SA Schools Act learner-members are only prohibited to enter into contract on behalf of a public school and they are also prohibited to vote on resolutions the impose liabilities to them. Therefore, it was within her level of responsibility to a certain extent, to have a say on the textbook they require. She is, however, restricted to contribute in the negotiations of funds with the supplier due to her level of maturity as stipulated in s32 of SA Schools Act that restrict learners-members to participate in some governance role. No participation of learner-members is limited in terms of section 32 of the Schools Act which states:

(1) a member of governing body who is a minor may not contract on behalf of the public school, (2) a member of a governing body who is a minor may not vote on resolutions of governing body which impose liabilities on third parties or on the school (3) a member of a governing body who is minor incurs no personal liability for any consequences of his/her membership of the governing body.

However, participants do not understand this limitation to their rights as SGB members. They tend to agree more with participants' understanding of s23 of SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), a section that allows them to be legally considered as members of SGBs. My working assumption (par 1.3)

was also based on s23 and s20 of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) regarding the membership of SGBs and their functions. The legislation is, however, clear on setting limitations for SGB learner-members in two aspects of their governance role, which is to “enter into contract on behalf of the school and voting on resolutions that impose liability on them”. I now believe that SGBs must follow the limitations set in s32 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), to limit the engagement of their learner-members in some aspects of their governance role with the aim of protecting them from physical or emotional harm.

Participant 11 said that *“they did not take decisions per -se, especially on finances, but they made suggestions and the SGB older members made the final decision”*. This procedure, according to me, is supported by s32 of the SA Schools Act and is done to protect learner-members from harm such as entering into financial contracts on behalf of the school.

This means that, although they are all legally elected, adult governors have different roles and responsibilities, of which learner members are restricted by s32.

In establishing school governance each stakeholder in school governance has a role and a responsibility (Mncube, 2008:77). Learner-members have a role to play in school governance, but making sure that all learners had textbooks is partially their scope of responsibility of, since they cannot fully participate in all stages of buying textbooks, as noted by participant 3, but is the responsibility of the adult members on SGBs, who would send a request to the Provincial HOD for materials needed, because they are allowed to enter into contracts with suppliers due to the legal status of being older. Participant 3 said his role is *“to assist learners with matters arising within the school and to play the role of a mediator between learners and staff, as well as between learners and the SGB”*. Participants 4, 6, 7 and 8 advocated the same sentiments as participant 3 *“that learner-members act as mediators between staff and the learners”*. While participants 5 and 6 felt that their main role was to communicate information from different groups, i.e., the learners, staff and other members of the SGB in a kind of go-between-role. This indicated that some of the learner-members understood the balance of rights in their governance role.

It seems that participants are not always clear on their role as learner-governors, in accordance with The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) as directive, to guide learner-members’ role as school governors. Hence, that is probably the reason why participant 3 was acting *inter vires*.

The SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), s20 stipulates the functions of SGBs without specifying specific roles for specific members. but is quiet on the functions and roles of learner-members of SGBs, for instance s32 clarifies what learner-members – as minors – cannot do as governors in public schools but is silent on what they are eligible to perform. One needs, however, to bear in mind that learner-members are viewed as part of the SGB and would be included in the functions of the SGB. Some participants reported that they struggle with the balancing act between responsibilities and their legal accountability as minors.

Sub-section 4.1.1 dealt with a discussion on participants' understanding of their governance role as learner-members of the SGB. Direct quotations of what different learner-members said were extracted from the raw-data. The next theme gives a detailed discussion on the decision-making role of learner-members on the SGB.

4.4.2 Theme 2: SGBs learner-members and their decision-making role

Table 4-3 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories which progressed into Theme 2: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role.

Table 4-3: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role

Theme 3: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role		
Codes	Category 3: Involvement	Category 4: Decision making
	Support learners. Provide some essential needs. Help with discipline. Mediator.	We do not take decisions. Making proposals to the SBG. Older members dominate decision-making. We take minor decisions such as deciding on school uniform.

Table 4-3 illustrates how raw data progressed to become Theme 2: SGB's learner-members decision-making role. The emerging two categories, category 3 that deals with learner-members' involvement in the SGB and category 4 dealing with SGBs' learner-members and decision-making, are reported in the following discussion.

As argued by Ncube (2008:77) on White Paper 2 that different stakeholders are required to play a part in the democratisation of education, including learners, who have the responsibility to ensure that schools become democratic and professional places of learning, participant 3 said *“that learner-members could contribute their views in discussions on discipline in the school, e.g. if learners are constantly not in their classes during teaching and learning time, learner-members could suggest a strategy to assist teachers to ensure that learners do not loiter outside.”* Participant 10 concurred with participant 3 in that the decisions they made were mostly about learner discipline. These participants’ interpretation of this role resonates with Duma’s (2015:183) views. He asserted that some of the responsibilities of the learner-member in the SGB are to help SGBs and educators maintain discipline in the school.

In this section key aspects of prohibited activities are mentioned. The discipline of learners was not mentioned. This automatically qualifies learners to participate in disciplinary procedures of learners in the school. Moreover, s20(1)(d) of the SA Schools Act stipulates that *“one of the functions of SGBs is to develop the school code of conduct”*, which was is to maintain discipline in the school. Therefore, participant 3 and 10 were serving a school where good procedures were used to improve learner discipline as one of the responsibilities of learner-members in SGBs.

In agreement with s20 of SA Schools Act, one of the responsibilities of SGBs as stipulated in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s8(1), is that the governing body, which includes learner-members as part of the governance structure, must adopt a code of conduct for learners after consulting the learners, parents and educators, to improve the level of discipline of the learners. However, I am uncertain whether s8(1) is being implemented in all the schools within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda district. The reason is found in what participants 1 and 5 said: *“they do not take decisions at all”*, yet I believe that compiling and adopting a code of conduct for learners, is part of decision-making, which is the task of the entire SGB, including the learner-members. Nevertheless, participant 8 agreed with participants 1 and 5, who believed that they are only allowed to take decisions related to school uniforms of learners, agreeing with Mncube’s (2008:78) statement that the primary role of learner-members of SGBs is limited to dress code matters. I disagree with Mncube (2008) because learner-members as members of the SGB can participate in the functions of the SGBs except what is stated in s32 of SA schools Act which prohibits learner-members to participate in certain instances of their governance role. Thus learner-members’ participation in school governance is not limited only to dress code matters.

Participant 4 said *“learner-members can create an environmental club for the purpose of taking care of the school, we must not vandalise the furniture so that future generations must also find it”*, which, according to me, falls in the category of discipline in schools.

Therefore, participants 2, 3 and 9 acted within the scope of the SGB that has the responsibility to improve the level of discipline in the school. Whilst participants 1, 5 and 7 said that they did not take decisions in their schools, participant 5 said *"We do not really have the power to make decisions but we can place our opinion to lead the SGB in making a variety of decisions"*, whilst participant 11 said she *"feels that they do not take decisions because they do not have the final say in each proposal they make to the SGB"*. It seems from the data that although learner-members do not always understand the rationale behind it from legislation, they do understand that their roles and responsibilities are limited due to their lack of experience and their age.

According to participant 5 they were only allowed to give an opinion followed by the SGB taking a variety of decisions. *"In certain situations, we feel like some issues are not taken into consideration."* However, participant 7 said that although they do not take part in decision-making, they still participate in the discussions which influence the decisions made by the SGB. Participant 7 provided examples of financial or infrastructure decisions which they were not allowed to participate in. While participant 1 believed that they do not take any decisions or are involved in any decision-making because even if they did propose on a valid matter, the principal did not take it into consideration *"we do not take any decisions in the SGB, because whatever we propose to the principal is never taken into consideration."* This statement by participant 1 made me realise that in this school, the principal and the older members of the SGB might not be giving learner-members their platform in governance, because it seems as if learner-members enquire from the principal not from the structure as they are the full members of the SGB.

Contrary to legislation, learner-members in this school seemed to believe that the principal poses a strong power in the SGB, because it is the perception that learner-members believe that the principal is the highest authority in every aspect in school. I doubt if the learner-members, as all other members, have full information of what they are supposed to do as governors in the schools. Participant 1 further said that *"there is no proper channel of communication from the learner-members, the principal, other SGB members and Teacher Liaison Officer (TLO)."* Nevertheless, promulgated legislation, such as The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s23(a), provides a complete structure of the SGB of an ordinary public school and it is obvious that this section speaks a different language from what is being implemented at school level and, particularly, at participant 1's school. The learner-member in this school is confusing RCLs with SGBs because from his enquiry and his methods of communication, lean more on what seemed to be the responsibility of the RCL members, as stipulated in s11 of SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

My perception is that by virtue of being elected by other learners to be part of the SGB, learner-members must be part of major decision-making in the school, not only in particular aspects as

stipulated by participant 9 who said that *“the most general decision we are allowed to take is about what we want to wear in school”*. There is more that can be contributed by the learners in decision-making than what is being implemented. According to participant 7 learners can also be fully involved in financial decision-making processes in the school. He said, *“We cannot make decisions alone, but we can participate in any decision taken by the other SGB members be it financial, infrastructure and sports.”* However, their involvement must be based on participatory democracy not on major decision-making because learner-members are minors, thus they are allowed to participate to a certain extent in some of the decisions made by SGBs, whilst still protecting these learners from any harm that might arise due to their youthful status.

Phaswana (2010:105) argues that learner participation in schools includes decision-making as part of their task. I agree with the statement made by Phaswana (2010) because learner-members form part of the SGB to be a complete structure. According to s20(a) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), the SGB is tasked with the responsibility to promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. This implies that the SGB must sit down and come up with different strategies to make sure that the abovementioned is implemented by taking a common decision as the body, and the body would be incomplete if the learners were not involved as stipulated in s23 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). In contrast and incorrectly, participant 5 said *“I think it is written in the legislation that learner-members are not supposed to take decisions in the SGB, hence the reason we are not taking decisions in our school”*. This statement made me realise how important it is that all learner-members who are newly elected must be trained to be able to execute the obligation placed in their leadership role.

This further made me question if the other members of the SGB are doing what was said by Heystek (2001:210), i.e., that the older members can learn from the young members and the young members can learn from the older members as a form of informal training or empowerment of the younger leaders to become future leaders. Maybe they are not doing anything because they are not equipped enough to carry out their duties as stipulated by Duma (2015:181), that most of the SGB parent members are unable to carry out their duties and responsibilities due to their low level of literacy. This can also be related to what Smit (2015:2143) noted, namely that about 50% of the national SGBs of public schools in SA are dysfunctional. Participant 10 said *“I make the SGB to be aware of the learners’ needs, but they do not take them serious in most cases”*. This supports the statement made by Smit. Indeed, many SGBs in South African public schools are dysfunctional, because even if learner-members such as participant 10 reported issues that must be addressed by the SGB, little to nothing is being done. This may very well be

because the SGB parent members had no idea of where to start in solving problems emanating in schools.

Mncube (2008:78) provides three possibilities of how learners can be involved in their school: an opportunity where learners are given a chance to be part of an SGB meeting; attendance offers the opportunity for learners to grasp the role they are required to play, and thirdly, engagement where learners are not only given a chance to attend but also to take part in the discussions and are making valuable contributions. As participant 1 indicated *“we don’t take any decisions in the SGB”*. However, the fact is that leading legislation in the education fraternity – the SA Schools Act and the provincial SGB training manual (EMGD) (DBE 2018:12) – are not clear on how learners should participate in democratic schools (Mabovula, 2009:220). Participant 1 further averred *“I don’t know the type of the decisions we have to make as learner-members”*. Thus, it is not clear on how learner-members can participate in decision making and other functions as an SGB member. Duma and Khuzwayo (2015) note that the elected learners, as part of the SGB, must carry the responsibility of assisting in maintaining order in schools, setting positive examples of discipline, promoting responsibility and leadership and supporting the education programmes of the school.

Learner-members can also be informing reading clubs and environmental clubs as noted by participant 4 when she said, *“Learners can create environmental clubs for the purpose of taking care of the school”*.

But in participant 10’s school, learner-members could only take disciplinary decisions. This, according to me, is an unlawful act because there is more than enough scope for decision-making that can be linked to learner-members on the SGB which are on par with their accountability and responsibility. Serfontein (2010:94) argues that the democratic partnership model between the State and SGB members – including learners – is concerned with funding, governance and the organisation of schools, thus also being misguided in the sense that learners are not allowed to be involved in financial matters. Above all the preamble of SA Schools Act acknowledges the learner’s responsibility regarding the finances a public school due to their level of accountability and responsibility on financial matters. She continues to argue that this devolution of authority to SGBs, should have as outcome guaranteeing the Constitutional right to a basic education at national level by means of provisioning of and to schools by the provincial authorities devolved to each state school. However, the State will remain legally liable for the actions of these statutory bodies, such as SGBs, as determined in the court case between *Randpark Bpk v Santam Versekerings-maatskappy* and it will remain a State responsibility.

According to Mabovula (2009:220) this leads to learner-members being used as “window dressing” where learners are included just to add numbers stipulated by legislation but are not

contributing to the democratisation process. In this regard participant 1 indicated *“I feel that all the postponed SGB meetings should be rescheduled so that I can have the opportunity to learn, as things stand, I actually do not know anything about school governance”*. Based on this statement, I agree with Mabovula (2009:220) that learners are just “window dressing” in most SGBs’ governance in public schools in the Kenneth Kaunda school district. In line with this participant 9 mentioned that they are only allowed to make decisions on what they want to wear in school.

The question in this regard is, are learners acting within the parameters of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s23 or are learner-members of SGBs working without direction because the legislation and policy documents are not clear enough about their duties?

Decision-making in SGBs in schools within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda school district differs from school to school and it differs between fee-paying schools and Non-fee-paying schools. Participant 1 from a no fee-school said *“they do not take decisions”* yet participant 3 and 10 from fee-paying schools said *“the decisions we make are about discipline of learners”*. But this might be the fact that after the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools, educators do not have alternatives to discipline learners in schools, hence learner-members are mostly tasked with the responsibility to help in maintaining discipline in schools. Yet, participant 7 from another fee-school said, *“we cannot take decisions alone, but we are involved in all decisions taken by the SGB, even financial decisions”*.

In my opinion, all schools have the willingness to involve learners in decision-making, but schools have no idea to what extent they may involve learners, and that may be the reason why it differs from school to school. I found that for most of the non-fee-paying schools, there is a lack of open participation as compared to fee-paying schools in decision-making which is based in their culture. It is a cultural norm of black people that, when older members of the community are having a meeting, young community members must not be part or even close to the venue of the meeting. Further, it shows a lack of respect to find a young man or woman speaking up in front of older members of the community. Older members of the community, especially males, are regarded as mature enough to take profound decisions that will work effectively for everyone in the community especially women and children. This was confirmed by participant 4 when he said, *“the role of the learner-member of the SGB is to make sure that whatever is being said by older members of the SGB is taken into consideration”*. This simply means that learner-members are followers and thus not governors as stipulated in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s23.

Since The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is not clear enough on what is expected from the learner-members of SGBs, this will be an issue that will last for an exceptionally long time, if it is not addressed by the legislature, both national and provincial. If disputes arise in this regard, it is the role of the courts to make judgments on what is right or wrong.

This sub-section provided an in-depth discussion of the decision-making role of learner-members and direct quotations on what different learner-members said.

The next theme gives a detailed discussion of the difference between learner-members and other SGB members.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members

Table 4-4 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories which became the source of Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members.

Table 4-4: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members

Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members		
Codes	Category 5: Differences between SGB members	Category 6: Contribution made
	Learner-members for discipline. Other members perform the other governance role such as financial matters. Responsible for the learners. Other members are responsible for entire school. Learner-members suggest. Other members implement. Learners' portfolio.	Positive discipline. Provides to the SGB. Placing learners' opinion. Link between different stakeholders. Voting. Limited contribution.

Table 4-4 illustrates how raw data progressed to become Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members, and the emerging two categories: category 5 that deals with differences between SGB members, and category 6 dealing with SGBs' learner-members and their contribution, reported in the following discussion.

Participant 1 only knew one responsibility or role, which was to provide information about learners to the SGB. While participant 2 said *“that the difference between learner-members and other members of the SGB, is that “learner-members suggest or propose to the SGB and other governors are laid with the responsibility to take decisions on what learner-members have suggested.”* Mabovula (2009:220) argues that the main principle of democratic school governance must be based on consultation, working together (collaboration), active operation, great relationship, mutual trust, and active participation of all stakeholders in the school community. I agree with Mabovula (2009) but it seems as if participant 2 is partially practicing what is described to be a democratic school, because he believed that the duty of a learner-member is to “propose” ideas. It is noticeable that this participant does not know that learner members can also vote.

Despite the above mentioned by Mabovula (2009), it seems like most of the learner-members were only active in one aspect of their governance role, and that was to interact with the learners and the educators.

This is echoed by participant 4 when he proclaimed, *“the role of the learner-member is to make sure that whatever that was suggested by the older members of the SGB, is taken into consideration.”* This sounded as if learner-members are programmed to succumb to any initiative, initiated by other members of the SGB. As an interpretivist, I believe that reality and truth are subjective, therefore they differ from person to person. In other words, I believe that in a true democratic school, learner-members must also suggest or initiate programmes which other members of the SGB must take into consideration (a school must have a bottom up and top-down type of governance to be regarded as a democratic school).

While participant 7 believed the difference between *“us learner-members and other members is that we are in charge of different portfolios”*, I concur with participant 7 because the SA Schools Act s30(1)(a) stipulates that a governing body may establish committees, and they have power to appoint someone out of their scope to be part of the committee. I therefore believe that an active learner-member in the SGB should be talking the language of participant 7. The only difference amongst SGB members must be their assigned task in portfolios and not what was stipulated by participant 4 when he said, *“the role of learner-members is to make sure that whatever is being said by the older members of the SGB is being taken into consideration.”* This, for the researcher, was the symbol of non-democratic participation as noted by Mncube’s (2008:79) research, which found that schools are unwilling to fully open up spaces for learners and other members in governance to engage on deliberations and dialogue which is more democratic.

Learner-members seem not to understand what is described above by Mncube (2008), because in some of the schools within Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, such as participant 1’s school, learner-members believe that, as learner-members, they must consult the principal instead of consulting the SGB as the legitimate governance structure in the school. This therefore meant that not all schools and some principals are willing to open the space for learners to be fully part of governance as stipulated by SA Schools Act s23. However, Phaswana (2010:105) believes that learner-participation in school governance provides an opportunity to learners to develop a sense of personal control, increase their confidence increased and to have better relationships with educators and peers and, importantly, they are most likely to influence learners to apply the same mechanism. Therefore, it seems as if the schools represented by participants 6, 7 and 8, were responding to the call made by the government through legislation, that the democratic ideal should be nurtured in SGBs and in schools.

This scenario differed from that of the schools represented by participant 1 and 2 where it became clear that the SGB worsened the inequalities of power relations between learner-members and older members on SGBs (Mncube, 2008:79). Participant 4 said *“Learner-members are responsible for minor issues while other members are responsible for big issues such as finances.”* Participant 4 emphasised that, as learner-members, they have less responsibility in the schools’ governance structure, because they are still young.

Noteworthy is participant 9’s views that *“the role of learner-members on the SGB, was to present the learners’ voice in SGB meetings”*. However, the other SGB members, especially the parent members, were more dominant when voting during SGB meetings and do not really support the idea. Participant 10 added *“learner-members speak on behalf of the other learners in the SGB* and thus agreed with participant 9’s perceptions and experiences.

Often, learner-members in SGBs are given responsibilities that are inappropriate due to their level of experience to make their contributions. However, some of the learner-members did not understand that responsibility is linked to the level of maturity of governors. It then depends on the type of schools in which learner-members are serving, e.g., mostly learner-members in fee paying schools, compared to Non-fee-paying schools, are given more opportunity to participate in school governance, taking into consideration their level of accountability. Participant 5 from a fee paying schools said *“we don’t take decisions, but we are always involved in all the decisions taken”* but participant 1 from a Non-fee-paying school said they do not take decisions at all. Therefore, this suggests that the participation of learners in school governance, depends on the expected level of accountability and how willing SGBs’ older-members are to involve learner-members in school governance.

This sub-section provided an in-depth discussion of the difference between learner-members and other members of the SGB. Direct quotations on what different learner-members said were extracted from the raw-data.

The next sub-section gives a detailed discussion on the contribution made by learner-members to SGBs.

4.4.4 Theme 4: Contribution made by learner-members to SGBs

Table 4-5 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories which became the source of Theme 4: Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs.

In addition, Table 4-5, illustrates how raw-data evolved to become Theme 4: Contribution made by learner-members to the SGB, and the emerging two categories, category 7 that deals with

SGBs learner-members' **input** and category 8 dealing with their contribution, reported in the following discussion.

Table 4-5: Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs

Theme 4: Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs		
Codes	Category 7: In-put	Category 8: Contribution
	Give information. Eye of the school. Discipline. Assist educators. Provide little.	We do not contribute. Provide opinions. Link staff members and learners. Contribution not considered.

According to participant 1, *their contributions as learner-members in the SGB were to provide information about learners' needs to the SGB and they were regarded as the eyes and ears of the school*; in short, they report. According to Heystek (2001:208), the main objective of having all stakeholders participating in the school was to make sure that all of them have a say in the management and governance of the school. Participant 6 agreed with participant 1, who said *"teachers do not think the way learners think, and learners do not think the way teachers think, I bring forth the perception of learners to the teachers' attention"*. Mabovula (2009) contended that learners brought forth new ideas that are related to them, which the other members of the SGB did not have.

However, it seems that participant 5 had a different experience when he indicated, *"We don't contribute much in the SGB, but learners-members place their opinions."* This statement by participant 5 contradicts what Mabovula (2009) pointed out. This means that, although learner-members brought forth new ideas that were related to learners, other members did not benefit from them, but the learner members still contributed to the limit of their level of accountability of being a minor. This therefore means that, in participant 5's school, other members of SGBs knew little about learner-members' thinking, because they did not take part or did not contribute much to the SGB discussions about what they could add, which was a privilege other members did not have. This sentiment is supported by participant 8 who said, *"Our contributions are taken into consideration by the SGB. We were told that we have the same powers in the SGB as a structure."*

This means that governance roles of learner-members of SGBs differed from school to school and were also influenced by the quintile number of the school.

Participant 8 was from a Fee-paying school classified as quintile 4. At this school, SGB members gave the learners an opportunity to govern just like other members of the SGB. Indeed, young members of the SGB were learning from the older members of the SGB in this school as suggested by Heystek (2001). Unlike this school, in participant 1's school, classified as a non-fee-paying school quintile 1 school, SGB learner-members were raising their concerns to the principal, which was a clear indication that learner-members were sometimes not invited to SGB meetings. Participant 2 said *"I have never been in an SGB meeting as things stands."* In short, legislation was mostly, but not always, clear in terms of what needed to be done, but the implementation by the schools, caused more differences and uncertainties to learner-members' understanding of their role as governors.

In SA, one finds a general assumption that secondary school learners have acquired their right to be listened to as a form of participation because they played a role in the liberation of education in our country. Smit and Oosthuizen (2011:61) "regard participation, community engagement, rationality, consensus, equality and freedom as the constitutive principles of deliberative democracy in the country". This statement supports what Heystek already stated in 2001, where he drew attention to the issue of democracy in schools by noting that democracy seeks to make sure that everyone must have a say on issues that directly involve or concern them. In the same vein, participant 5 claimed, *"we are mostly allowed to have a say on issues of sports"*. This is part of the learners' responsibility in which I believe they must have a say.

Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah (2014:55) also asserts that the primary aim of changes made in school governance was to decentralise power to the lower levels and thereby democratise the schooling functions of SA and to do away with autocratic methods of governance which displayed the past regime's ways of leadership. While participant 4 said, *"I think is helping teachers with other duties, such as extramural activities, because sometimes other members of the SGB and staff members may not have time to do things as expected. Learner-members can take the role to help, for the mission to be accomplished as planned."* Therefore, if learner-members are provided with the democratic role of being governors that required their accountability it can assist in other schools, as it happens in participant 4's school. Participant 9 thought learner-members' contribution was extremely limited. I would like to believe that their limited contribution must have been in line with the SA Schools Act s32. Learner-members were only limited to participate in some aspects of governance, but they could participate in all functions of the SGB according to s20 of the SA Schools Act. It is of paramount importance to involve learner-members in all the

SGB roles because they are legally elected SGB members with the same rights and responsibilities, like other SGB members as stipulated by SA Schools Act s23.

This sub-section provided an in-depth analysis of the contribution made by learner-members to the SGB. Direct quotations of what different learner-members said was extracted from the raw-data.

The next sub-section gives a detailed discussion of the importance of learner-members in school governance.

4.4.5 Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance

Table 4-6 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories, which became the source of Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance.

Table 4-6: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance

Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance		
Codes	Category 9: Importance of SGB learner-members	Category 10: Concerns of SGB learner-members
	Updates to learners come from learner-members as learners are only open to other learners. Mediator between the SGB, educators and learners. Gaining life-skills from older governors.	Partially taken into consideration. They are not taken into consideration because we are young. Depends on the situation.

Table 4-6 illustrates how raw-data progressed to become Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance, and the emerging two categories: category 9 that deals with the importance of learner members, and category 10 dealing with SGB learner-members' concerns, reported in the following discussion.

Regarding the importance of the learner-members in the SGB, participant 1 indicated that *“the information we have about learners is vital to help the SGB to take matters to task”*. It means that

there is certain knowledge that the learners have and not necessarily by any other members of the SGB. This information is vital to help the SGB to come up with strategies to deal with issues such as crime that is taking place in the school premises. Participant 4 agreed with this because he averred, *“even here at school we can experience some sort of crime only learner-members can have a full information about the crime”*. Crime such as selling drugs and abusing drugs is common in South African schools. Often information about the supplier and the drug abusers are mostly known to the learners.

Normally learners would not share the information because they are afraid, but active and vibrant learner-members of the SGB know the procedures to report sensitive cases that might endanger their or other learners' lives. Furthermore, participant 8 said about representation that *“it is important to have learner-members in the SGB because learners come from different cultural and religious groups that need to be respected as it is stipulated in section 31 of the Constitution of 1996 that”* a person belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right to enjoy their culture, practise their religion or use their home-language at school. Such information can be generated from learner-members serving on SGBs who have more information about the depth of diversity in the schools' environment. Lastly, participant 8 said, *“it is simple to talk to a learner if you are a learner in case you are in trouble or going through emotional, financial or physical issues, such vital information can be generated from learner-members”*. In other words, learner-members were the main channel to learn about vulnerable children in schools. Learners are sometimes afraid to communicate their issues with adults, especially issues of domestic violence or drug abuse, therefore SGBs' learner-members became their first port of call as they are peers.

However, learner-members are also involved because of what they see and experience as learners and are aware of other learners' experiences. Participant 5 said, *“I think it is necessary because certain situations wouldn't be handled the way they are being handled”* meaning that their importance is not utilised to the fullest. He felt that, without learner-members, SGBs would not be complete because they brought perspectives to the discussion on learner matters, which could only be provided by learner-members themselves, and not by adult members of SGBs. There are many burning issues that older SGB members and stakeholders are unable to see in the school, and only learner-members may have that specific kind of information. All the participants agreed with participant 1 when stating that it is imperative to have learner-members of SGBs. Participant 6 further indicated that *“schools should not make the mistake of taking learner-members out of the SGB as it may cause misunderstandings.”*

According to Phaswana (2010:105), learners who participate in school governance, have a good relationship with educators and their peers in schools. It means that SGB learner-members who

are involved as learners in school governance can assist in the smooth governance of schools. Learner-members help to develop a positive relationship with educators as reported above, and this creates a platform for positive peer-pressure to take place. In simulating this, other learners in schools might become eager to develop a positive relationship with educators. When there is a good relationship between educators and learners, teaching and learning may become more effective due to the conducive relationship between educators and learners.

Phaswana (2010:105) further argues that their participation in SGBs increased their practical reasoning skills and promoted a better understanding of school matters and values. Moreover, participation is associated with a positive self-concept, commitment and greater academic achievement for learners (Phaswana, 2010:106). In addition, it is the function of the whole SGB to promote the best interest of the learner in schools (Xaba, 2004:313) as stated in s28(2) of the Constitution. This means that all members of the SGB – including learner-members of the SGB – are tasked with the obligation to determine and protect learners' best interests.

Although learner-members on the SGB saw themselves as one of the most important stakeholders in school governance, leading to better education for all learners as stated by participant 11 when he stated, *"yes it is important to have learner-members in the SGB because the focus is mostly directed to parents and teachers and they are not the primary receiver of the education provided"*, Diskiene and Pauliene (2014) argue that traditional styles of leadership in schools caused unpleasant consequences that were undesirable for any institution. Diskiene and Pauliene (2014) further add that such leadership and management did not accommodate young leaders (learner-members) as determined by law. I agree with the statement because this means that learner-members must be quiet about the issues they observe or discover about other learners because, traditionally, they are not supposed to tell older members what they must do, currently what is happening as stated by participant 4 that their role is to do what the older members are saying nothing more or less. Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah (2014:55) argues that the SA Schools Act was promulgated during the era where the country's leaders were making sure that democracy is visible in the country and to the rest of the world. According to Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah (2014:55) the intentions were good, yet this plan has never been implemented. Since it was established the government has never been clear about the importance and way of involving learners in all structures of decision making.

This means that much is to be done to fully utilise the expertise of learner-members in South African public schools. All participants understand the necessity of their being part of the SGB and being active in decision making and problem solving, yet many participants feel that they are being side-lined.

This sub-section provided a discussion of the importance of learner-members in SGBs. Direct quotations of what different learner-members said were extracted from the raw-data.

The next sub-section will discuss the concerns of learners in governance structures.

4.4.6 Theme 6: SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance

Table 4-7 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories, which became the source of Theme 6: SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance.

Table 4-7: SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance

Theme 6: SGB learner-members' concerns about school governance		
Codes	Category 11: SGB meetings	Category 12: Joint engagements
	Sometimes we are called to meetings. They do not listen to us. It depends on the situation.	Have never been in a meeting. Partially engagement. We are involved. SGB brainstorming

Table 4-7 illustrates how raw-data progressed to become Theme 6: Concerns of SGB learner-members in governance, and the emerging two categories: category 11 that deals with SGB meetings, and category 12 dealing with joint engagements, reported in the following discussion.

Learner-members serving on SGBs may have more concerns in terms of what they must do and how they must do it because they are less experienced in most of the issues of school governance. This could also result from their short term of office (one year) as stipulated by the SA Schools Act s31(3).

According to participant 1, their concerns are sometimes taken into consideration, as demonstrated by participants 2, 3 and 9 who agreed with participant 1. They all agreed that *"sometimes their concerns are considered sometimes not"*. Participant 1 said *"most of the meetings of SGB were postponed"*, and he still believed that those meetings should have been re-scheduled because it would have given him an opportunity to learn.

It means that participant 1 had many concerns that he believed could have been resolved by older members of the SGB in meetings, but he never had that opportunity to attend SGB meetings

because most of the SGB meetings were postponed and never took place even after being postponed. The question is who had made the decisions on the discussions that were supposed to take place on those postponed meetings? If it was an individual (principal) who took decisions on behalf of the SGB. It is deemed to be illegal because principals are not solely responsible for school and SGB decisions must be taken jointly by all members including learner-members as stipulated by s21 of SA Schools Act. There is a need for capacity building for SGB members so that they will be able to ask relevant questions if they feel that things are not done according to legislation for schools. Further, no decision should and may be made by a single member on the SGB to the exclusion of other members.

Since some of the decisions were taken without the learner-members while they were invited in the previous gathering it means such decisions were not legal and procedurally correct. The departmental training programmes to ensure that all newly elected members of the SGB, especially the parents, should be recommended as they provide training at the beginning of their term of office. From the EMGD Training Manual (2015:17), it is clear that the focus is on different leadership styles to ensure that there is good school governance in place especially from the parent members. The training of parent members of the SGB, was only clear from national and provincial levels, whilst it was not clear how the districts decentralised the implementation of the training to the sub-districts and school levels. I am concerned about the fact that if it was not clear when it came to parents' training, especially on the district and sub-district level, since learner-members' training would likely not take place if it is not clear with parent members, who have a prominent responsibility and accountability in SGBs. Training should involve entire SGBs, not just parent members.

The mentioned training is only applicable to the parent members of the SGB. Learners are excluded in the trainings, however s19 (1)(a) of the SA Schools Act is clear that, out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the provincial legislature, the head of department must establish a programme to, provide introductory training for newly elected governing bodies to promote them to perform their functions and to provide continuing training to governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions. This section covering the whole spectrum of SGB members and not only parent members. Thus this is an error that must be rectified by the departmental officials. From national to sub-district there is no clear picture of how learner-members should be trained to be able to implement their duties, as stipulated by the SA Schools Act s21(a). This was asserted by participant 1 who said, *"we have never even had a training or workshop ever since we were elected, we are operating on our own."* He further said they *"are taking the matters that concern their fellow learners straight to the principal because the Teacher Liaison Officer (TLO) is constantly not available to assist. We are operating in the mist we do not have proper support from other SGB members"*. It is clear that

learner-members have the impression that the principals are the sole drivers of the SGBs in all public schools, thus they have the impression that they should report everything to them.

Learner-members in participant 1's school were never invited into SGB meetings, because they reported to the principal, not to the SGB. Learner-members in the school were doing what they thought was right because they did not have information on how to address issues of school governance as they haven't been trained as SGB members as prescribed in legislation.

This therefore means that the DBE's officials – who are responsible for planning and training – need an appropriate implementation plan which should include all SGB groups in accordance with the stipulations of s23 found in the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). According to participant 1, *“learner-members must get support from other members of the SGB”* (parents) in terms of school governance, yet they do not receive such support from fellow governors.

Xaba (2004:313) and Naidoo (2014) argue that the parent members on the SGB are unable to perform their duties because they lack knowledge and understanding of their role in school governance. If this is the case, how would one expect them to support and guide learners? This is due to the reality that some of the parent members are illiterate and, therefore, do not have the necessary level of understanding of what they should have done as part of developing learner-members, even as this was their delegated tasks in accordance with the SA Schools Act s20. Hence, in accordance with participant 1 they – the learner-members on the SGB – are lacking the support needed from older members in the SGB. However, it remains the undivided responsibility of the departmental official via the Head of Department to train newly elected SGBs and to provide continuing training for the already existing SGBs as stated in s19 of SA Schools Act. It seems therefore that the Department of Education and its officials are failing to provide the necessary support required by SGBs. Instead they shift the responsibility to either school managers or the SGBs of each school as a form of scapegoat.

This sub-section provided an in-depth discussion of the importance of learner-members in SGBs. Direct quotations of what different learner-members said were extracted from the raw data.

The next sub-section discusses the role played by other governors to support learner-members.

4.4.7 Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance

Table 4-8 provides a brief description on how the codes led to categories, which became the source of Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance.

Table 4-8 furthermore illustrates how raw-data evolved to become Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance, and the emerging single category, category 13 that deals with support to SGBs' learner-members, reported in the following discussion.

Table 4-8: Role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members

Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance	
Codes	Category 13: Support to learner-members
	Support. Leading by example. Decentralisation of task. Grooming young leaders.

One of the objectives of older-members of the SGB is to groom learner-members to become future leaders as stipulated by Wildemeersch *et al.*, (1998) social learning theory (par 2,4). This duty is crucial because it is the pillar of the future of South African education and the education system. This is also in line with the intention of making learners part of the SGB and school governance to learn the principles of participating in decision making within a democratic system.

Participants in this study were not certain about what role other members in the SGB had to play to develop learner-members. It seems like older members of the SGB had little to no idea of what they should do in terms of developing learner-members for their governance role. In this regard, participant 1 averred that *“we are operating in the mist, because we lack support from TLO.”* There was a lack of understanding of what a SGB was. Learner-members are not supposed to communicate or seek guidelines of the governance role from the TLO, as the TLO has nothing to do with school governance. This educator is only responsible for the election of learners in school leadership.

This means learner-members in participant 1's school did not have any form of support either from the staff members of the school or the SGB older members. SGB members in this school seemed to be inactive because the participant talked about reporting to the principal and not to the SGB in SGB meetings. This data seems to emphasise Smit's (2015:2143) findings that about 50% of SGBs in South African public schools are not functional. If the SGB was functional in

participant 1's school, there would not be a need for the learners to report issues to the principal. They then would be reporting straight to the SGB during their meetings. Participant 1 further indicated that SGB meetings were called and postponed and none of those postponed meetings were rescheduled. This it tells me that governance and management of the school was conducted by principals in some of the schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

Participant 4 said, *"Our views in decision-making are taken into consideration. Other members go to a point of asking us, what would learners feel about certain decisions? They do ask for our opinion on many occasions. Even if we had to vote on a decision taken, we have the voting rights"*. This suggests that operation of school governance in the district differs from school to school. In participant 4's school it was clear that democracy was implemented as compared to participant 1's school. Duma (2015:181) argues that youth exclusion in school governance is evident, often crossing with other forms of marginalisation linked to the socio-economic status and location of the school. Further, exclusion is mostly prevalent in rural schools (Duma 2015:181). I agree with the statement, partially because participant 1 from the school that seems to be autocratic, was from a semi-rural area, whilst participant 4 was from the school that seems to be democratic, was from an urban area. I partially agree because I believe that decision-making and the involvement of learners do not have anything to do with the issue of economy. According to me (researcher) this has to do with creative-thinking and being open-minded about systems in place or to be able to differentiate between legislation and culture.

One needs to note that there is a significant development in terms of learner-members' involvement in fee-paying schools as compared to Non-fee-paying schools, according to the data provided by the participants. Since we are a democratic society, I strongly believe that the schools that are doing good in terms of involving learners in school governance must adopt one school that is still struggling just to guide on how is done. All participants agreed that it is of paramount important to have learner-members in the SGB because they carry the information that none of the other members of the SGB have which is the correct and updated information about the learner. From the data, it is noted that learners are willing to assist with the smooth running of the school, but in some schools no opportunity exists, or they are not guided to perform their task to the best of their ability.

4.5 Synthesis

Themes derived from the data generation questions were collected with the aim to answer the primary research question: "What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members in school governing bodies in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda education district?"

In conclusion, an adapted figure of Benet's (2013:31) Polarities of Democracy Model is used to address the polarities found in the roles of learner-members serving on SGBs (and other members) in a democratic dispensation. This democratic dispensation speaks to the philosophy of human rights as ordained in the Constitution of 1996 (1996) which *inter alia* states the ideal of establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Figure 4-3 illustrates the thematic relevance of this study and indicates the democratic polarities that learner-members experience whilst serving on SGBs found during the theming phase of data-analysis.

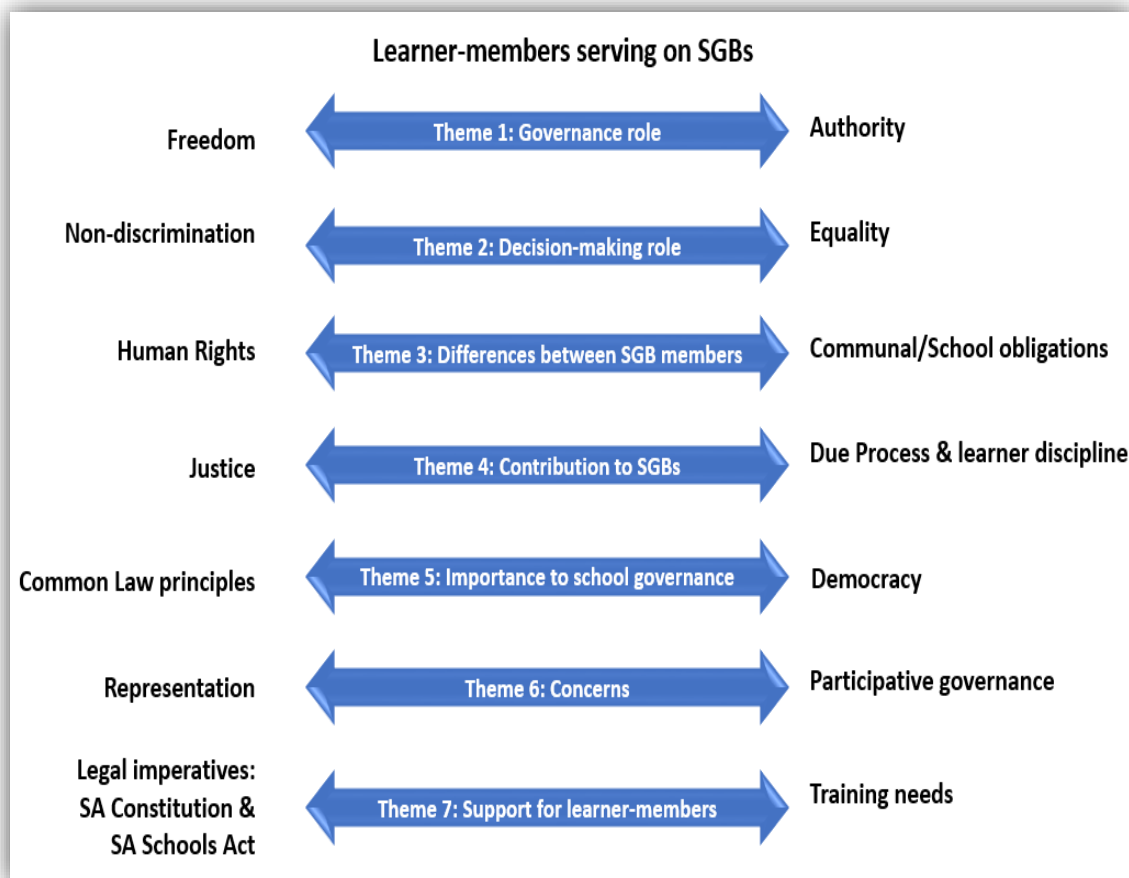


Figure 4-3: Democratic polarities of learner-members serving on SGBs (adapted from Benet, 2013:31)

To the left of each theme in Figure 4-3, are the legal polarities of freedom, non-discrimination, human rights, justice, common law principles, representation and the legal imperatives found in the Constitution of 1996 (1996) and the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). To the right of each theme in Figure 4-3, the polarities found in this study are summarised as learner-members explicit and implicit experiences as they served on SGBs: authority, equality, school obligations, due process and learner discipline, democracy, participative governance and training needs. The responsibility

to ensure democratic representation on SGBs goes with delegated authority to ensure good governance, stemming from the legally required institution of SGBs. The critical nature of learner-members of SGBs and their experience of democracy are portrayed as they experience participative democracy whilst serving on SGBs.

The polarities of freedom and authority are underscored in the discussion of Theme 1 - the governance role, to ensure participative democracy for and representation on SGBs (par. 4.1.1). Freedom goes with delegated authority to ensure good governance, stemming from the legally binding constitution of SGBs (SA Schools Act, 84 of 1996 s16(1)) ... the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body including secondary school learner-members on the SGB.

Theme 2 - learner-members serving on SGBs and their decision-making role (par. 4.1.2), is found in the polarities of non-discrimination and equality where it remains imperative that justice be applied to perceive the ideal of equality, albeit to a limited extent applied to SGB learner-members.

Furthermore, there are obligations associated with every human right, speaking to Theme 3 - differences between SGB members (par. 4.1.3). Notwithstanding the differences in age, learner-members and other members on SGBs, have a joint responsibility to ensure good governance of the school they are serving, and learner-members should have the right to democratic participation that will represent the voice of reason and concern on behalf of the learners they are representing (Phori, 2016:144).

As discussed in Theme 4 - learner-members' contribution to SGBs, the polarities are found in justice untoward their role in due process regarding learner discipline (par. 4.1.4). Smith *et al.* (2015:2367) found that learner-members and other role-players do not have – albeit being expected to have – a sound knowledge of the procedural aspects of learner discipline. Thus, the polarities of due process and learner discipline. Of importance is that no support was offered by local education districts. In the same vein, they argue that the disproportionate amount of required paperwork and expectation for laypersons to have a working knowledge of the large number of relevant legislation, to make a legal contribution to due process and learner discipline, are aspects that are not in the scope of an SGB learner-member or for that matter, the lay-members serving on SGBs.

Regarding Theme 5 - the importance of school governance, and the polarities of common law principles and democracy (par. 4.1.5) links to the previous theme, and what Mabovula (2009:219, 221) pleads for, “giving voice to the voiceless through deliberative democratic school governance.” Such a voice will increase voiced participation in deliberation within a democratic

school governance model, leading to self-revitalisation, increased stakeholder adaptive roles to change, problem-solving and enhancing a continuous growth culture.

The polarities of representation and participative governance found in the discussion on Theme 6 - concerns (par. 4.1.6),

Lastly, Theme 7 - dealing with support for learner-members serving on SGBs (par. 4.1.7), and the polarities of the legal imperatives found in the Constitution of 1996 (1996) and The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) as discussed in par. 2.3. Theme 7 also dealt with the imperative role of training, as found by Mabovula (2009:228) and Smith *et al.*'s (2015:2367) report on the polarity of what is expected by legislation – not only the Constitution of 1996 and the SA Schools Act – on learner disciplinary hearings, are not being achieved and that learner-members and other members on SGBs.

The next Chapter of this study provides a discussion on how findings and recommendations were extracted from the data-analysis process discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four focused on data analysis. Generated data from 12 participants at six different schools; both fee-paying schools and Non-fee-paying schools, were analysed using 7 themes that were derived from 57 codes and 13 categories. In this chapter, my findings will be discussed through the lens of the literature review done in Chapter 2. I will also put forward various hypotheses generated from this research and make suggestions for further research. This chapter will further suggest remedies to strengthen the functional strategies of the current existing SGB learner-members.

5.2 Summary of the research

This qualitative research (par. 3.3) was conducted under the topic “exploring the governance role of learner-members of SGBs” and was steered by the puzzling research question “what are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members of the SGB (par. 1.5.1). This phenomenological study was conducted using purposive sampling (par. 3.3.1.1) because it was conducted with a particular purpose in mind, which was to determine the views of learner governors on the role of learner-members in the SGB. The phenomenon investigated in this study was the governance role of learner-members in the SGBs. Learner-members in various schools were sampled as the target group. To increase the variety of schools, three schools were fee-paying schools and three were non-fee-paying schools within the borders of Dr Kenneth Kaunda District (par. 1.7.4.3) to determine if learner-members in the two types of schools perceive their governance role differently.

This study was also conducted using existing knowledge from different researchers. The participation and availability of learner-members in different levels of DBE (national to district level) (par. 2.5) thus there was no sign found on learner-member’s participation in all levels. The composition of school governing bodies and the reasons why different schools differ in the numbers of their stakeholders in their SGBs (par. 2.6.1). As to the involvement of learner-members in the SGB in general, this section proved my working assumption to be wrong (par. 2.6.2) as legislation allows learner-members to participate in all governance role and protects them from emotional harm in some aspects of governance such as finances. The participants’ opinions of strategies such as inviting learner members to SGB meetings and allowing them to have a say in some aspects of their governing role that are in used to involve learners in governance of schools (par. 2.6.4) partially proved an assumption of mine wrong..

As an interpretivist, I believe learner-members would perceive their governance role in the SGB differently. With this idea in mind, I decided to use in-depth face to face interviews to generate data from my participants (par. 3.3.2.2). This was done to get individual perceptions of their governance role and to determine reality from the answers provided by individual governors. This was also done to increase the level of confidentiality and privacy (par. 3.3.3.4) as one of the most fundamental aspects of research.

In this research, data were interpreted following a thematic data analysis navigated by the six phases of data analysis described by Nowell *et al.* (2017:4). Data were analysed using four steps of data analysis which consisted of raw-data, codes, categories and themes (par. 4.3). In-depth discussion on each theme was substantiated by raw data. This led to my findings and proposed remedies on the phenomenon (par. 5.4).

5.3 Findings

The findings are offered, keeping in mind the purpose statement and intention of this research (par. 1.4.1); the research objectives (par. 1.4.2); the primary research question (par. 1.5.1), the secondary research questions (par. 1.5.2) that were answered in the discussion on the themes generated during the data-analysis phases (par. 4.4, and the findings of this research (par 5.2). Throughout the development of this research report, these elements formed the roadmap of my study.

5.3.1 Theme 1: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role

The study was conducted to answer the primary research question which was, "What are the perceptions of the governance role of learner-members of SGBs." The in-depth data analysis and the literature were the driving forces to answer the research question. In this section I will present Finding 1 resulting from Theme 1: SGBs' learner-members and their governance role. Under this theme the following was found:

The main finding of this research was that no SGB members (including learner-members) were trained and prepared for the functions in the SGBs by the Department of Basic Education. The research further found that only some learner-members in SGBs, had an idea of what is legally expected of them in their governance role. In other words, learner-members are a pool of knowledge that poses critical information about the school community. Information such as issues that has an impact on modern schooling e.g. drugs. However, it was not the case with all learner-members, as some SGB learner-members did not understand their governance role as learner-members and often were not invited to SGB meetings. This exclusion of learner-members from SGB meetings – in itself unlawful – contributed to their lack of understanding of what their

governance roles and responsibilities, as learner-members serving on SGBs were. There was no preparation or training system in place that automatically included these learner-members. Thus, there is a lack of support from the side of older SGB members and the DBE to broaden their knowledge on the importance of their governance role.

However, there were differences of opinion between fee-paying schools and no fee-school SGBs' learner-members in terms of how learner-members executed their governance role. In most of the fee-paying schools the roles of each member in governance were categorised according to their respective levels of accountability and maturity. Learner-members were mostly invited to SGB meetings where the discussions were classified as relevant to their level of maturity.

Adult SGB members (professional members and parents) used their own discretion to determine whether learners should be invited, or not, which was contrary to the law. The three sources of education law (legislation, common law and case law) (par. 2.3) provide direction on how to deal with citizens of the country who are under age as s32 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) only limits two aspects where minor SGB learner-members could not participate in. However, s21, s20 and s32 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) are unclear of what learner-members can or are not legally allowed to do. However, it seemed that learner-members in non-fee-paying schools mostly did not attend SGB meetings. They were rather treated and expected to operate as RCL members in their governance role. Some of these participants in my study had an idea of what was expected of them, but they were practically not doing anything other than being spectators. However, from legislation one should remember that learner-members do not have the same legal status as adult-members and, of importance, they are only elected for one year.

In some schools – especially non-fee-paying schools – it seemed as if learner-members did not fully understand what it meant to be a learner-member serving on the SGB. Learner-members sought information and direction to fulfil their governance role from individuals such as their school principals because they believed that this was the correct procedure. I observed that even though participants were not invited to attend meetings, they did not regard their exclusion as unlawful, but rather viewed it as unfair treatment by the part of the other SGB members. Such discrimination is, however, in fact unlawful as learner-members are legally part of the SGB.

In this section, I discussed the findings based on theme one: SGBs learner-members and their governance role. In the following section I will discuss my findings based on Theme 2: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role.

5.3.2 Theme 2: SGBs' learner-members decision-making role

Learner-members were involved in maintaining discipline in schools as stipulated in s8(1) of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), determining that a code of conduct must be adopted after consulting all the stakeholders, including learners. The study found, however, that learner-members were not included in learners' disciplinary procedures because such procedures required responsibility related to high levels of accountability and confidentiality, and therefore the exclusion of learner-members during such procedures were valid, as they were limited by their level of maturity. This indicates that my working assumption, which stipulates that learner-members are neglected and not considered as governors, was not a true reflection of learner-members' role in decision-making. Learners were not allowed to participate in certain aspects of school governance – not just because they were regarded as young and naïve – but because learner-members were being protected from different kinds of harm which is in line with their status as legally being minors.

It seemed that most learner-members in fee-paying schools were taking part in decision-making related to discipline and they were also involved in some financial decisions taken by SGBs. Contrary to this positive finding, non-fee-paying schools excluded learner-members as they were mostly not involved in decision-making. Although the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s32 and s20 is clear on the functions of SGBs, it seems that the Department of Education and officials neglected their duty to train learner-members of SGBs. It is, however, clear that fee-paying schools are willing to involve learner-members in decision-making, but they are affected by stumbling blocks such as officials who neglect this task.

In both fee- and non-fee-paying schools, principals still made governance decisions as were customary in times prior to SA's democratic transition. This situation continues and is acknowledged by the DBE (2011) and Mncube and Naidoo (2014), that SGB members do not have quality information in the form of training to perform their duties as stipulated by legislation such as The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s20. Mafora (2013) concludes that principals thus hamper democracy at schools by continuously acting as and being regarded as the dominant actor in decision-making, and these principals could be regarded as hampering participatory democracy (Mansfield & Stwayi, 2017). Data proved that the *status quo* of this situation is still found to be true, as principals still allowed learner-members to report governance issues to them, instead of inviting learner-members to SGB meetings to report their cases on the correct legal and governance platform. Furthermore, it should be noted that the above undemocratic procedures were not found at fee-paying schools, because they constantly promoted the legally required democratic practice of inviting learner-members to SGB meetings. However, this was bound to happen, as the EMGD Training Manual (2015:35) developed to train

SGB members, does not mention what learner-members' responsibilities - or their specific training needs - are to prepare them for their role.

In this section I discussed my findings under theme two: SGB learner-members and their decision-making role. The discussion on Theme 3 gives in-depth findings on the differences between SGBs learner-members and other members.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Differences between SGBs' learner-members and other members

According to my assumption, there was a notable difference between learner-members and other members serving on SGBs regarding their governance role. However, the research analysis and findings discovered the opposite. The research data rather suggested that governors have the same role and responsibilities they differ in accountability due to their legal level of maturity. Thus, all governors are legally elected to act according to their legal responsibilities in accordance with the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). Learner-members serving on SGBs – as minors – are elected to participate in minor decision-making that does not require accountability above their level of maturity and these decisions were directly related to learners such as maintaining discipline, establishing environmental clubs and showing a good example of academic excellence in the school with the aim of motivating other learners to work hard. My data concurred as participants indicated that if they were given an opportunity, they could help maintaining discipline, establish environmental clubs and provide leadership in academic excellence. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996)s32 mandates other members of SGBs not to involve minor members of the SGB in some of the governance roles to protect them from emotional harm that may emanate from such decisions. However, it should be noted that this section, s32, does not indicate how learners should be involved. Nevertheless, it was clear that learner-members were elected to make contributions in decision-making and other members are elected to take governance decisions because they are adults and mature community citizens and professionals.

However, one must note that there were some differences and similarities in terms of how learner-members and the other SGB members were viewed in different schools. Learner-members and other SGB members of fee-paying schools are mostly differentiated by the portfolios they serve in. Learner-members served in portfolios related to their age and maturity. As such, they tend to serve in portfolios that require a low level of accountability, while other SGB members serve on portfolios that require a much higher degree of responsibility and accountability. This seems, however, not to be the case at non-fee-paying schools in this study. Data suggested that in both fee-paying schools and non-fee-paying schools, SGB learner-members were viewed as minors who could not be given a significant responsibility because of their lack of life experience as

advocated by s32 of SA Schools Act (84 of 1996). Thus, the core purpose of having SGB learner-members was to improve the democratic participation at school level. While the purpose of having other members of SGBs was to improve participation and to help in governance decisions of the school and to give a voice to parents in having a say in the education of their children and the improvement thereof. Moreover data depicted that not all the public schools SGBs invite the learner members to meetings. This is due to the fact that in several schools, the principal de facto acts as the governing body and learners take issues directly to him or her. There also seem to be problems with learners' participation in decision making within the SGBs. The participants also seemed to be concerned about the fact that they only participated in SGBs for one year and they questioned the wisdom and advisability of this rule. Further, participants also seemed to think or thought that older members of SGBs were supposed to train them for their participation. In this process, the state actually escapes its accountability completely as stipulated in s19 of the SA schools Act.

In this section I discussed my findings under theme three: Difference between SGBs learner-members and other members.

The discussion on Theme 4 gives in-depth findings on contributions made by learner-members to SGBs.

5.3.4 Theme 4: Contributions made by learner-members to SGBs

The contributions that SGBs learner-members made differed from school to school. It was found that learner-members in fee-paying schools seemed to contribute more towards school governance, whilst in non-fee-paying schools' learner-members' contribution towards governance seemed little or nothing at all.

Theoretically and legally, learners are involved and expected to contribute to SGBs. This research found that it does not happen at a practical level in some schools. There is no standardised procedure that allows learner-members to contribute to their SGBs. It was found that the decentralisation of implementation of policies and legislation such as the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) s32 and 20 contributed to the way in which schools allow learner-members' contributions. SGB learner-members in fee-paying schools were in the privileged position to take part and build on the democratic ideal, set out in legislation, and these fee-paying schools allow contributions of learner-members in contrast to non-fee-paying schools. This suggests the continuation of inequalities and backlogs that could have been eliminated after

25 years of democracy. It also suggests a degree of managerial and leadership incompetence in education officials above the ranks of school principals.

In this section I discussed findings based on theme four: contributions made by learner-members to SGBs. In the next section I discuss findings based on Theme 5 on the importance of learner-members in school governance.

5.3.5 Theme 5: The importance of SGB learner-members in school governance

One of my findings was that learner-members are one of the most important stakeholders in SGBs. Participants were privy to knowledge and understanding pertaining to the learners at their school, that was mostly known to them as part of their school world. They had information relating to crime issues around the schools and information on some learners' personal lives, such as their cultural background and chronic diseases, which in most cases needed the intervention of adult members on SGBs and non-SGB educators. This research found that SGBs' adult members were informed about what was expected of them in their governance role. The research found that it seems that in some schools, s32 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) was overemphasised, to a point of not inviting learner-members in SGB meetings at all.

It is without doubt that learner-members are minors and have a low level of expected responsibility and accountability due to the level of their maturity. This, however, does not disqualify the fact that learner-members are also elected members of SGBs who should be invited to attend relevant SGB meetings. The research confirmed the differences between fee-paying schools and non-fee-paying schools in terms of the importance of learner-members of SGBs within the Kenneth Kaunda district, where this research was conducted. In fee-paying schools, learner-members were mostly invited to SGB meetings whilst in non-fee-paying schools, learner-members were partially invited or sometimes were not invited at all.

I also established that the more democratic leadership practice was shown at a school, the more disciplined it became as compared to schools with a semi-autocratic leadership style. However, most of the schools, especially non-fee-paying schools, and even some of the fee-paying schools were still taking a traditional approach to leadership, which substantiated what was found to be the case by Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah (2014). As he noted, the traditional approach to leadership has been a disadvantage to developing schools attempting to be more democratic and welcoming to all stakeholders. He added by saying that until all stakeholders play their role, schools will not be transformed to become what was anticipated by the theory of democracy ("mass participation in all decisions taken").

In this section I discussed findings under theme five: the importance of learner-members in SGBs. In the next section I will discuss findings under Theme 6: concerns of SGB learner-members on their governance role.

5.3.6 Theme 6: Concerns of SGB learner-members in governance

Data indicated that SGB learner-members seemed to not understand the significance of serving for only one year in school governance, as compared to other SGB members who serve for three-year terms. This was part of my working assumption that “it is unfair that learners are not given sufficient time to serve as school governors.” Through reading different sections of legislation and gaining in-depth understanding of s32 which provides the limitation of learners in their governance role and s20 which provides the functions of SGBs and the literature taken from Johnny (2006), Xaba (2004) and DBE (2018) I noted that my working assumption was partially wrong, meaning learners would only be able to participate in all spheres of governance and prohibited on the issues of entering into contracts with suppliers on behalf of the school as stipulated in section 32 of SA Schools Act. This was prohibited to protect learners from emotionally and physical harm. The involvement of learner-members in SGBs was not actually based on major decision-making procedures, rather for up-skilling them and exposing them to good participatory democracy. The reality is that learner-members should be involved to develop their participatory and democratic skills and implement maximum participation on issues of governance, and this development must reach as large a number of learners as is possible.

If learners can serve for three years, it will mean that other learners will forfeit the opportunity to be exposed to the issues of school governance but it should also be born in mind that each members of the SGB can actually serve for a period of five years. I also noted that most learner-members are minors and, thus, their level of accountability and maturity is not at the same level as those of the adult members of SGBs.

This research found that adult members of SGBs lacked training and did not know what their accountabilities and responsibilities entailed. This is in line with what the literature suggests. The DBE (2011) and Mncube and Naidoo (2014) note that there is indeed a lack of training of parent-members serving on SGBs, because more often learner-members said even if they reported some of the issues to them, no action was taken. This might be an indication of their lack of understanding about what they had to do to help the minor learner-members of SGBs. Regardless of the results, adult members must give learner-members feedback on what they have been enquiring about. However, as things stand, there is no evidence that SGB learner-members are supported to the fullest. This is due to a lack of training of SGB adult members, especially in semi-rural schools.

Learner-members argued that they were not trained to perform their respective duties, as was done with the parent-members serving on SGBs. This would indicate an illegal practice from the side of the department or ignorance by the departmental officials. Thus, this was one of the driving forces that contributed to the fact that learner-members were mostly not invited to attend SGB meetings because of their level of maturity and accountability. However, one must bear in mind that this action is most visible at non-fee-paying schools as compared to fee-paying schools. It is important to note that most of the SGB learner-members did not understand their governance role because they were not trained and those who had to support them to carry out their duties were also suffering from a lack of training. The actions of other SGB members and the school management team at large indicated that they expected less from the learner-members in school governance decisions. Some of the principals especially in non-fee-paying schools are acting as sole governors. This is illegal and it goes against the call of SA Schools Act s16 which emphasises that the governance of all public schools is vested on the hands of SGBs.

In this section I discussed findings under theme six: concerns of SGB learner-members on their governance role. In the last section I will discuss findings under Theme 7: the role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance.

5.3.7 Theme 7: The role played by other SGB governors to support learner-members in governance

Often SGB learner-members in non-fee-paying schools act *ultra vires*, which meant that they were not acting within their legal parameters and they also felt that there was a lack of support from the TLO. However, the TLO is only responsible for preparing and organising RCL elections and governance elections for the learners. These nominated TLO individuals are not required to interfere with school governance as such.

This tells us more about *ultra vires* actions taking place in school governance in some schools. SGB learner-members felt neglected and consequently operated without any directives or training. This is indicative that adult members of SGBs were not teaching or training the younger learner-members at ground level, the ways that a democratic dispensation works, or should ideally work. This violates the principles of the social learning theory as determined by Wildemeersch *et al.* (1998). According to Wildemeersch *et al.*'s (1998) social learning theory, a new generation should learn from older citizens and *vice versa* (2.4). One should, however, bear in mind that it is legally the task of the DBE to train SGB members, including learner-members.

This theory established the possibility that these two groups of governors – SGB adult and learner-members – can learn from each other if they work together openly as was evident from

the governance style of some fee-paying schools that participated in this study not taking away the fact that learner-members are included in school governance for the purpose of participative democracy, SGB learner-members are still young and they have less accountability and responsibilities regarding school governance. My working assumption was partially correct in this regard, because if learners are elected to participate, they must be active and visible participants in all governance meetings which directly affects them as learners, as instructed by legislation.

However, from the data collected in some schools especially non-fee-paying schools, learner-members were not participating to their maximum capacity and their expectations were not met, compared to other learner-members from other schools, such as fee-paying schools in the Kenneth Kaunda district. Legislation, however, supports my working assumption to some degree in that learners are not given significant responsibilities and accountability simply because they are still young and not fit to perform such legal roles as minors. This is advocated by s32 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), where I noted that this section was promulgated with the intention of protecting a learner-member as a minor from unnecessary debts and entering into contracts which they might not be cognitively mature enough to take part in. Legislation such as SA Schools Act (84 of 1996) s21 was not promulgated to side-line SGB learner-members, but to illustrate the functions of the SGB as a whole on members that can participate on each sub-section or portfolio where age was not such a problem and no protection needed.

SGB learner-members of fee-paying schools in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District are more democratic compared to non-fee-paying schools. They seem to be giving learner-members the platform to act as governors, by allowing them to be part of school governance. I noted that different cultures existed between these two groups in terms of raising a child in becoming an adult, also played a large role in school governance. According to African tradition, a young person should not be part of the meetings called by adults to discuss their future. Children in African cultural traditions follow orders that come from their parents or elders (Mabovula, 2009:212).

Adults are regarded as individuals who are well informed and always making appropriate and mature decisions that are in the best interest of the child. Young people, according to African culture and tradition, must just follow orders provided by their older, because they have more life experience than young people. It seemed that participants agreed with the abovementioned because learner-members from non-fee-paying schools said their role was to implement what older members of SGBs were entrusting them to do. This was a symbol of obeying the rules given by leaders as part of African cultural instruction. That is why learner-members are mostly not invited or partially invited to be part of SGB meetings, mostly at non-fee-paying schools.

Fee-paying schools are generally dominated by Western culture that emphasises human rights and collective agreement. Learner-members in these fee-paying schools were given an opportunity to participate in decision-making, because there is a belief that learners also have valuable contributions to make for a school to be a successful institution. In most of the fee-paying schools, social learning theory as one of the steering tools for this study, is proving to be realistic since these schools are conforming to the principles of social learning theory (Wildemeersch *et al.*, 1998) (par. 2.4).

In this section I discussed findings based on theme seven: the role played by SGB members to support learner-members in SGBs. In the next section I will make some recommendations based on my findings in the different themes of this research (1 to 7).

5.4 Recommendations

Learner-members of SGBs will remain unskilled if they don't receive the legal training as provided by section 19 of the SA Schools Act both at a national and provincial level .

Learner-members do not understand the difference between their role as governor and member of an RCL. A remedy as recommendation was, that the EMGD manual should explicitly deal with how other SGB members should handle learner-members and how learner-members should be trained.

I will now present the hypotheses generated by this study to be confirmed by future quantitative research as well as proposed recommendations and remedies.

Recommendation 1: in-depth training of SGB learner-members

This study generated the hypothesis that many learner-members of SGBs in SA do not receive training for their governance role. I recommend that SGB learner-members – like other SGB members – should be given in-depth training on how they should act as legal governors on SGBs of schools. This should be provided by the departmental officials as mandated by SA schools Act in terms of section 19.

Recommendation 2: amendment of the SA Schools Act

The amendment of The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is recommended as remedy as it should give clearer directives on the responsibilities and accountability of SGB learner-members.

Rationale: Currently, The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is unclear and not transparent enough. The SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), in s20 and 21, is clear on how parent members should function in the schools. It is visible for everyone to see how this group of governors should participate in the school environment. There is evidence to the effect that if a school has an active and informed SGB membership, learners' academic performance is observed to be higher in such schools, as compared to the schools that are solely run by principals, who may take decisions on behalf of the entire school community. The training of SGB learner-members will eradicate the issues of learner-members acting *Ultra vires*, especially in non-fee-paying schools.

Recommendation 3: adapt and update EMGD manual

Another remedy as recommendation is to adapt and update the EMGD manual (2015) to explicitly deal with how other SGB members should handle learner-members and how learner-members should be trained.

Rationale: Learner-members will be informed and will know exactly what they should do and the boundaries or limitations to their responsibilities and accountability. As reported, some learner-members have never attended any SGB meetings, not to speak about the lack of guidance on the implementation of their responsibilities and accountabilities expected of them.

Recommendation 4: a two-year SGB membership period of Grade 10 and 11 learners

SGB learner-members, must be given at least a two-year cycle to be part of school governance.

- It is proposed that the first year could be regarded as developing, training and supporting the learner governors to become better leaders and taking informed decisions as expected by legislation.
- The second year would be used to implement and continuing training of what they had learnt during their first year and more of what they will be learning throughout their governance during their two-year terms.

Rationale: SGB learner-members should be given more opportunities to contribute to the governance role as they are not allowed to make major decisions due to their level of maturity. This means that, according to s23 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996), SGB learner-members

must be learners in the eighth grade and higher, who showed leadership among the school's learner cohort and, thus, further development should also focus on tenth and eleventh grade learners; unlike the current situation where SGB learner-members are mostly in grade 12 and focus more on the matric examination.

A school is a place of teaching and learning. When I apply the principle of looking at issues through the eye of the needle (meaning deeply scrutinising an issue to find reality), grade 12s are overloaded with academic work. Therefore, they end up focusing more on their own academic achievements than on governance. Mostly, learners are being affected by decisions that they did not contribute to or aided in making decisions affecting them directly.

Recommendation 5:

I recommend that the Department of Education in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District (and beyond) must create a platform where SGB learner-members of fee-paying schools and non-fee-paying schools could share experiences and learn from each other.

Rationale: Such a platform could be in the form of camps where learner-members will be sharing ideas and good practises, and continuous training at these camps, on their school governance role. This will empower learners from schools that are still not implementing promulgated legislation which stipulates that SGBs' learner-members must be awarded full – albeit limited – SGB membership with lowered responsibilities as stipulated by s23 of the SA Schools Act (84 of 1996).

5.5 Limitations of the research

“Every study has its limitations and often we experience problems in collecting and analysing our data” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:115).

As I finally got ethical approval only in October 2019, I had to negotiate to interview matriculants during their examination and at school. This had a negative impact on data collection because learners were fully preoccupied in doing well during the final year exam. Thus learner-members provided less information as I would have expected.

Principals found it difficult to release learner-members to take part in the empirical research at a neutral place such as a church or community hall as my research proposal initially indicated. Thus, data were mostly generated at schools. The principals fortunately understood that the study should be completed within a stipulated time frame and that I need participants with experience as serving on the SGB. Moreover, learner-members would not be at school in 2020 because this was their last academic year. If I had waited for the new academic year, my participants would

have been freshly elected members of the SGB without any experience about their governance role as SGB members.

The other limitation was that two participants did not provide answers in some of the questions because they did not feel comfortable to answer these questions. They were mostly shy and lacked confidence during the interviews. Thus, only two out of twelve SGB learner-members provided limited insight understanding of their governance role. As the study reached data saturation before all intended participants were interviewed, this seemed not to be a problem regarding the validity of the data.

5.6 Further research

It is proposed that a mixed method study is done to get responses across South African schools to prove the hypothesis generated (which is learner-members in the SGBs are not given enough room to participate in schools governance) by this study, as the findings are correct to enhance the potential reach of the remedies recommended by this study.

5.7 Conclusion

This study was conducted with my working assumption that learner-members were neglected, not taken into consideration, and considered as less important members serving on SGBs. However, I discovered through legislation and literature that learners cannot have the same responsibilities and accountabilities as adult members, but they can participate in functions of SGBs as legal elected members. The study has, however, suggested that there is indeed a need to train learner-members serving on the SGB to ensure that they achieve their fullest potential in a democratic society. It seems that although training of all SGB members, also learner-members, is compulsory by legislation, departmental officials neglect this task in some instances. There is no evidence of training for learner-members in the SGBs and there is no evidence of an ongoing empowerment of the already trained older members of the SGBs. This requires urgent attention.

REFERENCES

Republic of South Africa. 1997. *Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act 33 of 1997*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Arnold, M.W. & Biko, S. 1984. *The testimony of Steve Biko*. 2nd rev. ed. London: Panther.

Aukot, J.T. 2017. Students participation in decision making and its implications in secondary school discipline in Turkana East Sub County, Turkana County-Kenya. Nairobi: University of Nairobi. (Research Project - MEd). <http://hdl.handle.net/11295/102703> Date of access: 1 Oct. 2019.

Babbie, E.R. 2013. *The practice of social research*. 13th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Baqueda-López, P., Alexander, R.A. & Hernandez, S.J. 2013. Equity issues in parental and community involvement in schools: what teacher educators need to know. *Review of Research in Education*, 37:149-182. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X12459718>

Benet, W.J. 2013. Managing the polarities of democracy: a theoretical framework for positive social change. *Journal of Social Change*, 5(1):26-39.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.5590/JOSC.2013.05.1.03>

Boeije, H. 2010. *Analysis in qualitative research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Bourke, R. & Loveridge, J. 2016. Beyond the official language of learning: teachers engaging with student voice research. *Teaching and teacher education*, 57:59-66. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.03.008>

Burns, R.B. 2000. *Introduction to research methods*. 4th ed. London: Sage.

Bush, T. & Gamage, D. 2001. Models of self-governance in schools: Australia and the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 15(1): 39-44.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540110380604>

Bush, T. & Heystek, J. 2003. School governance in the new South Africa. *Compare*, 33(2):127-138. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305792032000070084>

Carr, I. & Williams, C. 2009. The mediation of Representative Council of Learners policy in Western Cape schools - 1997 to 2003. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(1):69-82.
<http://ref.scielo.org/9j9ttv>

Carrim, N.H. 2006. *Human rights and the construction of identities in South African education*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand. (Thesis – PhD).

<http://hdl.handle.net/10539/2032>

Cavrić, J., Galić, I., Vodanović, M., Brkić, H., Gregov, J., Viva, S., Rey, L. & Cameriere, R. 2016. Third molar maturity index for assessing age of majority in black African population in Botswana. *International Journal of Legal Med*, 130(4):1109-1120.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00414-016-1344-1>

Checkoway, B. 2011. What is youth participation? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(2):340-345. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.09.017>

Chinedu, O. & Van Wyk, M. 2015. *Educational research: an African approach*. Cape Town: Oxford UP.

Chisholm, L. 1983. Redefining skills: Black education in South Africa in the 1980s. *Comparative Education*, 19(3):357-371. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3098636>

Choobineh, J. & Kini, A.D. 2000. An empirical evaluation of the factors affecting trust in web banking systems. Paper delivered at the 2000 Americas Conference on Information Systems, Long Beach, CA: Association for Information Systems. <https://aisel.aisnet.org/amcis2000/169>

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2007. *Research methods in education*. 6th ed. London: Routledge.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996.

Creswell, J.W. & Poth, C.N. 2016. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. 4th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2013. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2014. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crotty, M. 1998. *The foundations of social research: meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage.

De Waal, J., Currie, I & Erasmus, G. 2001. *The Bill of Rights handbook*. 4th ed. Kenwyn: Juta.

Department of Basic Education (South Africa). 2011. Values in action: a manual in Constitutional values and school governance for School Governing Bodies and Representative Councils of Learners in South African public schools.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/Values%20In%20Action%20Manual.pdf>

Date of access: 15 Feb. 2019.

Department of Basic Education (South Africa). 2014. Guidelines relating to the elections of governing bodies of the public schools.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/Guidelines%20Relating%20to%20Electing%20SGB%20draft%202.pdf?ver=2014-12-19-084124-000> Date of access: 1 Oct.

2019.

Department of Basic Education (South Africa). 2016. Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998: Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). (Notice 170 of 2016). *Government Gazette*, 39684, 4-216, 12 Feb.

Department of Basic Education (South Africa). 2017. Guidelines relating to elections of school governing bodies of public schools.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/SGBs/SGB%20Guidelines%20Final%20approved%20edited.pdf?ver=2018-06-08-094707-237> Date of access: 13 Mar. 2019.

Department of Basic Education (South Africa). 2018. Guidelines for capacity building of school governing body members.

<https://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Fuakp7lj4aU%3d&tabid=581&portalid=0&mid=7623> Date of access: 13 Mar. 2019.

Department of Education (South Africa). 1996 Education White Paper 2: The organisation, governance and funding of schools. (Notice 130). *Government Gazette*, 16987:5, 14 Feb.

Department of Education (South Africa). 1998. South African Schools Act 84 of 1996: Guidelines for the consideration of Governing Bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners. (Notice 776). *Government Gazette*, 18900:1, 15 May.

Department of Education (South Africa). 2005. National guidelines for school governing body elections.

<http://www.kzneducation.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=6zvKXpAeN4c%3D&tabid=194&mid=469> Date of access: 5 Feb. 2018.

Diskiène, D. & Pauliène, R. 2014. Leader-follower relationship behaviors: who is a gatekeeper to leadership outcomes? *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(9):152-163. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n9p152>

Dobinson, I. & Johns, F. 2017. Legal research as qualitative research. In: McConville, M. & Chui, W.H., eds. *Research methods for law*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP. pp. 18-47.

Duma, M.A.N. & Khuzwayo, H.P. 2015. Educator's perceptions of developmental appraisal in schools. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 11(2):227-233. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2015.11890393>

Duma, M.A.N. 2011. Silent leadership: educators' perceptions of the role of student leadership in the governance of rural secondary schools. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(4):72-79. <http://www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol. 2 No. 4%3B March 2011/9.pdf>

Duma, M.A.N. 2014. Learner participation in school governance: the views of learner governors in South African schools. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20):1807-1812. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n20p1807>

Duma, M.A.N. 2015. Student participation in school governance: the views of rural school principals. *Studies in Tribes and Tribals*, 13(2):181-188. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0972639X.2015.11886725>

Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998.

Friese, S. 2014. *Qualitative data analysis with ATLAS.ti*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Fusch, P.I. & Ness, L.R. 2015. Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9):1408-1416. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss9/3>

Giliomee, H. 2012. Bantu education: destructive intervention or part reform? *New Contree*, 65:67-86. <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/93654>

Graaff, J. 2016. *Governance in the poorer public schools in South Africa from the perspective of the parent governor*. (Research on Socioeconomic Policy Working Paper 08/16). <https://resep.sun.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ReSEP-WP-08-2016-Janet-Graaff.pdf> Date of access: 15 Jun. 2018.

Greyling, M. 2004. Book review: data analysis for the behavioural sciences using SPSS. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 34(2):322-323. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/008124630403400210>

- Heystek, J. 2001. Learner representatives in the governing bodies of secondary schools. *Acta Academica*, 33(3):207-230. <https://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/article/view/654>
- Heystek, J. 2006. School Governing Bodies in South Africa: relationships between principals and parent governors - question of trust? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 34(4):473-486. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206068212>
- Heystek, J. 2011. School Governing Bodies in South Africa: under pressure to enhance democratization and improve quality. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 39(4):455-468. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143211406149>
- Heystek, J. 2014. Principals' perceptions about performance agreements as motivational action: evidence from South Africa. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 42(6):889-902. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214549425>
- Johnny, L. 2006. Reconceptualising childhood: children's rights and youth participation in schools. *International Education Journal*, 7(1):17-25.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ847201.pdf>
- Johnson, W.R. 1982. Education: keystone of apartheid. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 13(3):214-237. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1982.13.3.05x0983u>
- Johnson, J.L., Adkins, D. & Chauvin, S. 2020. A review of the quality indicators of rigor in qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84(1):138-146.
doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.5688%2Fajpe7120>
- Karlsson, J. 2002. The role of democratic governing bodies in South African schools. *Comparative Education*, 38(3):327-336. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305006022000014188>
- Korstjens, I. & Moser, A. 2017. Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 2: Context, research questions and designs. *European Journal of General Practice*, 23(1):274-279.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375090>
- Lansdown, G. 2011. *Every child's right to be heard: a resource guide on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*. (General Comment no. 12). London: UNICEF & Save the Children.
https://www.unicef.org/files/Every_Childs_Right_to_be_Heard.pdf Date of access: 15 Jul. 2018.

- Lewis, S.G. & Naidoo, J. 2004. Whose theory of participation? School governance policy and practice in South Africa. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 6(2):100-112.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ853842>
- Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E.G. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Mabena, L.T. 2002. Learner involvement in school governance as an aspect of school management: implication for whole school development. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University. (Mini-dissertation - MEd). <http://hdl.handle.net/10210/7561>
- Mabovula, N. 2009. Giving voice to the voiceless through deliberative democratic school governance. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(2):219-233. <http://ref.scielo.org/jxnb2v>
- Maddox, G. 1982. A note on the meaning of 'Constitution'. *The American Political Science Review*, 76(4):805-809. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/1962972>
- Mafora, P. 2013. Learners' and teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership in Soweto secondary schools: a social justice analysis. *South African Journal of Education*, 33(3):1-15.
<http://ref.scielo.org/rsjbfv>
- Mager, U. & Nowak, P. 2012. Effects of student participation in decision making at school: a systematic review and synthesis of empirical research. *Educational Research Review*, 7(1):38-61. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2011.11.001>
- Malila, V. 2014. The voiceless generation - (non-) representations of young citizens in the coverage of education stories by South African newspapers. *Communicare*, 33(1):21-34.
<https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC156802>
- Maluleka, J.S. 2008. The capacity of school governing bodies in rural schools in the Moretele district of the Nkangala region. Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Thesis - MEd).
<http://hdl.handle.net/10500/1948>
- Mansfield-Barry, S. & Stwayi, L. 2017. Chapter 3: school governance. In: Veriava, F. ed. *Basic education rights handbook – Education rights in South Africa*. Section 27: Johannesburg. pp. 75-89. <https://section27.org.za/basic-education-handbook/> Date of access: 13 Apr. 2018.
- Marcy, S.M., Kohl, K.S., Dagan, R., Nalin, D., Blum, M., Jones, M.C., Hansen, J., Labadie, J., Lee, L., Martin, B.L., O'Brien, K., Rothstein, E. & Vermeer, P. 2004. Fever as an adverse event following immunization: case definition and guidelines of data collection, analysis, and presentation. *Vaccine*, 22(5-6):551-556. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2003.09.007>

- Maree, K. ed. 2007. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Maree, K. ed. 2016. *First steps in research*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Maree, K., & Pietersen, J. 2007. Sampling. In: Maree, K., ed. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 172-182.
- Mariotti, M. 2012. Labour markets during apartheid in South Africa. *The Economic History Review*, 65(3):1100-1122. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23271564>
- Mathebula, T. 2008. The role of Representative Councils for Learners in South African schools: maximal or minimal participation? *Africa Education Review*, 2(2):189-204.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146620508566300>
- Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah, M. 2014. Configuring space for learner participation in school governance. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 41(1):55-61.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893341>
- Mestry, R. 2006. The functions of school governing bodies in managing school finances. *South African Journal of Education*, 26(1):27-38. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1150360.pdf>
- Mitchell, R. 2017. Democracy or control? The participation of management, teachers, students and parents in school leadership in Tigray, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 55:49-55. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.05.005>
- Mncube, V. & Naidoo, R. 2014. The contribution of school governing bodies in promoting democracy in South African schools: the current trends. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(3):484-492. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n3p484>
- Mncube, V. 2008. Democratisation of education in South Africa: Issues of social justice and the voice of learners? *South African Journal of Education*, 28(1):77–90. <http://ref.scielo.org/ynd452>
- Mncube, V. 2009. The perceptions of parents of their role in the democratic governance of schools in South Africa: are they on board? *South African Journal of Education*, 29(1):83-103. <http://ref.scielo.org/z77wmt>
- Modisaotsile, B.M. 2012. *The failing standard of basic education in South Africa*. (Africa Institute of South Africa Policy Brief no. 72). <http://www.ai.org.za/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/03/No.-72.The-Failing-Standard-of-Basic-Education-in-South-Africa1.pdf> Date of access: 7 Oct. 2019.

Mokoena, S. 2011. Participative decision-making: perceptions of school stakeholders in South Africa. *Journal of Social Science*, 29(2):119-131.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2011.11892962>

Moorosi, P, Bantwini, L, Molale, I, and Diko, L. 2020. "School Governance and Social Justice in South Africa: A Review of Research from 1996 to 2016 ". *Education As Change* 24 (November):23. <https://doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/7994>

Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Naidoo, J.P. 2014. *Educational decentralization and school governance in South Africa: from policy to practice*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED499627.pdf> Date of access: 15 May 2019.

Nakkeeran, N. 2016. Is sampling a misnomer in qualitative research. *Sociological Bulletin*, 65(1):40-49. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920160103>

National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996.

Ngidi, D.P. 2004. Educators' perceptions of the efficiency of school governing bodies. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(4):260-263. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/article/view/24998>

Nieuwenhuis, J. 2007. Analysing qualitative data. In: Maree, K., ed. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 99-123.

Nieuwenhuis, J. 2016. Analysing qualitative data. In: Maree, K., ed. *First steps in research*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 104-131.

Nonyane, D.L. 2016. *The impact of the role of school governing bodies: a case study undertaken in the Gert Sibande District of Mpumalanga at Badplaas and Mashishila circuit schools*. Pretoria: Unisa. (Thesis – DEd). <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/22731>

North West Province Department of Education (South Africa). 2015. Education Management and Governance Directorate (EMGD) training manual for SGBs. Pretoria: Government Printers.

North West Provincial Gazette (South Africa). 2015. North West Schools Act (3/1998): Regulations relating to the election of school Governing Bodies and governance of Public Schools in the North West Province. (Notice 79 of 2015). *Provincial Gazette*, 7407:3-42, 25 Feb.

Nowell, L., Norris, J., White, D.E, & Moules, N.J. 2017. Thematic analysis: striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1):1-13.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

Nwosu, L.I. & Chukwuere, J.E. 2017. The roles and challenges confronting the school governing body in representing schools in the digital age. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research*, 18(2):1-24. <https://www.abacademies.org/articles/The-Roles-and-Challenges-Confronting-the-School-1533-3604-18-2-109..pdf> Date of access: 21 Jun. 2019.

OED (Oxford English Dictionary). 2016. legislation, *n*. www.oed.com/view/Entry/107097

Oni, A.A. & Adetoro, J.A. 2015. The effectiveness of student involvement in decision-making and university leadership: a comparative analysis of 12 universities in South-West Nigeria. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*, 3(1):65-81.

<https://www.jsaa.ac.za/index.php/jsaa/article/view/1237>

Pendlebury, S. 2011. *Children and school governance: representation, participation and power*. (South African Child Gauge 2010/2011 Part 2: Children as citizens: participating in social dialogue).

http://www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/South_African_Child_Gauge_20102011/sa_child_gauge_2010-11_school_gov.pdf Date of access: 13 Dec. 2019.

Phaswana, E. 2010. Learner councillors' perspective on learner participation. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(1):105-122. <http://ref.scielo.org/r74ps8>

Phori, J.R. 2016. Enhancing collaborative skills among members of the school governing body. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State. (Thesis - PhD). <http://hdl.handle.net/11660/4752>

Pietersen, & Maree, K. 2016. Standardisation of a questionnaire. In: Maree, K., ed. *First steps in research*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 237-247.

Quan-Baffour, K.P. & Arko-Achemfuor, A. 2014. Training School Governing Body members in three rural schools in Taung: empowerment for good governance. *Studies in Tribes and Tribals*, 12(1):171-178. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0972639X.2014.11886698>

Roberts, L.D. & Allen, P.J. 2015. Exploring ethical issues associated with using online surveys in educational research. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 21(2):95-108.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2015.1024421>

- Robson, C. & McCartan, K. 2016. *Real world research*. 4th ed. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Roos, M.C., Oosthuizen, I.J. & Smit, M.H. 2020. Common law. In: Oosthuizen, I.J. & Smit, M.H., eds. *Aspects of education law*. 5th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 111-135.
- Rossouw, J.P. 2020. The employment of educators. In: Oosthuizen, I.J. & Smit, M.H., eds. *Aspects of education law*. 5th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 245-281.
- SAHO (South African History Online). 2017. *The June 16 Soweto youth uprising*.
<http://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/june-16-soweto-youth-uprising> Date of access: 20 Oct. 2017.
- SAHO (South African History Online). 2019. *South African Constitution: The Bill of Rights*.
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/south-african-constitution-bill-rights> Date of access: 20 Oct. 2017.
- Sandelowski, M. 2004. Using qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14(10):1366-1386. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732304269672>
- Sayed, Y. 2002. Democratising education in a decentralised system: South African policy and practice. *Compare*, 32(1):35-46. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920120116517>
- Schurink, E. 2009. Qualitative research design as tool for trustworthy research. *Journal of Public Administration*, 44(4.2):803-823. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC51748>
- Scotland, J. 2012. Exploring the philosophical underpinnings of research: relating ontology and epistemology to the methodology and methods of the scientific, interpretive, and critical research paradigms. *English Language Teaching*, 5(9):9-16.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n9p9>
- Serfontein, E. 2010. Liability of school governing bodies: a legislative and case law analysis. *Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in South Africa*, 6(1):93-112.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/td.v6i1.119>
- Smith, J. & Glidden, B. 2011. Occupy Pittsburgh and the challenges of participatory democracy. *Social movement science*, 1-6:<http://dscholarship.pitt.edu/26748/4/>
- Smit, M.H. 2013. Compatibility of democracy and learner discipline in South African schools. *De Jure*, 46(1):345-365. <http://ref.scielo.org/g7nq7k>
- Smit, M.H. 2016. School governing body election deficiencies: deliberative democracy knocking at the door. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad*, 18(6):2141-2182. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/pelj.v18i6.04>

Smith, A., Beckmann, J. & Mampane, S. 2015. Experiences and challenges of evidence leaders ("prosecutors") in learner disciplinary hearings in public schools. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad*, 18(6):2366-2403.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/pej.v18i6.10>

Smith, G.A. 1993. *Public schools that work: creating community*. London: Routledge.

Smit, M.H. & Oothuizen, I.J. (2011:60). Improving schools governance through participative democracy and law. *South African Journal of Education*, 31:55-73. doi: file:///C:/63491-Article%20Text-122670-1-10-20110210.pdf

South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

Squelch, J. 1996. Know your schools Act. *EduLaw News Brief*, 3(2):1-8.

Stenius, K., Mäkelä, K., Miovský, M. & Gabrhelík, R. 2017. How to write publishable qualitative research. In: Babor, T.F., Stenius, K., Pates, R., Miovský, M., O'Reilly, J. & Candon, P., eds. *Publishing addiction science: a guide for the perplexed*. London: Ubiquity Press. pp. 155-172
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv3t5qxw>

Thornberg, R. 2010. School democratic meetings: pupil control discourse in disguise. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(4):924-932. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.10.033>

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). 1990. *Convention on the rights of the child*.
<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text> Date of access: 13 Jul. 2018.

University of Reading, 2020. *Citing references*. <https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/citing-references/turnitin> Date of access: 23 Oct. 2020.

Van der Westhuizen, P.C. & Mosoge, M.J. 1998. An emerging vision for education management development in South Africa. *Koers*, 63(1/2):41-55. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/koers.v63i1/2.528>

Van Wyk, N. 2014. School governing bodies: the experience of South African educators. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(1):46-54.
<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/article/view/24966>

Waring, S. 1999. Finding your place: sensing the external environment. In: Lumby, J. & Foskett, N., eds. *Managing external relations in schools and colleges*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 179-192.

White, T.L. & McBurney, D. 2013. *Research methods*. 9th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Wildemeersch, D., Jansen, T., Vandenabeele, J. & Jans, M. 1998. Social learning: a new perspective on learning in participatory systems. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 20(2):251-265. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037980200210>

Wilks, J. 2010. Child-friendly cities: a place for active citizenship in geographical and environment education. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 19(1):25-38. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10382040903545484>

Williams, T.T. & Sánchez, B. 2011. Identifying and decreasing barriers to parent involvement for inner-city parents. *Youth & Society*, 45(1):54-74.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0044118X11409066>

Xaba, M.I. & Nhlapo, V.A. 2014. Principals' views on challenges of their school governance roles. *Africa Education Review*, 11(3):424-444.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2014.934996>

Xaba, M.I. 2011. The possible cause of school governance challenges in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 31:201-211. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1136735>

ANNEXURE A: DISTRICT DIRECTOR PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS



The District Director
Kenneth Kaunda district
North West Province
Fax: (018) 299 8290
For attention: Dr Ruth Segomoti

Private Bag X05,
Noordbrug
South Africa 2522
Tel: 0793645308
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>
19 June 2018

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (22958142)
079 3645 308
abel.mabone@gmail.com

Dear Dr Ruth Segomoti

LETTER TO OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

My name is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).

I am hereby seeking your consent to approach three fee paying schools and three non-paying fee-paying schools in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district to provide participants for this project.

I have provided you with a copy of my dissertation proposal which includes copies of the measure and consent, and assent forms to be used in the research process, as well as a copy of the approval letter which I received from the NWU Research Ethics Committee.

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a bound copy of the full research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 079 3645 308. Email address: abel.mabone@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

MEd Student North-West University (Univ. number: 22958142)

Original details: (11069382) H:\NAVORSING\Nhlanhla Khoza\Annexure A (District Director) Request for permission to conduct research in schools.docm
19 June 2018 File reference: Nhlanhla

ANNEXURE B: DISTRICT DIRECTOR – CONSENT LETTER DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL



Education and Sport Development

Department of Education and Sport Development
Departement van Onderwys en Sportontwikkeling
Lefapha la Thuto le Tlhaboloto ya Metshameko

NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Terrence Building, 5 G.R. Tlou, Street,
Pretoria 0001

Private Bag, X1256, Potchefstroom 2000

Tel: (018) 299 8264 / Fax: 054 8284

e-mail: education@nwpg.gov.za

Office Manager: Linda Nelson - Tel: (018) 299 8264

e-mail: Linda@nwpg.gov.za

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR Dr KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

Enquiry: P Tyatya; 018 299 8264

Tel: (018) 299 8264 / e-mail: ptyatya@nwpg.gov.za

23 September 2019

To: **North West University
Faculty of Education**

Attention: **N.A. Khoza**

From: **Mr. B. Monale
District Director**

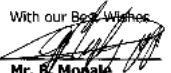
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Reference is made to your correspondence delivered to the Department of Education per courtesy of hand-move and dated 30 November 2018, regarding the fore-going matter. The content is noted and accordingly, approval is hereby granted to you to conduct research under the topic: ***Exploring the Governance Role of Learner-members of the School Governing Bodies.***

Please take note that the research process must conform to the following provisions:

- That the onus to contact your target schools and to identify suitable learners for purposes of the research remains with you.
- That participation in the project will remain voluntary for its entire duration.
- That you take reasonable measures not to compromise the learning time of learners identified to participate in the research.
- That the general functionality of schools should not be compromised by research itself, considering that interviews will in instances be conducted with Learners.
- That the outcomes of your research will be shared with the NW Department of Education, or its proxy, upon request.
- That the principle of confidentiality will be observed in its strictest terms in relation to information sourced from the campaign.

With our Best Wishes


**Mr. B. Monale
District Director:
Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District**



"Towards Excellence In Education and Sport Development"

ANNEXURE C: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS



Private Bag X05,
Noordbrug
South Africa 2522
Tel: 0793645308
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>
19 June 2018

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (22958142)
079 3645 308
abel.mabone@gmail.com

Dear Ms/Mr (Principal)

ACCESS LETTER: REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL

My name is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).

The proposed topic of my research is: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing body. The objectives of the study are:

- To explore the legal determinants of the role of learner-members of the school governing bodies.
- To determine what the learner governors' perceptions of their role are.
- To develop guidelines to support learner governors in fulfilling their roles.
- To investigate the similarities between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.
- To investigate the differences between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-member regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.

I am hereby seeking your consent to conduct this study in your school. To assist you in reaching a decision, I have attached to this letter:

- A copy of an ethical clearance certificate issued by the University
- A copy of the research instruments which I intend to use in my research

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. Our contact details are as follows:

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza contact no: 079 3645 308
Email address: abel.mabone@gmail.com

Or

Prof Willie Van Vollenhoven contact no: 018 299 4868

Email address: willie.vanvollenhoven@nwu.ac.za

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide you with an electronic copy of the dissertation.

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nhlanhla', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (MEd Student number: 22958142)

North-West University

Original details: (11069382) H:\NAVORSING\Nhlanhla Khoza\ Annexure B: Letter to school principal to obtain permission to conduct research in schools.docm
19 June 2018

File reference: Nhlanhla

ANNEXURE D: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – CONSENT LETTERS

BOTOKA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL		
ENQUIRIES: Mr. Matlaweng TEL NO: (018) 295 2009 FAX NO: (018) 295 2009 Email: botoka.tech@gmail.com	 BOTOKA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL	P.O BOX 40014 Ikageng Location POTCHEFSTROOM 2531
NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT		

Dear Mr N.A Khoza

Permission granted: 23 November 2018

I Mr Matlaweng the principal of Botoka Comprehensive School, here by grant you the permission to conduct your study titled: **Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing bodies**. As per the invitation you will be conducting face to face interview with our two learner-members in the SGB as your target group/participants.

Kind regards

Mr Matlaweng

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Botoka Technical High School PRINCIPAL 2018 -11- 23 P O Box 40014, Ikageng Potchefstroom, 2531 Tel: 018 295 2009 (Fax) NORTH WEST PROVINCE



B.A Seobi Secondary School

11815 Mogoledi Street, Extension 7, Ikageng, Potchefstroom, 2531
P.O Box 11005, Riverwalk, 2538
Enquiries: Mr. T.M Mainganya (072) 235 9950

Dear Mr Khoza N.A

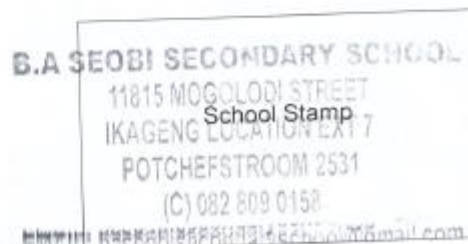
I Mr Mike Mainganya the Principal of B.A Seobi Secondary School, here by grant you permission to conduct your study in our school under the topic: **Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing bodies.**

The study as per the invitation will be conducted under the following objectives.

1. To explore the legal determinants of the governance role of learner-members on SGBs
2. To determine the conceptual framework of learners' governance role on SGBs.
3. To determine learner-members' perceptions and experiences of their role on SGBs.
4. To investigate the similarities between fee-paying and no-fee schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities on SGBs.
5. To investigate the differences between fee-paying and no-fee schools concerning perceptions of learner-member regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.
6. To suggest guidelines to support learner-members on SGBs in fulfilling their roles.

According your invitation you will be conducting face to face interviews with our two learner-members in the SGB as your target group/participant.

Yours in management



BOTOKA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL		
ENQUIRIES: Mr. Matlaweng TEL NO: (018) 295 2009 FAX NO: (018) 295 2009 Email: botoka.tech@gmail.com	 BOTOKA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL	P.O BOX 40014 Ikageng Location POTCHEFSTROOM 2531
NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT		

Dear Mr N.A Khoza

Permission granted: 23 November 2018

I Mr Matlaweng the principal of Botoka Comprehensive School, here by grant you the permission to conduct your study titled: **Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing bodies**. As per the invitation you will be conducting face to face interview with our two learner-members in the SGB as your target group/participants.

Kind regards

Mr Matlaweng

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Botoka Technical High School PRINCIPAL 2018 -11- 23 P O Box 40014, Ikageng Potchefstroom, 2531 Tel: 018 295 2009 (Fax) NORTH WEST PROVINCE

ANNEXURE E: SGB CHAIRPERSON – PERMISSION REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL



The School Principal
Uthokozane
1346

Private Bag X05,
Noordbrug
South Africa 2522
Tel: 0793645308
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>
19 June 2018

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (22958142)
079 3645 308
abel.mabone@gmail.com

Dear SGB Chairperson

REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).

The proposed topic of my research is: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing body. The objectives of the study are:

- To explore the legal determinants of the role of learner-members of the school governing bodies.
- To determine what the learner governors' perceptions of their role are.
- To develop guidelines to support learner governors in fulfilling their roles.
- To investigate the similarities between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.
- To investigate the differences between fee-paying and Non-fee-paying schools concerning perceptions of learner-member regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.

I am hereby seeking your consent to conduct this study in your school. To assist you in reaching a decision, I have attached to this letter:

- A copy of an ethical clearance certificate issued by the University
- A copy the research instruments which I intend to use in my research.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Our contact details are as follows:

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza contact no: 079 3645 308

Email address: abel.mabone@gamil.com

Or

Prof Willie Van Vollenhoven contact no: 018 299 4868

Email address: willie.vanvollenhoven@nwu.ac.za

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide you with an electronic copy of the dissertation.

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nhlanhla', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (MEd Student number: 22958142)

North-West University

Original details: (11069382) H:\NAVORSING\Nhlanhla Khoza\Annexure C: Letter to SGB Chairperson to obtain permission to conduct research in schools.docm
19 June 2018

File reference: Nhlanhla

ANNEXURE F: SGB CHAIRPERSON GRANTING PERMISSION



B.A XXX Secondary School

11815 Mogolodi Street, Extension 7, Ikageng, Potchefstroom, 2531
P.O Box 11005, Riverwalk, 2538
Enquiries: Mr. T.M Malinganya (072) 235 9950

Dear Mr Khoza N.A

I Ms Lekome L. SGB Chairperson of B.A Soebi Secondary School, here by grant you the permission to conduct your study in our school under the topic: **Exploring the governance role of learner-members of the school governing bodies.**

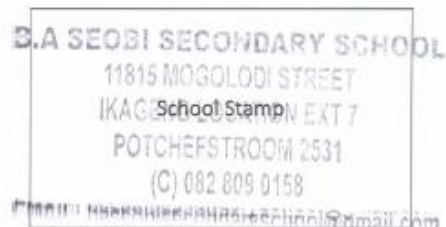
The study as per the invitation will be conducted under the following objectives.

1. To explore the legal determinants of the governance role of learner-members on SGBs
2. To determine the conceptual framework of learners' governance role on SGBs.
3. To determine learner-members' perceptions and experiences of their role on SGBs.
4. To investigate the similarities between fee-paying and no-fee schools concerning perceptions of learner-members regarding their roles and responsibilities on SGBs.
5. To investigate the differences between fee-paying and no-fee schools concerning perceptions of learner-member regarding their roles and responsibilities in SGBs.
6. To suggest guidelines to support learner-members on SGBs in fulfilling their roles.

According your invitation you will be conducting face to face interviews with our two learner-members in the SGB as your target group/participant.

Yours in governance


.....

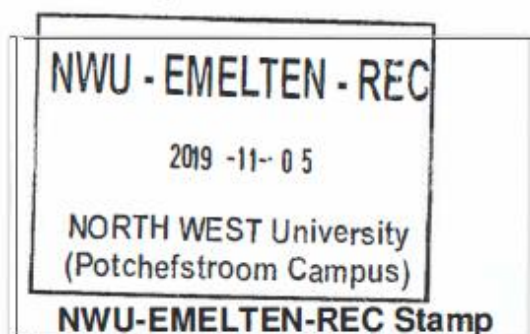


ANNEXURE G: PARENT OF SGB LEARNER-MEMBER (MINOR) – PERMISSION REQUEST & SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520
Tel: +27 18 299-1111/2222
Fax: +27 18 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

The Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office of the North-West University is acknowledged for the use of their document with minor adjustments made by the North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC).



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR PARENTS WHO'S CHILDREN (LEARNER-MEMBERS) IN THE SGB ARE LESS THAN EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD.

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBER: NWU-00353-19-S2

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Willie Van Vollenhoven

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

ADDRESS: Stand no 704 Ngwenyeni Trust 1346

CONTACT NUMBER: 079 3645 308/ 062 495 9490

Your child is going to be invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of a Masters in Education (MEd).

Please take time to read the information offered, which explains the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Of importance is that your child's participation – as learner member on the SGB – is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to not grant permission for him/her to participate. If you say no, this will not affect your child negatively in any way whatsoever. You may withdraw your child from the study at any point, even if you do agree initially.

This study is approved by the **North-West University's Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-00353-19-S2 – Potchefstroom Campus)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It may be necessary for the Research Ethics Committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *Due to your child's position as a learner-member of the School Governing Body (SGB), you are requested to give consent for your child to participate in research with the title: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.*
- *The primary researcher is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom.*
- *This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *Your child is selected to be part of this research because he/she is currently a learner-member of the SGB.*
- *As member of the SGB, he/she has acquired certain skills and knowledge about his/her role as learner-member of the SGB that no one else has, but him/her. With this knowledge I believe he/she can assist me to better understand the perceptions of learner-members about their roles in the SGB.*
- *Unfortunately, he/she will not be able to take part in this research if he/she is not an elected learner-member of the SGB.*

What will be expected of you?

- *Your child will be expected to participate in a face-to-face interview that will take about 45 to 60 minutes maximum.*
- *The interview will take place at a neutral place such as the church or community centre.*

Will your child gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There will be no direct gains for your child, but participating in this study will give him/her an opportunity to better understand his/her role as a member of the SGB.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

The risks to your child in this study are: There is a risk that he/she may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that he/she may feel uncomfortable talking about in some topics, but I do not wish this to happen. He/she do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion/interview if he/she feels the questions are too personal or if talking about them makes you feel uncomfortable.

- *There are more gains for your child in participating in this study than there are risks.*

How will we protect your child's confidentiality and who will see my findings?

- *Only the school principal and SGB members and nobody else will know about the participation of your child in this study.*
- *His/her privacy will be respected by ensuring that when data is transcribed and interpreted his/her identity will not be revealed.*
- *The data will be stored in a locked safe in the office of my supervisor.*
- *Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to your data.*
- *Hard copies of the data will be locked in a filing cabinet in the supervisor's office; electronic data will be saved on a password protected computer in the supervisor's office. As soon as data have been transcribed the raw data will be deleted from the recording machines. Data will be stored for a period of three years in the office of the supervisor and afterwards it will be destroyed by the supervisor.*

What will happen with the findings?

The findings of this study will be reported in a Masters dissertation and submitted to an academic journal.

How will you and your child know about the results of this research?

- We will share a summary of the results/findings by email to you after the Master's dissertation has been assessed and approved.

Will you or your child be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

Your child will not have any expenses by participating in this research and therefore neither you, nor your child will be paid. However, a small token of appreciation will be given to your child for participating in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

If you have any further questions or have any problems you are welcome to contact myself, **Nhlanhla Abel Khoza**, as the researcher at abel.mabone@gamil.com
Cell number: 079 3645 308.

OR

My study leader, Prof Willie van Vollenhoven at willie.vanvollenhoven@nwu.ac.za
Tel Number: 018 299 4868.

OR

If you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research, please contact:

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Marlize Bisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marlize.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za.

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Michael Ndlovu
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 31-10 2019

Signature of person obtaining consent: 

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com: cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 2019


.....
Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by parent

By signing below, I M. N. (Full names and Surname)

agree to give permission to my child to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.

I declare that:

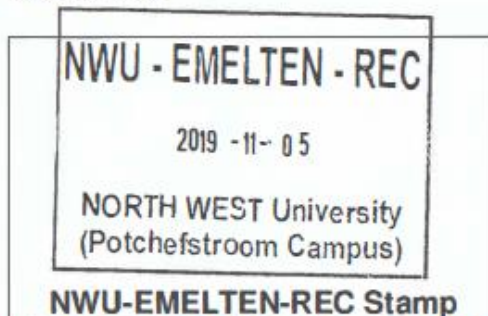
- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language in which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person asking the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that my child's participation in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressured to give consent for my child to take part.
- I understand that my child may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative manner, should he/she do so.
- If my child chooses to leave the study before it is finished, or if the researcher feels it is in the best interest of my child as agreed to.

Signed at (place) JOHANNESBURG on (date) 29/10 2019

M. N.
Signature of parent

ANNEXURE H: SGB LEARNER-MEMBERS (MINORS) – REQUESTING PARTICIPATION & INFORMED CONSENT

The Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office of the North-West University is acknowledged for the use of their document with minor adjustments made by the North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC).



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR LEARNER-MEMBERS IN THE SGB WHO ARE LESS THAN 18 YEARS

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBER: NWU-00353-19-S2

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Willie Van Vollenhoven

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

ADDRESS: Stand no 704 Ngwenyeni trust 1346

CONTACT NUMBER: 079 3645 308/ 062 495 9490

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of a Masters Research study. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences**

Page 1 of 5

Research Ethics Committee (NWU-00353-19-S2 – Potchefstroom Campus) and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *Due to your position as a Learner-member of the School Governing Body (SGB), you are invited to participate in research with the title: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.*
- *The primary researcher is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom.*
- *This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been selected to be part of this research because you are currently a learner-member of the SGB.*
- *As member of the SGB, you have acquired certain skills and knowledge about your role as learner-member of the SGB that no one else have, but you. With this knowledge I believe you can assist me to better understand the perceptions of learner-members about their roles in the SGB.*
- *Unfortunately, you will not be able to take part in this research if you are not an elected learner-member of the SGB.*

What will be expected of you?

- *You will be expected to participate in a face-to-face interview that will take about 45 to 60 minutes maximum.*
- *The interview will take place in a neutral place such as the church or community centre.*

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There will be no direct gains for you, but participating in this study will give you an opportunity to better understand your role as a member of the SGB.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

The risks to you in this study are: There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some topics, but I do not wish this to happen. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion / interview if you feel the questions are too personal or if talking about them makes you feel uncomfortable.

- *There are more gains for you in participating in this study than there are risks.*

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?

- *Only the school principal and SGB members and nobody else will know about your participation in this study.*

- Your privacy will be respected by ensuring that when data is transcribed and interpreted your identity will not be revealed.
- The data will be stored in a locked safe in the office of my supervisor.
- Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to your data.
- Hard copies of the data will be locked in a filing cabinet in the supervisor's office; electronic data will be saved on a password protected computer in the supervisor's office. As soon as data have been transcribed the raw data will be deleted from the recording machines. Data will be stored for a period of five years in the office of the supervisor and afterwards it will be destroyed by the supervisor.

What will happen with the findings?

The findings of this study will be reported in a Master's dissertation and submitted to academic journals.

How will you know about the results of this research?

- We will share a summary of the results/findings by email with you after the Master's dissertation has been assessed and approved.

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

You will not have any expenses by participating in this research and therefore you will not be paid. However, a small token of appreciation will be given to you for participating in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

If you have any further questions or have any problems you are welcome to contact: Myself, **Nhlanhla Abel Khoza**, as the researcher at abel.mabone@gamil.com
Cell number: 079 3645 308

OR

My **study leader, Prof Willie van Vollenhoven** at willie.vanvollenhoven@nwu.ac.za
Tel Number: 018 299 4868.

OR

If you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research, please contact:

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Marlize Bisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marlize.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I B. A. T. ..(Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) B. A. on (date) 28 Oct 2019



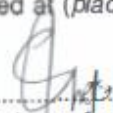
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) S. K. declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to B. T.
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 07-11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 29/10 2019


Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I K. P. M. (names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Seacombe on (date) 07/11 2019

P. M.
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) S. K. declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Kh. M.
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 04-11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

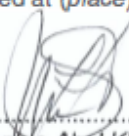
Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 07-11 2019


Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I L. N. (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Relief Room date 04/11 2019

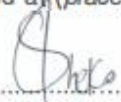

Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to L. T. A.
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 08/11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 04/11 2019


Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I ..R.... (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) on (date) 2019

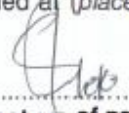
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) S. K declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to R. Dev
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potches Room on (date) 05-11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

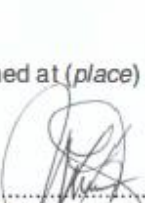
Declaration by researcher

I *Nhlanhla Abel Khoza* declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potches Room on (date) 02/11 2019


Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I C S R (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Secondary on (date) 07/11 2019

C S R

Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to George Rana
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 06-11 2019



Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 07/11 2019



Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

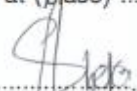
Signature of researcher

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to M S
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 09-11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 04/11 2019


Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I K. Nk (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) B. A on (date) 06/11 2019



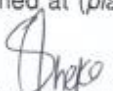
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Kaone Hshinogang
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 06-11 2019


Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 06/11 2019

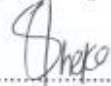

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Kaone Mtshinogang
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 06-11 2019



Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 06/11 2019



Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

Signature of researcher

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I B S D (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Sec on (date) 02/11 2019



Signature of participant

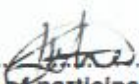
Declaration by participant

By signing below, I M. C. (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) H. Jim on (date) 03/11 2019

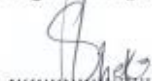

Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to B.S. Devillas
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 01-11 2019



Signature of person obtaining consent:

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (Khuzwayo Silungile Fortunate: email address: silungilekh@gmail.com; Cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place)  on (date) 02/11 2019

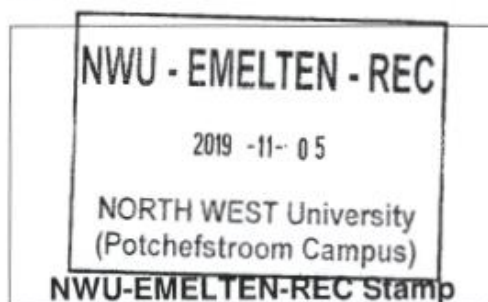
.....
Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

ANNEXURE I: SGB LEARNER-MEMBERS (18 & OLDER) – REQUESTING PARTICIPATION & INFORMED CONSENT



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520
Tel: +2718 299-1111/2222
Fax: +2718 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

The Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office of the North-West University is acknowledged for the use of their document with minor adjustments made by the North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC).



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR LEARNER-MEMBERS IN THE SGB WHO ARE EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD.

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBER: NWU-00353-19-S2

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Willie Van Vollenhoven

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

ADDRESS: Stand no 704 Ngwenyeni trust 1346

CONTACT NUMBER: 079 3645 308/ 062 495 9490

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of a Masters Research study. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-00353-19-S2 – Potchefstroom Campus)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *Due to your position as a Learner-member of the School Governing Body (SGB), you are invited to participate in research with the title: Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies.*
- *The primary researcher is Nhlanhla Abel Khoza, a Masters' student (student number 22958142) in Education Law at the North-West University, Potchefstroom.*
- *This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof Willie van Vollenhoven and Dr Idilette van Deventer (both from the NWU, South Africa).*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been selected to be part of this research because you are currently a learner-member of the SGB.*
- *As member of the SGB, you have acquired certain skills and knowledge about your role as learner-member of the SGB that no one else have, but you. With this knowledge I believe you can assist me to better understand the perceptions of learner-members about their roles in the SGB.*
- *Unfortunately, you will not be able to take part in this research if you are not an elected learner-member of the SGB.*

What will be expected of you?

- *You will be expected to participate in a face-to-face interview that will take about 45 to 60 minutes maximum.*
- *The interview will take place in a neutral place such as the church or community centre.*

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There will be no direct gains for you, but participating in this study will give you an opportunity to better understand your role as a member of the SGB.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

The risks to you in this study are: There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some topics, but I do not wish this to happen. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion / interview if you feel the questions are too personal or if talking about them makes you feel uncomfortable.

- *There are more gains for you in participating in this study than there are risks.*

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?

- *Only the school principal and SGB members and nobody else will know about your participation in this study.*
- *Your privacy will be respected by ensuring that when data is transcribed and interpreted your identity will not be revealed.*
- *The data will be stored in a locked safe in the office of my supervisor.*
- *Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to your data.*
- *Hard copies of the data will be locked in a filing cabinet in the supervisor's office; electronic data will be saved on a password protected computer in the supervisor's office. As soon as data have been transcribed the raw data will be deleted from the recording machines. Data will be stored for a period of five years in the office of the supervisor and afterwards it will be destroyed by the supervisor.*

What will happen with the findings?

The findings of this study will be reported in a Master's dissertation and submitted to academic journals.

How will you know about the results of this research?

- *We will share a summary of the results/findings by email with you after the Master's dissertation has been assessed and approved.*

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

You will not have any expenses by participating in this research and therefore you will not be paid. However, a small token of appreciation will be given to you for participating in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

*If you have any further questions or have any problems you are welcome to contact: Myself, **Nhlanhla Abel Khoza**, as the researcher at abel.mabone@gamil.com
Cell number: 079 3645 308*

OR

*My **study leader, Prof Willie van Vollenhoven** at willie.vanvollenhoven@nwu.ac.za
Tel Number: 018 299 4868.*

OR

If you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research, please contact:

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs MarlikeBisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marlike.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za.

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I J. de V. (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Sec on (date) 07/11 2019

J. de V.
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Johan de Villias.
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 26-10 2019

Signature of person obtaining consent:



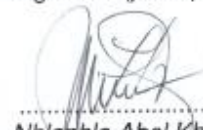
Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (KhuzwayoSilungile Fortunate: email address:silungilekh@gmail.com: cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 07/11 2019



Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Marlize Bisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marlize.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za.

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I K. M. (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom Secretary on (date) 08/11 2019


Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Kealeboga Mojaki
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 28-10 2019

Signature of person obtaining consent:



Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (KhuzwayoSilungile Fortunate; email address:silungilekh@gmail.com: cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 28/11 2019



Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

Signature of researcher

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Marlize Bisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marlize.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za.

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I T M (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) POTCHEFSTROOM on (date) 11/11 2019


.....
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Tsholelo Mooketsi
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 29-10 2019

Signature of person obtaining consent:



Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (KhuzwayoSilungile Fortunate: email address:silungilekh@gmail.com: cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 2019



Nhlanhla Abel Khoza

Signature of researcher

The North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Marelize Bisschoff at 018 299 4707 or marelize.bisschoff@nwu.ac.za.

- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I AS (Full names and Surname)

agree to take part in the research study titled Exploring the governance role of learner-members of school governing bodies I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) Schmiedt on (date) 09/11 2019

AS
Signature of participant

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (name) Silungile Khuzwayo declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to Johan^{SK} de Villiers Ashley Shokwani
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 27-10 2019

Signature of person obtaining consent: 

Declaration by researcher

I Nhlanhla Abel Khoza declare that:

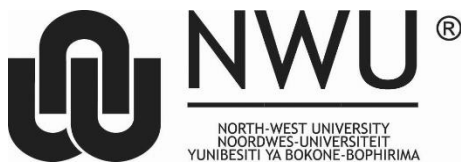
The informed consent was obtained by an independent person (KhuzwayoSilungile Fortunate: email address:silungilekh@gmail.com: cell phone: 078 0102 436).

- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understood all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (place) Potchefstroom on (date) 28/11 2019


.....
Nhlanhla Abel Khoza
Signature of researcher

ANNEXURE J: DATA GENERATION TOOL – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



Private Bag X05,
Noordbrug
South Africa 2522
Tel: 0793645308
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>
19 June 2018

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (22958142)
079 3645 308
abel.mabone@gmail.com

DATA GENERATION TOOL: QUESTION SCHEDULE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Open ended question schedule for interviews

- 1) What is your opinion about the role of learner-members on the school governing body?
- 2) Discuss the type of decisions that learner-members can make in the school governing body.
- 3) Discuss the difference between the role of learner-members and other governors in the school governing body.
- 4) Describe the way you view learner-members' contribution in your school governing body.
- 5) Discuss if you view it necessary to have learner-members on the SGB. Why?

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nhlanhla', is written over a faint, light-colored circular stamp or watermark.

Nhlanhla Abel Khoza (MEd Student number: 22958142)
North-West University

Original details: H:\NAVORSING\Nhlanhla Khoza\Annexure G Data collection tool - question schedule for focus group interviews
19 June 2018
File reference: Nhlanhla

ANNEXURE A: DATA GENERATION SCHEDULE FOR FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

Open ended questions for interviews

- 1) What, in your opinion, is the role of learner-members in the school governing body?

- 2) Discuss the type of decisions that learner-members can make in the school governing body.

- 3) Discuss the difference between the role of learner-members and other governors in the school governing body.

-
- 4) Describe the way you view learner-members' contribution in your school governing body.

-
- 5) What, in your view, is the importance of having learner-members in the SGB?

- 6) In your own opinion, do you think that your contribution and concerns are take into consideration by the other members of the SGB?

DATE: / /2019

ANNEXURE K: RAW DATA

Learner Members ¹ on SGBs and the...							
<u>Participants</u>	<u>Theme1</u> <i>Governance role</i>	<u>Theme2</u> <i>Decision making power</i>	<u>Theme3</u> <i>Differences between other members</i>	<u>Theme4</u> <i>Contribution made</i>	<u>Theme5</u> <i>Importance of their role in school governance</i>	<u>Theme6</u> <i>Concerns</i>	<u>Theme7</u> <i>Support role of other governors</i>
P 1	To talk on behalf of the learners in the SGB meeting. To support learners on different aspects of life and to ensure safe learning environment.	We don't take any decision because whatever we propose to the principal is not taken into consideration. There is no proper channel between us, the TLO and the principal. We only know that we must raise our issues to the TLO before it can reach the level of the principal.	Learner-members provide information about the learners and help in establishing discipline while other members of the SGB they concentrate more on financial matters of the school.	We provide information about the learners. We are the eyes and ears of the other members of the SGB	We are the learners we know the learners, therefore SGB benefit updated information about the learners.	Some concerns of learners are taken into consideration some are not.	Several SGB meeting were called but learner members were not invited.

P2	To ensure that all learners have essential needs and mediate between learners and school management	Learner-members can help in the decision of discipline in schools	Learner-members make the voice of learners to heard the school management and other governors other members maintain discipline at school.	Participants didn't respond to this question.	To serve as mediator between the SGB and learners.	Some are taken and some are not.	
P3	To solve learner's problem and to help in maintaining good behaviour for learners.	Decisions in school.	Learner-members make suggestions to the SGB and other members take decision on what learners have suggested.	Learner-members contribute positive discipline of the learners to the school.	To serve as a mediator between SGB and Learners.	Some are taken and some are not	
P4	Is to take care of learners as teachers do. To help in the smooth running of the school	Learners-members protects the furniture of the school for future generations.	Learner-members past the information discussed on the SGB meeting to other learners. Other members lead by example.	Is to help with other duties because other members of the SGB or teaches are occupied with a lot of work, then learner-members are being delegated with the task, especially co-coordinating sport.	Learners get a chance to learn from the elders in terms of how things are done. This will benefit the country as they grow to take over.		They are leading by example.

P5	We mediate between learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders.	We don't really have the power to take decisions, but we can place opinion to lead the SGB.	Must be involved in disciplinary meetings of the learners. He values our opinion on the issues of sports and how teachers should teach. Other members of the SGB are responsible for the finances of the school	We don't contribute much in the SGB but learner-members place their opinion.	We bring the perspective which no one has in the SGB. We provide information about a learner in the 3 rd industrial revolution.	No response	Educate young governors.
P6	To set a good example and to stand between learners and teachers	The head boy and head girl help in taking decisions in the SGB.	Learner-members interact with the both the teachers and learners while other members are responsible for financial matters.	Provide link between learners and other stakeholders of the school.	It is imperative because learners get a chance to and understand the views of educators about them	No response	
P7	To represent the rest of the learners in decision making of the SGB.	We cannot make decisions alone. But we have a say in decisions made by the other members of the SGB	We are in charge of different portfolios, learner-members are in charge of learners related issues while other members are responsible for finances.	We help in voting for a decision to be made.	Legislation emphasizes that learners must be of governance of the school. Learners learn a lot by being part of the SGB member.	No Response	Decentralization of legislation to suite the need of the school. Imparting knowledge and skills.

P8	To be strong for the other learners, to hold them together and be a positive role model. To support learners of all grades.	We only take minor decisions that affect learners. We don't form part of financial decisions.	Learner-members are responsible for minor issues while other members are responsible for big issues such as finances.	Our contributions are taken into consideration by the SGB. We were told that we have the same powers with the SGB and we are indeed maintaining that.		No response.	To impart knowledge to the young once.
P9	To represent the voice of other learners. To say what learners request to the SGB.	The most general is about what we want to wear at school	Learner-members represent other learners in the SGB, although we do not know our true role because of lack of training. Parents are the most influential when it comes to voting	Learner-member's contribution are very limited	It is necessary because they are the once who understand learners better than any SGB members.	They are not taken into consideration because they think we are young.	It is limited to non because they think we are still young.
P10	To speak on behalf of other learners within the school and to help or support them academically.	We make decision about the discipline of learners e.g. detention.	Learner-members speaks for on behalf of other learners and other members support the learners in various ways.	I make the SGB aware of the needs of the learners even though they don't take them seriously.	Yes, it is important because teachers and principals might not understand the needs of learners as learner-members would do.	Not always sometimes. Actually, it depends on the situation.	According to legislation is to improve the leadership skills of learner-members. But they regard learner-members as young people.

P11	To represent the learners within the SGB. To be the of all the learners in the school.	We don't take decisions perse. Because we don't have the final say in decisions taken.	We are responsible for learners needs, educators are responsible for educators needs in the school and parents are responsible for parents' needs.	In most case is to improve the school environment. We check if learners have chairs and report to the SGB parents component because they are not always around the school.	Yes, it is important. To represent the learners because in most cases attention is only given to educators and parents.	They are taken into consideration during discussion and brainstorming of issues that we sometimes bring fought to the bigger body.	Yes, hence am saying we sit down and discuss before any information is taken forward.
P12	To talk on behalf of the learners.	We don't take decision. Only parents and the principal are doing that task.	Participant did not provide an answer	Participant did not provide an answer	It is important because learners get an opportunity to heard on issues of governance	Participant did not provide an answer	Participant did not provide an answer

AT THIS YEAR ANNEXURE L: EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT

Participants No1

- 1) What in your opinion is the role of the learner members in the SGB?
 - My role as a learner-member is to seat and talk on behalf of the learners in our school in an SGB meeting. It is also to support learners academically, social and economically. We are meeting learners educational needs and to support learners in all times.
 - It is also to make sure that the environment is conducive for teaching and learning. It is sad because ever since my term of office started I only attended one SGB meeting but it was about finances of the school and the rest were postponed till to date and I couldn't understand some of the things or issues that were discussed in the meeting. I had to ask the principal to clarify some other things to me, thus I felt that the SGB meeting was actually not based within my scope as a learner-member, because my role is to take good care of the learners.
 - Yet I still feel that all the postponed SGB meetings should have been rescheduled So that I can have the opportunity to learn. As things stands I actually do not know anything about school governance.
 - We never even had a training or workshop ever since we were elected; we are operating on our own. We are also taking all matters that concern our fellow learners straight to the principal because our Teacher lison officer (TLO) is constantly not available to assist us. We are operating on the mist because we not providing proper support and we also do not get proper support from other SGB members.
- 2) Discuss the decision that learner-members can make in the SGB.
 - I Don't know.
 - We don't take any decisions in the SGB, because whatever we propose to the principal is never taken into consideration. There is no proper channel between us (learner-members), the TLO, Principal and the rest of the SGB members.
 - We are failing to take decisions because I believe that things should be taking place according to procedure and protocol. I only know that we must raise our issues to the TLO before it can reach the level of the principal. There were several meetings of the SGB in the school and we were never invited, we raised our concerns but they were not taken serious. I went to ask the principal the reason why we were not invited, he said we were not needed in those particular meetings it only required the parents component and teacher components. But I was not told exactly about the purpose of the meetings although it didn't concern us as learner-members.
- 3) Discuss the difference between the role of learner-members and other governors in the SGB.
 - I only know the role of learner-members which is to provide information about learners to the SGB. We serve as link between the SGB and learners. We deliver all the concerns of learners to the SGB, be it is positive or negative although some of the learners' concerns are not taken into consideration.

There worse part is that the only SGB meeting I have ever attended was based on finance, there was, nothing related to learner discipline in the school. I feel like our issues are being neglected.

- According to me, the issues of education must come first, which means that our issues should be taken into consideration because we are the future, the issues of money may come later they must first listen to us, because before everything else learners must have emotional fulfilment for them to receive education. They will not perform to their level best if they do not have a say in their education. When we take matters straight to the principal he refer us back to the TLO even though I informed him that we already did spoke to the TLO and nothing was done thus far.
- 4) Describe the contribution of learner-members in the SGB.
- To provide information about learners.
 - We are the eyes and ears of the school, we provide all kinds of information about learners to the SGB. Once we learnt that there are some learners who are committing serious misconduct in the school by planting weed in the school premises we took the weed to the school principal and those learners were immediately suspended.
- 5) What in your view is the importance of having learner members in the SGB.
- Since we interact with all the learners in our school we know more about them, this helps the SGB to have updated information about learners in the school. The information we have about learners is vital to help the SGB to take matters into task. There are many things and burning issues that other stakeholders are unable to see in the school, and only learner-members might have information about them.
- 6) In your opinion do you think your concerns are taken consideration by other members of the SGB.
- Some are taken and some are not taken.
 - In the case of weed in our school, we had a full support from the staff, since the weed was taken out by the educators and the learners were suspended.

ANNEXURE M: NWU-EMELTEN-REC - ETHICAL CERTIFICATE - NUMBER NWU-00353-19-A2



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 086 016 9698
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za/>

North-West University Education, Management
and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology,
Engineering and Natural Sciences Research
Ethics Office (NWU-EMELTEN-REC)

Tel: +2718 299 4707
Email: lukas.meyer@nwu.ac.za

25 October 2019

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the North-West University Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC) on 28/06/2019, the NWU-EMELTEN-REC hereby approves your study as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-EMELTEN-REC grants its permission that, provided the general conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Exploring the governance role of learner members of school governing bodies

Principal Investigator/Study Supervisor/Researcher: Prof WJ van Vollenhoven

Student: Mr. NA Khoza

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	0	3	5	3	-	1	9	-	A	2
Institution			Study Number					Year		Status				

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation;
A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single study

Commencement date: 28/06/2019

Expiry date: 27/06/2020

Risk:

**Greater than minimal risk with the
prospect of direct benefit**

Approval of the study is provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of an annual monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

General conditions:

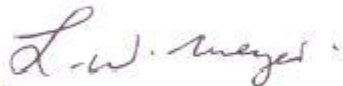
While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The principal investigator/study supervisor/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-EMELTEN-REC:*
 - annually on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided annually, and upon completion of the study; and*
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.*
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the principal investigator/study supervisor/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the NWU-EMELTEN-REC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*

- *Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for active monitoring.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-EMELTEN-REC reserves the right to:*
 - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;*
 - *to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;*
 - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
 - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
 - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-EMELTEN-REC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
 - *submission of the annual monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and/or*
 - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*
- *NWU-EMELTEN-REC can be contacted for further information via Ethics-EMELTEN-apply@nwu.ac.za or 018 299 4707*

The NWU-EMELTEN-REC would like to remain at your service and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the NWU-EMELTEN-REC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Lukas Meyer
Chairperson NWU-EMELTEN-REC

Current details: (23239522) G:\My Drive\9. Research and Postgraduate Education\9.1.5.4 Templates\9.1.5.4.2_NWU-HREC_BAL.docm
20 August 2019

File Reference: 9.1.5.4.2

ANNEXURE N: LANGUAGE EDITOR DECLARATION



Tel: 082 879 5799

E-mail: 271editing@gmail.com

To whom it may concern

This letter is to confirm that Mr N.A. Khoza submitted his MEd dissertation, *Exploring the governance role of learner-members of School Governing Bodies*, to me for proofreading and bibliographic control. I hereby confirm that the final reference list meets the requirements of the NWU Harvard style of referencing and that the document was checked for stylistic errors.

Regards

Kirchner van Deventer

9 October 2020

ANNEXURE O: TURNITIN-REPORT

20739109:Nhlanhla_Khoza.docx

by WILLIE VAN VOLLENHOVEN

Submission date: 22-Oct-2020 12:03PM (UTC+0200)

Submission ID: 1422997212

File name: gnments_ca47426d-4ce8-4bef-8b57-b2af51d56219_Nhlanhla_Khoza.docx (217.58K)

Word count: 51181

Character count: 274731

20739109:Nhlanhla_Khoza.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

14%

SIMILARITY INDEX

13%

INTERNET SOURCES

5%

PUBLICATIONS

6%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

hdl.handle.net

Internet Source

2%

2

repository.up.ac.za

Internet Source

1%

3

uir.unisa.ac.za

Internet Source

1%

4

dspace.nwu.ac.za

Internet Source

1%

5

fedsas.com

Internet Source

1%

6

www.scielo.org.za

Internet Source

1%

7

id.scribd.com

Internet Source

<1%

8

Submitted to North West University

Student Paper

<1%

9

www.education.gov.za

Internet Source

<1%

10	eduinfoafrica.files.wordpress.com Internet Source	<1%
11	vital.seals.ac.za8080 Internet Source	<1%
12	Danny Wildemeersch, Theo Jansen, Joke Vandenabeele, Marc Jans. "Social Learning: a new perspective on learning in participatory systems", Studies in Continuing Education, 2006 Publication	<1%
13	Submitted to University of Venda Student Paper	<1%
14	scholar.sun.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
15	core.ac.uk Internet Source	<1%
16	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	<1%
17	Submitted to University of South Africa Student Paper	<1%
18	Submitted to Mancosa Student Paper	<1%
19	manualzz.com Internet Source	<1%
20	repository.nwu.ac.za	

	Internet Source	<1 %
21	Johan Beckmann. "Some recent developments in the legal relationship between parent and child", Education and the Law, 2001 Publication	<1 %
22	fedsas.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
23	www.scribd.com Internet Source	<1 %
24	Submitted to University of Stellenbosch, South Africa Student Paper	<1 %
25	scholar.ufs.ac.za:8080 Internet Source	<1 %
26	Submitted to University of Pretoria Student Paper	<1 %
27	Submitted to Regenesys Business School Student Paper	<1 %
28	ir.cut.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %
29	Submitted to University of Johannesburg Student Paper	<1 %
30	fedsas.org.za	

	Internet Source	<1%
31	journals.sagepub.com Internet Source	<1%
32	Submitted to Bath Spa University College Student Paper	<1%
33	northernlaw.co.za Internet Source	<1%
34	howieswebs.ipage.com Internet Source	<1%
35	wiredspace.wits.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
36	Submitted to University of the Western Cape Student Paper	<1%
37	ujcontent.uj.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
38	ulspace.ul.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
39	Submitted to Embury Institute for Teacher Education Student Paper	<1%
40	Submitted to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Student Paper	<1%

41	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
42	www.saflii.info Internet Source	<1%
43	Mncube, Vusi, and Renuka Naidoo. "The Contribution of School Governing Bodies in Promoting Democracy in South African Schools: The Current Trends", Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 2014. Publication	<1%
44	Submitted to University of the Free State Student Paper	<1%
45	www.kas.org.za Internet Source	<1%
46	www.msmonline.co.za Internet Source	<1%
47	en.wikipedia.org Internet Source	<1%
48	www.cepc.gob.es Internet Source	<1%
49	Submitted to Republic of the Maldives Student Paper	<1%
50	paralegaladvice.org.za Internet Source	<1%

51	www.parliament.gov.za Internet Source	<1 %
52	thor.sabinet.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
53	Estelle Swart, Petra Engelbrecht, Irma Eloff, Raine Pettipher, Marietjie Oswald. "Developing inclusive school communities: voices of parents of children with disabilities", Education as Change, 2004 Publication	<1 %
54	cdn-lnx1.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %
55	www.sahrc.org.za Internet Source	<1 %
56	www.acel.org.au Internet Source	<1 %
57	Maura Mbunyuza-de Heer Menlah. "Configuring Space for Learner Participation in School Governance", Journal of Social Sciences, 2017 Publication	<1 %
58	www.mobt3ath.com Internet Source	<1 %
59	www.equaleducation.org.za Internet Source	<1 %

60	www.constitutionalcourtreview.co.za Internet Source	<1%
61	Submitted to University of Fort Hare Student Paper	<1%
62	repository.unam.edu.na Internet Source	<1%
63	Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour, Akwasi Arko-Achemfuor. "Training School Governing Body Members in Three Rural Schools in Taung: Empowerment for Good Governance", Studies of Tribes and Tribals, 2017 Publication	<1%
64	"A Decade of Research on School Principals", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2016 Publication	<1%
65	books.aosis.co.za Internet Source	<1%
66	Submitted to University of Newcastle upon Tyne Student Paper	<1%
67	Submitted to Walden University Student Paper	<1%
68	sahrc.org.za Internet Source	<1%

69	doaj.org Internet Source	<1%
70	www.concourtblog.com Internet Source	<1%
71	constitutionallyspeaking.co.za Internet Source	<1%
72	Submitted to Intercollege Student Paper	<1%
73	journals.assaf.org.za Internet Source	<1%
74	Nathan Bagarette. "Identifying Factors Driving and/or Inhibiting Participative Decision Making in Public Schools: Principals' Perspectives", The Anthropologist, 2017 Publication	<1%
75	www.ru.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
76	www.uniwest.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
77	www.populareducation.co.za Internet Source	<1%
78	Rj (Nico) Botha. "School-based management: stakeholder participation and the impact of stakeholder values", Africa Education Review,	<1%

2007

Publication

79	johanbeckmann.blogspot.ca Internet Source	<1 %
80	Maitumeleng A. Nthontho. "Chapter 4-1 Mediation as the Management Strategy for Policy Implementation", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2020 Publication	<1 %
81	Submitted to American Sentinel University Student Paper	<1 %
82	Rafael Mitchell. "Democracy or control? The participation of management, teachers, students and parents in school leadership in Tigray, Ethiopia", International Journal of Educational Development, 2017 Publication	<1 %
83	www.fedsas.org.za Internet Source	<1 %
84	www.greengazette.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
85	Submitted to Trinity College Dublin Student Paper	<1 %
86	www.legalinfo.co.za Internet Source	<1 %

87	scholar.ufs.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
88	R. J. (Nico) Botha. "The Role of the School Principal in the South African School Governing Body: A Case Study of Various Members' Perceptions", Journal of Social Sciences, 2017 Publication	<1%
89	ngqushwamun.gov.za Internet Source	<1%
90	Submitted to University of New York in Tirana Student Paper	<1%
91	Rekai Zenda. "Implementing a parental involvement policy to enhance Physical Sciences learner's academic achievement in rural secondary schools", Educational Research for Policy and Practice, 2020 Publication	<1%
92	amal.co.za Internet Source	<1%
93	www.nature.com Internet Source	<1%
94	www.justice.gov.za Internet Source	<1%
95	www.cacadu.co.za Internet Source	<1%

96	dadnegar.ir Internet Source	<1%
97	Jan Heystek. "School Governing Bodies in South Africa", Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 2016 Publication	<1%
98	Submitted to uvt Student Paper	<1%
99	open.library.ubc.ca Internet Source	<1%
100	"Religious Rules, State Law, and Normative Pluralism - A Comparative Overview", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2016 Publication	<1%
101	Kgatabela Albert Mphethi. "Chapter 21-2 Management of School Finances in South African Schools", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2020 Publication	<1%
102	es.scribd.com Internet Source	<1%
103	Rajkumar Mestry, Petrus Du Plessis. "Chapter 20 South Africa: Education Authorities and Public Schools: The Organisation and Impact of Policies in South Africa", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2020	<1%

Publication		
104	files.eric.ed.gov Internet Source	<1 %
105	nationalbarcouncil.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
106	ar.scribd.com Internet Source	<1 %
107	www.vivekananthahomeoclinic.com Internet Source	<1 %
108	www.elrc.org.za Internet Source	<1 %
109	www.saflii.org Internet Source	<1 %
110	Vusi Mncube, Lynn Davies, Renuka Naidoo. "Democratic School Governance, Leadership and Management: A Case Study of Two Schools in South Africa", Emerald, 2015 Publication	<1 %
111	mafiadoc.com Internet Source	<1 %
112	issuu.com Internet Source	<1 %
113	docplayer.net Internet Source	<1 %

114	www.westerncape.gov.za Internet Source	<1%
115	constitutionallawofsouthafrica.co.za Internet Source	<1%
116	www.ei-ie.org Internet Source	<1%
117	eldadewaal.co.za Internet Source	<1%
118	www.abacademies.org Internet Source	<1%
119	www.politicsweb.co.za Internet Source	<1%
120	"Promoting Healthy Human Relationships in Post-Apartheid South Africa", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2021 Publication	<1%
121	Jenni Karlsson. "The Role of Democratic Governing Bodies in South African Schools", Comparative Education, 2002 Publication	<1%

Exclude quotes Off

Exclude matches Off

Exclude bibliography Off