

## Partnership with major stakeholders having impact in improving Mathematics and Science in Vhembe District in Limpopo Province (South Africa): EPP Mhingwa High School, Jim Yingwane High School, Mahlefunye Primary School and Holy Rosary Combined School

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**ABSTRACT:** This study outlines the challenges South African Education systems is exposed to and how to mend the governance as equal partner which is likely to produce sustainable results through-out the country compared to some countries in the continent which are doing well like Equatorial Guinea and Zimbabwe which have got effective educational systems in place ahead of South Africa in terms of literacy to the country's population when it comes to basic education. The dawn of democracy put education of the children in the hands of the parents so that they may able to reap the fruits of their own intentions and hard work upon the education of their children as the government in power in the country believes that people shall govern and indeed at this facet of education the parents are governing (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:1). The old system of school committee was characterized by racism, undemocratically and inequality and it was gender insensitive (The Educators Voice, 1996:16). The education system was highly authoritative and hierarchical. Parents and the community had little influence on what happened in the schools (DoE, 1997:7). Of course the inception of this discernment had its own challenges despite having 86.40% of the people with literacy South Africa is amongst the countries with the highest illiteracy in Sub-Saharan Africa due to a number of factors which happened during the apartheid which kept majority away from school for a number of various reasons, this had a very negative influence to the governance of schools as most of the schools found in rural areas and townships were plagued by the highest level of illiteracy in governance which had an impact to the performance of schools as they did not execute their roles as expected though they were trained after resuming office, this made some academics in power to take advantage of the system to fulfill their own interests and personal ambitions. Research by Heystek & Louw (1991:21) believes that many governors in rural and township areas have limited skills because of their low literacy level and a "negative attitudes towards activities". Study by Vilakazi (2019:18) posits that SGBs are run by unqualified parents.

**KEY WORDS:** School governing body (SGB), School Management Team(SMT), Common Task Assessments(CTA), Education Labour Relations Council(ELRC), National Development Plan(NDP), Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD), Integrated Quality Measurement System(IQMS) & South African Schools Act(SASA).

### I. INTRODUCTION

Education is vital to the development of its society in any country which needs to compete in a global space of learning. The quality education is considered to be corner stone of economic development and transformation (Bayat, Louw & Rena, 2014: 53). In our country there is a legislation which has been passed which allows the parent community to work with department of education in achieving the results intended by the government which is to educate the nation and by doing that the nation will come out from its socio-economic challenges that the whole nation is living under at this stage. Policies and regulations have been laid down in section 20 of SA School Act deals with this situation of reaching the best out of the partnership of the parent community and the department of education, but the challenge we are facing at the moment amongst others; the capacity, resources, availability, information, readiness, priority and commitment from the parent community and the department. A study conducted by Naidu and Ngcobo (2008:132) contends that this should be followed by engaging in strategies that have been identified as holding promise for enabling successful collaboration and cooperation between schools and communities. In recent years the department has spent a lot of money in establishing school governing bodies to play their role in the education of their children as well as to workshop / train them what to do whilst they are serving in those structures, at the same time the school communities have been engaging in how best could they contribute to the success of their schools where they are staying. A study conducted by Duma, Kapueja & Khanyile (2011:51) states that it is essential for them to be given the necessary training, which should include the opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge so they would be in a position to participate meaningfully in the school governance activities. In terms of SASA 84 of 1996 parents or legal guardians are eligible to be elected to serve in the School Governing Bodies on the basis of the legal

requirement stipulated in the SASA which is used as the instrument to establish School Governing Bodies Structures in schools. Trainings done by the department should not be the obligatory ones to fulfill its mandate in setting-up the School Governing Bodies and from there they do not engage with them formal to see if they are doing what they have been elected to do for instance, to develop the policies of such school, instill discipline, to monitor and establish the finance committees, to check if the agreed decisions are being implemented for the benefit of their children, in most of the schools you find that parent community is being used to sign only cheques to be used in buying the resources of the school but you find that they never participated in the decision of the resources to be purchased whereby the principal of the school will just report to them what has been done and why they did that, so this aspect has been neglected by the department thus why most of the school do not have records of the materials bought or they do not even do the quotations as required by the act of how to handle the public funds at schools. Training is unlikely to be beneficial if it is not taken seriously (Mncube & Mafora, 2013:20). Not all respondents perceived the training that is provided as serving the intended purpose of adequate preparing SGB members for their roles.

A study by Clase, Kok & Merwe (2007:243) contends that decentralizing power to govern schools and to be involved in decision-making is aimed at decreasing centralized bureaucratic management of schools. Although it seldom occurs in practice that a government in power (ANC) rolls back all powers and responsibilities concerning school governance and management to school level, it is nevertheless desirable that a balance be struck between the authority of the state and the authority of the SGB at the school level. In practice most of the School Governing Bodies are just regarded as curtains which do fulfill the interests of the principals and teachers in many schools as they cannot actively participate in decision-making of the issues which concern governance and this gives the professionals that leeway to take advantage of the situation and when they come across the living parent communities who are conversant about the acts and procedures they find it difficult to work with such community as they are used in taking decision without encountering some challenges in the meetings they used to have with parent-component structure as most of them are just there to add the number to form a quorum.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

Considering the fact that education is a societal issue that needs all of us to play the role in order to get the intended results that could improve the level of our education and ultimately contribute positively to the economic growth of our country through the produced products that we have planted from the Foundation phase, Intermediate phase, Senior phase, Further and Education Training and final end up in different higher institutions of learning to pursue chosen careers. A study released by Clase, Kok & Merwe (2007:243) contends the success of any country's education system is dependent to a great extent on the mutual trust and collaboration existing between all partners. It is inevitable that the department works hand in hand with parents for the common good of the learners who are the children of the parents. In terms of SASA 84 of 1996, Section 16(1) Subject to this Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the ACT and Section 16(3) 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 the Department. This also applies to independent school in terms of Section 54(3) of SASA 84 of 1996.

How could the department and the SGB play their roles effectively and proficiently without the compromise of the other one? The department has to make sure that the SGB members are equipped to perform their roles in terms of providing them with the trainings which are very competent and useful like for instance after giving them such trainings they have to let them write open-exam test which will make them to be issued with the certificate of competence to serve as SGB members in that particular school where they have got children. The Circuit managers could be tasked to carry out this function under their command of control of which in terms of Section 19(1)(b) & (2) Of SASA 84 of 1996. This can make the parents to be proud for what they will be doing in the school as they will have something to show that they are competent in developing school policies, they will show that they can able to follow the processes of appointing the SGB educators who are not paid by the state but paid by the funds controlled by the SGB and also they can establish QLTC which will assist them to check teaching and learning section if is actual happening to the expected standard in the school. A study by Woods (2007:354) argues that most national governing bodies have a certification program that evaluates knowledge and competency. If this can be done the results could improve immensely in our schools because all the stakeholders will be competent in carrying out their duties without expecting the principal to lead in monitoring them about what to do as mandated by the constitution. The department has to empower SGBs so that they may engage at the same level than imposing though the constitution does not permit that in terms of SASA 84 of 1996. The SGB in Mulamula Primary School at Malamulele-West Circuit in Vhembe District in

Limpopo Province has developed its admission policy to accommodate learners who turn to 5 years old during December of that year provided that learner has graduated from Creche or Foundation Phase schools amending the one in place provincial which states that a learner should be turning 5 on the 30 June of the year of admission. In terms of the National Education Policy and South African Schools Act, determination of admission policy to public schools falls under the competence of the school's governing body (Maponya, 2010:7). The pupils were expelled from Mulamula Primary School in Dumela near Malamulele, Limpopo, allegedly, by a teacher who decided that they did not qualify for admission to Grade R (Maponya, 2010:7). The Department never acted on the ultravires committed by the educator of the above mentioned school. The department failed to execute its mandate to discipline the educator as she expelled the learners which is the function to be exercised by only the HOD of that Provincial Department in that Province let alone the principal of the school but in this case it was the educator who overruled the decision made by the entire SGB in a formal meeting, so the department has to provide the necessary platform for the capacitated SGB to do what the constitution allows on behalf of their children. A study conducted by Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia (2016:2) cited Anderson-Butcher and Ashton (2014:40) defines collaboration as `working together and sharing responsibility for results`. The parents communities have to take their roles seriously and responsible without fulfilling the constitution`s obligatory duty, they have to contribute positively by making sure that they take the education of their children in a serious note by engaging with them in a various ways like checking their books at home, establishing Quality Learning and Teaching Committee which will some time visit schools to check their books randomly to find out if indeed they are writing the class tasks and people to be assigned on these activities could be people who have already graduated from matric. A study done by Joubert, Maestry, Moose, Naidoo & Ngcobo (2008:130) contends this implies that, as a starting point, a school management team needs to establish an atmosphere that is inviting to parents and community members for participating in school activities.

A study by Maluleke (2014:8) argues that consistent findings have emerged from various researchers regarding parental involvement in schools, such as the fact that it improves student achievement, student attendance of school, and student behavior at school, as well as leading to increase community support for schools, including human, financial and material resources. School community could form some projects to fund hardworking students at tertiary level in a form of encouraging and tantalizing commitment from the parents, educators and learners to work together towards the common goal which is to achieve best quality results in their schools. The family circumstances could not be ignored if children have to be guided to work hard towards realization of better results so that they may better their family situations, so the family values towards education are primary important to shape the children in focusing in getting education. Should parents be dedicated in monitoring the progress of their children this battle can be won as this practice could instill the will to learn by the children for their own benefit than for their parents who try by all means to create conducive learning space. Improved mutual communication between the Department of Education and School Governing Bodies is the tool to be used to achieve quality results, a high degree of communication between the stakeholders could lead to positive achievement of the specific goals set by the stakeholders or expected in the school community as well as by the department in fulfilling their statutory obligations of their roles without favour and prejudice as well as to eliminate ignorance of the existence of the other stakeholders mainly by the schools as some qualified teachers know so much that the views of others are at best irrelevant. Possibly our worst fault is that which I call `profession-centricism` - the conscious or unconscious attitude that the qualified teacher knows so much that the views of others are at best irrelevant, and almost certainly inaccurate (Maryland & Rodgers, 1991:3).

My deduction is that if both stakeholders create mutual relationship which will demonstrate the integration of respect, open channels for communications, benefits of working together, recognizing values and differences of both stakeholders, inculcating cultures of ongoing learning and teaching amongst themselves our schools could benefit enormously from this partnership. A study by Posma (1990:165) contends that it is very important to have effective communication between the school and the parental home if there is to be any real partnership between parents and teachers; successful communication is an important part of any parent involvement plan. When parents and teachers work together as equal partners they bring out the best in the children (Quan-Baffour, 2006:21). As Bastiani (2000:18) points out when teachers and parents work together and education is made a priority at home, children develop beyond their peers and beyond the expectations.

### **III. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND SUB PROBLEMS**

Citizen participation and involvement at an early stage in the process is vital. The voices and views of stakeholders require an approach that is consultative, cooperative and committed to consensus building (Ile, Eresia-Eke & Allen-Ile, 2012:59). The question to be asked here is that does the School Governing Bodies do what the constitution expects them to do in the education system? Does the School Governing Bodies have what

it takes to be responsible and accountable governors? Do they understand King III report principles which have to be applied in reporting to other stakeholders in terms of transparency or they represent only their children whilst serving in the structure? On the other hand is the Department of Education as a major partner to parents with financial muscles does play their role of empowering the other stakeholders or partners for long term plan than focusing on three year period of the current serving governors? Does the department of education regard parents as equal partners in the education of their children or they are only there as puppets of the Department taking into account the proposed amendments Bill of Basic Education Law regarding limiting their powers to decide on the admission policy, scrapping their powers to recommend the appointment of senior staff teachers and amongst others scrapping the powers on language policy of that specific school where they have been elected to govern as outlined on the Government gazette **No. 41178** dated **13 October 2017** as well as the approval of ? Schools will be able to teach our children about sex-oral sex, masturbation-without the permission of parents (Matiwane, 2020:6).Is the Department of Education in a democratic dispensation not taking the nation back to those dark days where the school committee was used as a rubber stamp for imposing the agenda of the apartheid regime in our schools?

#### **IV. PURPOSE AND AIM**

**Primary aim of the study :** The school governing body should be equal to the task assigned to them in terms of the SASA 84 of 1996 which is to govern and improve the state of affairs at the school in order to ensure that quality teaching and learning is realized. School effectiveness could indicate how well the school is managed by the principal and how well parents and the communities are involved (Botha, 2010:607).The main aim of the study is to generate strategies that will enable the school governing body as legal structure representing the interests of parents, learners, school community and teachers are like together with the department of education to ensure that effective teaching and learning should happen within the parameter of the law in every school located in Vhembe District particularly at Malamulele-West and Central in a conducive environment. A study by Ehlers and Lazenby (2007:54) argues that organizations then use these societal resources to produce products and services that meet the needs of society. The principal's management actions are interwoven with the interests of the parents, the state, the church and the organized profession. In contrast to business, the implication of interwoven actions in educational management is that management in education is chiefly a case of action in partnership, for example between the officials of the state and professional people (the principal and his staff) on the one hand, and between the parents and teachers on the other (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:24)

**Secondary aim of the study :** The Department of Education has to respect the will and interests of the parents upon the education of their children wherein some of the decisions made by the SGB must be protected by the Department and ensure that the schools do implement them, for example, Language Policy is developed by such School Governing Bodies after consulting the parents of the learners who study in that school, so is the responsibility of the department to assist the schools to order such resources for the effective usage in that school as stipulated in their Constitution of that school. Studies conducted by Du Preez and Roux (2010:16) and Du Preez (2007:73) describe human rights values as universal and common values grounded in the principles underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as maintained in the South African Bill of Rights (1996). Human Rights values could be characterized as values to be cherished globally as well as locally.

#### **V. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The interests of all stakeholders should be aligned to support the common goal of achieving good education outcomes that are responsive to community needs and economic development (NDP-2030, 2012:303). Sergiovani (2001) cites Rousseau (a French philosopher of the eighteenth century) who made the point that a community is an entity that embodies the ability of individuals to come together to serve the common good (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008:11). Schools now are governed by elected school governing bodies (SGB) from school communities who develop policies, adopt constitution , monitor implementation of agreed decisions, support the professional performance and administrative duties in making sure that schools do perform their duties effectively and efficiently to attain quality results. Skarlicky, Kay, Aquino & Fushtey (2017) have proposed a framework that could be used for effective leadership at school level.The single most important investment any country can make to its people, education has intrinsic and instrumental value in creating societies that are better able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century (NPD-2030, 2012:296). It is very clear that the department alone could not make it happen either the communities represented by governance could not make it possible alone to achieve quality oriented results in our schools; these parties have to work hand in hand together to realize quality oriented results that are responsive to the needs of the societies and contributing to the economic development of the country in order to ensure that all citizens realize their full potential in the economy of the country. A study by Heystek and Paquette cited (Van Wyk, 2004:49) stresses

that this proliferation presents schools with an enormous task of governance because in South Africa, neither parents nor educators have had much experience of participatory decision making since in the past, principals were generally considered to be the only people with the required knowledge and authority to make decisions. Worku (2019:8) contends that a good school level leader appreciates and acknowledges the power of teaching and learning from other members of the community. A good leader is happy to be guided by local and international best practices in the teachers' profession. All stakeholders should be provided with clear information on accountability measures; accountability measures are likely to be met with resistance because they change the balance of power. At first, they will add to the workload of the teachers and principals and put new obligations on parents. Once system and routines are established, the workload will lessen and the system will deliver benefits for everyone (NDP-2030, 2012:311). This practice is still continuing in township and rural schools thereby the principals find it difficult to relinquish power of governance to the responsible structure mandated to do that by the Constitution.

The *school community* may be seen in a narrower sense as the form of community life in which the school principal, teachers, parents, children and former pupils work together in the interests of educative teaching and of training the child (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:406). A study by Postma (1990:164) calls educative teaching a collaborative act. By this he means that parents and teachers are both engaged in educating and teaching the same child. Although the state accepts responsibility for providing formal education the individual, parents and the community at large have a joint responsibility and authority in that respect (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:408). In the interests of the education of the child, the contact and cooperation between parents and teachers should denote a partnership. A partnership of this nature is the best way of getting parents and teachers to work together on education and to share the responsibility for education (Van Schalkwyk, 1990:39).

## **VI. GOVERNANCE AND PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Section 16(2) of SASA 84 of 1996 states that a governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school and Section 16(3) 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. The School Act distinguishes between governance and professional management, assigning the former to the SGB and the latter to the senior management team (SMT) of the school (Naidu et al, 2008:154). The mandate of the governors and administrators should be to complement each other in terms of sharing responsibility in the education of the child rather than competing for roles in the education system.

The study by Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia (2016:2) cited Anderson-Butcher & Asthon (2004:40) defines collaboration as 'working together and sharing responsibility for results'. The principal has to work hand in hand with quality learning and teaching committee by ensuring that the educators are in class fulfilling their obligations on time without any waste of time once the whistle has been rang to show that is a time for being in the class teaching vigorously the learners as being appointed to do by the department through the recommendations of the governance structure. The professional duties lies in the hands of the head masters of such institutions but for realization of the target set by the governance the principals have to accommodate the implementation of the QLTC in their schools through the initiatives of the governance together with the department should such committee being approved to be in existence in that school for the benefit of the learners in receiving quality teaching from amicable and conducive atmosphere (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:2). While the centrality of the principal in relationships within the school is acknowledged, the centrality of other individuals such as educators in relation to their peers, learners and parents is also important for the establishment of sound relationships (Naidu et al, 2008:120).

Research done by Van Schalkwyk (1990:116) emphasizes the fact that efficient management is a precondition of parent involvement. As the administrative head of the school, the principal always plays a decisive role in creating a management culture that is characterized by parent involvement. A study by NDP-2030 (2012:311) states that schools can be intimidating for many parents of learners in poor communities, there is an imbalance of power relations, parents often feel ill equipped to engage with teachers and school management about the performance of their children and the school as a whole. It is always encouraged that the principals create conducive warmth welcoming environment to all stakeholders to ensure that each interested party fulfill its obligation in the education of the child because education is a societal issue that affects any citizen in the country who knows that future of the country is in the quality education. A study by Worku (2019:8) cites that a good school level leader must be resourceful in identifying feasible and practical solutions to problems that are often encountered by learners, teachers, parents, government departments and members of the community. A study by Nash (2015:5) believes that governing bodies are the key strategic decision makers and vision setters in

every school. Eysenck (1972) cited by April, Macdonald & Vriesendorp (2000:119) posits that the notion of rational man, acting in conformity with reason and knowledge and guided entirely by his brain, is erroneous, although still widespread and still governs many of our educational and social policies. Instead ...much of human conduct is governed by heart rather than by head; by emotion, rather than by reason. The existence of SGBs in schools play an important role than when schools are at their own alone doing everything by themselves, as they would be expected to develop policies, adopt constitution and other functions than focusing in their primary professional matters which is to ensure that effective teaching and learning does happen at the school. Parents must participate in all aspects of the management of their children`s schools in order for school governing bodies to carry out their purpose (Talane:2014). Education is the responsibility of any structure that is found in that area where the school is located. Communities may breed a nation which is able to educate itself and prioritize the education of its offspring without favour, fear or prejudice (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:4). As it has been evident through the findings, HoDs could use the support from the members of the communities where their schools are based. Such support may come in the form of parental involvement, but the involvement of the school governing body is also most necessary (Gamedze, 2015:177).

## **VII. PROFESSIONAL DUTIES INVESTED UPON THE PRINCIPAL**

Section 16(3) of SASA 84 of 1996 states that the principal performs professional management duties and is responsible with the allocations of learning areas in the school in consultation with the staff and the SGB for effective teaching and learning as his/her professional duty to make sure that educators are allocated learning areas they are trained to offer which they are comfortable to execute in the school for the benefit of the learners who are major beneficiaries in the process. Principals should at all times follow the right procedures when performing their primary tasks than taking advantage of the power of the position they occupy and using state funds for their own benefit at the expense of the entire system which is supposed to benefit the pupils, teachers, support staff, SGB members, school community and the department of education; such is often compromised by the schools principals who fail to harness the involvement of all major stakeholders through effective communication by withholding the information and manipulate the SGB members to allow wrong things thrive at the school for their own personal interests. Study by Van der Westhuizen (2015:409) argues that the question is not whether there should be a relationship between the school and the community but whether the existing relationships can be improved for the sake of more effective school teaching. All organizations regard effective communication as essential for survival (Fielding, 1997:4).

Electronic communication means that we can communicate easily and instantly from offices, homes, schools and most forms of transport (Fielding, 1997:347). The principals as the accounting officers representing the department of education in that school do not have any excuse at this stage in time by not imparting the information to the intended users for their digestion and inputs for consideration in the decision making through the legal structures in place at the school for administration and governance purposes considering a number of means of communication at their disposal like e-mails, group chat through social media, telephone calls and circulars. Research conducted by Van Wyk (2007:134) cites that a parent serving on an SGB in a rural community stated that the dominance of principals can also be attributed to them withholding information from SGB members. This is particularly true of affluent communities where parents are well educated and tend to try to dominate events at school. They sometimes want to take over the professional leadership role of the principal (Van Wyk, 2007:134-135).

Section 19 of SASA 84 of 1996 provides a platform for the extensive training that could run continuously for the utmost importance to the members to grasp the contents of SASA in relation to the formation of SGB, governance of the school by the SGB and clear distinguish the professional role to be played by the principal of the school, as well as to how to determine the subjects to be taught at the school and to determine the language policy of such school to address the needs of the environment where the school is located would be of utmost importance in complementing governance and professional management which is the function delegated to the head master of such school. Study done by Van Wyk (2007:137) states that one teacher maintained: *“the workshops for training of SGBs should be improved. Follow-ups should be made to evaluate their performance. No follow-ups, no improvement.”*

A study by Riley (2008) cited by Kanana (2015:9) believes that head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff, parents and governors. This therefore calls for head teachers to be knowledgeable in educational matters. Successful head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils` academic achievement through their attributes and competencies. Managerial skills of head teachers therefore contribute to the general performance of the school. In terms of what has been written above it is very clear that even in Kenya the

professional duty is the obligation of the principal who should be knowledgeable in educational matters, the same applies here in South Africa, any head master to execute the delegated function by the Head of Department should be well vexed with educational matters in order to ensure that quality teaching and learning does take place at the school. Head teachers improve the teaching and learning of pupils and therefore their academic outcome through their influence on staff motivation, commitment, teaching practices and developing teachers' capacities for leadership. After realizing the need to professionalize school leaders, England has seen the need for certified training for head teachers to provide for management skills not included in teacher training (Kanana, 2015:10). The above citation is also shared by South African Basic Education Minister, "We take leadership of our schools very seriously. Evidence has shown that a good school is the one run by a good leader. The principal is a critical position we cannot leave to chance", said Angie Motshekga (Khumalo, 2011). The sentiment by the minister strengthen the crucial role expected to be played by the principal in the implementation of the department policies on behalf of the Head of Department and SGB policies which are intertwined for one school led by such principal, the head master could be regarded a bridge between the department and SGB who is expected to implement all the policies of all these legal bodies at the same time.

Study conducted by Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia (2016:14) argues that the policy also is understood differently by the principals in charge in schools whereby the other principal believes working together is so vital to enable the two to realize the vision of the school, however others think differently of which one thinks that curriculum in supposed to be executed by the professional and the SGB has to provide the infrastructure to be used by the school and must not interfere with professional delivery of the curriculum and the other one has got different views about how to manage the separation of powers as he believes that the SGB manages the schools' affairs but the SMT is responsible for managing administration and implementation of the policies of the school. A theory of Van Wyk (2007:135) argues that despite having majority representation on the SGB, many parents serving on SGBs are reticent and rely on the principal and teachers for leadership and guidance in decision-making. Some teachers interviewed feel strongly that parents' roles on the SGB should be reduced even more and those teachers as "*enlightened professional people who know about children*" should not be placed in a position where they could be outvoted by parents. Based on this sentiment shared above it is very clear that there is a rift on working together and sharing equal power in the education of a child who is a learner though SASA 84 of 1996 separates the role each party is to play in the education of the child.

### VIII. INTERACTION WITH THE RESPONDENTS

The reasonable research process began with a pilot study in how best the questionnaires to be used in collecting data in a qualitative method should look like in order to generate more data for the study. The supervisor was then approached with a draft of the questionnaires to be used for his approval before the department of education in Vhembe District is formal approached for permission to conduct the study in their district. The district concerned was also informed in writing by the provincial office and the national office about the study as they were copied on the letter that was addressed to the district manager of Vhembe District. The approval was received almost after a month whereby the department left it to the researcher to inform the circuit managers, principals, SGB members and other participants from different school communities concerned in the study but at the same time all the schools were informed internal by the department about this investigation.

Study by Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia (2016:12) cites that the questionnaires to all participants had a portion of consent for their participation which was voluntarily in which assurance of anonymity and confidentiality with regard to data collected about school should be done within the ethical means of conducting the research study. The study had a consent form separately from the questionnaires thereby the participants could take their time to express their opinions and experiences whilst completing the questionnaires. The Literature analysis control is given its space in the process of explaining the findings from the participants as their views were just quoted in a verbatim mode as written by the participants who voluntarily took part in the study without any force, pressure and coercive (Maluleke et al, 2016:12). Similar views were represented by the view of one participant and the different views were included as such to give another perspective of how participants in the same setting could come to different conclusions on how things are done or are ought to be done. The literature knowledge thus reflects the existing knowledge on the co-operation and equal partnership between the governors and the schools in transforming the schools to get and sustain quality results from its performance has been crafted by the researcher through the participation of the major rich-information from the concerned and affected participants who are in the system or who were in the system responsible with governance and administration in their respective schools or school communities one way or another in a form of support, partaking, involvement and/being members the SMT and governance. The following headings have been identified as issues of primary concern through data analysis and gathering:

- Sound governance and administration
- Mentoring and monitoring of performance
- Empowerment
- Education should be left to professionals

The views from the principals in respect of this matter are paramount importance to understand the responsibility they have upon themselves in ensuring that there is equal partnership in the education of a child. Principal A had this to say on this matter, "I think the two role players complement each other hence they both score successes in their mandatory roles as per applicable guides. I personally witnessed more successes in co-operation of two stakeholders hence we have remarkable results. There will never be any blaming games as long as the administrators provide professional coaching in their school governing bodies. There is no common sense applicable on completing their legal roles but their operational measures only depend on policies and prescripts. No policy is an island; all policies must be on/in line with Constitution of Republic of South Africa." Principal D had this view, "The SGB respect the SMT at all cost. The SGB supports the SMT through school management and financial management. The two components of the school work together at all cost." A collective purpose can be achieved only if it is truly collective, i.e. representing the considered views of all involved. So for all schools there is a bond between them and the families and the communities they serve. It is a kind of bond of confidence, of trust, that exists between them (Hardy & Altken, 1986:18). The principals believe that the two respect each other as well as to complement each other in their mandatory obligations, it is very important that the two observe their roles in terms of the law and keep mutual relationship at best for the benefits of the learners who are the children.

Governor B3 from a parent-wing had this view; "There is a tendency to engage in blame shifting when things do not go right in the teaching and learning of learners. To help improve on this it is advisable that each stakeholder works within their confines of their own duties." Governor C1 from a teacher-wing had this to say; "In schools where they plan and strategize together schools they are united and work as a collective in schools, we each play its part with pride and without blame or interference, they celebrate their success together and embrace their failures as a team and for that they are able to soldier on united. But in schools where there are infightings another plays dirty to fail the other and in such schools no one is ready to take the blame but points at the other, in such instances they waist time fighting than planning for the next exam."

Governor C3 also from the parent-wing has this notion on this matter of mutual respect; "Parents or School Governing Bodies allow educators in most cases to step over them because of their illiterate status or academic status as they undermine themselves and they are not sure of their role as governors which affect mutual respect between the two parties. I suggest that minimum requirement for a member to be elected should be in place to close the academic gap between educators and the members of the School Governing Bodies in order for both to treat each other with the necessary mutual respect in order to fulfill its constitutional obligation."

The respondent E3, "When it comes to education for a child or learner there is a blaming game, parents blame teachers when learners do not produce results, e.g. teachers don't teach our children that's why they are failing or being teachers shift the responsibility to parents, for example, saying parents have to help their children with homework or exercises so that the results will be good. Both players should communicate in order to be able to help learners to produce good results and most of all respect is the key. The two role players in education of a child do not treat each other with the necessary respect."

Views expressed by governors do emphasize that blaming game do take place when there is no good working relations between these stakeholders like planning together what ought to be done in the school throughout the year in terms of the terms available in the academic year. Governor C3 believes that in order to put the house in order to ensure that the role players treat each other with respect each party deserves, the issue of minimum requirement for education on top of the current requirements to elect parents into SGB could balance the graph other than what seems to be the case in his opinion that teachers step over the mark which does not belong to them by virtue of their academic status over the parents. The experts believe that communication is a key in order to ensure that the children or learners do well in their school work than blaming game played by each party when things do not go well at the school in terms of the results obtained by the learners, the results mirror how the school is doing internal to the external locality which prompt the inquisition by the community at large depending on how bad the results could be and at the same time when results are good commendations from across the wide spectrum of the society will be dedicated to the school at large which include the SGB and the



SMT that they are doing a good job. There has been an increasing need for organization and government to demonstrate that they are achieving results. This has become necessary because higher levels of awareness in society have increased demands for transparency and accountability in many organizations (Ile et al, 2012:77). Participants do not believe that there is enough mutual respect that each party gives other than SGB giving the SMT the necessary respect they deserve in managing the school as mandated in terms SASA 84 of 1996, section 16(3). Some participants believe that if the planning is done by all these role players there will never be a blaming game amongst themselves whereas some are of the opinion that if communication is done effectively and continuously blaming game could be avoided though some strongly believe that the teachers are using their educational status to overstep the boundary they have in the SGB and therefore believe that a minimum requirement should be in place when elections are done in order to get the parents who are educational informed so that they could be able to match the educational status of the teachers in the structure this could minimize the overstepping on the role which should be played by the parents but instead it is exploited by the teachers. Sometimes the parents are the ones who do not have a trust on their capabilities and abilities to govern the schools though they did not reject the nominations when elections are conducted in order to pave a way for others who might be having different views when it comes to the issue of governance, the issue of guidance as cited by principal A which is done by the principals upon them as SGB members might play another influential role to them that the principals can do whatever they want to do at the school if they can be able to assist us and guide us on how best to interpret and apply the policy shows that they master the governance though it is our role, so some regard themselves as just a rubber stamp in order to legitimize the decision taken by the principals than as equal partners in the education of a child.

As one of the members of Quality Learning & Teaching Campaign or elected to govern the school on behalf of parents community/ teacher-component/ learner-component/ staff, how do /did you find serving in the School structures or School Governing Bodies worthwhile in terms of improving the results of the school for a long term and the role played by the Department in terms of administration?:The Principal A had this notion on serving at the structure; “I really feel great. Participating in School Governing Bodies is utmost importance because it is the only key that gives courage to both schools and community at large. SGBs assist in total development of schools that include infrastructure sustainability and learning development. SGBs know exactly all challenges faced by learners and solutions thereof because they represent learners’ parents. Formulation of realistic policies fast-track learners’ academic progress and school progress in general”

Principal B is of this view, “My work as principal of Holy Rosary Independent Combined School is at all time to see that our learners are given quality teaching so as to facilitate a quality learning and creating an environment where the learner can develop holistically searching not only the outcome of above average results but the development of the child in other field like: moral, spiritual and emotional formation of the child. The Department of Education through the Circuit offers to the school elements which help to fulfill the commitment through monitoring, workshops, SASAMS, DDD, inspection visits, competition, etc., there is constant interaction between the Department and the School.”

Principal C had this to say, “School Governing body is the legal elected structure to govern the school holistically and the community ambassador to channel parent community and develop relationships between four components that are: Educators, Parents, Learners and Community. Sensing in the school structure is educative and mind opening to deal with educational route towards success.”

Governor A1, “As one of the elected SGB, I find it to be very useful and help as we are able to help educators and monitor our children. As we are elected by parents to represent them at school we find it very important because it gives us the opportunity to have a say to our children’s future and we also take part of the school’s decision in terms of our to improve the school results and how to discipline our children when not behaving well. It is a great honour to us as we were able to take part to our children’s future.”

Governor C4 had this view on this matter; “As a member of the School Governing Body (teacher component) one plays an important role in the overall governance of the school. Our brief as a teacher component includes amongst other things, making the parent component aware of challenges that educators experience in executing their duties on a day to day basis. This enables the SGB to make amendments in the school policy if necessary. Discipline in the school (learner discipline) is key to the success and progress of any school. Teachers are the ones who have firsthand information on school discipline so their presence in the SGB is important. Teachers also guide the parent component on the policy provision. (SGB guide)”.

Respondent E1, "It is worthwhile serving in the school structures as you are part and parcel of the decision making body: 1). You come up with ways to improve learners' performance through providing teaching and learning materials, providing support for both teachers and learners. 2). You sit down to analyze school results and advise accordingly. 3). We organize workshops and remuneration to motivate teachers e.g. outings when results are very good.

The views expressed by the governors from teacher-wing and parent-wing alongside the views from the principals as well as experts do stress on the importance of working together in making decisions of the school in order to support each other during the process of implementations to ensure that the intended objective is achieved at the end of such activity. The role played by the department when it comes to the administration of the school in terms of quarterly results, school inspections, providing workshops, capturing school results for accessibility in the whole country known as SASAMS and the community to support schools through monitoring and assisting of the teachers and learners to achieve their primary assignments were raised also by some governors from either side and this confirms that education is a societal issue which needs all the members of the community to play their part in their localities where the schools are found, by so doing the future is being built through such intervention which ultimately benefit the economy of such community as the end results of such undertaking which should have produced educated children from such school community. Research conducted by Ile, Eresia-Eke & Allen-Ile(2012:6) contends that governments need to be constantly aware of the needs of the communities they serve. This enables them to respond appropriately with a view to meeting those needs and improving the quality of the lives of its citizens by introducing or improving the service needed.

Majority of respondents believe that the current system in place works well as it allows the parents and educators to work together for the benefit of one child who is a learner in this case, they sustained their views as to why the system should be retained as such in order to allow checks and balances done by the parents, they believe that it is very vital to keep the current system in place to see to it that running of the schools are intact as that could create some pitfalls if the administrators should be left alone to deal with policies and governance at the same time implementing them at their own pace could be disastrous in the system. They believe that administrators should be monitored and be held accountable for their actions on the given assignments by their clients whom in this case are parents. The fact is that parents and teachers do have a lot to share with each other over individual children and most schools in the sample had excellent information systems (West, 1993:71). Study by Naidu et al (2008:191) argues that monitoring helps schools, departments or individuals assess how well they are doing. It allows schools to assess if they are achieving targets and teaching standards, and shows where improvement is needed.

Few governors have got unique views which differ sharply with the views expressed by majority on this question of changing the system in place to govern the schools. Governor B2 believes that policies should be made by the administrators and implements them at their own will without huge participation and monitoring by the governors, whereas governor B1 is of the view that the system should be open for change if necessary and responsibilities should be reviewed timeously. This governor believes that the scope of the SGB should be limited to policies only not to reach the administration part, however this governor argues that should the two be separated there might be a disaster in schools of a lack of checks and balances. They all agree about the importance of having parents on the board but with limited scope of responsibility and powers, their participation should be minimal also in order to allow the professionals to lead in the education of a child.

Governor C2 strongly believes that there is only one change which should be effected in order to perfect the system which is to put grade 12 as one of the requirements on top of the current requirements in place at the moment in order to hold their employees accountable. Governor C2 also believes that people who are illiterate should not be entrusted with a huge responsibility of this nature and is of the view that in order to make things work at the school people who are able to read and develop the code of conduct, finance policy, safety policy and the constitution of the school, if that is not addressed schools with educated SGBs will benefit and the ones with uneducated SGBs are likely to suffer in terms of the benefits which are derived from this system, he believes that the government came with good system but failed to set educational requirement on it to make it optimal. Research conducted by West (1993:88) posits that yet selection of governors to date has not yet been rigorous in its expectations of knowledge or training. Anyone can be put forward or come forward as a governor and, indeed, with the greater onus which is now placed on governors' shoulders, there is understandable concern about the suitability and caliber of the people who might stand and the capacity of any governing body to work cohesively and with due confidence about their remit and powers.

## IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature review analysis and findings from governors in this study warrants the department of education to consider the following recommendations in the opinion of the researcher in order to take South African education system to another level so that it could be comparable to the world class basic education:

- The department should make it a policy to campaign at parents meetings and community gatherings by parents community who intend to stand for elections in their schools so that those who are to elect them understand what they stand for in the education of the society and their children, by so doing their profiles will be assessed by all parents who will vote them into governance of their schools. It is always encouraged that members who are available for nominations are better equipped to handle finances and develop policies of the school and as such have some level of rudimentary education to understand the concepts which they will be exposed to for the period of three years.
- The department of education and governing bodies associations should make sure that the level of training to the governors in public schools and independent schools is improved by ensuring that effective training is continuous as stipulated in SASSA 84 of 1996, Section 19 (1)(a & b) in order to capacitate them in executing their roles so that they could able to perform their functions effectively and consider issuing them with certificate of competency after completing the program of training designed in that particular period by which in principle will be to professionalize the structure. The department of education and governing bodies associations should consider writing all the training materials in all official languages of the country for easy usage by those who are less educated.
- The Department of Education should urgently address the need of Mathematics teachers at GET Band especial at grade 9; re-training of Mathematics teachers should be reviewed in order to meet the national expectations as the results from all schools used in the study show that learners are performing well at grade 7 at primary level up to grade 8 but when they go to grade 9 the bar drops drastically and that has a huge influence on learners opting for Mathematical Literacy at grade 10. Incentive specifically for Mathematics teachers at grade 9 should be introduced to stimulate the morale of Mathematics teachers teaching at this grade. Workshops and vigorous trainings could help also but without considering the benefits that are attributed to teachers who are doing extremely well at grade 9 could have a minimum impact.
- The department of education and governing bodies should at all times create a space for social cohesion in roping the local authority like councilors, political leaders, union leaders, traditional leaders, pastors, social workers and community at large should come to the board to assist the school to improve the state of affairs for the benefit of the learners. Traditional leaders, political leaders and councilors as well as pastors should be encouraged to include one item of educational interests in their daily social gatherings in order to cautionise youth about the importance of education, their influence could have a positive impact on raising education awareness for the development of the society. The local authority should intervene early if things do not go well in their local school as the department's expectation remains but guidance also makes clear that local authority have no statutory powers of intervention with academies (Nash, 2015:15).

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