

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS APPLIED IN THE RESEARCH STUDY OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN VHEMBE DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

¹Raymond Mkatoko Maluleke, ²Zelege Worku & ³Mammo Muchie
^{1,2,3}Tshwane University of Technology, 159 Nana Sita Street, Pretoria, South Africa

ABSTRACT: The aim of this exploration is to show and expose the use of descriptive and cross-sectional in conducting a study to reach the conclusion that is very reflective of the current state of affairs within the locality and surrounding of the study. Descriptive study also involves an examination of the state of affairs describing, analysing and reporting conditions that exist or that existed (Kanana, 2015:21) cited Kothari (2004). Quantitative methods of data analyses were used in the study mainly. According to Bryman (2015), a descriptive study design is suitable for an exploratory study of this kind. According to Maluleke (2014:48) and Terry (1977:179), a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses are appropriate for this kind of study. Quantitative research methodology being regarded as realism or positivism in uncovering the existing truth in explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods in particular statistics (Aliaga & Gunderson:2000). The results produced by different schools were used in gathering data explored this method in comparing the performance of those four schools in similar period since 2014 up to 2020 in studying and analysing the pattern of how they performed in a decade. Data was then captured in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) then data analysis commenced (Bayat, Louw & Rena, 2014:186). Studies by Glicken (2003:1) argue that research may be regarded as a rational approach to problem solving. Research done by Creswell (2005:39) defines qualitative research as a type of educational research in which the researchers rely on the perspectives of participants: asking broad, general questions; collecting data consisting primarily of words from participants; describing and analysing these words for themes; and conducting the inquiry in a subject-based manner. Studies by Adler & Adler (1998) cited in Lee (1999:21) argues that a qualitative researcher's participation can vary from direct involvement to hands-off observation, and a combination of qualitative questionnaires. The study applied well known methods of conducting research in a form of quantitative and qualitative to reveal how best the governors could be used in our public schools and independent schools to get the quality results through effective sound governance and administration.

KEY WORDS: Quantitative, Qualitative, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), School Governing Body (SGB), Questionnaires, Quality Learning & Teaching Committee (QLTC), School Management Team (SMT) & department of education

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Since the dawn of democracy a number of studies have to be undertaken in order to find how best the school governing body could play its role to the education of their children as envisaged in the constitution of the country. The study discussed the material and methods used in the investigation. It discussed the study design, the sample size of study, the sampling technique, reliability and validity methods, statistical methods of data analyses, and research ethics considerations. The researcher outlined the research methodology used to collect data. In the basis of the presumed outcomes and data of the study, the insights and experience accumulated by the members of the SGBs, professionals, circuit officials and SMTs as well as their anticipations were discussed. It explained in detail all aspects of the research process employed for the study as alluded above ranging from the sampling procedure, its rationality and limitations, the data collection process, the instruments used and their validity and reliability, the way the data was analysed and its relevance of the aims of the study.

II. STUDY DESIGN

The design of study was descriptive and cross-sectional. Quantitative methods of data analyses used in the study mainly. According to Bryman (2015), a descriptive study design is suitable for an exploratory study of this kind. According to Maluleke (2014:48) and Terry (1977:179), a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses are appropriate for this kind of study. There were 65 educators, 28 School

Governing Board members and 30 circuit officials (Thenga, 2014:19).

Thus, the population size is 123. These 123 officials are working in 3 public schools and 1 independent school. These 4 schools are part of the Malamulele-West Circuit (Jim Yingwane High School and Mahlefunye Primary School) and the Malamulele Central Circuit (EPP Mhinga High School and Holy Rosary Catholic School, independent school). The four schools have 2,500 learners (Thenga, 2014:19). Thus, the population size of study was equal to 123. Data were collected from each one of the 123 officials who are working in the 3 public schools and 1 independent school. As such, the sampling procedure was a census (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013: 49-50). A qualitative research method and a quantitative methods prevailed in the study though quantitative were applied mainly in the study than qualitative method, people like School Governing Body members, school clerks, educators, principals, circuit officials and circuit managers, were used to give information through tested means like interviews and Delphi technique method in a form of questionnaires as these people mentioned above have got good accounts for incidents which take place in their operation of control and all the above schools used do have different scenarios in terms of how the SGB has played their roles in improving the performance of their respective schools.

Quantitative research methodology being regarded as realism or positivism in uncovering the existing truth in explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods in particular statistics (Aliaga & Gunderson:2000). The results produced by different schools used in gathering data explored this method in comparing the performance of those four schools in similar period since 2014 up to 2020 in studying and analysing the pattern of how they performed in a decade. Data was then captured in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) then data analysis commenced (Bayat, Louw & Rena,2014:186). Quantitative research design that was measurable, assessable and assessment based in terms of the results the schools have achieved within a certain period were used as the tool to prove the performance of the school in this regard of which that demonstrated if the SGB has managed to take out the school from poor performing to better performing state through its involvements and its strategies which have been inculcated by the school to produce the expected results. Studies by Glicken (2003:1) argue that research may be regarded as a rational approach to problem solving. Research done by Creswell (2005:39) defines qualitative research as a type of educational research in which the researchers rely on the perspectives of participants: asking broad, general questions; collecting data consisting primarily of words from participants; describing and analysing these words for themes; and conducting the inquiry in a subject-based manner. Studies by Adler & Adler (1998) cited in Lee (1999:21) argues that a qualitative researcher's participation can vary from direct involvement to hands-off observation, and a combination of qualitative questionnaires.

Qualitative research design that is exploratory, descriptive and contextual took place in the research project. Qualitative research was primary concerned with the view that individuals interacting with the social world construct reality. Quality researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed in making sense of the world and the experiences they have in it (Merriam, 1998:6). This method is regarded as subjectivism as its beliefs that there is no definite truth in pragmatic philosophy, truth is constantly changing and being updated through the process of human problem solving by applying open-ended questionnaires, interviews and discourse analysis. This research paradigm was regarded as realism or positivism in nature as it deals with the figures mostly, and of which in this case the percentage achieved by the four schools used in the project fulfilled that aspect whereby statistics demonstrated where such school was doing well even where it was not doing well, in which the short fall was identified which made the performance to be in that way in that school within a certain period and the strategies used to come out from such dire situation of performance if the situation was dire and this is where the subjectivism played role under qualitative method. Also, the staff size, enrolment of learners and SGB size also made sense to this part of quantitative paradigm applied in the project through charts and figures to demonstrate the differences.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Studies by McMilan and Schumacher (1997:33) cite that the term "research design" refers to the plan and structure of an investigation used to gather evidence to answer research questions. A research design's purpose is to plan and structure a given research study in such a way that the validity of the research findings is maximized (Mouton & Marais,1991:33). Descriptive survey according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) is the process of collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject under study. Descriptive study also involves an examination of the state of affairs describing, analysing and reporting conditions that exist or that existed (Kanana, 2015:21) cited Kothari (2004). In the study the researcher was applying exploratory design method as a primary instrument for data collection in a form of interview transcripts, computed questionnaires and analysis of a range of documents such as year-end performance results statistics

for selected schools used in a research project to determine the efficacy of partnership and collaboration Between the department and governors along with other role players in the education of a child. Study by Merriam (1998:23) points out very importantly that the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is on someone else's mind and since this cannot be directly observed or measured, the interviewer has to ask questions in such a way as to obtain meaningful information in an explanatory way to be understood by the participants get more from them so that meaningful and practical circumstances could be illustrated in writing the final product. Studies by Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit (2004:20) argue that knowledge is obtained not only by observable phenomena, but also from people's intentions, values, reasons, perceptions, meaning making and self-understanding. The semi-structured one-to-one interviews in a descriptive way were another domain exposed in carrying out data collection. The task of the researcher was to garner the evidence of the duty of the governance and department in performance of the institution recognised in the study to which extent the SGB members of these schools interpret their roles and how they handled these roles for the benefits of the school and the larger community as their jurisdiction operates, to which extent the department co-operated mutually with the SGB in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning do take place for the benefit of the learner.

The research achieved the intended outcome as it was supplemented by a theoretical comparison to the best systems used by the countries with better education systems, references of practical cases as well as case studies happening in different schools in nature by using quantitative method and qualitative paradigm based on the true reflection of the cases which have been finalized by courts of law for instance the scandal by the Department of Education for delivering text books in Limpopo was ruled in court for execution and the case of pit toilet in Limpopo also was used as a reference that the department has to ensure that schools have got good infrastructure in order to have sound effective teaching and learning that are beneficial to the children. Also the relevant information were gathered from former students of different schools, professionals, parents including former SGB members as well as former principals and retired educators, learners, business people and local educators who teach in other schools than those in the local community by doing the sampling amongst the targeted people whereby people of different status from all stakeholders mentioned above were interviewed and some were given questionnaires for the study research to be completed as well as the tangible results for different School Governing Bodies which have brought some changes to their schools' results through their mandate as governance and the administration of such schools improved too.

Co-operation and mutual collaboration with the major participants was a wise strategy to carry out the research to be successfully, by making a several meetings with major participants helped to get more information about how best could the School Governing Bodies play effective role in the performance of the schools as equal partners to the Department of Education in making sure that children get quality education in a conducive environments together with different interested stakeholders from different communities to help our schools to produce quality results through providing quality education throughout the year. And finally, archival research was inculcated whereby various documents like learner enrolments, school results, staff establishments, recognition ceremonies awards events and others were used to analyse generated findings in an exploratory and contextual design employed by the researcher in the study. The researcher used suggestions outlined in Neuman (2005) cited in Glecken (2003:153) to ensure in-depth findings related to the research questions. As a result of Neuman's suggestions some of these points could be made:

- The researcher attempted to observe and experience the principal's day-to-day duties and SGBs' functions and the role played by the circuit managers in Malamulele-West Circuit and Malamulele-Central where the study was based.
- The researcher in the study is an educator and served on the finance committee of the school where he was employed and also served as deputy chairperson of the SGB of another school where his child was studying, he knows and understands the principals' duties, SGB members' functions and the roles played by circuit managers with their officials in the daily operations of the schools as well as the setting of the environment and the atmosphere he was researching.
- The researcher was able to recognize events, interactions and social processes without interfering.

IV. TARGET POPULATION

The size of the population was 123. These are 65 educators, 28 School Governing Board members and 30 circuit officials (Thenga, 2014:19). These 123 officials work in three public schools and one independent school located at Xitlhelani village with the estimation of 800 enrolments which are part of the Malamulele-West

Circuit (Jim Yingwane High School and Mahlefunye Primary School) and the Malamulele Central Circuit (EPP Mhinga High School and Holy Rosary Catholic School). There are 2, 500 learners in these 4 schools (Thenga, 2014:19). Data was collected from each one of the 123 officials who are working in the 4 schools and two circuit offices. As such, the sampling procedure was a census (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013: 49-50). Studies by Kanana (2015:21) cited Kothari (2004) define the target population as all members of the real set of people, events or objects which the researcher wishes to generate the findings. Whilst the study by MacMillan & Schumacher (2001:165) posits that the target population is described as a set of items, such as objects, individuals, or happenings that meet certain standard and are used to extrapolate study findings. There is inclusion of QLTC members who are primary composed by professionals from the school, SGB members, circuit officials and Civic members in the study as the experts in different fields of specialization who do usually assist schools to improve their performance in such school community if there is a challenge of continuous poor results attained by the school in order to generate more ideas which were useful in producing quality end product of the study.

V. SAMPLING

Sampling was done from one circuit, two high schools and two primary schools with the minimum enrolment of 300 per school to the maximum of 1400 per school. The size of the SGBs was ranging from 9 members to 12 members depending on the size of the school and teachers from 10 to 45 depending on the size of the school. The overall general expectancy of the size was plus or minus 123 members. Sampling of members was non-probability methods, and the purpose of purposeful sampling was to select information-rich cases and informants who would best answer the research question. Studies by Thenga (2012:19) cited McMillan and Schumacher (2006:319) argue that purposive sampling is used to make information collected from small samples more useful. The researcher selected samples because they were likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon under investigation. Sample decisions are taken in order to obtain the most comprehensive source of knowledge available to address the study question (Nieuwenhuis 2007:78 cited by Thenga, 2012:19). Schools with big enrolment is likely to be having a big size of SGB which govern them and that was having an impact on the size of the numbers used in the study, but a minimum of seven members per school could achieve the intended goal of the study, principals and educators as well as circuit officials played a vital role as they represented the views of the department as partners in the undertaking, the education of a child needs the two to work together in transforming the mind of this child to be useful in the society and country as a whole.

VI. DATA GATHERING

Quantitative methods of data collection and analyses were used in the study. Data was collected by using a structured, pre-tested and validated questionnaire of study. The questionnaire of study is an adaptation of a questionnaire used for conducting a similar study in Tshwane North District (Worku, 2019: 109-120). A pilot study was used for ensuring content validity. The Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring validity, whereas the Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013: 49-53). Primary sources of data are School Governing Bodies, School Principals, and Department of Education officials (Maluleke, 2014:48). Information were obtained from the primary sources like School Governing Bodies, QLTC members, Department of Education sources through simple formal process of administering questionnaires to participants and processing all responded questionnaires for interpretation, discussion and presentation as well as records for example the results for all the intended schools for the period of five years since 2015 up to 2019, well informed community members who served as members of the SGB some years ago, educators and former school principals who served SGBs; so 6-10 people per school could be sampled based on the position occupied before or at the moment within the SGB and in the school as well as department officials could be roped in to provide supplementary information as the SGBs and School are directly reporting under them for effective administration.

The interview schedule; a questionnaire written to guide interviews is called an interview schedule. It comprises a set of predetermined questions that may be used as appropriate instrument to engage the participants and designate the narrative terrain (De Vos, 2006:296). Study done by Ile, Eresia-Eke and Allen-Ile (2012:142) posits that the point needs to be made though, that an interview where a conversation not based upon questions and answers may take place. This takes place especially in the form of the expression of opinions. Observation is a very effective way of finding out what people do in particular contexts, their routines and the interactions patterns of their everyday lives (Darlington & Scott, 2003:73). Study by Ile et al (2012:130) contends that this is an effective technique as it allows the observer access to first-hand knowledge of the way that project is being executed or how well a completed intervention is performing. The researcher chose the observational method as

complementary to other major instruments used in the study because he was able to see, observe and hear Things happening at schools, which he deemed necessary and meaningful to record for the outcome of the study (McMilan and Schumacher, 1997:268). Secondary sources like wider school community with keen interests in the development of education of their jurisdiction like royal leaders, councilors, mayors who sometimes adopt poorly performing schools, civic leaders with desk of education in their disposal to which extent they regard partnership for these SGBs and department in attaining their set targets and how they support education in their midst , former students of different schools, business people, newspapers, journals, dispatching questionnaires to some professors in the education fraternity to fill them in trying to find out their knowledge and viewpoints in relation to this matter to be undertaken as supplementary of the primary respondents were roped in. The information from affected stakeholders was of paramount importance in outlining the challenges and ways of dealing with them and a challenge was to understand the legality and practicality of those opinions and views as well as the truth of the different situations which happened in some circumstances whereby particularism was needed to be exercised in obtaining the positive results for the benefit of the learners. Study by Johnson (1990:23) cites that document can prove to be extremely valuable source of data. Other documents such as newspapers, information and media reports accessible from the internet was also collected, analysed and studied with the purpose in mind that any relevant data of the task of governors in school performance through sound administration and governance would be accepted.

VII. ADMINISTRATION AND COLLECTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaire of study is an adaptation of a questionnaire used for conducting a similar study in Tshwane North District (Worku, 2019: 109-120). There were well drafted questionnaires being administered in the regard of which the positive results yielded at the time of the gathering the intended data to use in concluding the dissertation wherein different participants exposed in the questionnaires that were used for the study wherein the quantitative method was applied 80% and qualitative method used only 20% in the study to get their insights and experience to the questions being asked. Questionnaires were dispersed to all informed school professionals, circuit officials and SGB members of these respective schools in order to provide their insights and experience on the study. Administering of questionnaires was a key in depth finding of data from well informed sources. Semi-structured interview in a form of one-to-one interview was very effective also in generating some of the vital data for the study. In addition to interviews, administering of questionnaires and observations, documents like school policies and performance statistics analysis gave the concrete evidence and the tangible evidence of how the schools and SGBs were handling their roles and functions in different schools where they have been tasked to perform professional duties and govern in a notion of fiduciary trust invested upon them for the benefit of all who are affected by the performance of such school which they manage and govern. Documents were requested from the responsible authority wherein copies were made for comparison of statistical results within the same period with other schools used in the study to form empirical theory of how the SGB is doing its mandate in the school and the questionnaires were requested to be returned back to the researcher after appending a signature of volunteering to participate in the study by participants from there completing of the questionnaires by the participants where a time period was not stipulated however acceptable period of three weeks was afforded to each participant to enable them ample time to complete those questionnaires.

VIII. PILOT

A pilot study was used for ensuring content validity. The Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring validity, whereas the Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013: 49-53). Studies by Bles and Higson-Smith (2000:155) define a pilot study as ` a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instrument and analysis are adequate and appropriate. A pilot study using focus group was conducted with the principal, former chairperson of the SGB and some of the former students who are supporting the schools to improve the performance of the local schools to see if the questions asked would yield useful information and if the method of questioning was appropriate for the participants. The plane research helped the researcher to identify confusing of the questions and correct any confusing that may have occurred during the interview and completing questionnaires sessions. The mentor accepted the questions laid down for the study after accessing a number of factors as to how the data could be collected, the wording of the questionnaire and how best the data needed could answer the research question in order to allow the researcher to embark on collecting data for the study. The pilot testing process was used to determine if questions asked are relevant and appropriate. Pilot testing process helps to check on the clarity and suitability of the wording in the questionnaire (Kanana, 2015:23). The questions should be tested to gauge if they are clear and solicit the right responses. This instrument can be effective if a large number of respondents have been selected for the study (Ile, Eresia-Eke & Allen-Ile, 2012:143). This process helped the researcher to align the questionnaires to the best possible means

that could address

The questions of the study and to gather data as much as possible from the participants as they found the questionnaires user friendly to engage with them as one of the primary source to collect data in the study.

IX. DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative methods of data collection and analyses were used in the study. Frequency tables, crosstab analyses (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2013: 99-104) and ordered logic analysis (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2013: 101-103) was used for data analyses. Face validity was used for ensuring validity, whereas the Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013: 49-53). In terms of the data analysis, a bottom-up strategy was adopted by segmenting the data into meaningful analytical units. The significance segment of data was identified by means of categories and sub-categories that pertained to the aims of the study (Ferreira & Schulze, 2014:4 cited Johnson & Christensen,2000). Studies by Maluleke (2014:48 cited Neuman, 2006:322) explain data analysis as a method of collecting and analysing textual information. Words, definitions, images, icons, concepts, themes, and any other message that can be conveyed were all included. The information gathered was organized to answer the study's key questions (Maluleke, 2014:48).

Data has to be analysed if it has reliability on it or not. How was the data being analysed? By just accessing the Annual General Meetings for different schools in different circuits wherein the SGBs were reporting the overall results of their schools and the actions to be implemented if the general performance was not satisfactory to the majority of parents who have got children in those schools. The management of public funds formed a basic of the reliable governance and administration which could produce good results as the end product at the need of the year. These SGBs could have the potential to handle maladministration and report corruption to the Department of Education through some diligent proficient whistle-blowing techniques for the attention of the responsible authority to make a ruling and how was the ruling made, so such cases could be used to beef up how useful data could be analysed to be used for research publication. Corruption Watch and National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) could assist about the cases which have been reported to them without any conviction though primary evidence prevailed to assist the department to execute its duties to the latter. Also the cases which are still under investigation with the similar charges could be of use in the study to achieve its intended goal wherein the principals or chairpersons as well as the treasurers have acted with insusceptibility against the existing prescripts of governance and administration of the school in a form of unilateralism in making decision or implementing decision that has not been approved by the legal structure of such institution.

Also, by doing short interviews with the major participants like SGB Chairpersons, School Principals, Educators, Department Officials and other influential stakeholders who have got a huge interests in the operations of schools could help the researcher to analyse the data obtained effectively. They had to sit down as group with major participants and discuss about the data obtained if it is resourcefully or not and go for the best data which is going to make research more practical and real in terms of realism and subjectivism of the circumstances of the schools being used to carry out the research.

The financial stability and proficiency in such school assisted in analysing how the school is being managed and steered to the right direction. The craps the school has gone through could be used as some of the learning curve the SGBs and SMTs are supposed to address if they have to get better results in that school and maintain such standard for the benefit of the school and for incoming SGB members who would get the school in good financial position and well governed state of affairs school to take it forward for the benefit of the large community. During the hand-over all the SGB members outgoing and incoming had to be present to get full report of how the outgoing SGB performed in the period of three years to enable the incoming SGB to have the gist of all the issues which do matter most in the school as well as to evaluate the success and the failures of the outgoing SGB so that they may improve where they had a shortcoming and sustain good standard where is due as the record to beef up that is there for reference purposes.

It was an advantage to the researcher as the outgoing SGBs were exiting from the helm of governance of the schools from February and March 2021. New principals and incoming SGBs who are new in this field had high expectations which assisted the researcher in hand before they are exposed to a number of complications in how governance and administration are to be approached for the benefits of the constituencies who elected and assigned them with such mandate for the governance circle of three years from 2018 up to 2021 and the next circle ranges from 2021 to 2024, their new approach in how the two could be interwoven in one institution for the benefit of one child who brought them together to play each constitutional obligation and supportive role to

each other was useful in the study as part of integration to what the previous SGBs have achieved and set as the Roadmap to be followed by the incoming SGBs with a support from school community at large. The challenges encountered by the outgoing SGBs will form core part in the findings of how the SGB play a huge part in the performance of schools as they have done something in the period of three years since 2018 up to 2021, of which they can proudly mention their achievements they brought to the school for its benefits and on the administration part which had to be played by the department if the two had mutual agreement which was respected by both parties to help a child who is the main target or if the department by virtue of controlling the purse from the tax payers had imposed in a number of issues which affect the child's education. In the study there was no one who has to be offended by the research, but only the data which has to be obtained from the trustworthy sources like school governing members, principals, experts, helpers of schools to improve their performance in all aspects, published journals and published books, no any intention the researcher has envisaged to upset and offend participants who are to volunteer partake in this study in order to assist the researcher to establish the challenges facing governors and administrators of the school so that solutions could be provided for effective teaching and learning by governors and administrators. The main intention was to produce the sound useful product that could be used by the department to improve teaching and learning in our country in addressing the socio-economic challenges which are part of the broader society whereby the education which is spot on to these challenges could eliminate them in order to have a prosperous country with the education which addresses its socio-economic challenges.

X. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The incidents that took place in various schools and different communities in relation to the research were accepted as something that people may rely on if there is a strong case documented down with the ruling made on such situations or pending any investigation or such given proposal is due to be approved by competent authorities who have been vested those powers. Quantitative method questionnaires were made clearly to be understood by participants in a manner that was going to reveal the ways of providing data needed and reliability of that information provided. Data provided was evaluated based on the similarity and contrast of such data from different participants who are in similar situations but in different localities coupled with the analysis from each school strengthened the reliability of the data obtained from participants.

The information that was collected from the four schools which had to part-take in the research project was of course having different outcomes which were mutual intertwined to compare the similarities and differences encountered as every school is unique with its unique challenges which could be similar or different to some other schools.

The schools used in the study are as follows:

1. Mahlepfunye Primary School that has managed to sustain its performance in the decade is likely to be used as the school which has potential to produce the best through what they have from the rural area under Malamulele-West Circuit in Vhembe District.
2. Holy Rosary Combined School which is found at Malamulele-Central Circuit in Vhembe District is only an independent school to be used as the school which has got good record of producing quality students from grade R to grade 9 for decades however at this stage the focus will be only for recent period.
3. Jim Yingwani High School also found at Malamulele-West Circuit in Vhembe District is the only school which has managed to improve its performance within the period of five years from 40 % to 70%, so their strategies employed in rescuing the school from that dire situation up to the nourish situation could assist vastly in creating the meaningful partnership between governors, school community and the department on the performance of the schools.
4. EPP Mhinga High School is located in Malamulele location under Malamulele Central Circuit in Vhembe District, is the only school from the sampled schools that has been sustaining its performance throughout the grades from grade 8 to grade 12. The school has some craps before the current leadership came into existence and since then the results, culture, motivation and outstanding performance have thrived, the school surpassed its well-known performance to higher margins.

The records in terms of numerical statistics are available to support the performances of all the schools bordered above.

Study by Paley (2008:649) states that “doing quantitative research entails commitment to a particular ontology and, specifically, to a belief in a single, objective reality that can be described by universal laws. However, quantitative analysis should not be synonymous with the positivist paradigm because statistical inference is concerned with probabilistic, as opposed to deterministic, conclusions (Davey, Gugiu and Coryn, 2010:141). Study by Davey, Gugiu & Coryn (2010:142) cites that measurement is indispensable aspect of conducting research, regardless of if it is quantitative or qualitative. Measurement is the process of assigning numbers, symbols or codes to phenomena (e.g events, features, phrases and behaviours) based on a set of prescribed rules (e.i, coding rubric).

Studies Ferreira & Schultz (2014:5) cited De Vos (2005) believed that Lincoln and Guba’s model of trustworthiness for ensuring that the findings were true for the particular participants and school contexts where the study was undertaken. In the research study, partial Guba’s trustworthiness model cited by Krefting (1991:214-215) was used to establish the validity and reliability of the qualitative research. The four criteria for trustworthiness are:

- **Credibility:** A qualitative study is reliable if it provides sufficiently valid explanations or representations of human experiences that people who have had or have had similar experiences or perceptions will recognise the explanation right away.
- **Applicability:** The results of qualitative research can be transferred but not generalized because it is subjective and because each case is special.
- **Consistency:** This is the degree to which the research results would remain consistent if the study is repeated with a similar sample and in a similar environment.
- **Neutrality:** Objectivity is the neutrality criterion, and it applies to the "degree to which the results are a result solely of the informants and circumstances of the study and not of other prejudices, motivations, and viewpoints." In qualitative analysis, the neutrality of the data is stressed over the researcher's neutrality.

XI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher initially struggled to find appropriate times for interviews with the principals because they were always busy particularly in term four of the year as they were very focused to final examination hence the appointment was made for the next academic year in term 1. The researcher believes that some participants were hesitant to provide enough data for the study to run smoothly, and that they were uncomfortable answering some of the questions, especially those that required more information about school documents like analysis of school results, annual general meetings reports and how to keep them safely for easy access as well as to retrieve them for usage in times of some studies similar to the one undertaken or audit to be done by any legal institution.

Some principals wanted to be difficult on providing analysis for requested period claiming that confidential information should not be provided to researchers as that could expose the institution concerned to its rival schools. It has been a challenge to get the complete requested information from some schools since there have been some administrative changes at the school management team recently, so the element of sabotage to the new leadership by the previous leadership has been identified and led to the compromise of the complete analysis compared to some schools in the study. Study by Ile et al (2012:143) cites that also, its usefulness may be seriously compromised if there are too few or inappropriate documents to analyse. This may be the results of documents being improperly kept or not safe guarded. Some principals wanted to withhold the information despite the fact that the responsible district in the province where the study was conducted has accepted and encouraged flexibility and cooperation in providing the researcher with the requested documents to allow him to complete his research; some documents are needed in the study. Some of the valuable documents to be studied may include: data relating to similar policies implemented previously or elsewhere; annual reports; financial documents; relevant reports from other institutions; client-related feedback reports; programme-specific meeting minutes; collation of queries or review reports (Ile, Eresia-Eke & Allen-Ile, 2012:143). Making time to see the participants had been a challenge to the researcher based on the mere fact that the researcher is an educator working in Soweto and the study was undertaken in Limpopo Province. In a number of times the schools failed to adhere to the agreement in relation to collection of questionnaires that prompted an extension by the researcher in order to afford them more time to complete those questionnaires but still some other schools failed to meet such agreement. Another concern was to get requested documents like school analysis and subject analysis; two schools have got excellent administration but the other two it was just a hassle to get documents which have been submitted to the circuit for approval as those two requested documents go hand in hand with schedules of the school despite having education assistants and administrative clerks hired to perform

administrative duties at the schools.

XII. RESEARCH ETHICS

Study by De Vos et al. (2006:57) defines ethics as set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. Ethics approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Tshwane University of Technology. Participation in the study was voluntary. Standard ethical guidelines and principles were adhered to while conducting the study. Ethical approval was obtained for this research from the Research Ethics Committee of TUT. This was done through the supervisor of study. Research approval was secured before the study is implemented.

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Limpopo Department of Education whose jurisdiction the sample of schools was selected. An informed consent letter was provided to each of the participants to get their consent before data collection begins. Responses obtained from consent participants of the study was made anonymous, and be kept in confidence. Each respondent was presented with a form on which they consented to participate in the study and in which they were given an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality with regard to data about the site. The researcher was ensured that the information obtained would be viewed in a sensitive light and would not be used to the detriment of the respondent. Also, the researcher sought permission from the participants to allow him to conduct interviews with them. People who were going to part-take in this study their identities and privacy would be protected during the research. The participants would be given choice to part-take or not after being advised about the kind of the investigation to be undertaken. Withdrawal by participants could not be denied at any time they wish to do so. This study was confidential until the time for publication has been granted that means it could not be published without the necessary authority. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. The researcher integrity to the body of knowledge was maintained by avoiding falsifying or altering data to suit the predications of the study.

The nature of the study was explained in detail to all participants before they make their choice about participating in the research project, their views are highly respected and could not be challenged at any given time should they thought otherwise after they have consented to take part in the research study. The professionalism and privacy of the participants always played a major role in the study undertaken, so that it does not look like was a sabotage or exposure to some who participated in the research which was being undertaken in front of their field of operations as headmasters, managers, governors, educators, non-teaching staff and wide community. The anonymity of the participants will be respected throughout the entire research study and during publication without any compromise or favour or prejudice in compliance to the principles of conducting fair research but only school A, B, C and D could be used in place of the school names instead. Professionals (principals and teachers) would be represented by A1, A2, A3 of which governors (chairpersons and other SGB members) would be represented by B1, B2, B3, B4 and C1, C2, C3 like that would represent circuit officials in the study in order to give participants more meaning in the study that was undertaken for the benefits of the large society, the Department of Education and other institutions.

The principals as representatives of the department through their schools would be represented by letters without numbers only as ex-officio members standing between governance and administration at a go, their views are paramount importance to assess the position of the department as well as to how they feel about the governance part of it as officials who are expected to implement the policies which have been developed by the SGB which they are part of in the school and implementing what the department has delegated them to do in terms of professional part of it whilst striking a balance in terms of authority between administration and governance of the school in order to complement the two in one school. At no stage will the comments of the principals, educators, circuit officials and members of the SGB be revealed to the department or to any other source. Study by Uys and Basson (1991:98) states that the researcher should ensure the anonymity of any person or institution. To ensure anonymity, the researcher used letters of the alphabet to identify participants. All information obtained was kept safe for the duration of the study and the findings of the study will be accessible to the participants upon request. The study was conducted in a way that it did not interrupt the normal school activities. Ethical standards also include honesty in reporting, an aspect that was adhered to in the study.

Research study was carried out with the intention of making a difference to something, but it can have other impacts as well. Honesty, openness, lack of coercion and confidentiality were key ethical issues, as is privacy, if you are proposing to initiate contact with individuals (Cameron, 2011:462). Consent was obtained from all participants freely without any coercion or any penalties for such conduct and some withdrew from taking part in

the study and their decisions were respected without any follow-up for that act as participation was voluntarily.

XIII. CONCLUSION

The reluctance of some members of the SGBs and SMTs to share and divulge a lot of data in relation to how deeply they run the schools demonstrate that a lot of information on literature review has got supporting hypotheses before the completion of the study with its full readings of findings as witnessed here at the research method and materials whereby to get more data from the purposefully participants was a mammoth task to deal with in the study. The questions were written in simple English to be understood by all who could be able to develop the policies of the schools they govern as mandated by majority votes casted on behalf of them to run the schools, however some members demonstrated that they would give the best out of them should questions written in vernacular to enable them to understand every concept and its intentions as well as its implications. The above sentiment shows that most SGB members who do not have rudimentary basic education do not grasp their roles in schools due to the language barrier if they could not read and understand the questions posed for their individual task to complete as part of voluntarily participation in completing the questionnaire for the study, so what about the invested task by law of running the schools as the polices of the schools are written in English?

The researcher found it easy to administer those questionnaires in English as most of the participants had matric and above, there was no need to do translation into the mother tongue which is Xitsonga. At the moment most of the SGB documents if not all are written in English and this had an impact in the electing and nominating members to serve in educational structures like SGB especial parent-wing, Education forum, NASGB and other structures to assist in the education of the child to contribute positively to the governance and leadership of schools as active participants with authority and accountability. Study by Heystek (2002:7) argues that in order for parents to fulfill the expected policy and financial roles, they must be able to interpret and understand policies and regulations in order to enact them. The issue of high illiteracy from rural areas has got another implications in finding the most capable candidates to run the schools therefore age is used as a major requirement to be nominated to govern the schools of which older people being the most favourable candidates to be voted by majority to be in helm of School Governing Bodies than skills in possession as some believe that the grey hair could bring stability in the schools as they have seen different administrations of government in the country however with this study it was proved to be otherwise as some do not even understand what to answer even when the translation of questionnaires was done in their mother tongue.

Some questioned why the study is about their co-operation, collaboration, partnership between the SGB and the Department in schools where they govern. They were answered that is not about all that but as governors they should take it upon their hands that the child who is the main target gets effective teaching and learning so that the economy of the country could respond actively to the needs of the society at large and this made the researcher to form some opinions that maybe some withheld data like SGB minutes for Annual General Meetings where the results of the entire school were presented before the parents and financial performance of the school in fear of being exposed or being convicted after revealing the unethical practice and negligence of performing duties as expected as they believe that other institutions like NASGB and Corruption Watch including the department can use this information to investigate them of which that notion was wrong as there is no name to be divulged in the whole study but only to get the feeling, views and experience of the people in charge of schools and what they believe could be done in the schools taking into account the systems of governance and administration in place in the country at the moment. During the sessions of administration of questionnaires, it was discovered that schools with good managers were likely to continue with the status quo in terms of the performance of the schools as any incoming SGB was supposed to adopt the culture practised in the school as the systems were established and installed for long term preposition. On the other hand, schools which changed principals because of poor results were stabilised by serious intervention of partnerships from the Department and the school community in assisting the SGB to get the school out of dysfunctional state to the functional level as it was discovered that the SGB alone was failing to rescue the school from ruinous situation in terms of the performance.

The SGB was beefed-up by the retired principal and circuit manager in collaboration with the local authority who monitored the weekly operations of the school after the strategies were tabled out for implementation by the school helped the school to produce better results. "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", the Basic Education Minister said (Khumalo, 2011). The results of the schools differed in the same period and were improved differently using different strategies employed by the different SGBs and administrators in different set-ups of their surroundings, so the philosophy of using qualitative and quantitative

methods made the researcher to clearly disclose the shortcomings and strengths of each school in terms of the performance particularly at Mathematics and Science Education wherein stability steered by the SGBs and administrators in addressing the research question as demonstrated in the introduction of the study and substantiated in the literature review through measurable analysis of available documents, contextual design, explanatory and exploratory methods exposed in the study yielded positive results envisaged in the study in assisting to measure the role played by the SGB and administrators together in performance of schools though there were some limitations encountered during the undertakings as alluded in the study.

LIST OF REFERENCES

1. ADLER, P.A. & ANDLER, P. 1998. *Peer Power: Preadolescent culture and identity*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
2. ALIAGA, M. & GUNDERSON, B. 2000. *Interactive Statistics*. 1st edition. Prentice Hall.
3. BAYAT, A., LOUW, W. & RENA, R. 2014. *The role of SGB in underperforming schools of Western Cape: A field based study*. New Delhi: Kamla-Raj.
4. BLES, C. & HIGSON-SMITH, C. 2000. *Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective*, 2nd edition. Cape Town: Juta
5. BRYMAN, A. 2015. *Business research methods*. Oxford University Press
6. CRESWELL, J. W. 2005. *Education Research: Planning, Conducting & Evaluating Quantitative & Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
7. CRESSWELL, J. W. 2009. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
8. DARLINGTON & SCOTT. 2003. *Qualitative Research in Practice*. Buckingham : Open University Press.
9. DAVEY, J.W., GUGIU, P.C & CORYN, C.L.S. 2010. *Quantitative methods for estimating the reliability of qualitative data*. *Journal of multidisciplinary evaluation*, Vol.6, No.13
10. DE VOS, A.S(ed).2002. *Research at Grass Roots, for Social Sciences and human service professions*.3rd ed. Van Schaik: Pretoria.
11. DE VOS, A.S. 2005. *Scientific theory and professional research*: Pretoria, JL Van Shaik Publishers
12. DE VOS, A.S, SCHULZE, S. & PATEL, L. 2006. *The sciences and the professions*, Pretoria: J L Van Schaik Publisher
13. FERREIRA, C. & SCHULZE, S. 2014. Teachers' experience of the implementation of values in education in schools: "Mind the gap". *South African Journal of Education*, 34(1).
14. GLICKEN, M.D. 2003. *Social Research: A Simple Guide*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
15. HAIR, J.F(Jr), BLACK,W.C., BABIN, B.J. & ANDERSON, R.E. 2010. *Multivariate, Data Analysis*, 7th Edition, Pearson, US.
16. HENNING, E . VAN RENSBURG & SMIT. 2004. *Finding your way in qualitative research*. South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.
17. HEYSTEK V HEYSTEK 2002 2 SA 754(T)
18. HOSMER, D.W(Jr) & LEMESHOW, S. 2013. *Applied logistic regression*, 3rd Edition.
19. ILE,I.U, ERESIA-EKE, C. & ALLEN-LLE, C.2012. *Monitoring and Evaluation of Policies, Programmes and Projects*, 1st edition: Van Schaik Publishers
20. JOHNSON, S.M. 1990. *Teachers at work: Achieving success in our schools*. New York: Basic Books.
21. KANANA, M.R.E. 2015. *Influence of stakeholders participation in primary school management on academic performance: The case of Uringu Division, Meru county, Kenya*.
22. KHUMALO, G. 2011. *Competency test looms for school principal posts*. Available at <http://www.school-principal-mayundergo-competency-tests>. Assessed on 18 November 2011.
23. KOTHARI, C.R. 2004. *Research methodology methods and techniques*. 2nd edition. New Age International Publishers, New Delhi
24. KREFLING, L. 1991. *Rigor in Qualitative Research: The assessment of truth worthiness*. *The Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45:214-224.
25. LEVY, P.S. & LEMESHOW, S. 2013. *Sampling of populations: methods and applications*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
26. AULEKE, S.G. 2014. *Parental involvement in their children's education in the Vhembe District*: Polokwane: Limpopo Provincial Department of Basic Education.
27. McMILLAN, J.H. & SCHUMACHER, S.S. 1997. *Research in Education: A conceptual Introduction*. Longman, New York.
28. McMILLAN, M.S. & SCHUMACHER,S. 1997. *Research in Education: A conceptual introduction*.3rd edition. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
29. McMILLAN, J. H. & SHUMACHER, S. 2006. *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry*, 6th ed. New

York: Pearson Education Inc.

30. McMILLAN, J.H. & SCHUMACHER, S. 2010. *Research in education-Evidence Based Inquiry*. (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, INC.
31. MERRIAM, M.B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Research in Education*. San Francisco: Jossey Boss Publications.
32. MOUTON, J & MARAIS, H.C .1991. *Basic concepts in the methodology of social science*. Pretoria : Human Science Research Council.
33. MUGENDA, O.M. & MUGENDA, A.G. 2003. *Research methods: Quantitative and Qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: African Centre for Technology Studies.
34. NEUMAN, W.L .2005. *Social Research Methods*: Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
35. NEUMAN, W. L. 2006. *Social Research Methods*. United States of America: Pearson Education Inc.
36. PALEY, J. 2008. *Positivism*. In L.M Given(Ed), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*(Vol.2 pp.646-650). Thousand Oak, CA: Sage
37. RITCHIE, J., LEWIS, J., NICHOLLS, M. C. & ORMSTON, R. 2013. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. New York: SAGE.
38. TERRY, G.R.1977. *Principles of management-Hard Cover*. Amazon.
39. THENGA, C. M. 2012. *Managing school funds in selected secondary schools in Gauteng Province*. Pretoria: UNISA.
40. WORKU, Z. 2019. Factors that affect the quality of teaching and learning in public schools. *Journal of Economic and Business Studies*, 2(1): 109-120.