

Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the school governing body and secondary school teachers in the Sedibeng district

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Recruit - learn to shoot. Law of frequency, recency
and resultant satisfaction - main factor:
a - Instinct to put things into mouth - Top's, deep
sugar - etc. decreased sugar was sweet
so agreeable - formed habit of putting candy
in mouth. It was a habit that could not be broken.



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JC Coetzee

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this to my late brother, Ryan Coetzee who may not be with us anymore, but his presence and support is always felt. To my parents, Alison Coetzee and Charles Coetzee, as well as my fiancé Con Cornelissen for all the unconditional love, support and encouragement.

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KEYWORDS

School Governing Body, teachers, effective communication, communication, school governance.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ANA	Annual National Assessment
BaSSREC	Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
COLTS	Culture Of Learning and Teaching System
IWSE	Internal whole school evaluation
PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
RCL	Representative Council for Learners
SCM	Strategic Communication Management
SGB	School Governing Body
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMS	Short Message Service
SMT	School Management Team

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the nature and effectiveness of communication between the teachers and the SGB in secondary schools. The data was collected from teachers from four different secondary schools in the Sedibeng district.

The literature relating to the nature and effectiveness of communication in the context of the school governing body was studied. Different theories of communication along with various processes and approaches of communication were examined. Communication and barriers of effective communication were discussed. The advantages of effective communication were explored. Along with this, the roles of the principal were also examined. Some solutions to ineffective communication are highlighted. The findings from the data collected were analysed and discussed.

An empirical investigation using a qualitative approach was conducted and data gathered by means of interviews with secondary school teachers. Lastly an outline of the findings and recommendations were made to assist the relevant role players in effective communication in secondary schools.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

The importance of the effectiveness of communication between the different members of a school governing body (SGB) and the teachers is one aspect of school governance that cannot be underrated (Akinnubi, Gbadeyan, Fashiku & Kayode, 2012:105). To this end, Akinnubi et al. (2012:108) assert that sound and effective communication becomes key to the process of maintaining order that will promote the best interests of learners in a school. According to Botha (2012:267) there is a strong need for sound and effective communication channels between the SGB and teachers, and that agreeable relations between these two stakeholders have been linked to a range of positive outcomes. These include increased staff retention, better matriculation results, improved Annual National Assessment (ANA) results in other grades, and lower dropout rates. Akinnubi et al. (2012:105) argue that without sound and effective communication between the SGB and the teaching staff at a school, the role-players will experience a state of perplexity when it comes to the what, who, when, and how of school governance.

Van der Westhuizen (1999:205) asserts that governance can only take place with communication between the school's governors and its teachers. Therefore, without communication, lines of responsibility can become blurred. Indeed in this regard, Heystek (2004:308-311) and Serfontein (2010:94-99) opine that role-players in the SGB cross boundaries at one stage or another cross boundaries, especially when governance functions and duties, for which each party is responsible, are not clearly defined. Heystek (2004:311) argues that because there are generally vague guidelines for the devolution of power, and the sketchy regulations governing the division of school governance authority, sound and effective communication between SGB role players and teachers is absent. For this reason, an effective communication strategy needs to be implemented to foster effective communication.

Mahlangu (2008:24) posits that fostering sound and effective communication between the SGB and the teachers will lead to the realisation of the most paramount key function of the SGB, which according to Section 20(1) (a) is to promote the best interests of the school (Republic of South Africa, 1996). In this regard, Business in the Community (2008:14) asserts that above all, SGBs are responsible for helping to determine the strategic direction in which the school should develop, and how it can improve and raise its standards of teaching and learning, in addition to supporting the principal and the teachers. According to Akinnubi et al. (2012:106), for an SGB to carry out its functions effectively and, it can be argued, to determine the school's strategic direction, all concerned members of the school, namely the principal, teachers, learners, and the members of the surrounding community, must be involved in and be informed about their roles and their responsibilities towards the school. In so doing, there is no doubt that sound and effective communication could be fostered. This can lead to harmonious relations among school stakeholders in the pursuance of positive school outcomes. This proves that sound and effective communication within a school revives the culture of learning and teaching system (COLTS). To this end, Mestry and Grobler (2007:183) point out that sound and effective communication skills and practices between the SGB and teachers are vital for South Africa's multi-cultural society.

The absence or lack of sound and effective communication between the SGB and teachers can be caused by numerous factors. According to Mestry and Grobler (2007:183), language is one barrier that is compounded by the SGB members' level of literacy, particularly the parent component. It can be argued that when there is a language barrier, it is difficult to develop a relationship characterised by trust, and consequently a working partnership between the SGB and other stakeholders will not succeed. Clase, Kok, and van der Merwe (2007:255) point out that lack of knowledge amongst other SGB members in terms of how to govern a school effectively can lead to uncertainty, inadequate communication, and misinterpretation, all of which influence the duties and decision-making processes in the functioning of the school as a whole, and the SGB in particular.

Thus, it was important to explore the nature and effectiveness of communication between the SGB and teachers in the South African context. In this regard, Van der

Westhuizen (1999:206) describes the importance of sound and effective communication as amongst others, to ensure the stream of information by transmitting messages between the SGB and teachers and vice versa; to ensure effective functioning of the SGB; to inform SGB members about how, what, and when an activity should be done, so as to ensure effective designations; and to guarantee the effective co-ordination of tasks, as well as to bring about mutual contact between people and tasks.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the nature and effectiveness of communication between the SGB and teachers at school is essential in realising the strategic objectives of the school. At the same time, it is also important to understand the dynamism of effective communication in a school setting.

1.2 Rationale

Section 18(2) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) No 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) makes provision for communication in the SGB, where it stipulates that the SGB must meet at least once every school term, and that the SGB must meet with parents, learners, teachers, and other school staff at least once a year. This interaction becomes a good platform and provides the rationale for sound and effective communication between the SGB and all school stakeholders, particularly teachers, as it is during these meetings that the flow of information can be put into effect. However, it has been largely established that there are challenges in realising sound and effective communication between SGBs and teachers at schools.

Botha (2012:267) asserts that there are barriers formed between the SGB and teachers, which has a debilitating effect on the smooth running of a school. In some rare instances, teachers and principals feel that they are being bullied and controlled by SGBs, particularly by parent members, who know very little or nothing about the educational system and almost all legislation relevant to education. In affirming the above-mentioned issues, Van Wyk (2004:51) contends that numerous teachers are displeased with the number of parents involved in the school's governance, since most of the parents have no idea about what goes on in the classroom with their children, and they lack experience in the control and management of staff.

Furthermore, teachers and the non-teaching staff of schools are minimally involved in the decision-making processes, and thus cannot express their opinions on issues of school governance that affects them either directly or indirectly. Xaba (2011:205), contends that parents and teachers have contradictory concerns regarding the roles and responsibilities of SGBs: on the one hand, teachers feel that parents in the SGB are incompetent in decision-making and school management, as they are illiterate and do not receive the necessary coaching, and they do not have the skills to be involved in the school system; while parents are uncooperative in school governance because they feel that educators consider them to be illiterate and incapable of performing tasks.

This contestation points to the effects of poor communication, and creates barriers and weakens already poor trust relationships between the teachers and the SGB. For instance, Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:172) indicate that the state requires participation between all stakeholders in the SGB, but warns against too much involvement in the day-to-day administration of the school. From this requirement, it becomes significantly challenging to determine the boundaries of where the involvement of the SGB and teachers should begin and end, without interfering in each others' duties and responsibilities. In fact, Section 16 of the SASA describes school governance and school management as separate activities. The professional management activity is the daily management of teaching and learning activities and support services needed at the school, which are the responsibility of the principal and the teachers, whereas, governance is the responsibility of the SGB, and deals with the policies and other crucial activities, such as giving the school a strategic direction. Failing to execute these roles properly can be attributed to poor communication between the SGB and the school, and in particular teachers, who carry out most of the daily teaching activities of the school. This lack of communication can be traced to the establishment of the SGB and how organisational structures with school functionaries and governance roles were initiated, and extend to poor communication between the SGB and teachers about what constitutes promoting the best interests of the school, and how this is implemented harmoniously by each component.

While there are various studies relating to SGBs, teachers, and communication, no studies seem to have focussed specifically on exploring the nature of effective communication between teachers and the SGB at schools in the Gauteng province. Therefore, this study sought to address this gap and focused on the Sedibeng East and West Districts.

The primary question for this study was:

- How effective is communication between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools in Sedibeng District?
- This question translated into the following secondary questions:
- What is the nature of communication between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng District?
- How does communication take place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng District?
- What strategies could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGBs and teachers in secondary schools in the Sedibeng District?

The primary question of this research study is the basis of the statement of purpose for this study, as articulated below.

1.3 Purpose statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how effective communication is fostered between teachers and the SGB in secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts. Due to the vastness of the entire Gauteng province, the researcher intentionally confined this study to the Sedibeng Districts in the province.

Flowing from the purpose statement and the secondary questions, the following research objectives were formulated:

- to determine the nature of communication in the context of SGBs and teachers;

- to explore how communication takes place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts; and
- to suggest a guide that could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools.

The objective to determine the nature of communication between SGBs and teachers involved reviewing existing literature on communication from theoretical perspectives, and the essentials of effective communication between SGBs and teachers. How communication takes place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts was explored through an empirical study. The suggested guidelines that could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts were informed by the findings emanating from the literature review in terms of what should be, and an empirical study on what was currently taking place at school concerning the study phenomenon.

1.4 Theoretical framework

For mutual contact between people and tasks, Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:150) state that there are four approaches that can be employed, namely the post-positive approach, the interpretive approach, the critical approach, and the postmodern approach. This study was underpinned by the critical approach. The critical approach universalises everyone's interests into the school's interests, which includes everyone and seems in line with the school governance function of promoting the best interests of the school and its learners, and requires all SGB members and staff to work together, regardless of which components they constitute and which constituencies they represent. Therefore, the critical approach was preferred due to the fact that it universalises everyone's interests into the best interests of the school, which are to serve the best interests of all learners at the school. To achieve this, this study was generally guided by Strategic Communication Management (SCM) as a model of communication between the school and its stakeholders.

Steyn and de Beer (2012:32) highly recommend the SCM, which can be defined as "a scientific view or paradigm that conceptualises communication management in the

strategic context of the school as an organisation.” According to Steyn and de Beer (2012:32), as a tool, SCM influences school leaders to state the school’s position regarding two-way communication and to practice it with external and internal stakeholders regarding issues of strategic importance, to build mutually beneficial relationships with the organisation’s stakeholders and other interest groups in the school, on whom it depends to meet its goals; and to assist the school to act socially responsible, and thus obtain legitimacy, garner trust, and build a good reputation. To this end, in the context of this study, the SCM is deemed appropriate as a defining theoretical framework for effective communication between the school and its stakeholders. This is based on the definition of communication espoused by Haider, Mcloughlin, and Scott (2011), which states that communication *“is the practice of systematically applying the processes, strategies, and principles of communication to bring about positive social change.”* These scholars assert that this kind of communication has been particularly successful in supporting interventions between SGBs and teachers.

As alluded to above, the South Africa Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) expects the SGB to promote the best interests of the school. To do so, communication between the SGB and teachers is essential. Brennan (2011:32) posits that a beneficial school governance involves high quality interpersonal relations and effective communication, including valuing the work of staff, ensuring that there is no conflict and unpleasant surprises. This is quintessential considering the eminent misunderstandings and conflicts of interests between key stakeholders in a school both from the SMT and SGB. Robinson and Ward (in Brennan, 2011:32) recognise that there is a compromise between high levels of interpersonal cordiality and the role of the SGB regarding accountability, particular ordinary SGB members (especially the lay SGB members) to engage in constructive challenge, and the role of the SGB in capacity-building. As a component of the SCM, participatory communication became the specific approach on which this study was grounded. According to Haider et al. (2011:27) participatory communication adopts processes and interventions that call for dialogue and collaboration, is underpinned by the concept of empowerment and voice expression, and is related to challenging power relations and promoting social change from the grass roots. Therefore, in

participatory communication, this is achieved specifically through communication tools.

Participatory communication requires a shift from a focus on communication as a dissemination or campaigning tool – used to inform and persuade people to change their behaviour or attitude, to a focus on communication as an empowering model. In the latter case, communication is used to facilitate continual exchanges between SGBs and teachers to define development concerns and to address common problems or goals, which facilitate individual and school community ownership of the entire school governance process.

1.5 Overview of the research method

The section summarily presents an overview of the research method. The full details of the research method are presented in Chapter 3.

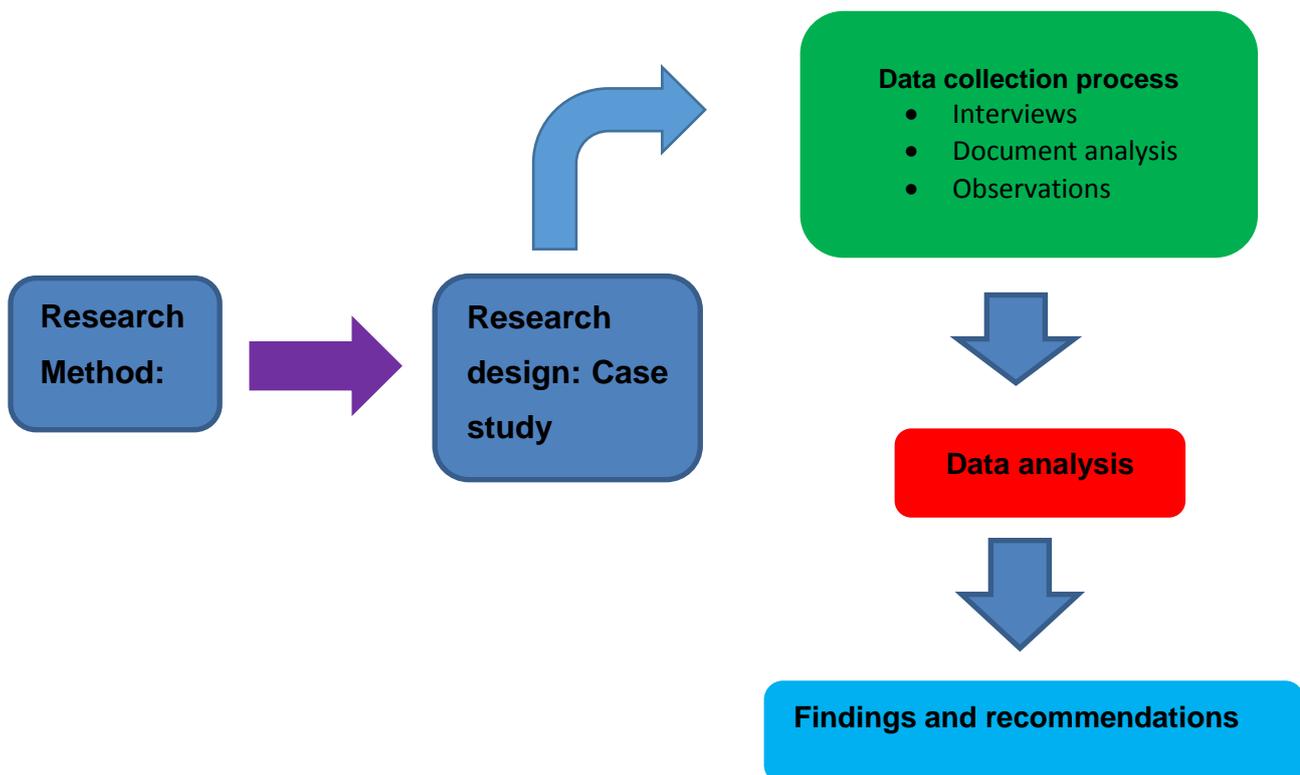


Figure 1.1: An overview of the research method

This design for this study was a qualitative case study, and it used interviews and document study for data collection. For this reason, data collection was underpinned by a social constructivist paradigm, which is grounded on the principle that individuals' ideas are a result of their seeking to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2009:8). In this sense, individuals give their own meaning about their encounters, and understanding is directed to certain objects or things (Creswell, 2009:234), and they seek to understand the world in which they live and work, thus developing subjective meaning of their experiences, that is, meanings directed toward certain objects or things. For this reason, the social constructivist paradigm was appropriate, in that it enabled the researcher to understand how teachers construct meaning based on their experiences, in this instance, their experiences with the SGB within the school setting with regard to communication. Through the qualitative interviews and document analysis, the researcher sought to understand the participants' experiences from the own perspective, and the meaning that they assign to events involving their communication with their SGBs. Therefore, data collection was in the form of case studies conducted in four secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts, and as pointed out by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:316), a case study enables the researcher "to become immersed in the situations and the phenomenon (being) studied". Thus, the researcher was in active participatory interaction with the participants in their work-life, and also actively observed how the study phenomenon unfolded among the participants.

To achieve the aim and objective of this study, the researcher sought to collect information rich data by interviewing participants most likely to provide meaningful insights. For this reason, the researcher used purposive criterion sampling, which involves purposely selecting participants who corresponded to certain criteria and who would contribute meaningful data (Niewenhuis, 2007a:79-80). Participants were selected because of some defining characteristics that made them the custodians of the data needed for the study, namely, how effective communication is between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools in Sedibeng District. To this end, participant selection decisions were made solely to obtain the richest possible information to respond to the research questions (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:79).

As pointed out above, the full description of the research method is detailed in Chapter 3.

1.6 Contributions of the study

Dealing with the challenges faced by SGBs and teachers in relation to effective communication between the two parties is as important as overcoming challenges faced by SGBs in promoting the best interests of the school. For this reason, the researcher anticipated that this study would cover the challenges regarding effective communication between the SGB and teachers at a school, and provided reasonable and practical recommendations for the solution of such challenges. It is hoped that the findings of this study will assist in providing schools with strategies that could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGB and teachers. Finally, it was envisaged that this study would contribute to knowledge in the area of school governance in the area of communication, which is key to the promotion of the best interest of the school.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The primary focus of this study was on fostering effective communication between teachers and SGB. The study was purposefully limited to the Sedibeng Districts only for convenience, and was confined to a limited number of viable schools in the areas' towns. The researcher anticipated challenges such as participants' reluctance to participate in the interviews for fear of reprisals. Other than that, all possible challenges were addressed, as discussed in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.8).

1.8 Layout of the study

A preview of the study is as follows:

Chapter 1

This chapter presents an overview and general orientation of the study, which includes the rationale, purpose statement, and conceptual orientation, the overview of the research method, contribution of the study, delineation, the challenges of the study, and a chapter summary.

Chapter 2

This chapter presents the literature review pertaining to the nature of communication between SGBs and teachers.

Chapter 3

This chapter presents the research methodology.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of data collected through interviews.

Chapter 5

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the problem statement, the rationale for the study, and outlined details of the research method. The conceptual framework and challenges of the study were also provided. Finally, the chapter layout of this dissertation was outlined.

The next chapter presents the literature review on effective communication between SGBs and teachers.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Section 20(a) of the SASA mandates the SGB to “promote the best interests of the school and striving to ensure its development through providing quality education for all learners at the school”. This mandate means that the SGB becomes an official juristic person in exercising school governance in pursuit of promoting the best interests of the school. Doing so demands that the SGB communicate effectively. The main tasks that need effective communication are those with regard to providing a sense of direction; acting as a critical friend; and holding the school accountable.

Therefore, effective communication between the teachers and the SGB becomes essential. For the purpose of this study effective communication refers to the manner in which the SGB engages the teachers with regard to governance matters that relates to the realization of its mandate. The mandate of the SGB according to this study are *demanding accountability, acting as a critical friend and to provide strategic direction*. For this reason the researcher looked for these elements in the data in order to be able conclude whether the communication was effective or not (cf. 5.3.2). While a lot of research exists on communication, management, and education, there is not much research on communication as it relates to education, and in particular, as it relates to teachers and their SGBs (Hunt, Tourish & Hargie 2000:120). Rafferty (2003:50) supports this proposition, by stating that research in the area of communication has been significant in the past years, but little has been done in the area of communication in schools, which is important in the pursuit of delivering quality education to all learners at a school. Therefore, in-line with the purpose of this study, it becomes imperative to scrutinise the effectiveness of communication between teachers and SGBs in the educational setting. To this end, the role of the SGB is crucial in order to contextualise its tasks as they pertain to communicating with teachers.

2.2 The context of the school governing body's mandate and role

To achieve a clear understanding of the context of the SGB's mandate and role insight into the composition of the SGB and the meaning of its mandate and an understanding of SGB in the school organisation is essential.

2.2.1 The composition of the school governing body

The SASA states the following about the composition of the SGB:

23. (1) Subject to this Act, the membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school comprises-

- a) elected members;
- b) the principal, in his or her official capacity; and
- c) co-opted members.

Section 23 (2) further states that the SGB shall comprise a member or members from each of the following categories:

- a) parents of learners at the school;
- b) educators at the school;
- c) members of school staff who are not educators; and
- d) learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school.

The fact that members of the SGB are elected, highlights the importance of proper functioning of the SGB, which underscores the importance of effective communication. Numerous research reports indicate challenges regarding communication in SGBs. In this regard, Duma, Kapueja, and Khanyile's (2011:49) study found that the majority of respondents (80%) indicated that parent members of SGBs do not regularly interact with teachers. Bayat, Louw & Rena (2014:130) found that in some instances, SGB members expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of communication that existed. In his study, Haines (2007:71, 90) also found that communication between members of the SGB in terms of information dissemination

about new developments in education was ineffective, and that communication involving the SGB was insufficient and insignificant.

These findings indicate the importance of effective communication between SGBs and teachers in that essentially, this interaction concerns developments in education, about processes necessary to carry out the SGB's mandate, and ensuring that teachers, through their service delivery, participate in promoting this mandate.

It is noted that the SGB's composition includes the teacher component. While they represent teachers at the school, it is argued by some that teacher representatives in SGBs have to participate in the SGB's activities to promote the interests of the school, and by implication learners, and not necessarily the teacher's constituencies (Xaba, 2004:316).

2.2.2 The school governing body's mandate and role

The current school governance mandate or obligation in South African education stems from the purpose of school governance, as articulated in the Schools Act. According to Section 20(a) of the Schools Act, the school governance mandate is aimed at "*promoting the best interest of the school and striving to ensure its development by providing quality education for all learners at the school*". To achieve this critical objective, the SGB needs to be effective. It is for this reason that the Open University (2015a) states:

"In order for governors to be effective and to stand any chance of being involved in the process of raising standards, they must first have a clear understanding of the role".

The school governance mandate essentially directs the core purpose of the SGB's existence. Communication between teachers and the SGB is, and should be, about the execution of this mandate. As articulated above, the SGB's mandate comprises three main elements, namely providing strategic direction, demanding accountability, and acting as a critical friend.

2.2.2.1 Providing a strategic direction

Providing a strategic direction to a school is one of the three common elements identified in various countries around the world. Providing the school with a strategic direction is the backbone of a functioning school governing body. In line with the purpose of this study, it is important to indicate that in order to execute this mandate effectively, communication between the stakeholders is vital. In fact, providing strategic direction to a school depends on effective communication between all of the school's stakeholders. Mireles (2013) asserts that providing a school with a strategic direction is of paramount importance, and a course of action that is directed at achieving the school's desired and stated goals. This strategic direction is primarily established during an internal whole school evaluation (IWSE) process, which is in itself a strategic planning phase that requires intensive communication between teachers and the SGB.

Holmström (1996:97-98) in Steyn and de Beer (2012:35) explains that the SGB and the teachers' express task is to create and widely distribute information regularly on behalf of the school, to gain the trust of the entire school community. By distributing information and being transparent with such information, trust will be built within the SGB itself, and a good relationship will be built between the SGB and the staff members. Additionally, strategies that might not work to the school's advantage might have to be reviewed and all staff members could have input. Thus, in order to gain trust and achieve co-operation between stakeholders, communication of information has to take place regularly and be widely spread. In fact, there has to be some form of cyclic communication on a regular basis. The National Governance Association's (2015:3) manual on the framework of governance in schools, includes a simple cyclic diagram on how communication should be implemented, as depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

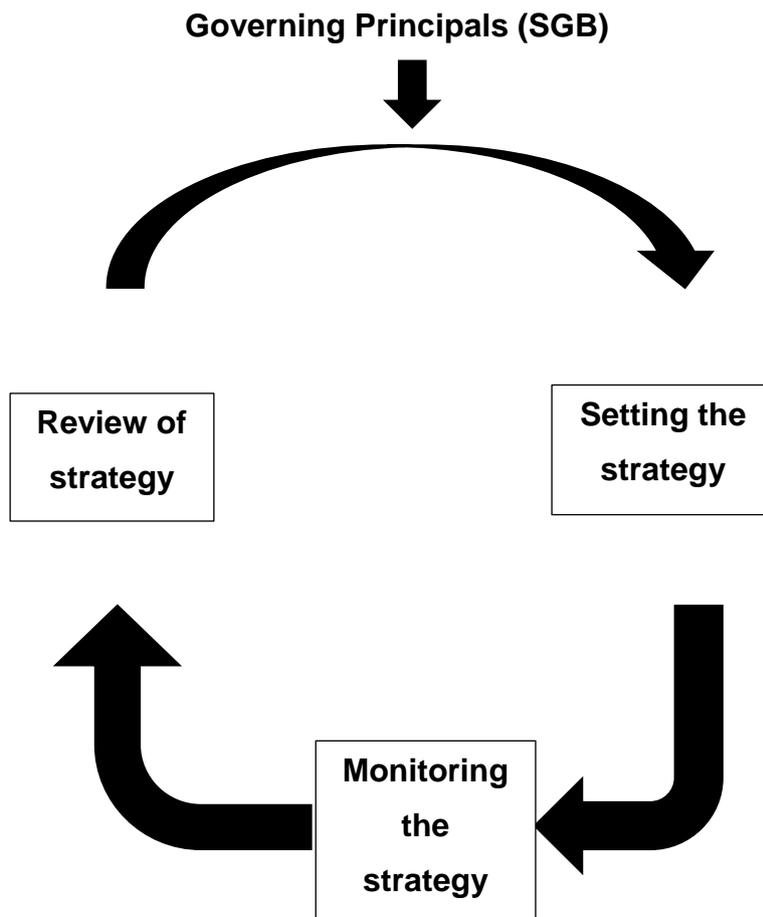


Figure 2.1 The cyclic manner of how communication must run

Source: (Adapted from National Governance Association, 2015: 3).

The diagram above can be explained as follows: The SGB develops a strategy, for instance, on how to improve the academic performance of learners in Grade 12. They communicate the strategy to the teachers who are expected to implement it. The SGB will monitor whether or not the strategy serves the purpose it was intended to. During the monitoring stage, communication between the teachers and the SGB will concern the strategy's effectiveness, and the teachers may also suggest how the strategy could be improved. The SGB will take the suggestions and apply them during the strategy's review stage. Furthermore, in order for the SGB to develop with strategies to guide the school towards the attainment of providing quality education to the learners, Xaba (2004:16) suggests that the development planning process needs to be understood by the SGB members, what its objectives are, and how it should be undertaken. In short, this calls for a clear understanding of the basics of strategic development planning. According to Serero (2016:50), the basics of the

strategic development planning process entail three critical statements that require answers, as illustrated in the figure below.

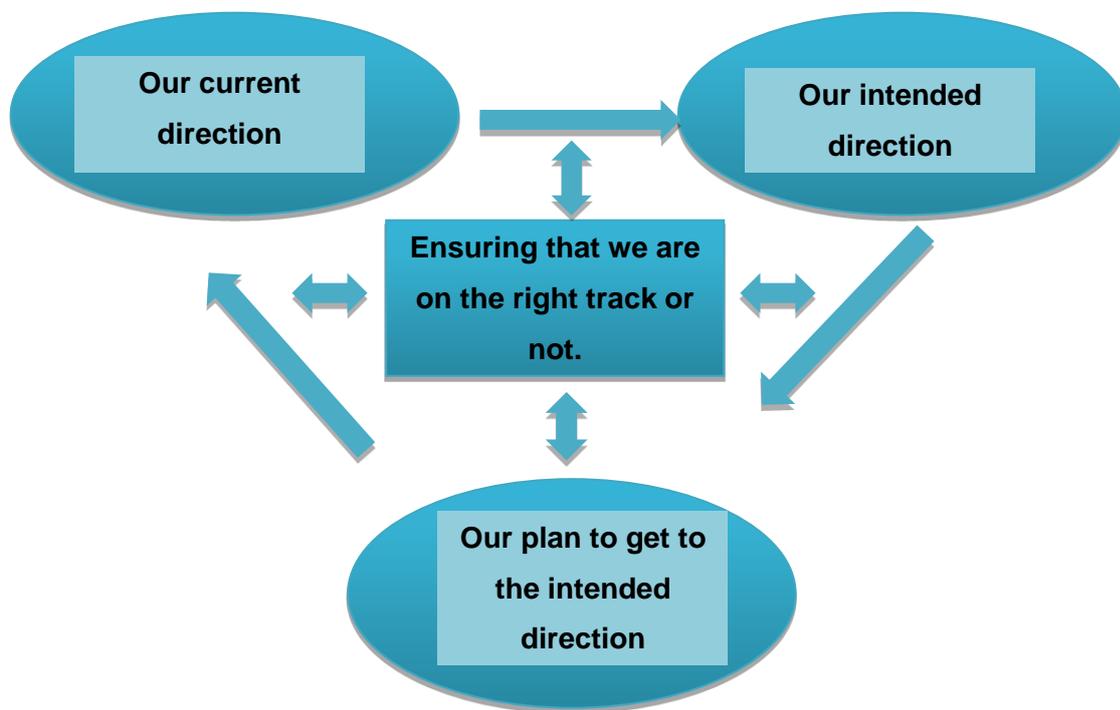


Figure 2.2 *The basics of the strategic development planning process*

This figure illustrates how important it is in the process of school development planning to first understand the current status quo, i.e. where the school is, where the SGB wants the school to be in terms of providing quality education, and how the SGB will assist the school to get there. If the SGB has answers to these questions, then it will be possible for them to identify and communicate these strategies with the teachers. Should the SGB wish to measure its progress, there must be effective and continuous communication between the SGB and the teachers.

Thus it can be posited that communication is about the school's strategy, its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and the decisions taken for corrective action, as well as for further school development and improvement. In terms of the Schools Act, setting the strategic direction would involve the following school functionality areas:

- the total curriculum;

- the school's organisation of resources, including staff, space, facilities, equipment, time, and finance;
- school policies on a diverse range of administrative and organisational issues;
- school strategies for implementing official guidelines, circulars, and regulations;
- mechanisms for reviewing progress, and taking corrective actions where necessary; and
- matters relating to school governance and infrastructure (Serero, 2016:51).

To execute these roles successfully, understanding what they entail is important. These functionality areas and the school governance mandate are contained in Section 20 of the Schools Act, and include roles that oblige the SGB to:

- adopt a constitution;
- develop the school's mission statement;
- adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- support the principal, teachers, and other school staff in the performance of their professional functions;
- determine times of the school day that are consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of school staff;
- determine the school's admission policy, subject to certain limitations;
- administer and control the school's property, buildings, and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- encourage parents, learners, educators, and other school staff to render voluntary service to the school;
- recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Educators Employment Act, 1994 Proclamation No.138 of 1994), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- recommend the appointment of non-educator school staff to the Head of Department, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);

- at the request of the Head of Department, allow the reasonable use—under fair conditions—of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school;
- discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act; and
- discharge other functions consistent with this Act as determined by the Minister by notice in the Government Gazette, or by the Member of the Executive Council by notice in the Provincial Gazette (Serero, 2016:57).

Included in these roles, are those stipulated for Section 21 schools namely:

maintaining and improving the school's property, buildings, and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable; determining the school's extra-mural curriculum and the choice of subject options in terms of the provincial curriculum policy; purchasing textbooks, educational materials, or equipment for the school; and paying for services to the school.

These roles are clearly in the SGB's strategy-setting domain. Apart from being communicated to the entire school stakeholder community, communication between the SGB and teachers is obviously noticeable. For example, the mission, code of conduct for learners, supporting teachers, determining school times, determining admission policies, and all other roles require clear communication because their execution involves teachers as partners.

2.2.2.2 Demanding accountability

According to Serero (2016:54) the Schools Act's primary objective is to mandate the SGB to hold the school accountable in ensuring that the learners receive a quality education. In explaining the concept of holding the school accountable, Figlio and Loeb (2011:283) state that this is a process of evaluating school performance on the basis of learner performance measures. Balarin, Brammer, James, and McCormack (2008:30) opine that this concept defines a relationship of formalised control between parties, one of whom has the authority to hold the other accountable for what they do, and typically includes an evaluation of what has been done in relation to the required standards. Vergari (2001:135) asserts that the SGB is supposed to specify the performance standards for which the school will be held accountable. To

this end, Open University (2011) suggests that the SGB ensures accountability by providing or communicating information both to and from the SGB (cf. 1.1). By implication, this means receiving the school's report on the performance and progress from the teachers and reporting to stakeholders. For instance, the principal and teachers must report to the SGB on the performance of the school, and in return, the SGB is held accountable for such performance, which means that they must also explain and justify the school's overall performance to parents and the broader community, making it a real societal issue (Zondi, 2005:28).

According to Holdford and Lovelace-Elmore (2001:1), the suggestion that performance measurement and coupling it to rewards and sanctions will cause schools and their staff who work in the schools to function at optimal levels, which is the basis for performance-based accountability systems. A school's ability to react to whatever form of external performance-based accountability is decided by the extent to which stakeholders share common values and understandings about such matters in terms of what they envisage of learners academically, what establishes good teaching practice, who is responsible for learners' learning, and how individual learners and teachers account for their work personally and their learner's learning. Furthermore, the authors argue that "*in many schools, individual teachers' notions about their own responsibility has the greatest influence in terms of how schools address accountability issues.*" The big questions are the following:

- Accountable to whom?
- And how?

These questions are answered by the decisions of teachers individual which are dependent on their own views about their ability and that of their learners, and not by collective deliberation or unambiguous management decisions.

To this end, The London Centre for Leadership in Learning (n.d.) claims "*that SGBs should work to support and strengthen the principals' leadership and hold them accountable for the day-to-day school administration.*" In order to ensure accountability, the SGB should ensure that issues are explored collectively, working from key baseline information provided by the teachers with a subject or area of responsibility. The SGB discusses strategies and responses to new initiatives,

working through a collaborative process to develop a whole school response that all have contributed to. The school improvement plan (SIP) and self-evaluation process are examples of how the principal and the school management team produce a final report after having included all teachers in the formulation, review, and evaluation. This collaborative approach means that every teacher is engaged in discussions about the improvement of the standards. In terms of holding the school to account, the transparency of practice in the school could mean that “everything is shared and everybody is aware of how each teacher is performing” (The London Centre for Leadership in Learning.) No one can claim that they did not know about certain initiatives, since everyone shares the responsibility.

According to Maile (2002:326), true school accountability should be “*a shared responsibility for improving education, not only involving teachers and learners, but also administrators, policy-makers, parents, and educational researchers.*” In fact, accountability is inextricably connected to inclusive administration and other related concepts, such as participation, decentralisation, empowerment, as well as transparency. It is for this reason that Serero (2016:54) emphasises the fact that “*a key intention of the Schools Act is to mandate the SGB to hold the school accountable for*”,

Ensuring that all learners receive quality education. Schools must focus on moving learners towards actual and real proficiency, not simply attaining standards of proficiency.

The current narrative on schools accentuates financial and scholastic accountability, although financial accountability was not referred to earlier in this research. It is vital to understand school accountability more universally. As public-funded institutions, Vergari (2001:129) states that schools should be held responsible for their scholastic performance in a various areas in the interest of the public, not excluding the inseparable pillars of financial and scholastic performance. Additional focus areas are amongst others:

respect for conflict of interest rules, open meeting agendas, and other qualities of sound SGBs, parental satisfaction and involvement, learner attendance rate, learner discipline incidents, and admission procedures.

Serero (2016:64) postulates that to hold a school to account is inferred among the functions that are listed in the South African Schools Act, and that these listed functions expect the SGB to be accountable to the stakeholders regarding their achievements convey their achievements to interested parties. Serero (2016:64) further argues:

“Because these functions are aimed at promoting the best interests of the school, the SGB must hold the school accountable for their execution. Furthermore, and importantly, because the execution of these functions require the use of funds for which the SGB is responsible, the Section 37 of the Schools Act specifically states that the —The governing body of a public school must open and maintain a banking account. This is for purposes to ensure that the use of school funds is done according to prescribed directives. For this reason, Section 37(6) states that the school fund, all proceeds thereof and any other assets of the public school must be used only for”

- a. educational purposes, at or in connection with such school;
- b. educational purposes, at or in connection with another public school, by agreement with such other public school and with the consent of the Head of Department;
- c. the performance of the functions of the governing body; or
- d. another educational purpose agreed between the governing body and the Head of Department.

Serero (2016:65) justifiably argues that “this prescription implies the accountability factor. In other words, the school is obliged to account for the use of school funds, as prescribed above, and furthermore makes the point that, Section 38 states”:

“(1) A governing body of a public school must prepare a budget each year, according to guidelines determined by the Member of the Executive Council, which shows the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following financial year; and

(2) Before a budget referred to in subsection (1) is approved by the governing body, it must be presented to a general meeting of parents convened on at

least 30 days' notice, for consideration and approval by a majority of parents present and voting”.

The fact that the SGB must hold the school accountable is further implied in Section 42 and 43, which state that the governing body of a public school must-

*“42 (a) keep records of funds received and spent by the public school and of its assets, liabilities and financial transactions; and
(b) as soon as practicable, but not later than three months after the end of each financial year, draw up annual financial statements in accordance with the guidelines determined by the Member of the Executive Council.*

43 (1) The governing body of a public school must appoint a person registered as an accountant and auditor in terms of the Public 66 Accountants and Auditors Act, 1991 (Act No. 80 of 1991), to audit the records and financial statements referred to in section 42.

43 (5) A governing body must submit to the Head of Department, within six months after the end of each financial year, a copy of the annual financial statements, audited or examined in terms of this section.

43 (6) At the request of an interested person, the governing body must make the records referred to in section 42, and the audited or examined financial statements referred to in this section, available for inspection”.

The essence of executing these roles demanding or holding the school accountable, lies in effective communication. Thus, teachers are an essential part of the school community, because they also have to be accountable since these functions include their involvement in many respects, and these functions need to be communicated to them. Teachers’ feedback on the implementation of these roles and the outcomes emanating from their execution, is a crucial aspect of communication between the SGB and teachers.

2.2.2.3 Acting as a critical friend

Costa and Kallick (1993) define a critical friend as:

“A trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers a person’s work as a friend. A

critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working towards. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work”.

By asking provocative questions, Business in the Community (2008:27) emphasises that by asking questions and trying to understand the school’s position, the SGB is acting as a critical friend, as well as those areas in which the school needs to improve. This means that the critical relationship position exists solely within a professional relationship that involves another person in a particular context, for instance school improvement. Serero (2016:54) argues that in every context it is utilised, the most prevalent and agreed upon representation of a critical friendship is a “detached stakeholder” who supports and challenges those with whom they are in a relationship. For that reason, the SGBs are regarded as “critical friend” to a school as an institution for the mere fact that they are self-directed stakeholders who support the principal and staff, give advice, and information, eliciting from it’s the knowledge and experience of the members. Furthermore, they focus on issues of school development and improvement, school evaluation and monitoring as well as professional development. This relationship can be conceptualised as follows:

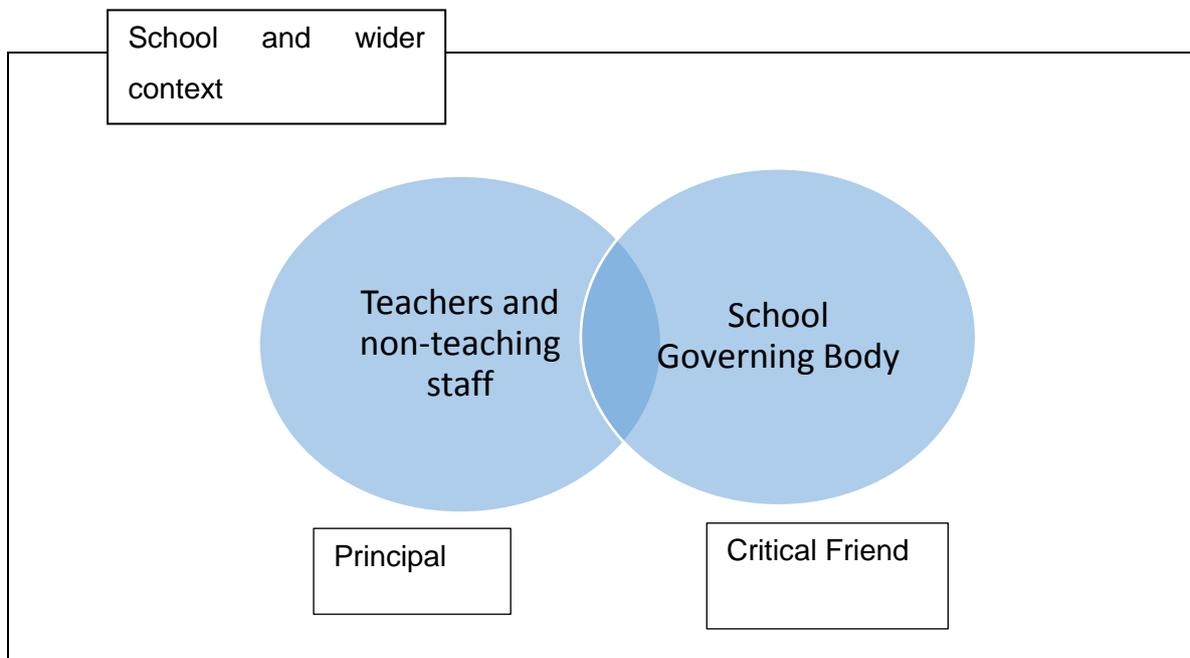


Figure 2.3 The school governing body acting as a critical friend

The above figure is indicative of the relationship that exists between teachers, the principal, and the SGB. The SGB becomes critical to the school for the purposes of ensuring that the school delivers on its mandate, and not with the intent of derailing the smooth running of a school. This is where a distinction must be made between school management and school governance. Ultimately, the two pillars combine as indicated in the figure above.

Balarin et al. (2008:15) propose that in monitoring and evaluating a school's progress and acting as a critical friend, the SGB is supporting teachers in the performance of their functions and providing them with constructive criticism. This implies that the SGB is free to ask questions and challenge teachers about issues pertaining to school improvement, and, in a good working relationship, this intervention would be accepted and considered progressive, while a poor relationship will result in discord and conflict. According to Swaffield (2007:7), in a critical friendship, trust is of vital significance to those who are engaged in the relationship. When the teachers and the SGB work together, mutual trust is built and a spirit of camaraderie will prevail. Personal attributes and values such as openness, honesty, respect, and above all, commitment, will contribute immensely to this critical friendship. Therefore, the SGB must ask questions and challenge the status quo in its endeavour to execute its mandate.

As previously mentioned, the Schools Act requires the SGB to render support to the school principal, school teachers, and other non-teaching staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions; and to encourage parents, learners, teachers, and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school. In this regard, Serero (2016:63) argues that the "*critical friend role must be seen in the context of constructive criticism and support, enabling the school to perform in alignment with the implemented strategic course*", and he further asserts:

"the three elements of the school governance mandate cannot be executed in isolation of each other. In fact, they are interwoven and are executed together. For instance, in providing a strategy, planning around monitoring the implementation of plans and the strategy, also involves demanding accountability and being a critical friend are involved".

The arguments raised above clearly indicate that there should be effective communication between the SGB and teachers. In fact, it can be argued that the successful execution of the school governance mandate requires constant communication between the SGB and teachers.

2.3 The school governing body in the context of the school as an organisation

Pojasek (2013:1) cites Schein, who defines an organisation as:

“the rational coordination of the activities of a number of people for the achievement of some common explicit purpose or goal, through division of labour and function, and through a hierarchy of authority and responsibility”.

Based on this definition, it is understood that an organisation is characterised by coordinated activities, a number of people, and a common goal. An important consideration is that an organisation places people in relation to one another, people who are pursuing a common goal through specialisation and differentiation of functions, and through authority and responsibility. For the school, this implies the goal of promoting the best interests of the school and its development by providing quality education for all learners, which is essentially the school governance mandate. This then defines the SGBs mandate. Pojasek (2013:1) makes the point that understanding the context of an organisation involves its “operating environment”, which he asserts, is determined by the organisation’s internal and external environments. For purposes of this study, the school’s internal environment describes the SGB’s context in the school as an organisation. To this end, Pojasek (2013:1) postulates that an organisation’s internal context includes its internal stakeholders, the teachers and the SGB, its approach to governance, its contractual relationships with its customers, and its capabilities and culture. In this respect, the SGB is a major entity in the school organisation in that it plays a pivotal role in achieving the school’s goal of promoting the best interests of the school and its development by providing quality education for all learners, which has already been established as the SGB’s mandate.

The elements of the school governance mandate as discussed, typifies the SGB’s functioning in the school organisational context. Thus, it is imperative to consider

communication between the SGB and teachers as descriptive or directive of the SGB's and teachers' operating environment, because the SGB's mandate is a function of the teacher's implementation of the strategic direction provided by the SGB. However, understanding the act of communication and its processes is equally important, as they determine the the SGB's success in its organisational contextual functionality and effectiveness.

2.4 Communication: Conceptualisation

In organisations, the concept of communication emanates from the act of conveying messages, and therefore, meaning between people. According to Velentzas and Broni (2012:117), in its very basic form, the term 'communication' has been derived from the Latin '*communis*' meaning "common", thus "to communicate" means "to make common", "to make known", or "to share" and includes verbal, non-verbal, and electronic means of human interaction. Comstock (2016) defines communication as the exchange of knowledge or the expression of ideas or feelings, whether or not such communication is effective. Furthermore, Comstock (2016) adds that written and spoken words are necessary for communication, but attitude, gestures, and body language also form part of the message. Miller (1995:11) articulates communication as "*human behaviour encompassing five critical features: it involves two or more people, is a process, is transactional, is symbolic and is intentional*". Rebores (2014) in Kheswa (2015:1) describes communication as the method through which the information that is prompted creates a response between sender and receiver, and avers that such communication may be details, thoughts, or descriptions that relate to an occasion, recounting behaviour, or asking a question.

Thus, it can be said that communication is a deliberate transactional and symbolic act between two or more people, where information is received and generates a response. Therefore, effective communication has to be useful and helpful. The messages that are transferred have to be clear and understood so that a response or reaction can be effected.

Thus, it can be concluded that communication is an act or process of constant interaction in an organisation, and more importantly, has to do with sharing ideas and making decisions that are beneficial to an organisation's growth and stability. In

addition to the concept of communication stated above, it is crucial to understand different types of communication.

2.4.1 Elements of communication

For the sake of emphasising the necessity of effective communication between the SGB and teachers, it is prudent to discuss the elements of communication more fully. It is also important to understand that the relationship between language and meaning during communication between these stakeholders, is not a straightforward one. Crystal (2005:8) explains that one reason for this complicated relationship is the range of modern language systems like English. Crystal (2005: 8) further argues that while the SGB and teachers communicate in many different ways, and while they often do not use words to send messages, attention must be paid to the fact that verbal and non-verbal communication are closely linked to how meaning is produced. According to the University of Minnesota (2013:12), there are limited ways in which people in an organisation like a school can communicate non-verbally, but there are millions of words to use in verbal communication. Ahuja (2015:30) identified the numerous skills necessary for effective communication and they involve verbal and non-verbal elements of communication, inter alia, words, gestures, and body language. Jooste (2011:33) adds that communication between teachers and parents should be done with intent, and through verbal and non-verbal communication. There are basically two types of communication, namely verbal and non-verbal communication.

2.4.1.1 Verbal communication

In light of the communication between the teachers and the SGB, and without disregarding non-verbal communication, verbal communication is essential. For the sake of this research, verbal communication is considered to be the act of communicating with words. Wrench and Punyanunt-Carter (2012:29) opine that verbal interaction is comprises certain voiced sounds that symbolise ideas. For instance, when the word 'classroom' is pronounced, it becomes evident that the letters c-l-a-s-s-r-o-o-m are not an specific place, but rather a place where learning takes place. For this to be understood it should be interpreted in the same way by

both the sender and the recipient. *“While it is important for the speaker to think and speak, it is important for the listener to respond and talk to the speaker. Verbal responses are any words that the listener uses to continue the conversation with the speaker”* (Turaga, 2016:62).

There is a lot to be communicated between the teachers and the SGB in a school, and most of the communication is done through verbal communication. Mostly verbal communication is done with an aim in mind, and it creates the needed action and reaction. The University of Minnesota (2013:14) proposes that words carry significance and emotion, and that some words actually produce actions. This could imply that teachers and the SGB must take cognisance of such reactions, because they might be detrimental to the school’s aspirations. Thus, verbal communication can assist the school to achieve its numerous needs via the teachers and the SGB’s ability to express themselves adequately. In times of need, verbal communication is used to ask questions that could provide accurate and requisite information. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the school’s teachers and the SGB to expressly use verbal communication to describe things, people, and ideas to assist them to realise their objectives, and to assist in enlightening, encouraging, and entertaining others, and in forming healthy working relationships.

Thus, verbal communication is powerful and plays a vital role in the way communication takes place effectively between the teachers and the SGB.

2.4.1.2 Non-verbal communication

The University of Minnesota (2013:20) defines non-verbal communication as a method of creating meaning, using actions rather than words. However, they additionally propose that non-verbal communication should not be seen as the opposite of verbal communication, but rather as the two communication elements working together to communicate effectively.

According to Williams and Cartledge (1997:29) and Gabbott and Hogg (2001:6), interaction is common to human beings, since they interact with each other and, not only through verbal communication, but also in terms of how they appear, and this is referred to as non-verbal communication. They further make a point that while

people continuously transmit messages, they need to be mindful of their kinesics, body language, hand gestures, eye contact, how we listen, our general appearance, use of space. Therefore, the teachers and the SGB must be mindful of their kinesics, because actions speak louder than words. For instance, when what is said opposes the non-verbal actions, mistrust and misunderstandings result, because observers always credit what they see above what they hear (Williams & Cartledge, 1997:29; Gabbott & Hogg, 2001:6). According to Richmond, McCroskey, and Payne (1991) in Gabbott and Hogg (2001:7), there are six interconnected purposes of non-verbal communication.

“At a fundamental level, non-verbal communication can merely highlight a verbal message, for example, holding up a thumb to show that everything is okay. The role in this setting, is to increase the probability of the precise response to the verbal message. A second purpose of non-verbal communication is as an alternative to a verbal message. For instance, waving or beckoning is used where verbal communication is sub-optimal due to distance. The third function is to stress a verbal message, for example, stopping before speaking, touching or leaning forward while talking or by speaking louder. These three functions are all enrichments of the verbal message. Nevertheless, non-verbal signs can also oppose the verbal message. For example, a lack of eye contact can undermine the verbal expression of sorrow. Lastly, non-verbal messages can influence the process of social interaction by signaling that it is somebody else's chance to speak, that a discussion is concluding or entering a different conversational segment. These functions are not jointly limited; it is possible for a gesture to be complementary, to emphasise, and to be repetitive concurrently.”

Thus, non-verbal communication is an integral part of communication and has several roles in communication, particularly in this instance, between the teachers and the SGB. In the following part of this discussion, kinesics will be examined to see how it plays a specific role in non-verbal communication.

2.4.1.3 Kinesics

Castañer, Camerino, Anguera and Jonsson (2011:1815) define kinesics as the study of patterns in gestures and posture, while The University of Minnesota (2013:42) add that kinesics includes the study of hand, arm, body, and face movements. All of these elements are part and parcel of non-verbal communication. In this section the researcher will discuss how these elements translate and function in the realm of non-verbal communication, and align it to the communication between the teachers and the SGB. These include body language, hand gestures, eye contact, listening and physical appearance.

Body language

Patel (2014:90) describes body language as a significant part of contemporary communications and relationships. Patel (2014:90) further explains that body language describes the method of communicating using body movements or gestures. Therefore, the understanding of body language, such as facial expressions and gestures, is important in communication. Basically body language includes subtle, unconscious movements, including winking and slight movements of the eyebrows, and other facial expressions. These movements are imperative during communication, as the body language adds to the message that is being communicated. If a person's arms are folded, it is usually a sign that they are blocked off from the conversation. Therefore, an understanding of the use of body language is crucial during communication between teachers and the SGB.

Hand gestures

The University of Minnesota (2013:45) and Dalonges and Fried. (2016: 221) claim that gestures are arm and hand movements which are meant to send a particular message. Anderson (1999:12) states that there are three main types of gestures: adaptors, emblems, and illustrators.

Anderson (1999:12) explains that adaptors are “those gestures which usually show those around us what we are feeling and are usually aimed at ourselves”, e.g. the clicking of a pen to show anxiety. Emblems are gestures that have been established, been agreed upon, and widely understood, like circling the index finger at the side of your head says “He or she is crazy”. Illustrators are gestures that are mostly used when showing a verbal message. These might be used to show the size or shape of something.

Eye contact

The teachers and the SGB’s members are expected to make eye contact during communication. Making eye contact is a form of communication that takes place through the eyes. Anderson (1999) adds that eye contact is usually studied under kinesics, but also has its own category of study called oculusics. The focal point when communication takes place is in the eyes and the ears.

According to The University of Minnesota (2013:57), eye contact serves numerous communicative functions, ranging from regulating interaction to monitoring interaction, to the transmission of information, to establishing interpersonal connections. In terms of regulating communication, eye contact is used to signal readiness to speak to others, or it is used to cue others to speak. Eye contact could offer the exchange of signals when teachers and the SGB are engaged in cognitive activities, and helps to establish bonds and connections, among other things.

Listening

Jooste (2011:47) says that communication is the process of understanding and sharing information where listening plays an important role. On the other hand, Rost (2011:1) posits that listening has significance for everyone. As one of the critical mechanisms of communication – there will be no communication without listening –

listening is an aspect of communication that is interrelated to many areas of review and analysis.

The University of Minnesota (2013:50) asserts that listening is the primary source of new knowledge, which aids in meeting significant needs, the ability to complete particular tasks at work or school, and generally getting things done. The act of listening to interpersonal partners offers support, which is an important part of interpersonal relationships, and it helps to meet relational needs. *“Listening to what others say about us helps us develop a precise self-concept, which can help us more purposefully communicate for individual needs in order to show others our desired self”* (The University of Minnesota, 2013:50).

Physical appearance – attractiveness, wearing spectacles, clothing, colour of clothing

It is imperative for teachers and the SGB to bear in mind that one should not “judge a book by its cover”, which warns against making sweeping evaluations about people on the basis of their physical appearance, because such judgments are usually based on incorrect or incomplete information, and are therefore likely to be wrong. Thus, it may be surprising to learn that naive observers can accurately judge the personality traits of a target individual from a single photograph, and that such judgements can predict objective life outcomes (Stefano Demenico, Quitasol & Fournier, 2015: 339). Pre-judging people can negatively affect the process of communication. Therefore, effective communication between teachers and the SGB in a school should not be based on the physical appearance of other stakeholders, since this could lead to conflict.

2.4.1.4. Proxemics

According to Rios-Martinez, Spalanzani, and Laugier (2015:137), proxemics is the study of the three-dimensional spaces that people keep in numerous social and interpersonal situations; these spaces differ according to environmental or cultural factors.

Defined by Jones (2017) There are different definitions of what each person's "personal space" is, and these definitions are contextual and depend on the situation and the relationship. The University of Minnesota (2013:32) adds that although personal zones are invisible, people are socialised into the custom of personal space within their cultural group. There are four zones, and they are more elliptical than circular, taking up more space in "our" front, where "our" line of sight is, than at "our" side, or back where "we" can't observe what is going on. Even within a particular zone, interactions may differ depending on whether someone is in the outside or inside part of the zone. The following discussion concerns the four zones, how they affect communication, and how they can be implemented or observed by the teachers and the SGB during their communications. The researcher uses direct quotations and explanations from the original sources to avoid misinterpretation of the texts.

- *Intimate zone (15-45cm)*

According to The University of Minnesota (2013:32), as people breach the invisible line, i.e. 45 centimetres from their body, they enter the intimate zone, which is limited to close friends, family members, and partners. Obviously the teachers and SGB must observe this defined space during their interactions. However, it is difficult to completely disregard people when they are in this space, even if you are trying to imagine that you are disregarding them. It can be annoying or comforting when this space is breached. There is a need for regular human contact that isn't just verbal but also physical. The University of Minnesota (2013) states that there are social standards concerning the extent to which this type of intimacy is displayed in public, as some people feel uncomfortable seeing other people interacting in the intimate zone.

- *Personal space (45cm-1.2m) – one-to-one*

The University of Minnesota (2013:32) asserts that personal zones refer to the place that starts at a person's physical body and spreads outward up to 45cm. These zones are limited to friends, family, and significant others. Most communication occurs in the personal zone, which is what people characteristically think of as their "personal space zone". Even though people get closer to the physical body of another person, they may use verbal communication at this point to signal that their presence in this zone is friendly and not intimate. "*Even people who know each other could be uncomfortable spending too much time in this zone unnecessarily. This zone is broken up into two subzones, which helps us negotiate close interactions with people we may not be close to interpersonally*" (McKay, Davis & Fanning, 1995). The University of Minnesota (2013:35) states that the outer-personal zone extends from 15cm to 45cm, and is beneficial for discussions that need to be confidential, but that it happens between people who are not interpersonally close. In this zone, people can easily touch another person while they talk to them, which facilitates conversation, self-disclosure, and feelings of closeness.

- *Social zone (1.2-3.5m) – meetings and interviews*

According to Jones (2017) communication that occurs in the social zone, which is 1.2m to 3.5m from the body, is typically used when people are in a professional or casual setting. This space is favoured in many professional settings because it reduces the suspicion of any indiscretions. It is possible to have people in the outer portion of "our" social zone, but not feel compelled to interact with them, but when people approach "us" then "we" often feel compelled to acknowledge them. The social zone is the most appropriate distance to be kept for the interaction between the teachers and the SGB.

- *Public zone (further than 3.5m) – speaker and audience*

Public and social zones typically mean the space further than 3.5m away from the body, and the communication that typically occurs in

these zones is official. This zone would usually be used when a person is doing a speech, and is not part of the audience. When in this zone, it is not expected that people interact or communicate with one another. It makes communication difficult, as you would have to speak louder and would not have any privacy, which in turn would make it difficult to develop a relationship in this zone (Jones: 2017).

The above types of communication have implications for communication between the SGB and teachers. Among other implications, these communication types affect strategies used for communication, relationship-building between school governors and teachers, and the conveyance of strategic planning, development plans, and their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. To this end, the act of communication can be understood broadly from other perspectives, models of how communication works, and contemporary theories of communication.

2.5 Models of how communication works

2.5.1 Shannon and Weaver's Linear Communication Model

The first model of communication is that of Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver's Simple Linear Communication Model of 1948 (Wrench & Punyanunt, 2012:166).

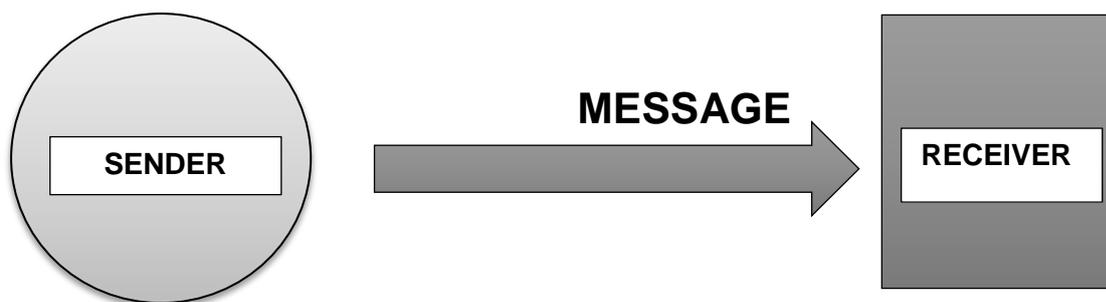


Figure 2.4 Shannon and Weaver's Simple Linear Communication Model

It is clearly evident that communication is only one-directional, with no feedback. While this communication model is still influential, and has been studied for many years, the limitations of this model are irrefutable. Only one message is sent at a time and received, but no feedback is given. Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:166) assert that the original linear model of communication is nevertheless significant, but

that it has limitations, such as the notion that listeners are passive, that only a single message is conveyed at a time, and that communication has a start and a finish. It also has no way of determining whether or not the message has been understood by its recipients. On the other hand, Graham-Clay (2005) emphasises the fact that communication is essential in creating a healthy relationship between teachers and the SGB.

As depicted in the figure above, it can be argued that one-way communication takes place when a school wants to update the SGB and or parents on school activities that do not necessarily warrant a formal meeting (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004). These activities could be learners' progress and events, and could be communicated via letters or short message services (SMSs), which must be written in language that can be understood by the parents in the SGB, or parents in general. Nevertheless, Graham-Clay (2005) insists that effective communication in schools begins when the SGB and other parents enter the school. As far as this study is concerned, the use of a one-way communication approach proves to be ineffective in the SGB and the teachers' quest to build a school that will provide quality education to all its learners.

2.5.2 The interactive communication model

In contrast to the linear communication model, the second model is a more interactive communication model that seems appropriate for schools. In this model there is room for feedback, and communication is two-directional. This model can be conceptualised thus:

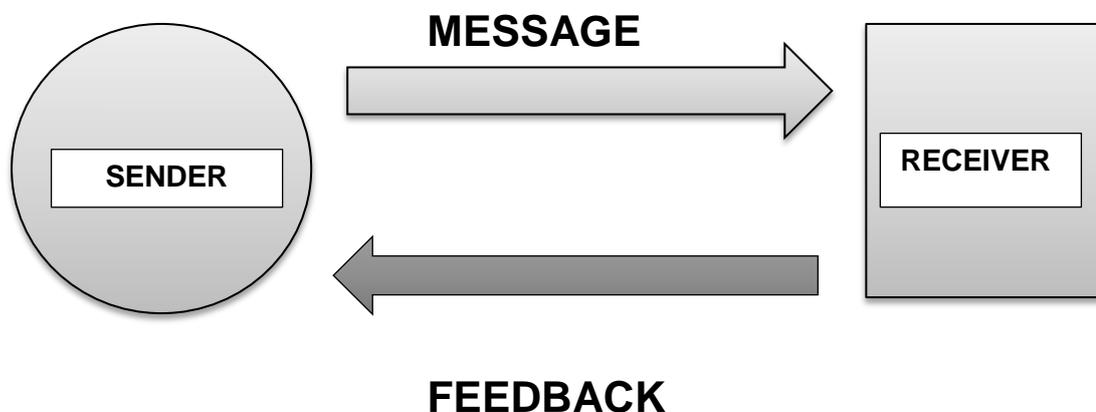


Figure 2.5 Interactive communication model

In this model, teachers/SGB are expected to send a message to the SGB/teachers. The recipient must give feedback after interacting with the message. The sender will also deal with the feedback, and probably send feedback or a new message to the receiver. In this way the communication is a two-way model.

Thus, interactive communication refers to communication between teachers and the SGB to enhance the learners' academic performance. Teachers are expected to initiate interactive communication between themselves and the other stakeholders. For instance, they can invite the SGB to share and participate in the school development planning process in which they will be able to communicate their inputs with the teachers, and debate issues until an amicable decision is taken. Sambo (2016:23) opines that the more these stakeholders communicate issues of common interest, the more trust built between them, and the greater the willingness to cherish that trust.

2.5.3 The Transactional Communication Model

The last model is the Transactional Communication Model. This is a more complex model and the roles can be switched between sender and receiver.

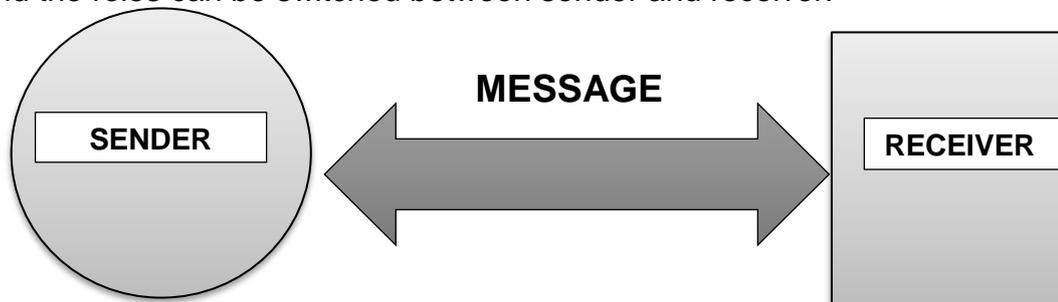


Figure 2.6 Transactional communication model

The Transactional Communication Model illustrated above, portrays communication as a simultaneous transaction (Wrench & Punyanut-Carter, 2012:167), which means the message and the feedback are exchanged simultaneously. This is exactly how communication should be if the school and the SGB want to achieve their common and intended goals and objectives, i.e. serving the best interests of all the learners in the school. This can only be achieved if the teachers and the SGB create a conducive environment in the school, an environment characterised by trust and co-operation. The environment can be created through effective communication

between these key stakeholders of the school. To this end, Wrench and Punyanut-Carter (2012:167) confirm that an expanded view of how communication operates can assist in understanding how teachers and the SGB communicate. Burk and Birk (2000:139) opine that the school culture and climate dwell in the minds and in the relationships between people, that it is not motionless phenomenon independent of people. Therefore, regular communication between the teachers and SGB becomes quintessential.

2.6 Contemporary theories of communication

As pointed out earlier, the context of this study is the school as an organisation. Many of the definitions of organisational communication share common elements. For the purposes of this study, organisational communication will refer to the sending and receiving of messages between inter-related individuals within a particular environment or setting to achieve individual or common goals. In this instance, the interrelated individuals will be the SGB and the teachers within the school environment. However, Deetz (2001:33) argues that one way to enlighten our understanding of organisational communication is to compare different approaches. It is against this background that various communication approaches will be discussed.

2.6.1 Post-positive approach

A school, like any other organisation, can only survive if it performs well. Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:150) opine that schools can only sustain themselves if they perform well, and therefore the SGB and the teachers have to choose the best way to achieve the best results. Effective communication becomes pivotal when choosing the best way to get the message across. As stated earlier in this text, it is important to know what the school's needs are.

Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:150) assert that the post-positive approach states that the organisation (school) is independent of people, and that the organisation will survive even as the people change. Hence, we can therefore say that the post-positive approach states that people have to choose actions that achieve the best results, individual opinions do not matter, and organisational communication plays a

unifying role. Thus, a school's results are measured by monitoring the school's combined performances. The aim of this sort of communication is to compel the SGB and the teachers to choose the most valuable actions that can lead them to their desired goals. Therefore, exact and clear-cut communication is the most effective method for this approach.

2.6.2 Interpretive approach

This approach adopts the exact opposite of the post-positive approach, which is that a school cannot survive without communication between the SGB and the teachers. According to Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:152), the SGB and teachers drive what their school's performance and ethos. Wrench and Punyanunt (2012:152) add that communication is not just an activity on its own, but one of many other actions that a school performs. The communications between stakeholders shape the school. The school does not survive impartially, but only in relation to its stakeholders' perspectives.

Interpretivists believe that simple monitoring is insufficient, and that the SGB and teachers' mindsets also have to be interpreted. The purpose of this approach to communication is to achieve results and for stakeholders to make sense of their work place, to set up patterns, to navigate their own identities, and to perform their roles. In comparison to the post-positive approach where the stakeholders' mindset of the school is not taken into account, the interpretivist approach believes that it is vital to gain knowledge of the school environment. Where the post-positive approach goes from description to explanation to prediction, the interpretive approach focuses on the stakeholders' understanding of the school's environment.

Therefore, schools that use the interpretive approach can use the SGB and teacher's communication and culture to turn negative behaviours into positive behaviours, and in turn create a better school.

2.6.3 Critical approach

The critical approach to communication within a school proposes that the interests of the school management have to be extrapolated (Mumby, 2013). In confirming this

proposition, Jacob (2015:1) argues that a critical approach to studying and understanding communication between the SGB and teachers of a school are vested in the idea that power is not equally distributed. They further argue that this imbalance of power creates a hierarchy that is visible in both society as a whole and in the school in particular. Therefore, this could imply that the overarching goal of the critical approach is to uncover the reasons for the imbalanced power, and bring those causes to the attention of the SGB so that they can drive power equalisation (management and governance) in their school. This equalisation can only be realised through effective communication between the SGB and the teachers for the common purpose of serving the best interests of all the learners of the school. Thus, it can be concluded that the post-positive approach seeks vital elements to bring about value and efficiency, bringing together stakeholders' goals for the school.

The critical approach seeks to uncover the concealed authority structures in organisations, and is achieved by using common theories of domination as the basis from which to analyse a certain organisation. In this approach, communication is used to methodically alter sense, views, awareness, and communicative activities so that domination seems normal, and other views are barred.

While it is important to understand the different approaches to communication, it is also important to study and understand the theories within these different approaches.

2.7 Communication strategies

Effective communication between the teachers and the SGB in a school calls for an in-depth knowledge and understanding of various communication strategies. A strategy of communication is basically a plan on how to communicate with others effectively. According to Epstein (1995:703), communicating with SGBs is one of the most important types of parent participation practices that is significant in creating sturdy working relationships between teachers and the SGB. Schussler (2003:7) adds that nurturing these relationships is essential for a school's effective functioning.

Expressed communication involves one-way or two-way exchanges (Bender, 2005:4). Jooste (2011: 50) describes one-way communication, stating that it occurs when the school staff wishes to inform parents (SGB) about something, and this can be done using newsletters for example. Two-way communication involves shared discussions between teachers and the SGB. Therefore, conversations may occur in various ways, and both of these strategies should be used for effective communication between the teachers and the SGB.

2.7.1 One-way communication

One-way communication is linear and is limited, because it occurs in a straight line between sender and receiver (cf.2.5). Williams and Cartledge (1997:30) opine that written communication in respect to the official school setting includes one-way communication, and is perhaps the most effective way schools can deliver important continuing communication between teachers and SGB. This implies that written communication is a stable result that needs careful thought regarding format and content. The primary objective is to organise succinct, clear, and precise information so that the SGB will be able to comprehend it, and be able to cascade the information down to the school's parent community.

2.7.2 Two-way communication

According to Lawrence-Lightfoot (2004:24), two-way communication is interactive, and both the sender and receiver of information listen and respond to each other. For this strategy to be effective between teachers and the SGB, an efficient conversation will have develop out of trust, joint concerns, and an appreciation of conflicting viewpoints. For instance, teachers may contact the SGB to discuss the success of a project, but more frequently the contact will be about a concern or suggestion to develop the school, which could be a source of conflict for both parties involved. Jooste (2011:53) advises that both the SGB and teachers make the most of these forms of communication.

Jooste (2011:53) adds that teachers and the SGB are urged to follow up the meeting by preparing a written meeting summary in line with the school's strategic plan. Supplementary activities might include making suitable appointments, discussions

with relevant teachers or parents, or developing detailed directives or strategies. This ensures that communication between the SGB and teachers is effective, and that it is developmental for the school.

2.8 Effective communication

According to Jooste, (2011) & Rafferty (2003:53) effective communication is the process of understanding and sharing information, where listening also plays an important role. On the other hand, Sambo (2014:334) defines effective communication as *“the process of sharing information between two or more entities, which leads to the desired outcome. The information shared is conveyed and received efficiently without the intended meaning being distorted or changed. It includes skills like non-verbal communication, attentive listening, ability to understand, controlling one’s own emotions, and managing stress. These skills need to be developed and honed. In confirming the above definitions”*, Johnson (2013) claims that the SGB believes strongly that effective communication should be a two-way process, where someone speaks and they are listened to and treated as worthy of consideration and respect. It is therefore important for teachers to listen when communicating with the SGB, to show respect, and not to interrupt while an SGB member is speaking, as some members feel offended by teachers interrupting them, which they may construe as a sign of disrespect. Majola (2013:46) asserts that the teachers’ lack of effective communication with the SGB during discussions adds to the problems that SGB have with teachers. Therefore Agbo (2007) opines that it is the teacher’s responsibility to open communication channels with the SGB and the community members who want to interact with them, and to show the SGB that they are valued and that the teachers are prepared to work and co-operate with the SGB.

To this end, Sambo (2014: 47) advises that for effective communication to take place, the following encouraging means of communication should be followed:

- SGB members should be allowed to speak in their language of choice;
- SGB should not be interrupted prior to completing their part of the dialogue;
- poor communication could result in a gradual break down of relationships; and
- when an SGB member is upset, they should be allowed to calm down before continuing, even if it is felt that the SGB member is in the wrong

This shows that the aim of effective communication is to build and sustain sound relationships characterised by fundamental values of respect and trust with the SGB (Majola, 2013:31).

According to (Van der Westhuizen, 2010:205; Van Der Linde, 1997:195) no task can be successfully completed at a school without effective communication between the SGB and teachers. These authors also assert that leaders in education (SGB and teachers) spend most of their time in collaborative situations, and therefore the importance of effective communication cannot be overemphasised. A school, as an organisation, has different stakeholders who each have a role to play in order to achieve the school's objectives, the SGB being in the strategic position to ensure that the governance mandate of the school is realised, and the teachers who will execute the SGB mandate. Therefore, effective communication has to take place so that each role-player knows what they have to do in order to achieve these objectives. Prinsloo (2003:156) also emphasises the importance of effective communication between the SGB and teachers, stating that the effective communication in a school is imperative. The "knack" of communication that Prinsloo (2003:156) refers to is what is believed to be missing in the communication process between the School Governing Body and teachers.

Kheswa (2015:1) opines that effective communication plays an important role in almost all of a school's activities. All personnel in any organisation have to communicate, but effective communication contributes to a school that functions optimally.

According to Van der Westhuizen (2010:205), some of the purposes of effective communication are:

- to expose development and objectives;
- to ensure operational functioning of a school;
- to facilitate effective synchronisation of tasks; and
- to bring about shared contact between people and tasks and effective entrustment of tasks.

This ensures that a school runs properly and effectively. Xaba (2011:205) concurs that teachers and the parents of the SGB find it hard to work together because teachers believe the parent members of the SGB are uneducated and illiterate. This causes many trust issues between the SGB and teachers. Trust is not just gained but built. Fullan (2014:130) theorises that trust is a value and norm that one must embrace and develop in the school environment.

Therefore, from the above discussion, it can be surmised as Benson (2016) states that effective communication is a necessary and integral part of management and school governance. Activities can be carried out efficiently only if the communication flow is smooth and unhindered. Attitudes and a work environment have a significant influence on effective communication. Thus, effective communication depends on a plethora of skills, which often needs to be learned and applied in everyday situations to have the desired outcome. Changes, propositions, strategies, etc. all require effective communication for smooth execution. While the means of communication may change due to evolving technology, effective communication still remains the foundation for executing management and governance work.

2.9 Barriers to effective communication between teachers and the school governing body

In contrast to the discussion of effective communication above, there are numerous barriers to effective communication. Sharma and Patterson (1999) posit that recognition of the most common communication barriers, and understanding how they impact on the effective communication, is important. Removing barriers is one of the easiest ways to improve communication. Literature refers to some of these barriers, and as such, each will be discussed in detail and suggestions will be provided in terms of how they can be overcome. Some of the major barriers (not exhaustive) to effective communication are:

- Distrust in the relationship

Teachers and the principal sometimes feel that they are being bullied and controlled by the SGB, particularly the parent members who know little or nothing about the educational system including almost all legislation relevant to education (Botha,

2012:267). In this instance the relationship between the two stakeholders is characterised by distrust. On the other hand, the SGB also do not trust teachers, and therefore become uncooperative in school governance, as they feel that teachers consider them to be illiterate and incapable of performing tasks. Therefore, it can be argued that if effective communication is to take place in a school, all stakeholders, particularly the SGB, must feel secure enough to voice their concerns. This creates a climate of trust and security in which barriers can be overcome. Many SGB members might at first be overwhelmed by all the duties that need to be carried out.

- Language

According to Businessstopia (2017), communication becomes difficult in situations where people do not understand each other's languages. The inability to communicate using language is known as the language barrier to communication. In South Africa there are 11 official languages, and English is the preferred language of communication. The use of English as a medium of communication during the meetings of the SGB creates problems, as parent members of the SGB cannot express their ideas and concerns freely and fluently when addressing a meeting in English. Therefore, there is likely to be a communication breakdown, and as such, the school's aims and goals will never be adequately addressed. The SGB must be allowed to speak in the language that they feel comfortable with, and translation services should be employed to facilitate those who do not understand.

- The school governing body's lack of experience

The SGB's lack of experience could become a barrier. Van Wyk (2004:56) states that teachers suggest that the SGB members receive training and obtain a copy of the SASA in their desired language. In essence, this means that language is one of the principal barriers to effective communication.

- Literacy level

Van Wyk (2004:51) conducted research regarding the SGB's effectiveness, and found that SGB members lack confidence, and this was attributed to low levels of literacy and training. The low level of literacy hampers effective communication because the SGB members cannot read and nor can they understand legislation that

governs the school. In order to run a school and to make executive decisions, as SGB members do, it is important to have the skills to assess, evaluate, and consider the possible outcomes of a decision, which affects the governance of the school. According to Chaka (2005:1) setting and literacy level define the SGB members' skills and knowledge in respect to the SGB's legitimate functions.

In order to tackle the SGB's functions, a person must be fully equipped to do so, and to this end the SGB members should receive proper guidance and support.

Xaba (2011:205) concurs with Mabasa and Themane's (2002:114) statement that illiteracy among the majority of SGB members makes it difficult to execute their duties. Xaba adds that educators undermine parent-governors because of their low education. These duties include the construction of school policies, obtaining moneys, managing school resources, and hiring educators. Chaka (2005:2) states that developing school policies needs some form of literacy, which can be hard to find in impoverished areas.

Van Wyk (2004:51) further states that educators feel that their SGB members are ineffective in their roles, due to low levels of literacy and lack of training. This brings about an atmosphere of trust issues, which can later result in the collapse of an organisation or school.

- Uncertainty of roles

Between the SGB and the principal, the roles become intertwined, and it might be hard to distinguish what the exact roles for each of them are, and this in turn could cause major conflict. Van Wyk (2004:51) adds that a participant in her study admitted that SGB members are unsure of their functions, and this could lead to a lack of confidence. Thus, if there is no confidence in the leadership of an organisation, the role and duties associated with the leadership will fail.

Many challenges pertaining to communication and how information is communicated are evident in schools. Mabovula (2:2010) found that difficult relationships between largely educated members in the school governing structures and a largely under-educated parent community, resulted in conflicts between parents and educators regarding the meanings of governance and management, and the weakness of

communication channels between SGBs and the provincial departments of education.

Clase et al. (2007:253) add that most of the tension in governing bodies is that there is a lack of communication between the concerned parties, and people have different interpretations of education legislation. A serious challenge concerns the communication between staff members of the school and the SGB, where communication is non-existent or intensifies into hostility between staff members, which leads to the ineffective functioning of the SGB.

From Heystek (2004:308-311) and Serfontein's (2010:94-99) research, it is evident that role-players can over-step the mark when there is a lack of clarity concerning the exact governance functions and duties of each party, only vague guidelines are available regarding the distribution of power, the division of authority is unclear, and there is a lack of effective communication between the different role players.

Even though there are no defined roles for the SGB and the principal, it is important to know when one needs to step forward and when one needs to step back. Xaba (2011:209) asks and analyses the question regarding whether or not the principal is regarded as a member of the SGB, since the principal is required to assist the SGB. This role might point to a tendency to put the principal above other members of the SGB, and therefore creates circumstances for their authority, which opposes the impression that once in the SGB, all members adopt identical rank as governors, and this might be the reason principals believe that they are mentors to the SGB.

- Poor listening

Siddiqui (2014) explains that poor listening could lead to serious communication problems. He claims that too many people are interested in talking, and mostly talking about themselves. They are so involved with themselves that they do not have the patience to listen to others, and the result is that they are not interested in the speaker who is thus unheard. This is exactly what the teachers do when an SGB member speaks, and the SGB consider this behaviour to be a sign of disrespect and as such, it breaks the relationship of trust between them.

Siddiqui (2014) further argues that everybody knows about the importance of listening, but very few actually practice patience, and active and empathic listening. That is why so many communication problems occur. Poor listening accounts for incomplete information and also poor retention. One may simply not get the desired result if this continues to occur. That is why Sambo (2016) advises that teachers play an active role in ensuring that communication channels between them and the SGB members are open, and that they value the SGB's contributions.

- Offensive style of communication

It is quite obvious that an offensive style of communication leads to communication breakdown (Siddiqui, 2014). It is a rather sensitive point. If a sender sends a message in such a way that the receiver becomes defensive, their relationship becomes strained and communication suffers. Hence, it is absolutely necessary for the stakeholders to adopt a persuasive style of communication.

- Improper and inadequate information

According to Hopkins (2011) one of the aspects that illustrates the difference between effective and ineffective communication is the quality of a message. He argues that *“a good message contains meaningful and appropriate information, and it incorporates language rules with proper choice of words. A poor message, whether spoken or written, does not produce the intended effect, it creates ambiguity, and it leads to misinterpretations.”*

- Maintaining good body language

Hopkins (2011) opines that maintaining good body language attracts positive responses from others, whereas displaying poor body language not only makes a bad impression on others, it also takes somebody's attention away from the effective communication process. Besides, sound listening skills lead to full trepidation of a message, while poor listening changes the message. However, care should be taken to overcome the barriers to effective communication, so that the desired goals and objectives of a school are attained successfully (Hopkins, 2011).

In fact, as Hopkins (2011) eloquently puts it that the barriers to effective communication between teachers and the SGB are many, but with care and attention, the majority of them can be overcome. The fewer the barriers, the greater the chance that the school's communication will be heard, understood, and your most desired action (MDA) that you wish the teachers and the SGB to take, will actually occur (Hopkins, 2011).

2.10 Teacher–school governing body communication

The SGB occupies a strategic position in a school. For this reason, many important decisions have to be made by the SGB, which can influence the way the school functions by, amongst others, providing a strategic direction to the school. That is one of the primary reasons why the SASA of 1996 (RSA, 1996) mandated all schools to establish SGBs. The composition of the SGB is also strategic in the sense that there are different role-players selected from various components of the school community, i.e. the principal—who is an ex-officio member, teachers, parents, and, in secondary schools, learners form part of the SGB (cf. 2.1). Parents are expected to be in the majority, they have been placed in a strategic position with authority to address fundamental issues ranging from, amongst others, establishing the school fund, adopting the school's constitution, and serving in the best interest of the school (cf. 2.7.1).

Section 18(2)(b) of the SASA No 84 of 1996 makes provision for meetings of the SGB. According to Jonas (2005: 6) the SGB only needs to meet once a term and the SGB must meet with parents, learners, educators, and other school staff at least once a year. Furthermore, a report on its activities must be given to parents, learners, educators, and other school staff at least once a year. It is vital for SGB members and teachers to attend these meetings, as communication between them is developed, and this in turn creates a working relationship in the context of school governance. The members of the SGB and teachers cannot expect this to be enough, and work from this mandate alone. The teacher component of the SGB must also give feedback to the rest of the staff about the meetings, decisions made, and any new issues that arise from the meetings. Paragraph 2.7.1 of this study will deal specifically with the issues that need to be communicated between the SGB and the teachers. This study's researcher believes that an interactive communication

model is the best model for communication between teachers and the SGB (Figure 2.2).

Thus, it can be stated that communication between the teachers and the SGB is primarily for the development and improvement of the quality of learning and teaching in the school.

2.11 Communication for school development

Cummings and Worley (2009:16) opine that school development and change has never been more relevant and necessary for a school that aims to provide quality education in the 21st century. This implies that for a SGB to develop and change for the better, for it to deliver on its mandate of serving the best interests of the school, effective communication is indispensable. In the context of change, and by implication, a school and its staff should continually be developing, especially in this day and age, with technological and scientific advances being made every day. This will enhance teaching and learning in the school. The SGB must provide direction and support to teachers to realise this objective.

Rafferty (2003:50) posits that it is the design of the interaction occurring between teachers and school governors that largely determines the school's efficiency. These interactions cascade into the workplace where communication becomes more effective. Based on the researcher's personal experience as a school teacher, it is of extreme importance to build relationships within a school environment. This helps with resource usage, developing new strategies, and carrying out day-to-day tasks. By working together as teachers and the SGB, the school is developed as a whole.

Heystek (2011:456) contends that the expectation in "*South African schools that governance will have a positive influence on the quality of education does not seem realistic.*" While Heystek's (2011) argument may be true, given the recent incidents in education, for instance, the racially motivated stance of a school's SGB in a coloured area protesting against the appointment of an African principal and a deputy principal, lead to a temporary closure of the school. It is highly unlikely that the SGB of that school will have a positive influence on the quality of education at that school. In this regard, Xaba (2011:203) suggests that all SGB members make a combined effort in their active efforts towards providing quality education. This combined effort

could mean that the SGB and teachers need to work as a unified unit in order to achieve a common goal, i.e. the development of the school.

According to Hargie, Tourish, and Hargie (1994:27), the quality of interpersonal communication is a critical variable affecting the level of organisational success, since the foundation of all managerial and organisational success is the ability to work with and through others. In order for this to be realised, teachers and the SGB have to be able to communicate effectively so that the school can function as a successful and thriving unit.

While all schools would like to be the best at what they do, it is vital to implement certain structures to accomplish this. The SGB along with the teachers must communicate and work together in an efficient manner, and not lose sight of the main goal. Communication can also be seen as personal, and so it needs to be developed personally in each individual staff member, thus creating a cohesive group of teachers and SGB members to develop a flourishing school.

2.11.1 The school governing body's communication areas

Section 20 of the SASA states that the SGB of a public school must promote the best interests of the school, and must strive to ensure its development by providing quality education for all learners at the school, and in so doing, they must, inter alia:

- develop the school's mission statement;
- support the principal, teachers, and other school staff in the performance of their professional functions;
- encourage parents, learners, teachers, and other school staff to render voluntary services to the school;
- adopt a code of conduct for school learners;
- adopt a constitution;
- discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act;
- discharge other functions consistent with this Act, as determined by the Minister by notice in the Government Gazette, or by the Member of the Executive Council by notice in the provincial gazette;

- determine times of the school day that are consistent with any applicable conditions of the employment of school staff;
- determine the admission policy of the school, subject to certain limitations;
- administer and control the school's property, the buildings, and grounds occupied by the school, including hostels, if applicable;
- recommend the appointment of teachers at the school to the head of department, subject to the Educators Employment Act, 1994 Proclamation No. 138 of 1994, and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- recommend the appointment of non-teaching school staff to the head of department, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994) and Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995); and
- at the request of the head of department, allow reasonable use of fair conditions of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school;

Section 21 of the Schools Act specifically lists all the allocated functions of the SGB. In this regard, some SGBs are entitled to these functions, while other SGBs are not entitled to any, or sometimes only to a few. These functions are:

- to maintain and improve the school's property, buildings, and grounds, including the hostels, if applicable;
- to determine the school's extra-mural curriculum and the choice of subject options in terms of the provincial curriculum policy;
- to purchase textbooks, educational materials, or equipment for the school; and
- to pay for the services to the school.

These functions are aimed at ensuring that the SGB is able to promote the best interests of the school by providing quality education to all learners at the school. In fact, this is the fundamental obligation of the school, as previously mentioned. It could be argued that listing these roles and functions could lead to conflicts in the school. Therefore, it would be prudent to unpack the roles and functions so that unnecessary tensions between the teachers and the SGB in the school can be avoided. Serero (2016: 62) contextualises the roles and functions of the school governance mandate as, inter alia:

- **Providing strategic direction to the school**

By adopting the constitution: the SGB will be able to direct all its activities and communicate clear functional and demarcation of roles as well as the essential strategic procedures attached to such demarcations.

By developing the mission statement of the school: this is a fundamental step of envisioning the school's desired destination.

By determining the school's times: school times are an integral of school's aims and objectives and they are therefore a part of the school strategy in the pursuit of such goals and it also involves the effective use of the available resources, be they human, capital, and/or material resources.

- **Acting as a critical friend**

Acting as a critical friend calls for the SGB to ask challenging questions as a means of monitoring the progress and evaluating the outcomes of the school's effectiveness, as well as pressing for improvement. This can be done by: supporting the principal, teachers, and other school non-teaching staff in carrying out their duties; and encouraging the parents, learners, teachers, and other non-teaching staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school.

- **Demand accountability**

This element is the most critical of the three elements of the school governance mandate. According to Serero (2016) demanding accountability ensures that the school governing body executes its governance mandate effectively, and it is concerned with the scrutiny of performance against set targets of implementation of the school's strategic direction. Finally, as the Birmingham City Council (2012:4) puts it, demanding accountability seeks to:

- *“ensure high standards of education;*
- *ensure value for money by demonstrating efficient and appropriate allocation of resources;*
- *ensure effective school management and organisation; and*

- *ensure that everything is done and everyone is operating within the agreed aims and objectives”.*

From the above exposition of the “three elements of the school governance mandate”, it is evident that their effective execution holds implications for the effectiveness of the SGB. However, in order for the SGB to be able to execute the “three elements of the school governance mandate” successfully, the following requirements are essential, James, Brammer, Connolly, Fertig, James and Jones, 2010:105:

- proper induction and adequate training of the SGBs;
- necessary attributes for effectiveness in SGB (individual members, i.e. their standing in the community, their expertise and skills relevant to the task of governing a school, and most importantly, their ability to work as a team and collaborate with others; and
- knowledge of the functioning of the SGB, i.e. understanding roles and responsibilities.

2.12 Fostering effective communication

Zupanc (2011) is convinced that most of the communication that we engage in in our daily lives is quite successful. For instance, he says that we know how to modify our behaviour, or vary our method/approach if we realise that our messages aren’t being communicated. However, he argues that for the communication to be effective, more effort has to be invested firstly, into acquiring the principles, and later, into preparing and delivering our messages each and every time. For this reason, Nhlapo (2015:65) states that the implication of effective communication is that *“it signals to stakeholders that they are free to approach each other at any time in case they need help and support”*. Weller and Weller (2000:63) in Nhlapo (2015) argue that principals need to have good communication skills to promote effective communication and good human relations. Effective communication ensures that all stakeholders have a similar understanding about various issues concerning their institutions. Furthermore, Nhlapo (2015:65) argues that the principal must also be able to coordinate various school activities with the help of SGB members, and they

must ensure that what is communicated is understood by all SGB members. Guthrie and Schuermann (2010:387) state that it is common knowledge that “*communication is a social force that facilitates cooperation and mutual trust among individuals in an organisation in order to pursue mutual goals*”. Thus, it should be emphasised that without regular communication, no school team can sustain its good work.

According to Cardinal at Work (2015) when teachers work with the SGB to produce stellar results, whether it’s a project team or a cross-discipline committee, collaboration quickly becomes a key skill. When considering team effectiveness, it can be useful to evaluate the results, the process, and the relationships, as three separate but equally important factors (Cardinal at Work, 2015). This can be done as follows:

- Results

Set clear goals. Take the time to ensure everyone is clear and aligned on the goals of the collaboration—if some think the goal is to increase efficiency and others think it is to increase customer satisfaction, the group will struggle from the start. Communicate how decisions will be made.

Does everyone need to agree? What happens if consensus is not possible? Have a fall-back determined and stated up front, or you risk others feeling their trust is broken if their ideas are not implemented.

- Process

Agree on roles. The biggest challenge with collaboration is when work is duplicated or forgotten. What can seem obvious to one person, can get lost in translation for others. Take time at the beginning of the project, and at the end of each meeting to clearly state who is responsible for what. Then resist the urge to take on others’ responsibilities.

Communication: A strong corollary to the above is to agree on how progress, changes, and ideas will be communicated. Nothing torpedoes collaborative efforts faster than informal communication channels, leaving participants feeling left out, or

misunderstandings resulting from missed opportunities to share information with stakeholders.

- Relationships

Build trust by getting to know your collaborators on a personal level; it is not a waste of time, and can keep channels of communication open.

Address issues early. Strained relationships, wherever they show up, create challenges to effective collaboration. Address behaviours (and encourage others to address them) professionally when they occur.

The discussion of these three important factors leads to another level of communication that could be viewed as an anchor of the communication between the teachers and the SGB, i.e. strategic communication.

2.13 Strategic communication

Strategic communication is defined by Hallahan, Holtzhausen, Van Ruler, Verčič and Sriramesh, (2007:3) as the purposeful use of communication by an organisation to fulfil its mission. In essence, the purposeful use of communication makes it "strategic". However, the World Bank Group (2017) argues that although the purposeful use of communication—strategic communication—is highly relevant for development, this approach alone is not sufficient to understand the breadth, depth, and wealth of communication as it affects development and reform effectiveness. Notwithstanding the plethora of different communication strategies, for the purpose of this study, Strategic Communication Management (SCM) will be discussed in detail.

Steyn and de Beer (2012:30) define SCM as a scientific worldview that creates communication management in the tactical context of the organisation. On the other hand, communication management is defined as the management of communication between an organisation (institution) and its internal and external stakeholders, and other societal interest groups, and is performed at the functional level of an organisation. In addition, this could be called the 'full participation' approach where

people are involved before planned decisions are made. The SGB has to be precise when making decisions; these should not be made on a whim.

When it is time to work through disagreements and conflicts between the stakeholders, as they are to be expected, National Seminars Training (n.d.) suggests the following:

- understanding how your actions and behaviours may be affecting the actions and behaviours of others;
- knowing what to do when your priorities clash with your responsibilities;
- establishing how to overcome negativity and the “that won’t work” mentality; and
- knowing when it’s time to ask a higher-up to step in and break an impasse.

Steyn in Toth (2007) states that corporate communication in its strategic role:

- gives stakeholders information about relevant issues regarding the institution, and in so doing can be assisted in developing strategies and goals;
- encourages organisational leaders to pay attention to risks and issues that have been identified, by aligning organisational goals and strategies to stakeholders hopes while serving the institution and the public;
- assists organisational leaders to apply two-way communication with both internal and external stakeholders regarding issues surrounding the institution;
- builds mutually positive relationships; and
- encourages the institution act in a accountable way and build a good standing within a community.

This shows that SCM can be beneficial to the SGB in terms of communication and decision-making between members as well as for teachers and the community at large. Steyn and De Beer (2012:36) have come up with three corporate communication roles, which are strategist, manager, and technician. The most vital role here is that of the strategist - they are responsible for identifying status risks and other problems or prospects that need to be communicated.

Since the strategist is tasked with identifying any status risks, it is important that the organisation builds up trust with the community at large. If the SGB does not have a

relationship of trust with teachers, the community will not send learners to the school, and the school will fail to exist. Steyn and De Beer (2012:36) further state that the SGB recognises that public trust is not gained by merely altering outward communication to show responsibility; the school as an organisation has to perform in a responsible manner. Therefore, practicing good governance and including all stakeholders becomes imperative.

Within SCM there is a stakeholder approach, which is an alternative framework used in governance. Freeman and McVea (2001:11) state that a stakeholder approach places emphasis on an organisation's active management and relationships, as well promoting common interests. The interests of the organisation should be those of the key stakeholders. Therefore the SGB should have the community's interests for the educational needs of their children at heart. Harrison and St John (1998) add that motivating, managing relationships, contracting, negotiating, and communication are involved in stakeholder management that is built on a partnering mentality. The SCM's stakeholder approach seems to be the perfect fit for communication, not only between the SGB and teachers, but also with the whole community at large. Implementing this strategy would have a positive impact on all stakeholders.

While SCM is a brilliant approach to communication, it is important to study some of the earlier theories of communication in order to gain a deeper understanding of communication within an organisation. However, this study has only focused on the SCM as the fundamental approach.

2.14 The principal's role: capacity-building of the school governing body

While SASA, 84 of 1996 sets out the functions of the SGBs it does not state how both the SGB and the principal of a school should manage their roles. (Section 21(1)), the principal of a school is in a very challenging situation when it comes to their roles and their place in today's ever changing world.

This section will identify the principal's role in effective communication between teachers and the SGB. Khuzwayo (2007:15) explains that there must be a valuable collaboration between the principal and chairperson if the staff and governors are to add positively to the school, otherwise, according to Rafferty (2003:49), educational

leaders face many barriers to educational effectiveness. These barriers transcend the traditional challenges presented by a changing learner demographic, resource reductions, increased operation costs, and the urgency to produce immediate achievement gains while providing quality learning experiences for learners.

A school principal's role is to lead the school as a whole and to ensure that the best interests of the learners' of the school are taken into consideration; it can also be said that the principal has a dual role. Karlsson (2002:332) states that in virtually every school, in comparison to other staff members, the principal plays a dominant role in decision-making. It is important to note that the principal has to act as an intermediary between the educators and the SGB, which can become a complicated role. Khuzwayo (2007:18) states that the principal's role is to assist SGB members to help them carry out their duties according to the SASA.

Van Wyk (2004:51) states that during interviews conducted with school principals it was obvious that significant talks take place between principals and the chairpersons of the various SGBs. By contrast, very little mention was made of consultations with teachers other than the members of the school management team. In general, it would appear as if principals assume that they fully represent the interest of educators. The position of teachers on SGBs is fairly vague, and while the principal's role as "chief executive" or "leading professional" is relatively clear-cut, it is often difficult for educator governors to find meaningful roles. Additionally, teachers on SGBs often feel uneasy deliberating a point on the agenda that would impact directly upon their employment conditions. This means that educators often look to parents on the SGB to support their interests, rather than to their own representatives on the SGB.

The principal must ensure that they are able to effectively communicate to both parties without becoming biased. Majola (2012:25) asserts that several principals habitually undermine other employees' capability, which might be a strategy to protect their own interests, however, they should remain neutral. Xaba (2011:205) states that principals find themselves in the position of having to educate members of the SGB as to their roles on the committee, and also having to act as an intermediary between teachers and the parents of the SGB.

The Ministerial Review Committee (2003:93) in Nhlapo (2015:54) shows that the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) policy defines the principal's governance role as follows:

- to serve on the SGB and render all necessary assistance to the SGB in the performance of their functions in terms of the SASA;
- to co-operate with members of the school staff and the SGB in maintaining an efficient and smooth running school; and
- to liaise with the Department and other departments and agencies regarding all matters pertaining to the school's well-being.

Nhlapo (2015:54) adds that the principal's role in the SGB becomes that of an ordinary member of the SGB. The principal's role in the SGB is not precise, and as such, the principal needs to serve all involved, while still performing in the best interests of the school. Khuzwayo (2007:20) asserts that the overlap of management and governance duties has been deemed one of the most crucial obstacles that chairpersons, principals, School Management Team (SMT) members, and SGB members have to deal with in schools. Nhlapo (2015:55) agrees, and says that the principal's role is a dual role, and has significantly influences what is expected of them.

2.15 Advantages of effective communication

Xaba (2011:203) states that all SGB members must work together towards providing quality education for learners. This will be achieved via effective communication. The SGB and teachers have to have an open channel of communication that will then show the advantages of the effective communication. Rafferty (2003:67) states that an open school environment usually comprises teachers and governors who trust each other, and this trust affects each individual member's behaviour and work. Thus, trust positively influences schools, and members carry out their duties effectively as part of a group.

These advantages are all in the best interest of the school, which is the SGB and the teachers' main duty.

Botha (2012:267) states that constant interaction between SGB members and the teachers is linked to a variety of positive outcomes for the efficient running of a school. These outcomes include improved matriculation results in secondary schools and better annual national assessment results in the other phases and grades, a lower dropout rate, and improved staff retention. Kheswa (2015:330) adds that the more communication there is, the better the results are, and cooperation between staff members is enhanced.

On a personal level, effective communication plays an important role in developing long-term relationships (Hung & Lin, 2013: 1), and this will also enhance trust relationships between the SGB and teachers. Msila (2011:445) concurs with this, stating that strong communication is based on shared trust, and this is one of the foundations of a strong school. Rafferty (2003:68) states that his results show a clear link between the school environment and upward communication patterns, and suggests that by increasing upward communication, the school environment can be developed.

In this section the exploration of the benefits and advantages of effective communication will be studied and discussed.

2.15.1 Advantages for learners

The best method of measuring whether or not a school is effective is to look at their learners' results. The advantages of effective communication between the staff and SGB is evident in the learners' outcomes. Kheswa (2015:333) states that the advantages of effective communication in schools are learners' increased achievements in reading, extra-curricular participation, and lower drop-out rates.

Nhlapo (2015:66) states that one area that requires effective communication is learners' performance, which is significant in deciding whether a school is functional or dysfunctional, and which shows whether or not effective teaching and learning takes place at the school. It is of vital importance that the school keeps records of learners' performance in order to notify stakeholders about the school's functioning, especially when it comes to the school's tactical direction, which should mirror its vision, mission, and objectives. These results can be distributed in the form of a

summary of results, which are passed on to parents, and this should be followed up by a meeting to discuss any barriers that are hampering the results.

Majola (2013:19) adds that inefficiently managed school conflicts could have devastating effects on the teaching and learning at schools, and will directly affect the learners. Rafferty (2003:66) explains that because a school's performance is directly connected to what teachers think and do, which is to teach learners, effective communication is at the core of establishing and sustaining an effective school. Effective communication positively affects the school's quality and effectiveness.

If effective communication is practiced in the school, it will be apparent in the learners, since effective communication usually cascades down from the management to the teachers and then to learners. The learners will be more willing to participate in activities and the results of the learners will be of a high standard. Majola (2013:26) asserts that if there are learners that are in need, and that communication is vital in taking care of these learners. If effective communication is practiced within a school, the learners' needs will be taken care of, and the learner will be able to go to school, study, and achieve excellent results.

Thus, if the teachers and SGB communicate effectively, the advantages for learners are significant. Learners will feel the positive school climate, and if there is tension and distrust among teachers and the SGB, the learners will not perform well due to teachers not performing their duties properly. Lastly Rafferty (2003: 67) posits that if teachers and the management work together, they make an impact on a cause much greater than their own.

2.15.2 Advantages for parents

“Schools should become places where families feel wanted and recognised for their strengths and potential” (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2004: 268). Parents and families should be involved with the school to open up communication pathways and to be involved in their children's education.

One of the most important factors within schools is communication with parents. Parents may reap the benefits of this communication if it is effective. Kheswa

(2015:333) notes that communication between the school and parents is seen as a collaborative effort to make decisions about how learners are educated, and this brings about congruence and harmony.

According to Lemmer and van Wyk (2004:261), during the apartheid era parents were only there to provide financial support to their children's education, but today, post-apartheid, the expected role of a parent is more demanding. Parents are seen as collaborators in the child's education, and as such the co-operation of stakeholders is improved.

The advantage of effective communication for parents is that they can participate in their child's education and are empowered to make decisions on how they are educated. Improved communication opens pathways of communication and forges strong bonds between schools and parents.

2.15.3 Advantages of effective communication for the schools

The school has to function effectively in order to cope with stakeholders' demands and expectations as well as keeping their best interests at heart. Rafferty (2003:50) notes that without effective communication, the school's commitment, motivation, confidence, and perceptions could be jeopardised. Rafferty (2003:66) adds that effective communication is vital in shaping the school's social reality and that of its staff, and is at the core of what makes a successful school.

Lemmer and van Wyk (2004:267) state that the lack of a teaching and learning culture within schools could lead to the deterioration of schools. Rafferty (2003:66) states that communication between teachers and management affects the school's quality and effectiveness. The school benefits from an open atmosphere and faces less risk and frustration from teachers and management. Rafferty (2003) states that both teachers and principals experience less risk and defensiveness when communicating in an open environment.

Majola (2013:29) concurs, and states that there should be cooperation for efficient and effective success of organisational objectives, whereby members constantly cooperate and consult one another and share ideas harmoniously. Rafferty

(2003:68) says that if trust and open communication are practiced in a school, it allows the continuing and practical probing of exciting expectations and principles that aid as the base of daily procedures and instructional practices of schools. Thus, the open, upward flow of relevant information is essential to school improvement and effectiveness.

Keswa (2015:330) states that principals that bring about a culture of motivation and co-operation will yield positive results for the school, due to positive communication. This shows that effective communication in a school is vital, and the advantages of effective communication will result in a culture of co-operation and harmonious functioning.

2.16 Different understandings of effective communication

When studying effective communication, it soon becomes apparent that the effective communication is a very unique concept, and every organisation or school has to communicate effectively and in such a way that it suits the specific needs of the specific organisation or school. According to Nhlapo (2015:65), effective communication ensures that all stake holders have a similar understanding of various issues concerning their institutions.

Nhlapo (2015:65) adds that the principal is able to achieve effective communication if they are able to motivate parents to strive towards the achievement of educational objectives and goals, and if they are able to co-ordinate various activities and help the SGB members ensure that their message is understood and that they themselves understand the communicated message. Rafferty (2003: 53) states that it is widely accepted that effective communication is central to efficient management. Weicks' Theory (*In Rafferty, 2003:52*) states that social realities are constructed through words, symbols, and actions, which signifies that meaning is made through daily interactions between people.

There has to be an element of trust and openness in an organisation in order for effective communication to occur. Nhlapo (2015:65) states that effective communication requires an open environment in which to take place. It is vital that

staff and management are comfortable enough to communicate with one another, in order to avoid any conflict.

The question of who has to implement effective communication is relevant when discussing the different understandings of effective communication. The main person involved would be the principal, as he has so many roles and duties to fulfil, and deals with both the staff and SGB. Rafferty (2003:54) explains that as communication takes place with management, i.e. the principal, information is clarified and negative information may be changed or overlooked, which then results in poor communication.

It is important to know what practices of effective communication to implement where, as there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution. The managers have to look at what the schools needs are, and what to implement to get the best results in achieving their aims.

2.17 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the nature of communication in the context of school governance was explored. Approaches to communication were extensively discussed, implications of the three key elements of the SGB mandate were also discussed.

The subsequent chapter details the empirical research design.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter set the tone for the empirical study of this research project by presenting a literature review on the nature of communication in the context of school governance at schools in South Africa. The main constructs pertaining to the study phenomenon were adequately provided, with the sole aim of providing a springboard to the empirical study.

This chapter introduces the second phase of this study, in line with its second objective, which is to explore how communication takes place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts. Therefore, this chapter details this study's research design and methodology in terms of its paradigmatic orientation, the research design and methodology, including the data collection and analysis strategies and issues pertaining to ethical considerations.

3.2 Paradigmatic orientation

This research followed a social constructivist paradigm, which is grounded on the principle that individuals' ideas are a result of their seeking to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2009:8). In this sense, individuals add their own meaning to their encounters, and understanding is directed to certain objects or things (Creswell, 2009:234).

The advantage and aptness of a social constructivist paradigm in this study was the fact that it enabled the researcher to understand how people construct meaning based on their experiences, and how they understand a concept through their experiences, that is, the teachers' experiences with the SGB within the school setting regarding communication between them and the SGB members. According to Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter (2006:282), a social constructivist paradigm is relative, since there are many truths, and the descriptions of reality are merely accounts and constructions by participants. It was for this reason that the researcher had to interact with people to gain an understanding. Thus, meaning was

constructed through interaction. However, De Vos, Delpont, Fouché, and Strydom, (2011:7) argues that participants are actively involved in the data processing exercise, and thus become partners in the whole process. Nonetheless, the researcher's central goal was to achieve an advanced understanding of how teachers and members of the SGB communicate, and therefore it was imperative for the researcher to engage the participants in interviews for this purpose.

3.3 Research approach

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, which is in line with the constructivist philosophy, and, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:315) “assumes that reality is a multi-layer, interactive, shared social experience that is interpreted by individuals”. These scholars go on to explain that this actually implies that “people in reality, form constructions to make sense of their world and reorganise such constructions as viewpoints, perceptions and belief systems” or “what they consider real and thus what directs their actions, thoughts, and feelings”. This approach was appropriate for this study, in that it is interactive, open-ended, and allowed the researcher to deal with human problems, by collecting data while interacting with the participants (Creswell, 2009:4; Henning & Van Rensburg, 2002), and it also enabled the researcher to understand social phenomena from the participants' viewpoints. In this study, this is precisely what is intended – to understand how communication takes place between the SGBs and teachers at secondary schools from the participants own perspective. For this reason, a case study design was used to explore this phenomenon.

3.3.1 Research design

Nieuwenhuis (2007a:75) cites Yin, who describes a case study design as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” and “strive(s) towards a comprehensive understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they make meaning of the phenomenon under study”. In the case of this study, the aim was to achieve a holistic understanding of how SGBs and teachers communicate and make meaning of communication as a tool for interacting during school governance

activities within the school, as they engage with and between each other in the pursuance of the school's goals.

The advantage of the case study design for this study is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:316) who state that this study design enables the researcher "to become immersed in the situations and the phenomenon (being) studied" in active participatory interaction with the participants in their work-life. Therefore the researcher was actively engaged with participants from the cases that were selected for the purposes of data-gathering, and while this was mainly on the basis of qualitative interviews, the researcher observed how the study phenomenon unfolded among the participants. Thus, the qualitative approach was perceived to be the most suitable for that kind of investigation. It assisted in gathering the depth and intricacy of behaviour from the participants' perspective, and subsequently, the data consisted of words in the form of rich verbal accounts.

The added advantage of the case study for this study was that it enabled the researcher "to become immersed in the situations and the phenomenon (being) studied" in active participatory interaction with the participants in their work-life (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:316). Therefore, the researcher rigorously engaged participants from cases selected for the purpose of data-gathering, and while this mainly occurred during qualitative interviews, the researcher thoroughly observed how the study phenomenon unfolded among the participants.

The researcher also used document analysis to collect data. Creswell (2009:181) states that during research, the researcher may gather 'qualitative documents', which may include public or private documents. For the purposes of this research, official records such as the SGB's minutes, minutes of the staff meetings, and various other subcommittees' minutes were also reviewed. The documents yielded very rich data that revealed how communication takes place at various schools, and the effectiveness of communication will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this research study.

The researcher must also hasten to indicate that at some schools the researcher was not given the relevant documents to review. When the researcher requested these documents he was given irrelevant documents. Among these were generic

training manuals for the SGB, which were not of much research value. When the researcher asked for minutes of meetings or official documents, the researcher was given minutes of meetings that were outdated and irrelevant to the schools' activities. Regrettably, no valuable data was collected through document review. The response by these schools alerted the researcher to the possibility that perhaps there was more to be hidden from public consumption, than meets the eye. It was possible that management was not comfortable in being transparent with regard to their schools' communication channels. This could also mean that the schools were not actually holding meetings. For this reason, there was no effective communication between the teachers and the SGB regarding matters of good governance at school. It is regrettable to report that no credible data was collected through document review in this study.

The training manuals that the researcher was presented with were interesting and provided general information about SGB membership, and upon closer examination of the functioning of the SGB, it became apparent that the SGB has a specialised role, but insufficient training is done to capacitate the SGB to perform its duties as expected, and this is supported by Serfontein (2010:97), Khuzwayo (2007:23), Xaba (2011:201), and Van der Westhuizen (2010: 429).

3.5 Data collection procedure

Given the fact that human beings make sense of their milieu based on their historical and social perspectives, the researcher personally visited the identified research sites of the participants in order to collect data.

3.5.1 Participant selection

In this study the researcher used purposive criterion sampling. This sampling involved selecting participants who corresponded with certain criteria, and who would contribute meaningful data (Niewenhuis, 2007b:79-80). Participants were selected because of some defining characteristics that made them custodians of the data the study required, namely how effective communication is between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng District. Sampling decisions were made for the sole purpose of obtaining the richest possible sources of

information to respond to the research questions. In qualitative research, sampling is flexible and often continues until no new themes emerge from the data collection process, and this stage is referred to as data saturation (Maree, 2007:79; Gray, 2005:324).

The researcher selected four public secondary schools in the Sedibeng East and West Districts, on the basis of their ability to provide rich data to respond to the research topic. From each school the researcher selected 5 teachers. However, on the day of the appointment 5 teachers from schools A and B participated in the interviews while only 4 teachers from schools C and D participated. The sample size was as a result reduced to 18 (N=18).

Table 3.1 Sample size

Number of schools	Schools	Number of participants	Participants
Four public secondary schools	A	5	2 teacher component, 3 teachers from the staff
	B	5	2 teacher component, 3 teachers from the staff
	C	4	2 teacher component, 2 teachers from the staff
	D	4	2 teacher component, 2 teachers from the staff
Total		18	18

3.5.2 Data collection strategies

To generate data, the researcher contemplated using three methods, i.e. interviews, document analysis, and observations (cf.1.5). However, it was not possible to rely on observations to observe how teachers and the SGB communicated, because the

schools had not planned meetings during my visits to the schools. The use of several different data collection methods in the same study are referred to as methodological triangulation. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:114), triangulation involves the use of more than one method in the pursuit of a given objective. The researcher chose these strategies to assist in interpreting, elaborating, and corroborating data from participants.

3.6 Data collection methods

3.6.1 Interviews

In this research, face-to-face interviews were used as the primary data collection strategy. The aim of conducting the interviews was to see the world through the eyes of the participants, and this was a valuable source of information (Maree, 2007:87). Face-to-face interviews were conducted preferably in those settings where participants' attention was focused on the interviews without any outside interference. The face-to-face interviews in this study took place at the participants' respective schools, and the amount of time allocated to each interview session did not exceed one hour.

Open-ended questions were asked to explore how communication was fostered and took place between teachers and members of the SGBs, and these questions were carefully planned and accurately worded in an interview schedule (cf. appendix 1), and the interviewer used an electronic process to record the responses (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998:167).

3.6.2 Document review

A **document review** was also used. The US Department of Health and Human Services (2009) define this method as a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents, either hard copies or electronic copies, and may include log books, reports, meeting minutes and newsletters. For the purposes of this research, the documents that were reviewed included amongst others:

- i. each SGB's constitution (Schools Act, 84 of 1996: sec. 20(1)(b);
- ii. the minutes of SGB meetings; and

- iii. official indicators/minutes/letters to teachers of how and when feedback was given on the SGB meetings.

Confidentiality is required when collecting data using the document review method. The US Department of Health and Human Services (2009) opines that if one needs to review documents that involve confidential data about individuals, a system that ensures confidentiality of individual-level data must be developed. For instance, the school principal, or anybody mandated by the school, may be asked to be part of the process in which documents would be reviewed. A declaration of confidentiality by the reviewer and the delegate is signed by both of these officials. Developing these processes and guidelines also helps in securing access to sensitive or confidential documents.

All the research sites were requested to voluntarily make some official documents available during the document review process. Initially there seemed to be no problems attached to this request, but when the researcher ultimately requested these physical documents, the researcher was given irrelevant documents from other schools, and among these were generic training manuals for the SGB that were not of much research value. When the minutes of meetings and official documents were requested, the researcher was given minutes of meetings that were outdated and irrelevant to the schools' activities.

From what transpired during that time, the researcher immediately sensed that something was being hidden, or that management was uncomfortable being transparent with their documents. This reluctance could also mean that the schools were not actually having meetings. One school presented the researcher with a training manual that was interesting and seemed to provide general information about SGBs. Serfontein (2010:97), Khuzwayo (2007:23), Xaba (2011:201) and Van der Westhuizen (2010:429) all agree that the SGBs have a much specialised role to play in running the school and that insufficient training is provided.

3.6.3 Observations

Observations as a data collection method are a way for researchers to observe and listen to what is taking place naturally in the research site. Observations are used to

enable the researcher to gain a deeper insight and understanding of the phenomenon being observed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a:84). There are different roles that a researcher can play during observation, e.g. a complete observer, observer as participant, and complete participant. In this study the researcher acted as observer as participant, where the researcher participated in the research scenario with the main intention of being an observer in the situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:85). The purpose of the observations was to observe how the SGB communicated its governance mandate to teachers at the secondary schools, and how the teachers cooperated with the SGB in this regard.

It was not possible to observe how the SGB communicated its governance mandate to teachers at the sites of research, or how the teachers cooperated with the SGB in this regard. It would probably have been more useful if there had been a meeting of the SGB in which teachers accounted for learners' performance, or the SGB accounted to the teachers in terms of the support that they provide to the teachers and the principal. For this reason, further research could be conducted, research in which the communication between the teachers and the SGB can be clearly observed.

3.6.4 Data collection process

Data was collected by meeting with the participants in the Sedibeng East and Sedibeng West Districts at each of the respective schools at a time that suited the participants' schedule. The researcher then explained the study to participants and discussed what would be expected from them, should they wish to participate in the study. The advantages of the study were also conveyed to the participants and how they could contribute towards better communication in schools. Participants were well informed, and the researcher was responsible for motivating the participants to participate in the study.

All participants were advised about how their contribution to the study, i.e. their interview was to be implemented in the study. Participants were then given a consent form to read through thoroughly and to complete within in a certain yet appropriate timeframe. Moreover, participants were made aware of the fact that

participation in this study was completely voluntary, and that they could withdraw their participation at any time. Anonymity was explained and promised.

Participants were free to contact the researcher at any time if something was not understood, or if they wanted feedback on the findings. Interviews were then conducted with each participant. Interviews were arranged so as not to take up a lot of the participants' time, and the interviews lasted no longer than an hour. Participants were all asked the same questions, and then probe questions were asked to gain deeper understanding of answers. Preceding the interviews, contact was maintained telephonically in order to confirm interview dates. Interviews were audio-recorded on a tape recorder, and the procedure was explained to participants before the interviews took place. For documentation analysis, consent was requested from the school principal, and permission was granted to view such documents. As soon as consent was granted, the researcher travelled to the locations to analyse the documentation.

3.7 Ethical considerations

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:117) advise that since most research in education involves human beings, it is important to understand the ethical and legal responsibilities of conducting such research. For this reason, rigorous steps were taken to ensure that no participants were at risk of any kind during the collection of data for this study. An application to conduct this research in the schools was sought from the Department of Education. It was clearly indicated in the application that all the participants were going to be interviewed, and that a document analysis would also be done. Permission was duly granted.

The Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) at North-West University was also approached for ethics clearance in order to conduct this research, and its approval was granted. Permission was then also sought from the principals of the schools involved and the individual participants, and they also granted permission to conduct this research.

All participants were asked to sign an informed consent form. Participants were informed about the research and were told that they would be interviewed and that a

voice recorder would be used to record their responses. It must be emphasised that all participants were assured that their identity would not be revealed and that their privacy and sensitivity were of the utmost importance and would be protected. It was also explained to them that the information that was provided would only be used for this study, and that the information would be kept safely. All participants were also notified that confidentiality would be maintained.

After all the research is complete, the findings will be released to the North-West University's Department of Education, as well as schools and participants who participated in the study. No findings of the research were falsified, and the results were not exploited (Cresswell, 2009:92).

3.8 Quality criteria for trustworthiness

According to Majola (2013:103), qualitative research requires the vital element of trustworthiness. Since the researcher is seen as the research tool for gathering information, it is imperative that the data collected be credible and trustworthy. Trustworthiness was emphasised in this research by focussing on credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

3.8.1 Credibility

Terre Blanche et al. (2006:91) postulate that credible research produces findings that are convincing and believable. Furthermore, they emphasise that the credibility of a qualitative study is established when the research is undertaken. Gray (2009:194) asserts that naturalistic terms are developed by examining the study design and methods to propel findings.

In this research, credibility was verified through triangulation of the data collected from the different sources, as previously alluded to. These sources were used to illuminate and corroborate the research question.

3.8.2 Transferability

One of the reasons for transferability is to ensure that the research findings can be applied to real life situations. This research was conducted in a natural setting as previously described in the methodology of this research. Nevertheless, it was never

the intention of this research to generalise but to explore the effectiveness of communication between the SGB and the teachers in the secondary schools. Rich data that was collected through interviews and document analysis are provided in this research.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the extent to which the results are repeatable. The researcher's intention in this research was not to duplicate the results of the researchers who had previously investigated the same phenomenon, instead, repeatability was achieved through the exposition of a rich data procedure, which provided an audit trail.

3.8.4 Conformability

As explained in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.5), conformability refers to whether or not the data assists in confirming the general findings and leads to implications. For this reason, the process of data generation, analysis, and interpretation are provided in this research, presenting an audit trail that can be easily traced.

3.9 Data analysis and interpretation

Mouton (2011:108) posits that analysis involves the "breaking up" of data into themes; this is to gain an understanding of the data through the scrutiny of associations between ideas, concepts, or variables, and to ascertain whether or not there are any patterns that can be distinguished to form themes. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364) argue that data from a qualitative study can be broken down by means of coding, categorising, and interpreting data to provide explanations of a particular phenomenon of interest. Therefore, in this study, the coding, categorising, and creation of themes was done with the help of Atlas.ti 8 software.

3.9.1 Analysis of interview data

The fundamental step in the analysis involved the organisation of data. Data from the voice recorder was transcribed verbatim. Immediately after transcribing, the researcher started to analyse. The researcher read the transcripts and

simultaneously listened to the recordings, and then loaded the transcripts into Atlas.ti 8 software. Atlas.ti 8 grouped similar responses into manageable chunks of themes and categories for ease of reading and interpretation. The process was tedious because the researcher had to revert back to the data on the software to add the codes that the researcher had missed along the way. After this procedure, the researcher then grouped the categories into themes, with the help of the software, and used the inductive method to identify the themes in this research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:364), the primary purpose of using the inductive method in the analyses of qualitative data is to allow the research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in the data, and also to enable the researcher to classify significant themes inherent in the raw data collected. The following diagram represents the inductive process employed in this research:

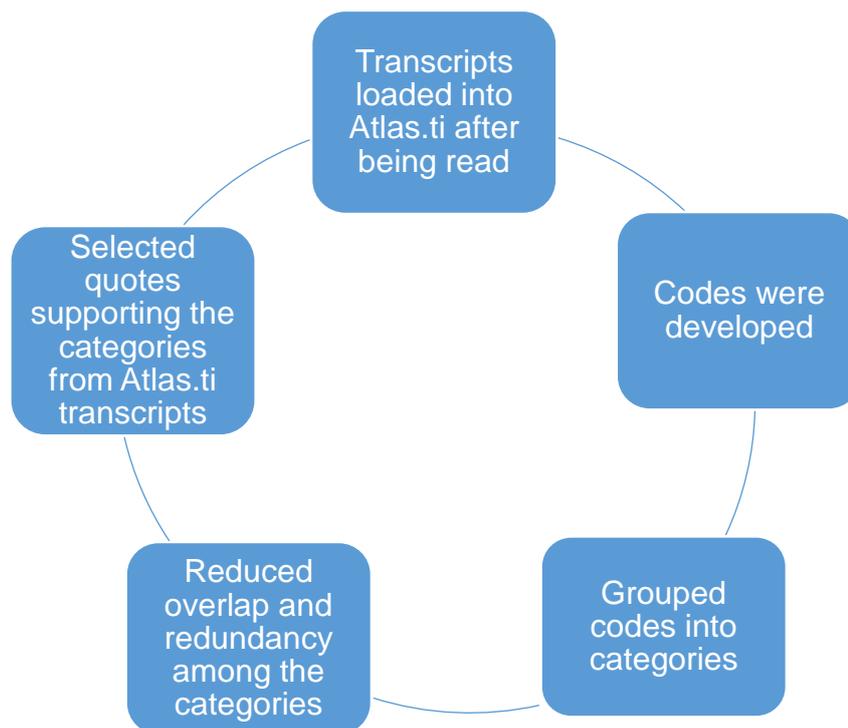


Figure 3.2 Analysis of interview data

3.10 Study limitations

De Vos et al. (2011:118) assert that numerous limitations are possible, even in the most carefully planned research study, and are therefore worthy of mention. Thus,

limitations in this study were, amongst others, the fact that participants were not at ease in responding to some questions for fear of reprisal—especially the teacher component of the SGB. Another limitation was that irrelevant documents presented to the researcher were of no significance to this study. And an additional limitation was that the researcher was presented with old minutes of meetings, which were irrelevant to the study. This was an indication that school principals had something hide, for whatever reason, even though the researcher explicitly explained the purpose of his research.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter dealt extensively with the process of empirical research. The research design, research paradigm, and the research methodology were presented. Ethical considerations were outlined, and credibility factors were also explained. In summary, this chapter provided an overview of the manner in which the researcher conducted the empirical research. The findings, analysis, and interpretation of the empirical research will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher's interest was in presenting the research methodology that included an explication of the research paradigm, design, data collection strategy, population and sample, data analysis procedures, and quality criteria, as well as the ethical standards. The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the results of the literature study and the empirical study. The researcher presents data collected from 18 purposefully and conveniently selected participants, in order to present and discuss the effectiveness of communication between the teachers and the SGB in the secondary schools, data collected through observations, and data collected through document analysis. The participants' demographic profiles and the triangulated data are also presented.

4.2 Demographic profiles of the participants

The participants in this research comprised of 18 teachers from four secondary schools. In this section the researcher will present the demographic information of both the teachers and SGB-teacher components that might have an influence on the results of the study, as well as on the communication of the SGB.

The demographic profile determines the participants' biographical information and individual personalities, for reasons such as comparing the sample to the norms of the rest of society and other relevant studies to discover possible themes and relationships. The demographic profiles of the research participants are as follows:

Table 4.1 Participants' profiles

School	Participant	Gender	SGB-teacher component
A	1	F	
A	2	M	
A	3	F	X
A	4	F	
A	5	M	X
B	1	M	
B	2	F	X
B	3	M	
B	4	M	
B	5	F	X
C	1	F	X
C	2	M	X
C	3	F	
C	4	F	
D	1	F	
D	2	F	X
D	3	F	X
D	4	F	

Table 4.1 shows that there were more females (12) than males (6). There were 18 participants of which 8 were SGB-teacher components, and the remaining 10 were post level 1 teachers. This was valuable in determining the overall degree of participants' perceptions of communication between the SGB and teachers.

School A:

Participant 1 (A1) – (female) Teacher

This teacher has many years' experience in the education system and has previously been involved in communications with the SGB.

Participant 2 (A2) – (male) Teacher

This teacher has more than 10 years' teaching experience and is knowledgeable about the SGB.

Participant 3 (A3) – (female) SGB-Teacher component

This teacher has less than 10 years' experience. She participated in the SGB at a previous school and her current school. She has been in her position for less than a year.

Participant 4 (A4) – (female) Teacher

This teacher is a novice teacher. She is knowledgeable about the SGB, and has had some experience with the SGB.

Participant 5 (A5) – (male) SGB-Teacher component

This teacher has had less than 10 years' experience in teaching. He has been part of the SGB-Teacher component for more than a year.

School B:

Participant 1 (B1) – (male) Teacher

This is a novice teacher who has only recently started working in the education system. He has very little experience with the SGB.

Participant 2 (B2) – (female) SGB – Teacher component

This SGB-Teacher component is an experienced educator. She has served many terms on the SGB, and has substantial knowledge of the workings of the SGB.

Participant 3 (B3) – (male) Teacher

This is a very experienced teacher and he is actively involved in the school. He has a lot of experience and knowledge of the SGB's functions.

Participant 4 (B4) – (male) Teacher

This teacher has had many years of experience in the education system, and has some experience with the SGB.

Participant 5 (B5) – (female) SGB – Teacher component

This is a teacher who has taught for less than 10 years, but has had a lot of experience with the SGB and their communication system.

School C:

Participant 1 (C1) – (female) SGB – Teacher component

This SGB-Teacher component has had more than 10 years' experience as a teacher and has served on the SGB for more than two years. She is very knowledgeable about the functions of the SGB.

Participant 2 (C2) – (male) SGB – Teacher component

This SGB-Teacher component has had more than 10 years' experience in the education system and has had many years' experience with the SGB. He has served on the SGB for more than two years.

Participant 3 (C3) – (female) Teacher

This is a very experienced teacher and she has been at her school for many years. She is knowledgeable about what the functions of the SGB should be.

Participant 4 (C4) – (female) Teacher

This teacher has been in the education system for more than 20 years, and is very knowledgeable about the SGB and the functions thereof.

School D:

Participant 1 (D1) – (female) Teacher

This teacher is very experienced and has many years of service in the education field. She has dealt extensively with the SGB, but has never served as a member of the SGB.

Participant 2 (D2) – (female) SGB-Teacher component

This SGB-Teacher component has had less than 10 years' experience as a teacher, but is very involved in in the school, and she has served on the SGB for more than a year.

Participant 3 (D3) – (female) SGB-Teacher component

This SGB-Teacher component is an experienced teacher and she is knowledgeable about the SGB's functions and communications.

Participant 4 (D4) – (female) Teacher

This teacher is knowledgeable, and she is involved in school activities and has experience with the communication between the teachers and the SGB.

4.3 Discussion of findings

This section presents the main themes that emerged from the participants' responses as detailed in Chapter 3. From the participants' responses, the researcher used extracts to create explanations and meanings of themes. The primary theme was that of availability of effective communication between teachers and the SGB. The aim was to establish if there is any form of communication between the SGB and the teachers in the participants' schools.

Theme 1:

The evidence of effective communication between teachers and the SGB.

The majority of participants indicated that communication was evident. However, it was evident that communication took place mainly during the annual general meeting (AGM), and therefore it can be concluded that it is not effective communication. The following responses were recorded:

“Yes we do, when we have AGMs, not all the teachers. When you are a post level 1 educator you not just jump everyone to meet the SGB. So we are able to communicate with them through the AGMs when they require information. What to be discussed with the parents” (Participant A3).

“Yes, we have communication with the SGB, to start with I’m a committee member of the SGB from the side of teacher component. We have two meetings per term unless we have an emergency and then the principal will call us” (Participant C1).

“I won’t say frequently, but yes we do have communication” (Participant B1).

Other participants referred to the meetings they held with SGB-teacher components instead of the entire SGB, and responded as follows:

“Yes, the teachers as a whole, maybe only when we have a staff meeting is when we can communicate with them”.

The others were not sure about the type of communication the researcher was referring to:

“Yes, what type of communication are you referring to?”

One participant indicated that communication takes place from the top and then it filters down to the rest of the staff without them necessarily meeting with the SGB, but rather with the principal in the morning briefing sessions.

“Zero, anything that comes through the SGB has to go through the principal and he informs us in a morning meeting basically” (Participant A2).

However, there were a few participants who indicated that there is no communication at all between themselves and the SGB.

“Me, personally, as school staff, zero” (Participant A1).

“Zero” (Participant A2).

“None what so ever” (Participant A4).

“No I don’t” (Participant B5).

“No” (Participant C3).

(Participant C1) made a very important statement, saying that the management of the school could not only be left to one person, and that different people had to be consulted:

“There is no way that the principal will run the school alone without consulting the SGB or even the SGB cannot run the school without communicating with the principal and the teachers. Then there is communication that takes place between the SGB and the teachers. It’s not a one-man show”.

Thus, it can be concluded that although there is a measure of communication taking place between the teachers and the SGB, this communication is not sufficient. If it is not sufficient then it can never be effective. Apparently the majority of the participants did not understand what communication is, and how, when, and with who are they supposed to communicate, and were unsure as to what should be communicated. Most of the participants gave brief responses, confirming that they were clueless. Examples of their responses were as follows:

“Yes we do, when we have AGMs, not all the teachers” (Participant A3).

“Well yes, I’m one of the teachers that’s in the SGB” (Participant A5).

“I won’t say frequently, but yes we do have communication” (Participant B1).

“Yes, I’m part of the SGB” (Participant B2).

“We do have” (Participant B3).

“Yes, I do, I do” (Participant B4).

“Yes, we have communication with the SGB” (Participant C1).

“Yes, I’m part of the SGB teacher component” (Participant C2).

“Not on a formal basis, informally” (Participant C4).

“Yes... All the time” (Participant D1).

“...educator component inside, so when we have meetings” (Participant D2).

“Yes I do, with some of the members of the SGB” (Participant D3).

“Usually when I communicate with them I’m not involved” (Participant D4).

(Participant C1) confirmed that the staff at their school had more than the prescribed number of meetings per term. The participant did not divulge what exactly they communicate. It must be noted that the SGB has a mandate that they must accomplish, and for them to accomplish their mandate, the teachers must be involved. Therefore, firstly, they must communicate their aims and objectives, vision, and mission, and then communicate a way forward as both the teachers and the SGB.

When the teachers were asked if the communication between them and the SGB influenced their job, their responses clearly showed that the SGB and teachers operate in silos. Therefore, there was no way that the SGB could hold the teachers accountable. The participants responded as follows:

“No, not really, let me tell you why. Teachers are employed by the Department of Education, they are our boss. The governing body are only in charge of teachers who are employed by the governing body, and they oversee the running of the finances and the running of the school, but the real manager

remains the headmaster, and the governing body should be guided by what the headmaster says. So the governing body doesn't have any influence over the teachers, but they have an influence over the children. For example, they'll say the children must wear blazers, children must have this colour uniform, children must have school bags, children must do this, the school fees will be this, and so they dictate that management, and that comes down through the teachers. And it is not a question of should we, it's an instruction for teachers to carry out. So they must carry ... out those instructions. But the actual interfering with teachers the governing body doesn't do, or shouldn't be doing that" (Participant A1).

"You know what, it's difficult, it's difficult for the SGB to be involved. In a sense that we are two parallel groups, there's teachers and then there's SGB here. It's difficult for the SGB to have an impact; they don't have an impact because there's no platform for where we meet. I'm talking from an educator's point of view, but as from the SGB point of view there is, somehow they would love to be involved, the SGB committee loves to be involved with the teachers, we need to find that. The way the school is being run, it has nothing to do with the SGB, even though the policy says the SGB has to be involved in terms of planning, and in terms of policy-making of the school, etc. Also with the code of conduct and so forth, the SGB has such documents. But it's impossible, it doesn't have an impact" (Participant A5).

"I won't say so, I don't want to lie, I have never seen any impact" (Participant B1).

In actual fact, the SGB is expected to have an influence on the teachers' jobs. For instance, the SGB must set targets for the school in terms of, for example, Grade 12 results. It is the teachers who must see to it that the targets are met. Therefore, the SGB and teachers must together look at ways in which the targets can be achieved. The SGB and teachers think only about the listed roles and functions of the SGB as contained in Section 20 and 21 of the SASA (No. 84 of 1996). It is time that these roles and functions are unpacked so that they are better understood by all the stakeholders of the school (*cf.* 2.7.1).

However, there were a few participants who strongly felt that the SGB has an influence on their jobs, but their explanations did not reveal the kind of influence that the SGB has on them. This is what they said:

“It really does, it honestly really does... You if there is no communication between the SGB and the teachers, and there is a complaint, there won't any smooth running of the school. It makes the education to flow freely, if there is any issue to be discussed or known at least when the SGB is here we are able to know go through easy with that” (Participant B3).

“It does a lot because, in most cases, you know SGB is in control of the monies of the school, so if we are running short for the photo copy machine, if it's not functioning. If there's no communication they won't know as SGB that the photo copy machine is not working. So for the school to run normally, everything at school should run properly so they have to be told and who tells them is us as teachers” (Participant B4).

“It does help, like recently one of the parents decided to come to this workshop to fight, and then the SGB decided the parent was wrong, and the problem was solved quickly. Yes it does help” (Participant B5).

“It helps a lot because the SGB is the main component that runs the school. And it helps a lot, because if we want communication, or if there is something that we want at school, we have to go through them. Like if we want to fund raise or to change uniform, even the code of conduct we have to go through them first” (Participant C1).

Theme 2:

SGB training and experience for better communication purposes

Literature reveals that it is important for the SGB to undergo intensive training immediately after taking office. In this training they will be guided on how to govern the school, understand their roles and responsibilities, learn how to communicate effectively with other stakeholders, learn how to give the school a strategic direction, learn how to make the school accountable, and understand what it means to be a

critical friend of the school. With regard to SGB training, the participants responded as follows:

“Normally yes, they have to go for training, because some of the parents are new in the SGB and don’t even know what is expected from them, so they need to undergo the training. It is very important for them so that they work successfully so” (Participant B4).

“Yes, definitely, because not all the SGB are to say, educated parents, so they need to know what is happening in the SGB, what are the issues, concerns pertaining to school etc., because it might be that [its] their first time on the SGB, and they don’t know or they don’t have an idea of what is happening in the SGB, and [the] issues [that] are concerned and therefore they need training” (Participant B3).

“They need more training, especially with the appointments. Most times the principal would abuse the situation [if] they see the SGB is not committed, and also if there is a loophole, if they don’t know some of the things ... they would abuse that” (Participant B2).

“Oh yes they do, the SGB is supposed to be here for three years and then when the new SGB comes into office, the Department usually organises a workshop. There is a workshop to start and explain the roles and the duties of the committee members, and also like yesterday, we had a meeting, a workshop of some sort, but that was pertaining to the posts which are being advertised in the gazette. So they normally go for training” (Participant A5).

“They are sometimes taken to workshops and somehow I think that that training helps a lot, because remember some of the parents have not [been] to school, therefore if they trained they would know exactly what role... they have to play in the SGB. So training would very much help them” (Participant A3).

“Yes, the governing body does need training, because they are parents that have volunteered to do a service for the school, and they need to be told what

they can do, how they can do it, when they can do it. They do need training about where their authority lies, they do need training in the direction of what does this entail, what does that entail. If I'm on the disciplinary committee, they need to know how a disciplinary committee runs, and they need instructions for that. And yes they do get training. They do go once a year or even twice a year, depending on what the course is about. Maybe it's about management, maybe it's about finances, maybe it's about discipline, but there are different courses and the governing body does get training" (Participant A1).

From the above responses it is evident that the SGBs do not get adequate training to assist them in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as expected. As Participant 3 stated, they only attend workshops for a particular activity, such as the vacancy list for promotion posts etc.. The SGB is never trained in line with the school's core business and mandate, which is providing quality education to all the learners in the school as well as serving the best interests of the same learners in the school. Participant A1 was unsure of the training that the SGB received, and used the phrase "maybe" it's about management, "maybe" it's about finances.

In instances where the participants referred to training rather than workshops, it is evident that the training that they received as SGBs was inappropriate. It is expected that the SGB is given training in school governance, not management. For instance, Participant B1 said:

"Yes they do have training, because I remember we were having one training that took place in Meyerton, where there was a training of teachers and the SGB about the management of the school".

One participant indicated that there was definitely a need for SGB members to be adequately trained. That was an indication that the teachers do need the SGB, but only in so far as the SGB know their roles and responsibilities and how to govern the school successfully. For example:

"They definitely need more training, because I don't think that they fully realise their role[s] and their responsibilities, and what they may and may not do. I

think they see this as a position, but they don't know exactly what their responsibilities are" (Participant C4).

Another participant was completely unsure as to whether the SGB goes for training or not. This is further evidence that communication between the SGB and teachers is non-existent in some schools. The participant said:

"You know I never actually thought of that, but we have got, now at the moment a head master, and he is very into FET. He is seriously doing everything he can to get the community we are standing in to reach out and enrich the parents, empower the parents. You must remember that we are sitting here with un-empowered community. And so many ... chips on the shoulder, you must be so careful about what you say, and who you say it to, and how you're saying it, and when you're saying it, that you're walking on eggs all the time, because with the "Broederbond" you knew you could gossip with my father and he would gossip with another guy and it will eventually get to the target person. Here you can't do it, because of the political situation. That's now personal, I can't generalise, it's my opinion" (Participant D1).

Theme 3:

Relationship of trust between the teachers and the SGB

If the SGB is not well trained with regard to their roles and functions, the relations between the teachers and the SGB will be strained. There will be numerous overlapping and overstepping by either teachers and/or the SGB. With regard to trust issues between the teachers and the SGB, the participants responded as follows:

"I do, I do trust them because it's not a one-man show, they do everything as a team or a committee. Then there is no way that the principal will run the school alone without consulting the SGB, or even the SGB cannot run the school without communicating with the principal and the teachers. Then there is communication that takes place between the SGB and the teachers. It's not a one-man show. I do trust them, because those are the people that have to sign the cheques for school, for teachers who are going for training, or

workshops, or to have all the machinery we are using at school, and to see that the school is running properly; those are the people who have to see to it that everything is being done properly according to allocation of the money” (Participant C1).

“A lot, I was once an SGB [member]. I trust them a lot. One of the activities that they had to do, they had to come to school, not regularly, maybe two or thrice a week to check how the learners are behaving, to check the late arrivals of the learners the performance, but not us the teachers. It’s all about the learners. To come and check those things. Sometimes you find that one of the SGB members, maybe the chairperson or one of the SGB members, is not on good term with one of the teachers or with the principal, and then you find that it’s going to be a disaster as a teacher, you are not going to find what they are looking for” (Participant B5).

“I definitely trust them, because our relations are very good, and I think they are also transparent [which] make[s] me ... trust them, because people who are not transparent, you start doubting what it is that they are doing in their corners, but when they become transparent, they become trustworthy” (Participant B4).

“Yes I trust them, honestly there is nothing that leads me to say I don’t trust them. I have not come across anything that would say I don’t trust them” (Participant B3).

“I’m in between, it depends on the type of parents that we get, some years we will get motivated and learned parents, in some years we have to coach them in how to lead” (Participant B2).

“I wouldn’t say per se trust, but I will say I do believe in their work” (Participant B1).

“Yes we do, they are our, you know, mediators, between ourselves and the learners, it helps a lot” (Participant A3).

“Well, the educators that [are] there, there’s very excellent teachers, medium and even low, and as I see, from there they are quite dedicated. The SGB side of the parents, I’ve spoken to two of them, while we were on the boat, one of their learners are in my class. I think that they are competent, but I don’t feel that assurance maybe because I’ve been here now at this school now for four years, and I saw the implementation, but it seems ... even with the new transition, with the new principal, the ethos of the school is still the same, the lazy attitude hasn’t changed completely” (Participant A2).

From the above responses it is evident that trust is based on petty issues that do not pertain to the real governance issues that can lead to mistrust. For instance, there is no indication of trust between the teachers and the SGB when it comes to fulfilment of the school governance mandate. An example of the expected element of trust was that of guaranteeing that the set targets of the SGB will be met by the teachers, by improving the success rate of the school, or the support that the SGB must provide the teachers with in order to successfully improve the success rate of the school. It cannot be evidenced, because the areas of communication between the teachers and the SGB are not clearly defined in these schools. Nevertheless, the involvement and support of the SGB is necessary for the school’s success (*c.f.* 1.1; 1.4; 2.1; 2.4; 2.9). Ngidi (2004:261) states that it is important for the SGB to provide support to the principal, educators, and other school staff in the performance of their professional functions. To that effect, the participants expressed their opinions as follows:

“For instance, when we discussed let’s say, disciplinary matters, in classes so the parents would ... support us in terms of talking to other parents, and it’s one part that really helps us” (Participant A3).

“In some cases it does, but some of the things aren’t relevant, like for example in my case, in my subject or whatever the case might be, but the things that are relevant, yes it does assist us, and to know that they are there to support us” (Participant D2).

When the SGB supports educators and management they are naturally involved, however involvement also refers to the involvement of educators, in discussions as well as decision-making processes. The participants in the study recognised that

support from the SGB is very important. The support from the SGB towards the principal, teachers, and learners is non-negotiable. The SGB is the school's support system, and therefore, support is the SGB's main duty. What was noted was that when these educators are involved, good support, effective communication, and good decision-making is present as a result.

(Participant A5)'s response to involvement was very interesting, and the participant made a valid point:

"I personally think that having these SGBs as a committee, and then being involved and making a lot of policies it's, I don't want to say it's a waste of time, but I feel that it's not working. Maybe if they could streamline, make it maybe [a] four people or three people SGB, then it's easier for them to manoeuvre, and every time they want to come, they can come, not only during meetings, that is, people meeting with the teachers.

The researcher found that many participants feel that the SGB should have a representative to be available for day-to-day issues that arise, whenever they arise. One participant even suggested that the SGB set up an office at the school where they can always be in contact, and reach the SGB easily. However, the educators' lack of involvement was mostly due to the SGB's ineffective communication with teachers. (Participant C3) stated:

"I think everyone is quite negative, because everyone feels left out, or that our opinions don't count. Even if we do have our teacher component of our SGB, they don't even communicate with us and ask us if we have any issues that should be discussed. They don't report back to us after a meeting, so there is nothing".

From this comment it is evident that it would be hard to form any bond or to be involved in reaching any goals the school has set.

It is evident that there is some involvement and support, but not enough from the SGB towards the different role-players, in order to help create an open, free-flowing

environment for effective communication to take place, notwithstanding the fact that a lack of support from the SGB can lead to ineffective school management.

Theme 4:

Communication barriers between the teachers and the SGB.

According to the literature there are many different issues that can stand in the way of effective communication (*c.f.* 2.10). Pfeiffer (1998:1) asserts that communication is a multi-layered occurrence. Communication can be something as basic as sending and receiving messages, as both aspects have to be present in order for the process to take place. But, the primary transaction of messages sent and received does not mean that the communication has taken place. Common barriers in communication can and do occur, and these barriers are the cause of dysfunction.

What the researcher noticed from the research is that many of the educators have experienced various problems due to ineffective or the absence of communication. Themes that are coupled with ineffective communication include: training of the SGB; trust among the SGB and teachers the SGB only communicating in a single language; the involvement of teachers; and no meetings being held. This could stem from a variety of different reasons, but the fact remains that every member should be present and should be allowed to contribute freely and fairly towards the meeting. This has not happened. From this information, the researcher sensed that the male group of the SGB were dominant and they were only there to serve their own interests rather than those of the school. This is a cause for concern, since females in the SGB may not feel that they have the opportunity to contribute to decisions made.

It can be argued that although the literature has indicated a number of barriers to communication between teachers and the SGB, empirical evidence shows only a few barriers. It is possible to conclude that the stakeholders are not aware of other barriers to communication. The participants emphasised language as a serious and prime barrier to communication between the SGB and the teachers. For example:

“Language barriers, fine. But what I found very interesting ... is the lady component in the SGB. My personal feeling was that they were there, they said two or three words, and then I realised that in vernacular they were told it was time to get the food ready, so the ladies went out and prepared the food. And I was thinking to myself, gee is this why you’re here? You’re just here to prepare the food so that they can have a meal” (Participant C4).

“See because I don’t know who is on the SGB. Okay, let me put it to you like this, when there are parents’ meetings, the meetings are done in vernacular; when they address the parents it’s in vernacular. I mean and even if we do have children in our school that do not speak Sotho, so their parents don’t speak Sotho or Zulu or whatever. So I don’t think that is only some of us that feels left out, I think that communication between parents [is] blocked” (Participant C3).

“We are, most, all of our learners in this school ...[of] African descendant, the SGB, so the parents are all African descendant[s], and then we have two that is of non-black, so I think while they have these meetings as I heard they don’t ... they refrain [from] using their own language, so the communication is ... in English. So its quite transparent and clear they have extended meetings so maybe, because of their extended meetings, maybe there is uncertainty that could be arise” (Participant A2).

“You know we are sitting in a previously model C school, and the barriers come in that the language is a problem. We are an English-speaking school, and the governing body comes in and they do speak English, but often the language chops and changes to a black language, and not everyone is versatile in both or all the different languages. So that is about the only barrier that comes. The other barrier is that parents think that they are in charge of everything and they automatically, now, to use a term, seize the institution. But they are not really, they are just parents who are trying to do the job and assist the school. They should not be given more credit for their position. And that’s about the only barrier” (Participant A1).

One participant pointed out that another barrier could be the fact that other parents and SGB members are not readily available at school, and therefore emergencies at the school cannot be attended, to especially those that involve these parents or SGB members. One participant said:

“Yes, sometimes there are barriers that are caused by the fact that the SGB members and other parents don’t work here. They only come at certain times ... and sometimes we want something urgently and the SGB members are not here, except the teacher that we have within the school, but they cannot take the decision on their own. They need time to consult. It then becomes a barrier. You know if things could go according to me, I would say that the SGB should actually have an office at school, but you know how things are. If they had an office at school, it would be easier for all those questions that you’re asking me” (Participant B3).

Another participant felt common misunderstandings between the teachers and the SGB are a barrier. They explained their rationale as follows:

“Yes sometimes there are misunderstandings, that’s why you find that the messages don’t reach the teachers or members, and then people would not attend meetings. That is why we suggested that there be a database where they have our details and try to communicate. Bring them on board with the WhatsApp and all that” (Participant B2).

The following response shows that communication in itself could be a barrier, especially when it comes to decision-making. It is very important to involve all the stakeholders in decisions that will affect them in one way or another:

“Yes, such as communication; the communication barrier has become a problem ... and the interaction, mostly because they are parent representatives, but then mostly ... those three components include the parent, the teacher, and also the learners. There is a lack of communication. We find that the two components can make a decision without including the other component, and then the other component starts to complain and then it

becomes a problem. Like I can say, communication, decision-making its one of the problems I have just noticed” (Participant B1).

In the following response, the participant argues that they (teachers) feel that there is a disconnect between them and the SGB. In this scenario, only the teachers employed by the SGB can communicate with the SGB, and not the teachers employed by the state. This stance is unfortunate, and shows that the teachers do discriminate against each other in terms of lines of reporting:

“Yes, a lot. I think that we as teachers are also not doing enough. Before a meeting we are supposed to call a meeting with all the educators. So there are those barriers, because we are supposed to take that mandate from the teachers. Call a meeting. Sometimes you find that you are supposed to be given three days, and sometimes you are given two days, and it’s not enough, then you can call a staff meeting and discuss whatever that we want to see from the teachers’ side. But most of the time we feel that there is a gap between the teachers and the SGB. We feel that the only ones that [can] have relations with the SGB are the SGB-employed educators. We feel that you don’t have to be addressed by the SGB, or we have nothing to do with the SGB, only those employed by the SGB do need to report to the SGB, and so on. So there is a huge gap” (Participant A5).

The most serious barrier identified in this research is that of hoarding information and lack of transparency by elected members of the SGB:

“I have been a Teacher component in the SGB at my pervious school. Sometimes we [were] told not to tell the educators everything that was discussed in the SGB meetings, so that is a barrier” (Participant A3).

“With some SGB members, yes. Like I said, we have the teacher component of the SGB, and then we also have RCLs, that are part of the SGB, but they are not always necessarily allowed to be there because of some of the things that are being discussed. However, it would be nice if they knew more, because they are then supposed to speak for the learners and to the learners.

So that is one thing that might be a barrier that the learners don't know as much or don't have so much input as they should have" (Participant D2).

Other participants mentioned school traditions and cultures as barriers to effective communication. Since the schools were built decades ago and have developed over the years, it was illuminating to discover that these cultures and traditions changed every time a new SGB committee was elected. The participants commented as follows:

"Some parents think that they can make decisions about this, this, and this, and they don't know the history of the school, about how things have gone. And I do believe that tradition should be maintained in a school. And sometimes a governing body comes in and wants to change the world, and everything gets dumped and dropped, and they just move on in their own thing. And when they leave, after three years, it is left in the middle of nowhere, there's no tradition, there's no holding" (Participant A).

It seems somehow unfair to leave the school in disarray and without any form of tradition or culture to carry forth; this could also be the result of ineffective communication from the SGB and their failure to inform the rest of the staff and new SGB of their vision and plans. It shows that handover from one SGB to another must be viewed in a very serious light.

"I think one mistake that they make is that [when] a new SGB comes in, they don't want to follow on what previous SGB's have done; they want to come with new trends instead of maybe following the school policy. They also want to draw up their own policies and see things differently; they want to amend and so forth, so they don't normally follow the same line of governance" (Participant A5).

Therefore, it must be emphasised that the SGB should learn from one another and from traditions, so that the new members that come into power have some concept of how duties and functions are performed.

Theme 5:

Instances and approaches of communication between the teachers and the SGB.

During the interviews, most participants said that they communicated with the SGB during the meetings. This is done in accordance with what was stated in the literature and SASA 84 of 1996, i.e. that the SGB must meet at least once a term. According to SASA (No. 84 of 1996), the SGB only has to communicate through meetings and reports, however, there are no other means of communication taking place. The reports only have to be given to all stakeholders of interest once a year (c.f. 2.6.1). What is interesting to note in this study is how the SGB communicates with teachers, as indicated by the following responses:

“When we have AGMs” (Participant A3).

“I can say only when there’s a meeting” (Participant B1).

“The communication is through letters” (Participant B1).

“In the form of meetings and sometimes they come to the staff” (Participant B2).

“Verbal, but it also depends on what is the issue we are talking about, the issue on the table. Sometimes there are things that have to be written down. (Participant B3).

“Normally what happens, in our caucus in the morning” (Participant B4).

“Yes the teachers as a whole, maybe only when we have a staff meeting is when we can communicate with them” (Participant B5).

“Through meetings here at school” (Participant C1).

“We normally meet once every term as the SGB, and then we also meet again with the entire parents and teachers, the entire school meeting” (Participant C2).

“Via their children and direct communication, because I know the people’s faces, and sometimes when we have functions, gatherings, meetings” (Participant D1).

“For me, I’m an SGB component ... and educator component inside, so when we have meetings, which is once a term when we communicate the most things. If there [are] any other issues that we need to speak about, then the chairperson is called in, and then we also discuss things with them” (Participant D2).

“You know our SGB is very hands on, we see them almost every week they are here at school, or even twice a week, but they are very involved” (Participant D3).

“You know what? Right now we have never had meetings with the teachers, but one thing that they have done is that the SGB had something, like a team building, I think it was in March, and that was the introduction phase of the SGB to the teachers, in saying that they appreciate what the teachers are doing. But we have never had that session. How the protocol is supposed be: the teachers are supposed to give their grievances to us, there are three of us. [X, Y, and Z], we are the three teacher reps, and then we take the grievances to the SGB. Actually we represent the teachers in the SGB, but we form part of the SGB committee. So we don’t actually want that platform where the SGB goes to the teachers and talks to the teachers. No we don’t have that. I think we have to make time for that” (Participant A5).

Communication has to run in two directions in order for it to be effective. For the purposes of this study, the SGB had to communicate to the teachers and the teachers also had to communicate with the SGB. (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012:167; Burk & Birk, 2000:139) (cf. 2.5). With regard to of communication between the teachers and the SGB the participants stated the following:

“We do it through the principal” (Participant A4).

This response clearly shows that there is no direct contact or communication between teachers and the SGB at the school, the principal is the middle man.

“Correct, correct. Even though we have to take messages from the teachers. It’s rare that you would be having grievances from the teachers that we take ... to the SGB. Except for those issues where learners have to be expelled or [we have] certain difficulties with them, then they will need intervention from the SGB” (Participant A5).

In this instance the SGB teacher components are the representatives of the entire teaching staff. These representatives are the only teachers who have direct communication with the SGB, which means there is mediation between the stakeholders. The following responses indicate that there is two-way communication between the teachers and the SGB.

“Oh, it’s a two-way type of communication, the SGB can communicate with us and the teachers can communicate with the SGB as well. So it’s a free communication flow between us and the SGB” (Participant B3).

“It’s in both actually, as a staff if there is anything we don’t understand or we want clarity or anything that we want to propose to the SGB, we call a meeting. We tell the principal can we have a meeting with the SGB. Then we have a meeting with the SGB” (Participant C1).

“It goes both ways, when there are issues, we take the issues and discuss the issues with the SGB from the teachers, and then when the SGB is having issues the SGB communicates with us and then to the teachers. So it goes both ways” (Participant C2).

This kind of approach is encouraging, because it shows that there are schools that are doing the right thing. The participants’ claim that there is free communication flow between them and the SGB, and that when they want a meeting with the SGB that meeting is arranged respectively.

“Normally what happens, in our caucus, in the morning they give us the feedback about what transpired in the meeting. If they had a meeting as the

SGB, they give us that feedback. Should there be anything that is important that we need them to take back to the SGB, we also tell them to go back to the SGB, but if it happens that we don't have a caucus, we talk in our corners, we tell them about our needs that they have to take back to the SGB" (Participant B4).

"Technically that's why we have the SGB-educator component, so we are three educators inside the SGB, so between the three of us we need to communicate via the SGB with the teachers, that's the way we communicate, or the principal tells us what the SGB decided. It's not like everyone can have communication with the SGB" (Participant D2).

Participants B4 and Participant D2 clearly expressed that there is a mediator between the teachers and the SGB, and therefore a direct line of communication is non-existent. These mediators are stifling the relations between teachers and the SGB, and communication is thus blocked.

Feedback was also perceived as one way of fostering effective communication. All members of the SGB should receive feedback on any issues that arise. The feedback should be given immediately, while the information is still relevant and important.

"In regards to immediate feedback, it they can give teachers feedback immediately after they have their meetings so that we can all be familiar with all the content that was discussed. And maybe if we are able to come up with immediate solutions. So they can improve on it. ...I do believe that they could improve their communication, because in some instances we need to remind these representatives that they have to give us the feedback. They forget to do that. So normally, what they should do, so maybe what they could do, is have a letter to give to the teachers, to give to the principal, because some of these representatives, in some instances, don't attend the meetings. If it happens that they don't attend the meetings, those that attended the meetings should make available the minutes of the meeting, so that teachers could know about what transpired in the meeting" (Participant B4).

“Yes, because we would like to know what they are discussing, what decisions they take. We would like to have feedback. We don’t even know when they have meetings, to tell you the truth. So it’s never communicated to us, and we never get a report back after a meeting” (Participant C3).

The researcher finds it distasteful and unprofessional that the staff have to remind the SGB to give feedback. This lack of communication, or disregarding this form of communication, can cause serious dysfunction in the effective communication of a school, which leads to a dysfunctional school. However, there was proof that some SGB members give feedback.

“Normally what happens, in our caucus, in the morning they give us the feedback about what transpired in the meeting. If they had a meeting as the SGB, they give us that feedback. Should there be anything that is important that we need them to take back to the SGB, we also tell them to go back to the SGB, but if it happens that we don’t have a caucus, we talk in our corners, we tell them about our needs that they have to take back to the SGB” (Participant B4).

“They would give us the feedback on what they have decided on” (Participant B5).

Creating a platform on social media for communication between SGB and teachers can be useful. With technology developing at a rapid pace, it seems only natural that teachers have caught up and know of improved and faster ways to communicate. One participant stated that the SGB suggested that they create a database where they will be able to communicate with the teachers and parents; this would give the SGB a direct link to teachers and parents, the communication would be immediate, and there would be no need to wait for feedback.

“Yes sometimes there are misunderstandings, that’s why you find that the messages don’t reach the teachers or members, and then people would not attend meetings. That is why we suggest that there be a database where they have our details and try to communicate. Bring them on board with the WhatsApp and all that” (Participant B2).

“In terms of technology are running short that we cannot call urgently for parents, so we have to send letters, and sometimes these learners cannot forward the letters to their parents. So if we have a system whereby we use our phones to send all the messages to all the parents at the same time, that would be one. Two, not only through the general meetings should the parents know about the functionality of the school, they must be regularly informed. If we have such a system it will always inform parents about all the activities, about all the things that are happening in our institution” (Participant C2).

“I believe that this method of communication would be effective as well as efficient” (Participant D1).

In conclusion it can be reported that even though there are many ways in which the SGB communicates to the teachers, there is a lack of direct communication between the teachers and the SGB. Both stakeholders find it hard to have their opinions heard and to influence decisions that are made.

Theme 6:

Information exchanged between teachers and the SGB.

Husain (2013:44) states that “meaningful communication” enlightens, trains, and inspires employees at all levels. Thus, if any communication does take place, what is being communicated needs to be of value, and must add either to building a relationship, or to contributing beneficially towards the running of the school (*c.f.* 2.6.1). The responses in this regard show that communication is formal as well as informal. When it happens formally, school issues are discussed, e.g. finances and discipline issues. Participants also communicated any future plans and what new rules would be implemented to best suit the improved administration of the school. It was very difficult for participants to indicate clearly what is it that is communicated by both the teachers and the SGB, except for finance and discipline issues. This was an indication that the schools did not know exactly what needs to be the common

course of interaction between teachers and the SGB. This was evidenced by the following responses:

“The things that were discussed in the previous meeting with the SGB, entire SGB, and like I said, we also then tell them what we need to see happening at our school, because the SGB and teachers should work together” (Participant B4).

“Maybe the changes, maybe about transport fees for going to the workshops, that they communicate with us. The rest they communicate through the teachers component and they would give us the feedback on what they have decided on” (Participant B5).

“The proper functioning of the institution, and then we also talk about issues that can make our school better, a bit of communication from the chairperson concerning issues and we had two or three discussions” (Participant C4).

One participant mentioned learner development as one of the areas that teachers and the SGB address during communication.

“We focus mostly on learner development” (Participant C2).

This response was encouraging since this is one of the fundamental areas that must be dealt with collaboratively between the teachers and the SGB.

The researcher established that when teachers and SGB members were together informally, they found a way of discussing other topics, and leaving school out of the conversation. The researcher considers this interaction to be a good way for the teachers and the SGB to build solid relationships on which to build. One participant mentioned that the SGB has no idea of what is going on at the school and with the teachers. The researcher considered this to be a cause for concern since an organisation cannot foster effective communication if there is no knowledge about the factors that are affecting the organisation.

(Participant A5) shed some light on this matter, by stating:

“Even though there are clashes in terms of how we love to have the system and run it as educators, the principal and the SMT and what the SGB perceives or what the SGB would like to see happen, e.g. issues such as school bag, the SGB don’t see the necessity of the school bag, whereas we, the teachers and the SMT see the issue of a school bag, so there are some differences, policy differences, and how things are supposed to be handled, so it’s totally different”.

This shows that even when the issues from the teachers seem insignificant to the SGB, they should be taken seriously, as the teachers have to deal with the decisions made by the SGB.

4.4 Chapter summary

The responses received from teachers concerning the communication between themselves and the SGB were insightful. It was clear that there is communication between the teachers and the SGB in most cases, but this communication is limited, and it could be more meaningful. Many barriers were detected in the communication process.

Most of the participants also stated that the SGB requires training, and that the SGB has to be more involved and supportive. According to Chaka (2005:2), there must be direct, specific training and support that will suit the needs of SGBs, and that will equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake their functions. This is where teachers considered the SGB could improve. It was interesting to note that even though the teachers thought that the SGB required training, they also trusted the SGB.

The teachers also wanted the SGB to communicate with new, incoming SGB members in order to keep the school traditions alive. Teachers also wanted feedback from the SGB as soon as the SGB made decisions on issues. They also thought that it would be a good idea to choose a social media platform over which the SGB and teachers could communicate.

The next chapter deals with the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of this study by focusing on important aspects stemming from the literature study with regard to the nature of communication in the context of school governance, and the findings from the empirical study. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the effectiveness of communication between the teachers and the SGB. This purpose was achieved by addressing the objectives of this study, as mentioned in Chapter 1. These objectives are:

- to determine the nature of communication in the context of SGBs and teachers; and
- to explore how communication takes place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng Districts.

These two objectives were addressed by conducting a literature study and an empirical study, which resulted in the third objective, which was as follows:

- to suggest a guide that could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGB and teachers at secondary schools.

The main findings of the study and recommendations are also presented. The strategies and recommendations that could be utilised to foster effective communication between the SGBs and teachers are also proposed in this study.

5.2 Summary

Chapter 1 set out to establish the base of the study, and presented the background as well as the rationale for the study. Clearly defined aims and objectives of the study were outlined. The chapter presented the significance of the study, an overview of the research methodology, and the research limitations.

Chapter 2 presented a literature study on the nature of communication between SGB's and teachers. The chapter contextualised the phenomenon of communication between SGBs and teachers within the school as an organisation, which then highlighted the importance and the manner in which effective communication should be conducted in a school to ensure that the SGB successfully delivers on its three-tier mandate of providing strategic direction to the school, holding the school accountable, and serving as a critical friend to the school (cf. 2). A relevant legislative framework in terms of school governance in South Africa was also presented (cf.2.1). The chapter also dealt with theoretical perspectives of the communication act (cf. 2.3.1), approaches to communication (cf. 2.3.2), barriers to effective communication (cf. 2.5), and communication areas of the SGB (cf. 2.7.1), and Section 2.8 explained how effective communication should be approached. The chapter was concluded by discussing the principal's role for capacitating the SGB in ensuring effective communication between the teachers and the SGB.

Chapter 3 presented a comprehensive discussion of the research methodology. The research elements relevant to qualitative research as used in this study were explicated from section 3.2: paradigmatic orientation, which comprised of the research design; strategy of enquiry' data collection including participants and how they were selected; data analysis; the role of the researcher; quality criteria; and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 provided the data analysis and interpretation of the empirical data. This study commenced with the demographic profiles of the participants, but did not consider the clarification thereof as being important to this study. This was followed by a presentation of discussions of the findings regarding the views and experiences of the participants with regard to the nature of communication between the SGB and teachers in their respective schools (cf. 4.3), in line with all the main themes that emerged from the data analysis

Chapter 5 presented the summary of the entire study, the conclusions on the findings, as well as the recommendations.

5.3 Findings and conclusions from the study

The findings and conclusions were made from the objectives found in Chapter 1, these included:

5.3.1 Findings regarding the nature of communication in the context of the SGBs and teachers.

In the research it was revealed that there are different types of communication between the SGBs and teachers, but the extent in which they occur varies, e.g. verbal communication or non-verbal communication.

5.3.1.1 Verbal communication

It was found that during verbal communication, language was a problem. English was mostly spoken during SGB meetings, and some members of the SGB were not fluent in English (cf. 2.4.1.1). Therefore, these members could not express their views and contributions freely to the SGB. It was also discovered that some ideas were very useful, but the members were challenged by the SGB's use of a language that not all of the members understand.

5.3.1.2 Non-verbal communication

The other finding was that the teachers and the SGB could not communicate effectively because some of the non-verbal cues used by the teachers and sometimes by the SGB were offensive. The SGB complained that some teachers undermine them by showing gestures that indicate that they are stupid. A relationship of trust, which should be developed between the SGB and teachers was then compromised by the use of these unfortunate gestures (cf. 2.4.1.2).

However, it was also discovered that some of the communication that takes place is worthless and does not contribute positively towards the school, e.g. allowing the SGB to deliver on their given mandate (cf. 2.11.1). Some of the communication that takes place is constructive, and helps teachers with discipline and their administrative duties. In some schools it was discovered that little or no communication was taking place, and that teachers felt frustrated and despondent because of this.

It was also discovered that communication between the teachers and the SGB was characterised by mistrust, misunderstanding, and lack of communication skills. The teachers did not trust that the SGB could contribute anything to the development of the school, because of their levels of literacy. On the other hand, the SGB felt extremely undermined by the teachers, because of the teachers' perception of them not being educated.

This study shows that communication between teachers and SGB is vital and should be promoted to support and constructively develop the schools. Teachers reported that with no communication, staff morale is very low.

5.3.2 Findings regarding the exploration of how communication takes place between SGBs and teachers at secondary schools in the Sedibeng District.

It is stated in the SASA 86 of 1996 that the SGB should have a meeting with all staff at least once a term. Yet in this study, where there was communication, it was found that not only do the SGB members communicate through meetings, but also through other various methods. It was also established that the communication was not only in one direction, but in both directions, i.e. the SGB could communicate with the teachers and the teachers could communicate with the SGB (cf. 2.5).

Where communication took place, teachers expressed the need for the SGB to catch up with modern technology. Teachers were trying to set up platforms on social media for them to open more channels between the SGB and themselves (cf.2.8). It was also discovered that where there was no communication, there was no effort to open up any channels for effective communication.

The most critical finding was the fact that the SGB did not get adequate training after taking office. Their lack of training prevented them from understanding their roles and responsibilities, and as such, they are always found wanting, crying out for help. In some instances, where training was alleged to have taken place, the trainers were not familiar with school governance matters.

5.4 Recommendations

Given all the challenges experienced by both the teachers and the SGB regarding communication between them, the following recommendations are suggested to bolster and ensure effective communication between all parties:

5.4.1 Recommendation 1

In the first place, it is crucial to ensure that the SGB receives proper training and induction. The training must obviously be based on the SGB's needs for the different roles and responsibilities assigned to them in the Schools Act. Providing the initial training as contemplated in the Schools Act is not good enough to address the training needs of the SGBs in their various roles and responsibilities. It is recommended that intensive training be offered to the SGBs, and this training must be provided by experts in school governance.

The researcher also suggest that SGB training must focus not only on generic or watchdog roles, such as financial management, but must go beyond that, and deal with various roles, such as the school governance mandate and all the other various responsibilities as outlined in the Schools Act. For instance, the SGB members should:

- be trained on how to draw a code of conduct for learners;
- informed as to why the SGB must encourage other parents to render voluntary services to the school;
- communicate with the teachers in order to hold them accountable;
- understand what it means to be a critical friend;
- attend an intensive training programme that shows the SGB how to develop a strategic plan for the school;
- and be in constant communication with the teachers.

Preferably, the researcher should recommend a tailor-made training programme for the SGBs, so that priority needs can be addressed first, and then all other needs can follow in the order of the individual school's preference. This would boost the confidence of the SGB members, and enable them to be accountable and promote effective communication between the teachers and the SGB.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2

It would be wise to conduct a communication skills audit of the SGB members before they take office or undergo any form of training. More often than not, training is conducted in English and the training manuals are also written in English. This audit will enable the SGB members to be trained in the language that they understand and know, and that will also facilitate the development of customised training programmes, and also facilitate the use of knowledgeable and skilled SGB members as mentors of other SGBs that might require training in the fundamentals of their functions (De Bruin, 2014:142). This training should include how to communicate effectively with staff. The SGB should also receive a guide to effective communication.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3

It will be necessary for the school to create an environment wherein communication between the teachers and the SGB is made possible. This environment must be based on the interactive communication model (cf. 2.5.2). Information should flow effortlessly between the SGB and the teachers, so that all matters and decisions that are taken are communicated effectively between the teachers and the SGB.

5.4.4 Recommendation 4

The language of communication between the teachers and the SGB must be a language that is understood by all stakeholders. If that is not possible, translations must be made. In the case of training materials, as discussed earlier, the researcher recommends that the materials should be in all 11 official languages so that the SGB members can read and understand the content at their leisure. This suggestion might seem like an expensive endeavour, but its benefits would surely be commensurate to the cost in the long run. During the SGB meetings, the chairperson should ensure that nobody is disadvantaged by the language barrier, especially in the ex-model C schools.

5.5.5 Recommendation 5

The researcher believes that the principals of schools as ex officio members of the SGB should ensure that the SGB is capacitated as required by the SASA, otherwise there will be conflict between the school management duties and school governance activities in

the school, which are the primary sources of all the conflicts between the teachers and the SGBs in schools.

5.6 Recommendations for future research

The following recommendations are suggested for future research:

- research should explore how best the SGBs can be capacitated in order to mitigate the challenges of school governance; and
- parents' illiteracy level is a challenge that inhibits effective communication in a school, and therefore research should be conducted, and effective ways of addressing the SGB's inability to participate in effective communication activities should be developed.

5.7 Challenges in data collection

Initially the study intended to collect data with interviews, document analysis, and observations as the data collection strategies. However, only the interviews were able to provide rich data. In terms of document analysis, the researcher was disappointed by most schools when they presented the researcher with irrelevant, outdated documents that made no contribution to this study. Lastly, the researcher could not closely observe the communication between the teachers and the SGB in most schools, because the teachers and the SGBs did not work collaboratively.

Times for interviews were changed, and some participants decided to pull out on the last minute, which is why the researcher ended up with two participants shorter than the target sample.

5.8 Chapter summary

This chapter presented an overall summary of the study, summaries of each chapter, the findings relating directly to the research objectives, and recommendations for addressing the latent challenges pertaining to barriers to effective communication between the teachers and the SGB. The study managed to gain insight into the challenges and successes of schools in fostering effective communication. For that reason, the study was successful.

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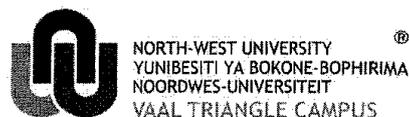
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ANNEXURE A: LETTER OF APPROVAL – OPTENTIA

OPTENTIA
RESEARCH FOCUS AREA



Mr James C. Coetzee
[20334427]

PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900
Tel: +2716 910-3111
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za> / www.optentia.co.za

22 July 2015

“Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the school governing body and the secondary school teachers in the Sedibeng district”

Dear Mr Coetzee,

This letter serves to confirm that your research proposal has been accepted and approved by the **Optentia Research Committee**.

Committee members:

Present:	Apology:
Prof. J.R. Hoffman	Prof. S. Rothmann
Prof. M.M. Grosser	Prof. M. Nel
Prof. E. Fourie	
Prof. M.I. Xaba	
Prof. E. de Waal	
Dr D. van Tonder	
Dr A. Nhlapo	

The ethics application is referred to the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC).

Best Regards,



Prof. S. (Ian) Rothmann

Director: Optentia Research Focus Area

ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF APPROVAL – GDE



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no. D2017/234

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	18 August 2016
Validity of Research Approval:	18 August 2016 to 30 September 2016
Name of Researcher:	Coetzee J
Address of Researcher:	6 Wilgenhof, Willem Close, Brackenfell 7560
Telephone Number:	082 974 8093
Email address:	James.coetzee.edu@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the school governing body and secondary school teachers in Sedibeng District.
Number and type of schools:	4 Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Sedibeng East and Sedibeng West

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Makhado
2016/08/18

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

DM

Dr David Makhado
Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: *2016/08/18*

2

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ANNEXTURE C: LETTER OF APPROVAL – BaSSREC



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom,
South Africa, 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900
Faks: (018) 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee

Tel: +27 18 299 4849
Email: Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on **20/02/2017** after being reviewed at the meeting held on **03/11/2016**, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the School Governing Body and secondary school teachers in the Sedibeng District.		
Project Leader/Supervisor: Dr Aaron Nhlapo		
Student: James Coetzee		
Ethics number:	N W U - H S - 2 0 1 6 - 0 1 3 9	
	<small>Institution</small>	<small>Year</small>
Application Type: Original project		
Commencement date: 2016-11-04	Expiry date: 2019-02-04	Risk: Low

Special conditions of the approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the BaSSREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the BaSSREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC via BaSSREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the study, and upon completion of the project
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader must apply for approval of these changes at the BaSSREC. Would there be deviated from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC via BaSSREC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC and BaSSREC retains the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
 - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented,
 - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via Charmaine.Lekorwane@nwu.ac.za or 018 210 3483.

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC or BaSSREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof LA Du Plessis
Digitally signed by
Prof LA Du Plessis
Date: 2017.03.07
08:49:06 +02'00'

Prof Linda du Plessis
Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

ANNEXURE D: CONSENT FORM TO PRINCIPALS

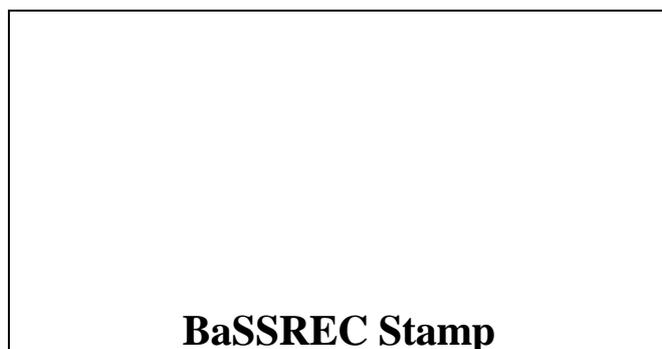


NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS

PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

DATE: _____



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPAL

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the School Governing Body and secondary school teachers in the Sedibeng District

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: James C Coetzee

ADDRESS: 6 Wilgenhof, Willem Close. Brackenfell Cape Town. 7560

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 974 8093

You are being invited to take part in a research project that forms part of my Masters degree in Educational Management. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project

that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the Basic and Social Sciences **Research Ethics Committee BaSSREC) of the North-West University** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in 4 Secondary Schools in Gauteng (Sedibeng East and West) and will involve interviews and document analysis. The researcher has been trained to use the methods mentioned in the previous sentence.*
- *Approximately 20 participants will be included in this study from 4 different secondary schools.*
- *There will be 2 schools from Sedibeng East District and 2 secondary schools from Sedibeng West District.*
- *The participants will come from township and suburban schools*
- *It will be an assorted group of male and female participants.*
- *The objectives of this research are to explore how effective communication is fostered between teachers and the SGB in secondary schools.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to participate in order for the researcher to gain data in the form of confidential documentation.*

What will your responsibilities be?

- *To provide the researcher with necessary documentation.*

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- *The direct benefits for you as a participant will probably be a better understanding of the communication process between the SGB and teachers.*
- *The indirect benefit will probably be that the communication between the SGB and teachers becomes more effective and efficient.*

Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?

- *The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:*

<i>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</i>	<i>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</i>
Because you will be asked about your job and the management as well as documentation, it is possible that you might feel uncomfortable.	The researcher facilitating your interview and analyzing documents will keep all information private and anonymous.

- *However, the benefits (as noted above) outweigh the risk.*

Who will have access to the data?

- *Anonymity (that is, in no way will your results be linked to your identity) will be kept by only using a pseudonym (a number or letter) to protect your identity. Confidentiality (that is, I/we assure you that we will protect the information we have about you) will be ensured by keeping consent letters and recordings in different places. Reporting of findings will be anonymous by never using your name or anything to link you to the study.*
- *Only the researchers and promoters will have access to the data. Data will be kept safe and secure by locking hard copies in locked cupboards in the researcher's office and for electronic data it will be password protected.*
- *Audio-recorded data will be sent to a transcriber who will sign a confidentiality clause (i.e., she will not be allowed to talk to anyone about any aspect of the data). As soon as data has been transcribed it will be deleted from the recorders. The transcripts will be stored on a password-protected computer. All co-coders will sign confidentiality clauses.*
- *Data will be stored for 5 years in the researcher's office.*

What will happen to the data?

The data from this study will be reported in the following ways: in chapters in my thesis and may be quoted in articles and other research projects. In all of this reporting, you will not be personally identified. This means that the reporting will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g., your address or the name of your school).

This is a once-off study, so the data will not be re-used.

Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid/compensated to take part in the study.

How will you know about the findings?

- The general findings of the research will be shared with you by sending you a summary of the findings.
- If you would like feedback on your personal results, then you may contact me and I can discuss the results with you.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact James C Coetzee at 082 974 8093 or james.coetzee.edu@gmail.com if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the chair of the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) Prof Jaco Hoffman at 016 910 3456 or the Deputy chairperson Dr Vhumani Magezi at 12403741@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for either Jaco or Vhumani with Ms Charmain Lekonyane at (016 910 3483)
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled:

Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the School Governing Body and the teachers

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I report and say) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

- You may contact me again **Yes** **No**
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research **Yes** **No**

The best way to reach me is:

Name & Surname: _____

Postal Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:

Name & Surname:

Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email:

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of researcher

.....
Signature of witness

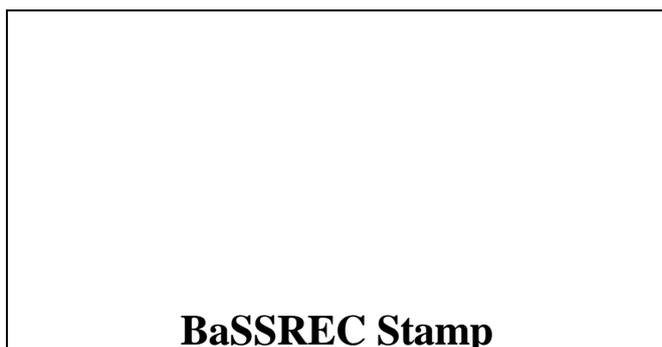
ANNEXTURE E: CONSENT FORM TO TEACHERS



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY[®]
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS

POBox1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

DATE: _____



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the School Governing Body and secondary school teachers in the Sedibeng District

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: James C Coetzee

ADDRESS: 6 Wilgenhof, Willem Close. Brackenfell Cape Town. 7560

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 974 8093

You are being invited to take part in a research project that forms part of my Masters degree in Educational Management. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the Basic and Social Sciences **Research Ethics Committee BaSSREC) of the North-West University** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in 4 Secondary Schools in Gauteng (Sedibeng East and West) and will involve interviews and document analysis. The researcher has been trained to use the methods mentioned in the previous sentence.*
- *Approximately 20 participants will be included in this study from 4 different secondary schools.*
- *There will be 2 schools from Sedibeng East District and 2 secondary schools from Sedibeng West District.*
- *The participants will come from township and suburban schools*
- *It will be an assorted group of male and female participants.*
- *The objectives of this research are to explore how effective communication is fostered between teachers and the SGB in secondary schools.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to participate because you are a teacher/ teacher-governor in a secondary school, within the area (Sedibeng East /Sedibeng West) I am researching.*
- *You have also complied with the following inclusion criteria of being a teacher/ teacher-governor within a public(Suburban or township) secondary school.*
- *You have also been invited because of your experience dealing with the SGB.*
- *You will be excluded if you are not a teacher/ teacher-governor, at a secondary school.*
- *You will also be excluded if you are a principal, vice-principal or HOD.*

What will your responsibilities be?

- *Interviews will take place in a quiet room, such as a class, or staffroom.*
- *You will be expected to answer questions in an interview, at a time which suits you. The interview will not be more than an hour long.*
- *These interviews will be recorded on a tape recorder.*

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- *The direct benefits for you as a participant will probably be a better understanding of the communication process between the SGB and teachers.*
- *The indirect benefit will probably be that the communication between the SGB and teachers becomes more effective and efficient.*

Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?

- *The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:*

<i>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</i>	<i>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</i>
Because you will spend about an hour completing the interview, it is possible that you will become tired.	The researchers facilitating your interview, will give you a 15-minute break, with some refreshment (a juice and a piece of fruit) about halfway through.
Because you will be asked about your job and the management as well as documentation , it is possible that you might feel uncomfortable.	The researcher facilitating your interview and analyzing documents will keep all information private and anonymous.

- *However, the benefits (as noted above) outweigh the risk.*

Who will have access to the data?

- *Anonymity (that is, in no way will your results be linked to your identity) will be kept by only using a pseudonym (a number or letter) to protect your identity. Confidentiality (that is, I/we assure you that we will protect the information we have about you) will be ensured by keeping consent letters and recordings in different places. Reporting of findings will be anonymous by never using your name or anything to link you to the study.*
- *Only the researchers and promoters will have access to the data. Data will be kept safe and secure by locking hard copies in locked cupboards in the researcher's office and for electronic data it will be password protected.*
- *Audio-recorded data will be sent to a transcriber who will sign a confidentiality clause (i.e., she will not be allowed to talk to anyone about any aspect of the data). As soon as data has been transcribed it will be deleted from the recorders. The transcripts will be stored on a password-protected computer. All co-coders will sign confidentiality clauses.*
- *Data will be stored for 5 years in the researcher's office.*

What will happen to the data?

The data from this study will be reported in the following ways: in chapters in my thesis and may be quoted in articles and other research projects. In all of this reporting, you will not be personally identified. This means that the reporting will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g., your address or the name of your school).

This is a once-off study, so the data will not be re-used.

Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid/compensated to take part in the study, but refreshments will be available during the interview. There will thus be no costs involved

How will you know about the findings?

- The general findings of the research will be shared with you by sending you a summary of the findings.
- If you would like feedback on your personal results, then you may contact me and I can discuss the results with you.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact James C Coetzee at 082 974 8093 or james.coetzee.edu@gmail.com if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the chair of the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) Prof Jaco Hoffman at 016 910 3456 or the Deputy chairperson Dr Vhumani Magezi at 12403741@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for either Jaco or Vhumani with Ms Charmain Lekonyane at (016 910 3483)
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled:

Exploring the nature and effectiveness of communication between the School Governing Body and the teachers

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I report and say) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

- You may contact me again Yes No
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research Yes No

The best way to reach me is:

Name & Surname: _____

Postal Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:

Name & Surname: _____

Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email: _____

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of researcher

.....
Signature of witness

ANNEXTURE F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. How long have you been serving in the SGB?
2. How would you describe the nature of the relationship between different stakeholders (e.g. SGBs, teachers, and the principal etc.) in your school?
3. To what extent does this relationship impact on communication at your school?
4. How do the SGB and teachers communicate at your school?
5. How is communication in general at your school?
6. What challenges does your SGB face when delivering on their given mandate?
7. What do you think should be done to foster effective communication between the SGB and the teachers in your school?
8. What role (if any) should the principal play to improve the communication between the SGB and teachers?
9. What do you think can make communication (in general) to be more effective at your school?