

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO TENSIONS BETWEEN PRINCIPALS
AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN INANDA**

BY

SITHEMBISO J. NYABA

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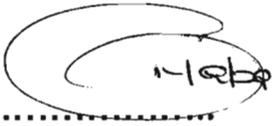
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Supervisor: Dr T.T Bhengu

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation titled 'An investigation into tensions between principals and School Governing Body members in secondary schools at Inanda is my own work and all the sources consulted are acknowledged.

Signed.....

Date 24/04/2009

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mom Lillian Phazamisile Nyaba for her understanding when the study opened the gap between us. I also dedicate this study to my son Tshupo as a challenge for him to go beyond my level.

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all people who contributed to the success of this study such as my research project supervisor, Dr Thamsanqa Thulani Bhengu of the University of KwaZulu–Natal, for his motivation, perseverance, guidance and support throughout this project. I would not have come this far if he was not there for me especially when I felt demotivated he encouraged me with words: “I know you are capable of doing it”.

Words of appreciation also go to all people who supported me in different ways. These people include the following:

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ABSTRACT

This research project addresses tensions between principals and School Governing Body members (SGBs) in secondary schools in the Inanda area. To understand such tensions, an interpretive approach was employed to gather data that informed our understanding of how tensions among target population affected the day to day running of secondary school.

The two township secondary schools were purposefully selected in Inanda in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Selected schools were generally known for consistently having problems although the nature of those problems was not known. The study employed an interpretivist approach to interpret the participant's actions and their behaviour during the process of interviews. The findings from two cases confirmed the existence of tensions and also that such tensions did not enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The tensions were found in different categories such as tensions between principals and parents, and between principal and educator components of the SGB. Both schools had similar tensions which were located between the SGB members and their respective principals. Such tensions included poor involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process, leadership style and lack of SGB structures such as school finance committee, interview committees and discipline committees.

There were also internal factors which directly contributed to the tensions. These tensions were directly linked to the leadership style of the principal, understanding of school policies, struggle related to positions and poor communication among the organisational members. The Department of Education (DoE) has been reluctant to intervene even when it has been alerted to serious problems which could undermine the smooth running of schools. It is therefore recommended that the DoE officials should play an active role in resolving some of the critical challenges facing these schools.

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List of abbreviations and definitions

DoE	Department of Education refers to both national and provincial. National department deployed policies to provincial level which guide the functioning of schools
SGBs	School Governing Bodies.
Devolution	Transfer of authority to a unit that can act independently or without first asking permission.
Decentralisation	Means the transfer of certain tasks and work, but not authority, to other units in an organisation.
Decentralised Schools	It is a democratic form of School Governance based on the principles of representation, equity and participation.
Governance	It is a formal system established by the law to control people, institutions or organisations through the exercise of authority and influence.
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
SMT	School Management Team
SASA	South African Schools Act.

Strategic listening	Refers to listening to someone in a supportive and non-judgmental way.
Black	Refers to the African people who were disadvantaged during the apartheid era. This definition excludes Indians and Coloureds

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Table1: Demographic information about the participants

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Before South Africa became a democracy in 1994, the education system was characterised by racial segregation and inequality in terms of provision, management and in all other aspects. The ushering in of a democratic dispensation invariably attempted to address the past practices through a number of legislations and policy initiatives. One of these is the South African Schools Act (SASA), (Act No 84 of 1996) which states that parents, educators and learners, where applicable, should accept co-responsibility for the governance of their schools. In 1997 the regulations for school governing bodies were drafted and promulgated to guide the creation and maintenance of effective learning environments and also to build partnerships in education. Since the South African Schools Act gave powers to the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to govern schools, tensions that in many instances resulted in various conflicts emerged in some schools, Calitz, Fuglestad & Lillejrd, 2002). In many instances, these tensions tended to disturb the teaching and learning situation in schools. This was more visible in schools that are located in the townships and in the rural areas (Archimedes, 1996; Calitz, Fuglestad & Lillejrd, 2002; Molo, 2005). This study explores the tensions between principals of secondary schools and SGBs in the Inanda area of KwaZulu-Natal.

The terms 'tensions' and 'conflict' are used interchangeably in this study. The author's reluctance to make a distinction between these two concepts drew on common practice amongst authors on these issues, who do not make clear distinctions between the two terms (Dweyer, 2003; Collins, 2005; Deutch, 2005). There is convergence of views among many scholars about what constitutes conflict, particularly within the organisational context. Just like tensions, conflicts are regarded as the clash of opinions, values and needs and wants (Squelch & Lemmer, 1994; Dweyer, 2003; Van de Venter & Kruger, 2003; Everaldo & Morris, 1996). Such tensions can arise when

people's needs and wants are not met, and these can be physical, social, educational, intellectual, recreational or spiritual needs (Dweyer, 2003). While having different wants and thinking is regarded as a natural phenomenon, and people sometimes take different actions to satisfy their wants and needs, such actions can create tensions between different stakeholders.

Despite the views advanced in the previous paragraph, there is recognition among scholars that tensions, just like conflicts, are not always necessarily negative and bad. These scholars view conflicts and tensions as both "positive and constructive, and negative and destructive" (Dweyer, 2003, p. 240). Dweyer, (2003) for instance maintains that tensions can be good for organisations to grow, but also that some of the tensions are negative, destructive and can paralyse the organisation (Van der Westhuisen, 1991; Dweyer, 2003; Van de Venter & Kruger, 2003). It is argued in this study that the tensions that exist between principals and the SGB leadership in schools researched have the potential of distracting and undermining schools' functionality. It is such tensions that the researcher regards as problematic; it is because these tensions can be destructive and therefore undermine organisational growth.

1.2 The principal and management functions

The Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998) specifies the duties of the principal as the provision of leadership and professional management of the school. Notwithstanding these duties and responsibilities, principals also have as one of their core functions, serving on the SGB and monitoring the performance of its functions in terms of SASA. Principals' membership of SGBs is by virtue of the position they occupy in schools, are part and parcel of this body. As mentioned above principals are responsible for school management, whereas SGBs are responsible for school governance. However, in practice, the distinction between the two responsibilities is blurred and misunderstood by the parties concerned (Smith, 1995). Viewed in this way, tensions abound. The researcher advances the argument that tensions between principals and SGBs are associated with failure to understand their respective roles in school governance. This particular view is expressed by Archimedes (1996) when he

says that the lines of demarcation, powers, duties and functions of governors and principals have led to a complete breakdown in the relationship, inhibiting the best interest of the school and the learners.

1.3 The role of parents in school governance

The parents together with other stakeholders are responsible for school governance and they carry out their functions through the SGB. The functions of the SGBs are stipulated in Section 20 of SASA. Some of these functions include encouraging parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school. Other duties include providing support to the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions. Promotion of the best interests of schools, and striving to ensure school's development through the provision of quality education for all learners in schools, forms part of SGBs' responsibilities. Principals and SGB members are facing enormous challenges in managing South African schools particularly in township secondary schools (Segal & Broekman, 1997). Such challenges include stress, anxiety and tensions which are exacerbated by rapid demographic changes in some schools and increasing demand on teachers (Segal & Broekman, 1997). Segal and Broekman (1997) also viewed tension as the whole, whose parts are constituted out of vulnerability, threat, strangeness and fear.

Cooper and Kelly (1993) in their study which was conducted in United Kingdom (UK) argued that the Heads (read principals) experience stress in maintaining standards and budgets, interpersonal relationships like teachers and parents. This revealed that some of the problems that South Africa experience are also found in different parts of the world. Schools in South Africa can generally be divided into two categories, namely, functional and the dysfunctional schools. Such dysfunctionality or otherwise is not restricted to secondary schools, however, disturbances that lead to closure of schools for a certain period are commonly noticeable in secondary schools due mainly to one crucial factor. The functionality of the school is associated with its effectiveness. The good matriculation results, order and discipline is associated with effective school and poor results, chaos and lack of discipline for the ineffectiveness of the schools (Moloi,

2005). Christie (1998, cited in Moloj, 2002) argues that teaching and learning have been disrupted and the work ethos has usually collapsed. She further maintains that if this remains unheeded, the school itself may collapse.

This scenario in some ways suggests that the problem of tensions that are problematic is prevalent in secondary schools located in these communities (Moloj, 2005). The researcher has observed that many of these problems are manifest in the interactions between principals and the School Management Team (SMT) on one hand and SGBs on the other (Derk, & Rene, 1995; Moloj, 2005). The governing body and its members are faced with anomalies and tensions. For example every member of SGBs in dysfunctional schools has an uneasy relationship with their constituency that is school staff, local authority members and parents (Derk & Rene, 1995).

1.4 Policy context and background to the study

The study is located within the area of school governance in the field of leadership, management and policy (ELMP). The involvement of all stakeholders in schools is the result of the changes that were brought about by the new democratic government that came into existence after the 1994 elections. A plethora of new policies were introduced in the education system to bring about changes in schools and these include the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996), the Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998), Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 and the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act (No 33 of 1997), to cite just a few. The South African Schools Act (SASA) envisaged partnership between the public school and the parent in school governance. The townships and rural area schools were familiar with school committees, but not with the SGBs. It is thought that school governance can be the cause of some problems in some of the previously Black secondary schools since stakeholders were not in line with the introduction of a new system of governance.

This research project was undertaken to address the relationships between the school principal and members of the school governing bodies in the township secondary schools. These relationships that were characterised by problematic tensions were

thought to be impacting negatively on teaching and learning as well as on learners' academic performance. As an educator who works in these secondary schools, I have realised that some of these schools have been labelled by some newspaper articles as sites of violence and tensions. Some of these newspapers include 'The Teacher' (May Tshabalala (2005), Ntshangase (2007) and Nxumalo (2007)). According to Tshabalala (2005) tensions between SGB members are sometimes so high that SGBs are dissolved before their terms expire. Moloji (2005) wrote a chapter that focused on the roots of problems facing black township secondary schools. According to Moloji (2005) the roots of problems facing township secondary schools emanate from the past inequalities of the apartheid government. Godden (1996, cited in Moloji, 2005) argues that in many cases school management and leadership were undertaken by unskilled, poorly qualified principals who do not have necessary management and leadership skills. Godden (1996) continues by emphasising that these problems result in the widespread dysfunctionality in township secondary schools.

The problematic tensions being experienced in township secondary schools have resulted in the increased number of learners who move from previously Black secondary schools to multicultural schools for various reasons such as instability caused by tensions. The movement of White; Coloured and Indian learners to previously Black secondary schools has not been witnessed. The study is based on assumptions that apart from obvious reasons that make learners to move from township schools to multicultural schools seeking for better education in well resourced schools, there is that reason of instability in so-called African schools which are the results of tensions and which are thought to disturb the functionality of the school (Moloji, 2005).

The root of the problems facing township schools emanate from the past inequalities of the apartheid government. For example the policy of segregation, where different race groups were separated from each other, put these racial groups in a disadvantageous position where they could not learn from one another (Moloji, 2005; Mda & Mothata 2000). White schools were better resourced and also familiar with governance structures. Mathonsi (2005) suggests that SGBs still suffer the baggage left by apartheid government as it is still difficult to bridge the gap between some of the Black

schools and the White schools. Some of the reasons are the previous inequalities in the curriculum designed for Blacks like Bantu Education which was aimed at inhibiting the academic development of Blacks. The researcher thinks that some of these problematic tensions have caused some schools to be labelled by community members as underperforming or dysfunctional. According to Robbins (1991) the dysfunctional conflicts impact negatively in the life of the organisation. It includes strikes, physical aggression, sabotage and inefficiencies between work units. McGregor and McGregor (1992, cited in Moloji, 2005) blame the Department of Education (DoE), saying that such problems were exacerbated by poor support from district offices which provided no management development programmes. The researcher thinks the problem is lying somewhere else because the Department of Education does provide workshops for school principals.

1.5 Motivation for the study

Since the promulgation of the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996), which gave powers to the SGBs to govern schools, tensions began to emerge as changes affected the roles of the principal and educators (Moloji 2005). These tensions tend to disturb the teaching and learning situation in Black township schools. Gorton (1991) contends that school and community relations have never been completely trouble-free, as conflictual rather than co-operative relationship develops between governance structures. This could have an extremely detrimental and possibly destructive effect on the school life if there is poor relationship between organisational members (Karlsson & Pampallis, 1995). This study was aimed at examining the areas that contribute to the dysfunctional conflict in some secondary schools.

Studies done by different researchers have revealed the existence of tensions in school. One of these examples is the study which was conducted by Mahlangu (2005). Mahlangu conducted the research project in the province of Gauteng. Gauteng is one of the nine provinces in South African. This research project was located in secondary schools in Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Soshanguve and Thembisa. The purpose of Mahlangu's study was to investigate the relationship between the principal and the

SGB. The study revealed that the school principal and the SGB have a problematic relationship in each case, and such tensions that were regarded as problematic inhibit the functionality of the school.

Mazibuko (2004) similarly conducted research in primary schools of the Eastern Cape Province. The findings of the study revealed the poor relationship that existed between school principals and the SGBs in that province. Such relationships were commonly found in South African Schools. Moloji's (2005) account of the roots of the problems facing township schools showed that there were tensions in previously Black secondary schools, particularly in the Gauteng and Eastern Cape provinces. According to Moloji tensions in schools are caused by enormous changes in education. Moloji suggested that these changes in education affect the roles of the educators and principal, causing uncertainty about their work and how it needs to be done. These problems result in the atmosphere of uneasiness, anxiety and tensions between organisational members.

Township schools experience different problems, some of which are published in newspapers, radio news, television, and also seen in township schools. It has become common that the editors and news readers both in radios and television report the death of educators, either on school premises or outside schools. The death of those educators has usually been linked with the piling up of tensions among educators and has also involved members of SGBs. Such problems in schools motivated the researcher to conduct this research project in Black secondary schools. These studies were done in other provinces, but nothing is known about the problems that result in conflict in secondary schools under KwaMashu Circuit. KwaMashu circuit comprises the primary and secondary schools in Phoenix which was formerly an Indian township, Newlands East, formerly a Coloured township, KwaMashu and Inanda, which are Black townships. Inanda is a vast area that extends from the semi-urban to rural area of the eThekweni Metro. Some of the secondary schools in this area have experienced different forms of conflicts which have resulted in the loss of learners or educators, and the closure of schools for certain periods.

Coser (1996, cited in Anstey, 1991) defines conflict as the struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals. Anstey (1991) categorise conflict into two, namely, functional or productive conflict, and destructive conflict. Different writers encourage conflict in organisation and view such conflicts as the life of the organisation. Everald and Morris (1996, p. 89, cited in Kruger, 2003, p. 27) contend that the absence of conflict in the organisation may indicate the lack of interest or may indicate lazy thinking which confirms that "*When everybody thinks alike nobody thinks*".

Functional conflict or productive conflict may also be seen as the positive vehicle for progressive social change (Cooley, 1956, cited in Anstey, 1991). This is echoed by Mullins (1999, cited in Van der Merwe, 2003) by asserting that positive conflict results in the production of better ideas; pressure to search for new approaches; foregrounding and resolution of long lasting problems, clarification of individual views, stimulation of interest and creativity and opportunity for people to test their capacities. The researcher believes that 'functional conflict' can tend to be dysfunctional when people lack conflict management skills. This research project focuses on destructive conflict as different writers suggest that dysfunctional conflict disturbs the functioning of the schools as well as teaching and learning.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will benefit the black secondary schools that seem to struggle in coping with the new changes, many of which were brought about by democratic principles. Principals will learn conflict management in order to manage schools effectively. Educators and parents will learn new techniques of working as partners and be able to tolerate each other in order to overcome the problems facing the secondary schools. All stakeholders will learn from understanding their roles within the context of the SGB and that will improve their relationship.

1.7 Statement of the problem

Literature has shown that tensions in organisations contribute to institutional growth (Van der Westhuisen, 1991; Dweyer, 2003; Van de Venter & Kruger, 2003). Notwithstanding such a critical role in organisations, many schools in and around the community where this study was conducted have had signs of problematic tensions with a potential to undermine quality teaching and learning environment. Many school principals and members of School Governing Body do not work collaboratively as required in terms of the South African Schools Act.

1.8 Research aims

The aim of this study is to examine the current interactions and relationship between principals and members of school governing bodies in selected secondary schools in the Inanda in KwaMashu Circuit.

1.9 Research questions

- How do the perceived tensions between the principals and the School Governing Body facilitate or inhibit the functioning of the school?
- What are principals' perceptions about their roles and that of SGBs in school management and governance in secondary schools in Inanda?

1.10 The layout of the study

Chapter One

Chapter one introduces the study by outlining its context, motivation, key questions and its significance, as well as making brief comments about methodology.

Chapter Two

This chapter reviews the literature on the research problem and key concepts central to the study. It further provides different angles through which to understand tensions between principals and SGBs in South African secondary schools.

Chapter Three

This chapter discusses in greater detail research design and methodology, as well as other pertinent issues regarding the research process.

Chapter Four

Chapter four presents the data that was produced using the methodology described in chapter three.

Chapter Five

This chapter summarises and provides an analysis of the key findings of the research project. Recommendation for the improvement of relations between the principal and the SGB are also discussed in this chapter.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter outlines the tensions between principals and SGB members in the selected township secondary schools within the KwaMashu Circuit. Issues such as the background and rationale for the study, statement of the problem, and research questions are also outlined. The next chapter focuses on the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature with a view to shedding more light on different perspectives regarding tensions and conflicts between principals and members of the School Governing Body (SGB). Principals are placed in a situation where they are expected to play dual roles as professional managers and as members of SGBs. Principals and SGBs are compelled by SASA and the Professional Administrative Management as well as, the Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998) to have a mutual relationship for the effectiveness of the school.

This chapter begins by unpacking the key concepts such as management and governance. SASA, which forms the legal framework of school governance, is also discussed in this chapter. SASA lists the functions of the SGBs and that of the principal which is listed in Professional Administrative Measures known as the PAM document. Some of the functions of SGBs and of the principal are discussed in this chapter because they overlap and sometimes cause conflicts which can in the long run harm the organisation. Theories of leadership that guide the study are discussed. Different studies that have been done in different places are discussed to support this study.

2.2.1 Governance

Smith and Lombard (as cited in Beckmann 2002), define governance as a formal system established by the law to control education through the exercise of authority and influence. Beckman, Foster and Smith (1997) define governance as implying overall control and authority of the school and its policies and directions. Maile (2002) refers to governance as the exercising of power of the management of resources. It involves the nature and extent of authority as well as control and incentives applied to deploy human and economic resources for the well being of an organisation. The above authors agree with each other on the power, control and authority that SGBs have in order to govern

schools and provide direction, but Maile (2002) differs on the issue of incentives. This researcher believes that SGBs deserve incentives which would serve as the motivation and that will impact on the effectiveness of the organisation.

SASA outlines some of the responsibilities of the SGBs and some tensions can be linked to the fact that some SGBs do not understand these functions especially in relation to principals' management functions (Godden, 1996; Smith, 2005; Mestry, 2004). It is well documented that in many schools SGB members lack a number of relevant skills including financial skills due to illiteracy among parent component (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank Mothata and Squelch 1997) These functions of SGBs include the following: the adoption of a constitution, code of conduct and development of the mission statement of the school. Members of SGBs are entitled to open and maintain a bank account for the school, prepare the annual budget that is planning the school finances for the following year, submit budget to parents and get their approval and also entitled to keep financial records of the school. Schreuder and Landley (2001) argue that although educational leaders in the schools take new roles, this does not mean that the principal is no longer accountable for effective school management. And the lack of consultation with all stakeholders may lead to total chaos (Schreuder & Landley, 2001).

2.2.2 Management

Sapre (2002, cited in Bush, 2003) states that management is the set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilisation of organisational resources in order to achieve organisational goals in an efficient and effective manner. Griffin (1987) regards management as the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling organisation's human, human financial, physical and information of resources to achieve organisational goals in an efficient and effective manner. Paisleys (1981) regards management as a concern to ensure the optimum use of resources, to determine the direction and the adaptability of an organisation in a changing environment. Management is the universal and unavoidable personal and organisational process of relating resources to objectives. It is clear from these

definitions that management is about persons tasked with management function making sure that all resources in his/her disposal are utilised in order for the organisation to achieve its goals. Management therefore is different from governance in that the latter focuses on exercising control powers and setting parameters for all stakeholders to execute their functions and roles.

This conceptualisation creates a better understanding of key concepts in this research project as this study discusses the issues that involve the governance, management and educational leadership. The researcher considered different authors' views in order to understand what is expected from organisational members as well as the understanding the different areas that result in tensions in the organisations.

2.2.3 Education Leadership

In schools principals are the most important leaders and the success of the schools depends on the effectiveness of the principal's leadership style. Other leaders are Head of Departments who control the work of their departments. Such leaders work in partnership with educators, non-teaching staff, parents and community. Singh (2005) contends that for collegiality to be effective, the processes of shared leadership need to prevail. Members of the team work together with fewer or no tensions being experienced. Schreuder and Landley (2001) view leadership as the ability and the skills to influence people to carry out certain task. The example is the human relations between individuals, and various individuals in a group which play an important part in the life of the organisation. Effective leaders develop a supportive school climate where organisational members obtain support from the leader in order to attain organisational objectives. The leader empowers and motivates all stakeholders and establishes a relation of trust, unlike the principals who lock their offices during their absence in schools. Shared leadership makes all organisational members take responsibility and schools function normally even if the principal is away. That is why SASA devolved powers to all SGB members.

The principal plays a dual role in schools because principals are leaders of the institutions with appropriate management responsibilities which include setting the organisational goals and provide guidance to the staff (Coleman 1992). The management team made up of the principal, deputy head, and heads of departments provide supervision and control of the school. In this new dispensation of democracy principals are also members of the SGBs. According to SASA principals as leaders and also school managers have to share powers with all stakeholders to ensure the proper functioning of the school.

2.3 The key areas of school governance

Apart from other duties of SGB in schools there are key functions that can cause tensions if procedures are not followed. It is important that people involve in school governance understand their duties. The key areas of school governance include understanding and following various policies like SASA; finance; administration; as well as the appointment of educators including principals. Some of these areas need relevant skills like financial skills. Principals form part of appointment. These key areas are discussed below.

2.3.1 The South African Schools Act as the legal framework of school governance and management in public school.

The South African Schools Act scheduled regulations for the establishment of SGBs in public schools. These regulations were promulgated to guide the transformation of South African school governance. This resulted in a significant shift where South African schools began to practice the concept of democracy. Previously, in South Africa, schools had committees or school councils with limited powers in the running of the school and principal had more powers. Holt and Murphy, (1993, p.175, cited in Lemmer, 2000, p. 128) contend that school leaders in most countries in the past were 'lords in their own education chieftdom'. School principals are now working in partnership with community members like parents, teachers, learners and non-teaching staff. Decentralisation and devolution of power disempowered the principal and empowered

parents to make decisions regarding the education of their children. According to the Schools Act, SGBs have to assist the principal and educators in carrying their duties in public schools.

Duties and responsibilities of the SGBs are listed in the South African Schools Act and the Personnel Administrative Measures known as the PAM document outlines the duties of the principal. Some of the functions of SGBs are to support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions SASA section (20) (e). SGBs recommend to the Head of Department the employment of educators at the school subject to the Employment of Educators Act, (No 76 of 1998) and Labour Relations Act 1995 (No 66 of 1995). According to the Employment of Educators Act the principal is responsible for professional management of the school and for providing professional leadership within the school.

The description of duties of the principals and the SGB members show that there is a grey area whereby their duties overlap and such a scenario give rise to conflicts in the schools. For example SGB members are entitled to support the principal and educators in the performance of their professional functions. The work of parents overlaps with that of educators when trying to give support to the professionals because the state gives them little preparations and training for their roles. (Danzberger, Carol, Cunningham, Kirst, Mc Cloud & Usdan, 1987 cited in Fullan, 1991) contend that in United Kingdom they called the School Boards as "the forgotten players on the education team.

This overlapping can results in tensions in the organisation. Bishoff and Mestry (2003) contend that there is an overlapping of roles between the principal and the SGB members. The lack of skills can be a contributing factor that leads to tensions which later result in conflict in schools. Tensions in schools are found in different areas of school governance such as financial issues, policies, selection of educators and administration. These areas need relevant skills if the SGBs have to perform up to an optimal level.

2.3.2 Financial Issues

Financial affairs are a very important area where SGBs play an important role. SGBs are legally responsible for the financial control (SASA, 1996). This is also an area that is linked to tensions between the two parties, namely, principals as professional managers and SGBs. In terms of Section 42 of the Schools Act, SGBs must keep records of funds received and expended by the public school and they must also prepare financial statements as soon as possible. The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document states that the school principal must keep records and accounts and make the best use of funds to the benefit of the learners. I believe this area can show the overlapping of roles between that of the principal and the roles of the SGB. In addition, the Schools Act states that the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body (Section 16 (1)). This indicates that the school communities have important roles to play as equal partners in the education of their children.

Different studies conducted in other countries such as the United Kingdom revealed that the relationship between principals and SGBs can result in a problematic conflict. Derek and Rene (1995) provided evidence of the battle between a principal and a head of the governors in London schools. In another incident, Fidler and Atton (2004) make mention of a leader of a comprehensive secondary school who was suspended for misappropriation of funds. After that suspension the principal was declared unemployable in any managerial position. The lack of mutual trust between the governor and the principal had a negative impact in their relation.

The governor who lacked financial skills delegated financial duties to the principal who also lacked financial skills. The school principal was not good in administrative tasks. When the governor found out that there was an improper financial proceeding during auditing, the governor then suspended the principal. That is one of the reasons the South African School Act emphasises the importance of mutual trust between the SGB members. According to the Schools Act, the SGBs are given powers to co-opt the person with relevant skills required. The person such as lawyers, educators or accountants can play an important specialised role in school governance.

Mestry (2004) conducted a study in Mpumalanga. In that study it was reported that the principal assisted SGB in finance matters and the principal was charged with misappropriation of funds. In the court the defence attorney argued that there was no jurisdiction for the Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) or the Head of Department to claim that the principal is equivalent to an accountant officer. Monduk (2000, cited in Deventer and Kruger, 2003) argue that the governance and management of finances are the responsibility of the governing body. According to the Employment of Educators Act the principal's core duty is to manage the professional duties of the school. The researcher's argument regarding the study conducted by Mestry (2004) is that if the principal who is the professional manager cannot manage the school funds because of the lack of financial skills, how can we expect the proper administering of funds from the SGBs? The literature revealed that some schools are served by SGB members who are illiterate; therefore SGB members including the principal cannot be charged of financial mismanagement if they were never capacitated with relevant skills. According to the SASA both the principal and SGB are responsible for the administering of funds effectively.

Mestry (2004) contends that the school principals play dual roles; that of being an ex-officio member of the SGB and on the other side that of an employee of the education department. The researcher agrees with Mestry (2004) regarding the dual responsibilities of principals, namely, working with SGBs on school governance and also for working with SMTs on school management. Mestry (2004) then suggests that the dual role played by the principals in schools does not decrease the responsibilities of those principals who delegate some of the duties to other organisational members. Such dual responsibility has been reported as resulting in conflicting roles and some of these principals end up leaving the education system early due to stress and frustration.

Fidler and Atton (2004) contend that it is increasingly becoming common to find principals leaving their posts prematurely or choose to take ill-health retirement due to some of the challenges listed in the previous paragraphs. According to Fidler (2004), the contributing factor is the poor relationships of head teachers (read principals) and governors (read SGBs) or staff. Friedman and Rosenman (1974, cited in Fidler &Atton,

2004) collected demographic data which measures job satisfaction, mental health, job stresses and coping strategies. The findings of this particular study revealed that the school principals showed extremes of competitiveness, hyper alertness, explosiveness of speech, tenseness of facial muscles and feelings of under pressure all the time and challenge of responsibility. The relationship problems put them in the risk of mental health. Fidler and Atton (2004) come up with the solution of training principals in time management and personal skills to eliminate the pressures and problematic tensions in public secondary schools. Principals who have learnt how to manage their problems can play a more effective role in SGB.

2.3.3 Policies in South African Schools

The principal who is also the member of the SGB is entitled to manage the professional matters of the school. The SGB in some township schools, who have experienced the problem of illiteracy amongst SGB members, end up delegating their duties to educators or to the principal. The policy formulation is the responsibility of the SGB and educators implement those policies. In some schools the policies are being formulated by the principals with the help of educators due to the lack of skills of SGB members. Sections 16(1) and section (3) of the Schools Act, clearly demonstrate the distinction between the governance and management roles, but it is at practical level where schools experience problems of interference in each other's responsibilities (Karlsson, 2002).

The Department of Education (DoE) provides workshops for both the SGBs and the principals to help them understand policies and their roles. Mathonsi (2000, cited in Calitz, Fuglestad & Lillejord, 2002) argues that the DoE has failed to meet the needs of the schools and communities as the officials provided inadequate training in poor communities. For example the language and theories that are used when training the SGBs are not appropriate. The DoE has translated the documents to the languages that people understand better but this does not mean that it improve the level of illiteracy and eliminate problematic tensions in schools. The socio-economic problem is also a contributing factor in literacy, and conflict in schools. I think we cannot expect to see the

smooth running of schools where illiterate SGB members score points for professional managers or any educators during selection of educators in public schools. Some SGB members might think they are employers of educators and can expel them when they wish.

2.3.4 Appointment of educators

The Schools Act has given the powers to the SGB to recommend to the provincial heads of department the appointment of principal and staff. During the interviews, SGBs participate in interviewing of selected candidates. Some of the SGB members in some public secondary schools regard themselves as employers, with powers to appoint and dismiss professional educators. The powers given to SGBs to recommend the appointment of staff have given rise to conflict in Black secondary schools (Vandeyar 2002). Educators' posts have become like a commodity, to be bought and sold; as a result some of the SGBs together with the underpaid educators misuse their powers for their own benefit. This is one of the reasons that have caused problematic tensions which resulted in the loss of life of a number of educators in Black secondary schools.

Different newspapers like Daily Sun and Isolezwe, report different kinds of problematic tensions in Black schools. Nxumalo (2007) published a story of two female educators who were allegedly killed and were found lying in the bush. The school principal was blamed for allegedly paying R1000 to the killers of the two educators. According to Nxumalo (2007), those educators were killed because they wanted to reveal the truth about mismanagement practices of the principal. Problematic tensions in schools have destroyed people's lives, disturbed teaching and learning and have also perpetuated violence in schools where some children are alleged to have

According to Fullan (1991) the problem may be that many advisory been used either by principal or SGBs to fulfil their own interests. councils and other structures for parent participation in decision making do not have a clear focus and are not well implemented, that is why they are inefficient, unproductive and do not address the needs of the parents. Joyce (1978, cited in Fullan, 1991) contends that the governors can be very

effective in bringing about change in their schools provided that it can be carefully developed.

2.4 Conflicts between SGBs and school principals

There are conflicts between groups such as departmental clashes, disputes between interest groups, staff and management groups and teams (Crawley & Breavey, 1992; Broekman & Segal, 2002). Robbins (1991) presents three different views of conflict. The first is the traditional view that conflict is harmful and has to be avoided. The second is the human relations view which is the belief that conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group. The Schools Act has empowered the parents by giving them powers to make decisions regarding the education of their children. These democratic changes have resulted in the middle class and literate people having opportunities to send their children to multicultural schools, leaving the illiterate and unskilled community and their children behind. These parents who form majority of school governors are struggling to familiarise themselves with a number of school policies and legislations such as, the Schools Act, the admission policies, provincial policies, language policies and Section 21 regulations and many other policies made by the national department of education.

The stake-holders that form the SGB represent different groups like teachers, parents, learners, community members and non-teaching staff. The expectations of group are high while in a group the individual has their own problems. In groups people bring with them their contrasting experience, common aims, their strengths, ideas and feelings (Crawley & Breavey, 1992; Erasmus & van der Westhuisen, 2002).

Bush (2003) contends that there was no harmony in schools in England and Wales in the 1980s and 1990s until the powers of were changed. He concludes by saying that now there is fluid participation in decision making. In East London, at Starterford secondary school where the disagreement arose between the principal and the Chair of Governors about the powers of governing body, the Chair of Governors wanted the level of participation in school management to be much greater than was expected in

other schools. Their differences and tensions led to the involvement of the Secretary and the courts.

Fidler and Atton (2004) contend that in some cases the chairperson of the SGB and the principal become too close for different reasons. It can be due to the lack of knowledge or skills to perform the work effectively. In some schools their close links works well while in some schools it is regarded as corrupt especially if such closeness negatively impacts on the organisational goal. In schools where there is high uncertainty among SGB members, their relationship with the principal may be based on exploitation. The SGB members put trust in the principal and they become the rubber stamp for the principal. Mathonsi (2005) suggests that the operations of the SGBs in schools still suffer the baggage left behind by the apartheid. He continues by saying that poor schools in Black communities struggle with technical planning and with complicated language of policy because of the members' education levels.

2.4.1 The enhancement of the capacity of the School Governing Bodies

According to section (19) (1) of SASA, the Head of Department must provide programmes to provide introductory training for newly elected Governing Bodies to enable them to perform their functions. The Head of Department must also provide continuing training to Governing Bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions. My argument is that the training of the SGBs is not the continuing process that is stated in the policy documents. The Department of Education and principals expect SGBs to function properly with training of short duration without considering that in some schools parents still struggle to understand the roles they should play.

The DoE organises workshops for both principals and SGBs. The aim of the DoE is to capacitate them so that they will understand their roles, improve their relations and equip them with necessary skills. It is argued that some principals do not attend the workshops and some of them resist working in partnership with other stakeholders like SGBs. It is possible that their resistance is based on their reluctance to be moved from their comfort zones. Some principals were comfortable with the traditional system of

education because they were dictating, having all the powers to decide about the functioning of the school. Different studies have revealed that principals decide to leave the system due to the relationship problems. That is why Fidler and Atton (2004) assert that the cause of pressure on the principals is located in the relationship problem with the governing body.

Fidler and Atton (2004) further maintain that disharmony in schools is the result of the lack of relevant skills in school governance and some governors delegate their duties to the overloaded school principal. Those SGB members who leave everything to the principal because of their own uncertainty, take no active part in school development. That is why the DoE provides training to the SGB members in order to help them understand their roles, responsibilities, and their duties as is required in the Schools Act. Some of the duties articulated in Schools Act like recommending the appointment of educators, drawing up budget, determining school fees, determining language policy, determining times of school day, adopting a code of conduct, adopting a constitution and developing a mission statement require people with relevant skills. For example, developing a budget requires financial skills. Potgieter, Visser, Van de Bank, Mothata & Squelch (1997, cited in Mda & Mothata, 2000) contend that these duties and other duties require a higher level of literacy and relevant expertise. They suggest that where the SGB members lack expertise, governance is inhibited. Regarding the duties of SGB members and fundraising, Potgieter et al. (1997, p. 38, cited in Mda & Mothata, 2000, p.79) stated that:

“The law does not merely ask you to do something to raise money for the school whenever you feel that is necessary. You have a definite duty and responsibility to see to it that your school can have more money available. You will have to use your talents to make plans and carry out projects to earn income for the school”.

In the traditional system, there was top-down approach where the management structure in schools were formed by the principal, at the top and then the deputy followed by the heads of department and educators at the bottom of the hierarchy. Learners and community members played no effective role in the running of the Black

schools. Mda and Mothata (1994) challenge that system of education saying that it created passive individuals who only focused on the rule following and maintaining the status quo. The passiveness was observed in Mda and Mothata's research which was conducted in Port Shepstone on school governance in 1997. Discussions were dominated by men, and women were silent and withdrawn. It was also observed that those people who occupied senior positions in the community tended to be adopted as the group decisions. I have noticed that men particularly with recognised power bases like headmen or former school chairmen did not involve others in decision making.

The researcher believes that the passiveness of females in the discussions was due to the different factors like the apartheid government where people had no freedom of speech and the pervasive inequality, where Whites were regarded as superior than Blacks and patriarchy where males were dominant. The Black people's culture particularly that of the Zulu nation does not allow the females to voice out their concerns while interacting with males. Some people regard themselves as minors because of the lack of competence in educational issues.

In South Africa many parts of the world have challenged the traditional management practices in secondary schools (Manz & Sims, 2001, cited in Singh, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 1997, cited in Bush, 2003). According to Singh (2005) the traditional management sometimes act as if things have order and stability in schools while it is based on bureaucratic structures where power is centred no one person. Its structure is vertical and hierarchical and needs to be transformed to collegiality. Collegiality encourages personal visions to be shared by all members in the organisation. According to Sergiovanni (1991, as cited in Singh, 2005), collegiality is a collaborative process that entails the devolution of power to teachers and other stakeholders in order for them to become an integral part of the leadership process of the school that is guided by that school shared vision. Devolution of power emancipates parents, learners and educators in school management.

Devolution of power and collegiality flattens the hierarchical management structure and all people participate in decision making. According to Singh (2005) the traditional

hierarchical management structure should be flattened. The flat management structure indicates that the salaries should be flat. The traditional managers like school principals who cling to power as an entitlement of their position do not learn to devolve their power and work on an equal basis to all members of the organisation that is school. It is implied in this study that the management crisis in some secondary schools can be linked to the traditional top-down bureaucratic management approach. The devolution of power to schools and the consequent *decentering* of school management has resulted in both painful anxieties and heartening benefits in various countries (Fullan, 1999).

2.4.2 The relationship between principals and members of the SGBs.

The South African Schools Act constitutes the legal framework for the partnership between parents, learners and educators. De Wet and Yeast (1964, pp. 556-558) give characteristics of a partnership by maintaining that a partnership is an association of people. The success of partnership depends partially on the relationships between the partners and their commitments to such relationships. Partners agree to work together on an equal basis to achieve specific goals; Partners share rights and duties; partners manage affairs of their partnership.

The Schools Act requires learners, educators, parents as well as community to form partnership with school governance. Smith (1997, cited in Beckman, 2002) defines governance as an overall control and authority of schools and its policies and directions. SASA aims at creating effective learning environment and building partnership. Different researchers reveal that parental involvement brings about improvement on learners' academic performance. Ziegler (1994, as cited in Fullan, 1991) conducted the study on the effects of parent's involvement in Canadian and United States schools. The findings of the study revealed that the involvement of parents at home and at school benefit the child. Rosenholtz (1999, as cited in Fullan, 1991) agrees with Ziegler (1994), as he focused on the "moving" schools versus the "stuck" schools. The findings of the study showed that stuck schools showed no goals of parental involvement while moving schools focussed their efforts on involving parents in decision making. Therefore parental involvement plays a prominent role in school effectiveness and contributes to

the elimination of the problematic tensions between principal and SGB members. Leaders in all organisations need to be influenced by different leadership styles like situational in order to lead organisations effectively.

2.5 Management Theories

Theory helps to provide leaders and managers with guide to their actions. Theory also provides support for certain actions, as it can explain and give meaning. Hughes and Bush (1991, as cited in Bush, 2003, p. 23) perceive theories as:

“The most useful for influencing practice when they suggest new ways in which events and situations can be perceived. Fresh insight may be provided by focussing attention on possible interrelationships that the practitioner has failed to notice, and which can further be explored and tested through empirical research. If the result is better understanding of practice, the theory-practice gap is significantly reduced for those concerned Theory cannot then be dismissed as irrelevant.

There are different theories that form part of the study of educational management and these include bureaucratic, collegial, political, subjective, ambiguity and cultural theories. This researcher focused on bureaucratic and collegial theories of management to describe what is happening in township secondary schools.

2.5.1 Bureaucratic theories

Bureaucratic theories have the following feature; they have a hierarchical structure with the different positions in the hierarchical structure. At the apex of the structure the principal holds a senior position and is accountable for all activities within the school. There is a division of labour where staff specialise in particular tasks on the basis of their expertise, like the educators doing their work under different departments in school. According to Bush (2003) South African schools as well as the whole global education system is governed by bureaucratic features where there is top-down management approach. Bush (2003) argues that a bureaucratic theory ignores the

contribution of individuals within the organisations. Such a theory also emphasises that principals have authority by virtue of their position as the appointed leader of the organisation. According to Johnson (1995) the top-down management approach inhibits the development of collegiality in schools.

2.5.2 Collegial theories

Collegiality can be linked with school effectiveness. Collegiality is accepted by many countries as the most appropriate way of running schools. It works well where individuals are empowered to participate democratically in the running of the organisation with a sense of solidarity. Its features encourage that members of the organisation should arrive at decisions through consensus rather than conflict. This is not observed in some South African Black schools as the problematic tensions have changed schools into sites of violence where people put their lives at risk. This is also witnessed by different writers like Moloï (2005) who wrote the chapter on the roots of problems in Black township schools.

Bush (2003) draws from the work of Miller and Miller (2003) and suggests that “through a transformational process the motives of leader follower merge”. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) define transformation as the fundamental change in society from unequal to equal, from unfair practices to fair practices in order to rectify past injuries. Bush (2003) contends that transformational theory is consistent with collegial theory as it develops structures to foster participation in schools. Not all the authors support the notion of transformational leadership for example Leithwood (1994, cited in Bush, 2003) argues that transformational leadership may be used for manipulation of members in the organisation to support the vision and aim of the leader.

In England the collegial approach was successful (Bush, 2003). In some schools there was a policy making body which was called the “Moot “. Moot was open to all stakeholders in that region. It met every six weeks and all parties participated in decision making. This is shown in the study that was conducted at Leicestershire College in Counterhope in 1970. Hargreaves (1994, cited in Bush, 2003) asserts that

collegiality was espoused by official groups in order to secure the implementation of policy of England and Wales Brown, Boyle and Boyle (1999 as cited in Bush 2003) argue that even if collegiality is recommended by different authors, the fact is that the espoused collegiality is not genuine.

A study conducted by Botha (2004) in the United States of America revealed that changes in education brought more responsibilities without removing any other existing responsibilities. Different authors such as Caldwell (2002, p. 9); Edwards (2002, p. 4); Budhal (2000, p. 45) echo Botha's (2004) contention by saying that the work load of the school principal is becoming unmanageable in secondary schools.

Huysteen (1999, p. 12 cited in Botha 2004) contends that South African secondary school principals have similar problems like their counterparts in other countries. Sterling and Davidoff (2000) examined the leadership challenge in South African schools. They saw South African education as being in a process of change and reconstruction. According to their understanding changes in education impact negatively on most people involved as they experience pressures from different sides. As a result people become demotivated, frustrated and without hope.

Different studies that have been done in different countries revealed tensions in some secondary schools. In Lesotho, de Wet (2007) revealed that problematic tensions in schools are experienced by both learners and teachers. Learners experience physical and verbal abuse and teachers also experience physical and verbal violence in schools. The author argued that exposing children to different forms of violence leads to negative behaviour. Students develop aggressive behaviours such as anger and hatred that finally explode in acute violence in schools. The researcher believe that de Wet's findings also apply to community, parents and also because pupils grew and become members of the same community. The school violence that takes place in Lesotho is also found in some South African schools.

2.6 Conflict management

Conflict can either have positive or negative implications for the functioning of the organisation. Squelch and Lemmer (1994) contend that conflict is part and parcel of school life and further maintain that it is impossible to avoid it, and that it should be managed constructively. Positive conflict implies that through conflict parties begin to realise alternatives for instance, in schools both the principal and members of the SGB may have differences regarding certain goals of the school. The principal may, for example, see the need for buying computers for the children while the SGB might view that as a waste of money. Even if their differences results in conflict, it is important that the organisational goal should be met.

It is important for the school managers to have conflict management skills. Everald and Morris (cited in van der Westhuisen, 1991) contend that the ability to handle conflict is a key factor in managerial success. Van der Westhuisen, (1991) maintains that "It is important that a leader, as well as an educational manager, be trained in the effective resolution of conflict to do justice to the key role of that he fills". Van de Venter and Kruger (2003, p. 27) emphasise the need for positive conflict as they state that "the absence of conflict may indicate the lack of interest or lazy thinking which confirms that when everybody thinks alike nobody thinks ". This encourages constructive conflicts that end up on goal attainment and to the benefit of the organisation.

Destructive conflicts should not be encouraged in organisations. Van de Venter and Kruger, (2003) contend that negative conflict is when the interaction between the two or more groups harms the organisational aim. Van der Westhuisen, (1991) states that parties involved in negative conflict adopt an attitude of "playing the man not the ball" and thus a variety of counter-productive elements emerge which can eventually paralyse the whole organisation. Since conflict is the life of the organisation, it is important that the better opportunities be created to reach consensus amongst both parties (Caldwell & Spinks, 1998). It is important for both parties involved in conflicts, that is, the SGB and the principal, to have an understanding of how the situation develops, so that the intervention will stimulate and encourage beneficial and helpful

conflicts and to resolve, suppress or prevent harmful conflict (Johnson, 1994, cited in Steyn & Niekerk, 2002).

Davies (2004) noted that there are conflicts in schools and focused on how these conflicts should be managed. He indicated different types of conflict management like prevention negotiation and bargaining, mediation, arbitration, anger management, consensus seeking and restorative justice. According to Davies there must be a mediator, meaning a third party who will meet with the two conflicting parties in order to solve conflict. The other strategy of resolving conflicts in school is to involve an arbitrator, also a third party, to resolve conflicts. The difference between these two strategies is that the mediators come up with their own decision while in arbitration the arbitrators have powers to make decision.

Ngcobo (2003) agrees with Davies (2004) on the issue of conflicts and strategies to manage it in schools. Ngcobo (2003) acknowledge the existence of conflicts in schools and said that it may occur between different stakeholders like between pupils, pupils and teachers, teachers and parents, teachers and SGBs and teachers themselves. According to Ngcobo (2003) the root of conflicts may be the lack of resources and staff appraisal which act as the barriers to the achievement of desired objectives and lead to poor results. Both Ngcobo and Davies believe that conflict management using negotiation and arbitration is important in resolving conflicts in schools.

Sharp (2003) also noted that conflicts do exist in schools but argued that tensions are categorised into two, minor conflicts which can be resolved by mild methods which involve compromise, and acute conflicts which need non-violent action or non-violent struggle. Non-violent struggle refers to the peaceful protest such as the use of boycotts or where people refuse to participate in the meeting or attend school. There are different methods in active intervention and disruption of normal operation of the system, such as hunger strikes, occupation of offices and sit downs on the street (Sharp 2003).

In the South African school context the teachers are facing different challenges. Many are leaving the profession because of feeling disillusioned with the unrelenting

pressures (Broekman & Segal 1997). Broekman and Segal (1997) conducted a study in the city of Johannesburg. The study focused on tensions experienced by teachers in schools. Teachers were interviewed on tensions they experience in schools. The study revealed that some tensions emanate from one source and sometimes it appears from multi-sources, like various stakeholders within the school.

2.8 Decentralisation of power

Decentralised school governance is also a democratic form of governance which is based on principles of representation, equity and participation. This means that the structures of SGBs are democratically elected, representing the community and able to participate in decision making. The issue of decision making has caused problematic tensions in some schools because some people think schools cannot take decisions without involving other stakeholders. That is why David (1995, p. 7, cited in Lemmer, 2000) contends that participatory decision making does not mean that everyone decides everything, some decisions are best left to the professionals and some to the parents. He continued saying that "...let education professionals make the important professional decisions" (David, 1995, p. 11 cited in Lemmer, 2000, p. 130).

Decentralisation of power has its own problems in schools. Kentucky the state in the United States of America established democratic school governance, moving from centralisation towards decentralisation in schools. This has resulted in a number of conflict situations. According to Lindle (1996, p. 20, cited in Lemmer 2000, p. 139) in the move from centralised to decentralised school governance and the creation of school-based decision making councils, schools encountered obstacles such as more work, more conflict and more meetings for members involved. Lemmer (2000) criticised decentralised decision making saying that it is more time consuming, there are more constituencies involved in the process and it creates the potential for conflict.

New Zealand, like Kentucky in the USA, experienced problematic tensions after it had decentralised school governance. For instance the roles of principal, teachers and parents have changed. According to Lemmer (2000) in New Zealand there is often

tension between governors and principals and between parents and school authorities. The common problem experienced by many school councils or governing bodies is inadequate expertise. Some governing bodies are unfortunate in being served by professionals who lack relevant skills. Even if the SGBs are being served by professionals that do not mean that the SGB members are knowledgeable about complex educational matters. Therefore school leaders must learn management skills and communication skills.

The South African education terrain remain one of diversity, complexity and at times chaos, while there are likely to be some schools that operate as professional learning communities. The majority of schools are characterised by a culture of opposition, dependency and non participation as a legacy of apartheid (Thurlow, 2003 cited in Grant, 2006). Caldwell, 2002 contends that decentralisation is a feature of school reform in every nation that is seeking to improve the quality of learning. The researcher believes that destructive tensions experienced by some secondary schools increased after the democratic dispensation in South Africa in April 1994. Different authors witnessed the escalating problems at schools. For example, Lumby (2003, p. 101) observes that trust within a school among staff and parents cannot be assumed.

According to Bhengu (2005) principals both nationally and internationally experience difficulties in coping with decentralisation. His study revealed that some principals work alone, only reporting to the SGB the progress they have made. Yet others work with certain groups, either parents or educators, in the SGB to achieve their personal goals to the exclusion of other stakeholders. The problem experienced by South African township schools is also found in multicultural schools. The example is the Vryburg School in the North West province. Vryburg School was a White Afrikaans school but after 1994 it began to admit Black learners. The medium of instruction was Afrikaans but Black learners were segregated into English medium classes. Computer classes were offered in Afrikaans and thus excluded Black learners. Black learners demanded computer classes in English. The SGB argued that this was a demand they could not meet afford to meet as they could not afford an additional English medium class for computers. The Black students protested against this and as a result they were

excluded from the school. The conflict escalated when White students attacked Black learners.

In response the Black community protested in support of the black learners. The conflict escalated further and took a violent turn with White parents arriving armed to protect the school. Protests increased and violent became endemic in the area until the police intervened and the school was closed. This attests to the need for adequate preparation of SGBs in taking on governance roles and responsibilities in a system of decentralised governance. The argument is that the analysis of the policy of educational decentralisation reveals sharp disjuncture between the policy intention and the policy practice, what is referred to as 'the policy gap' (Sayed, 2000).

2.8 Communication skills

Communication skills is one of the neglected aspects in some organisations as people who are in power want people being led to feel that they are being tightly controlled. This can have a negative impact on organisational working relations. Communication experts and psychologists suggest that communication skills work hand in hand with strategic listening. The different types of listening involve discriminative listening, comprehensive listening, therapeutic listening, and critical listening cited in (Tate & Dunklee, 2005).

Problematic tensions in different organisations can be linked to the lack of listening skills. Tate and Dunklee (2005) identified barriers to effective listening, and they mention issues like an attitude of superiority of organisational members, tight control and excessive certainty where leaders are not prepared to take other people's views. These barriers involves cutting off, philosophising where leaders become self centred, and not distributing knowledge they have to organisational members. Parroting is one of the barriers in strategic listening whereby leaders or members in the organisation respond to the fact but shows no feelings like listening without empathy, or where speakers maintain a dry detached manner like continuing whatever activity they were

involved in and not looking at the speaker. Such acts increase tensions among organisational members.

2.9 Related research studies

Mahlangu (2005) conducted a quantitative study in the Gauteng province and focused on secondary schools in Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Soshanguve and Thembisa. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between the principal and the SGBs. Mahlangu (2005, p. 7 cited in Karlsson, McPherson & Pampallis, 2001, p. 141-148) suggested that the mixing of roles and functions, and the high rate of illiteracy among SGB members cause conflict in schools. This is also witnessed by the Department of Education (2004, pp.11-171 cited in Mahlangu 2005, p.7) that the most important causes of tensions between the principal and the SGB are poor governance, illiteracy, mixing of roles and functions by both the principal and SGB and poor management by the principal.

The literature used in this study suggests that the causes of problematic tensions in school are the overlapping of roles where the principal and SGB members interfere on each others' work. The high illiteracy rate among SGB members, absenteeism among both educators and learners and dismissing of classes before time also contribute to some of the problematic tensions in schools. Data was collected by the use of questionnaires which was distributed in four districts under Gauteng, focusing on principals, parents, learners, educators and non educators.

Bhagowat (2001) case study of one Indian secondary school located in the north of Durban at Phoenix also focus on roles and functions between SGB members. Phoenix is one of the areas that were allocated for only the Indian community during the apartheid government and policies of segregation. Those policies prevented different races from living together. Blacks were the most negatively affected by this, and even now it is difficult to close the gap between Blacks and other races. That is why in this democratic era, more Black learners attend multicultural schools but no Indians, Coloureds and Whites attend township or rural Black schools.

Bhagowat, (2001) conducted an in-depth qualitative study at Almari secondary school and interviewed five participants like the principal, SGB chairperson, deputy principal, educator representative and RCL president. The purpose of the study was to examine how democratic school governance has redefined the role and functions of a secondary school principal in the north of Durban region. The key questions for the study focused on the leadership style practised by the school principal, decision making process and the impact of the SGBs on the principal's role function.

According to Bhagowat (2001) SASA was implemented with the intention that the school principal would work in collegiality with other stakeholders such as learners, educators, parents and department officials but in practice some SGB members created new challenges for the principal. One of the reasons can be that the principal was not initiated in the process of democratic school governance. The findings of the study revealed that the practice of democratic school governance proved to be a challenging task for the principal because of his training and expertise in the traditional management school of thought. Study revealed that participation was not always forthcoming from the side of parents. Some of the decisions had to be made by the principal without involving all stake holders, though RCL members were supported by the principal in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

The studies conducted by different researchers in different parts of the world provide evidence of the existence of tensions in school governance. Problems vary from school to school but some problems are common such as the overlapping of roles and the problem of illiteracy. This researcher conducted this study to find out whether what is happening in other provinces is also happening in township schools at Inanda.

2.10 Conclusion

In concluding this chapter on the literature reviewed internationally and locally, the studies revealed the existence of problems in some schools particularly in the South African context. Such problems are found particularly in Black secondary schools. Moloi's (2005) study focused on the roots of problems facing township secondary

schools and suggested that such problems emanate from the past inequalities of the apartheid government. The researcher's argument is that all township schools experienced the same problems during apartheid era but some now function properly and experience less tension with no negative impact although those schools are located in rural areas and in townships. Godden (1996) contends that in many cases school management and leadership were taken by unskilled and poorly qualified principals who do not have leadership skills. The researcher agreed with Godden that the effectiveness of the school depends on the leadership style of the principal and the support the principal receives from the DoE.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Three explains the design and methodology that was used in carrying out this research. The research examined principals' and SGB members' understanding of roles and responsibilities in school governance, as well as the conflicts that occur during the interactions between these two stakeholders. The methodology underpinning the methods is explained in this chapter as well as the researcher's reflections of her experiences during fieldwork. The chapter commences by stating the research questions and is followed by the description of the design and methodology, data production methods and conclusion.

In attempting to find answers that would assist the researcher to obtain an understanding of principals' and SGB members' understanding of their respective roles and conflicts that sometimes ensue, the following questions were used.

3.2 The key research questions

- How do the perceived tensions between the principals and the School Governing Body facilitate or inhibit the functioning of the school?
- What are principals' perceptions about their roles and that of SGBs in school management and governance in secondary schools in Inanda?

3.3 Research design and methodology

The study is located within a qualitative case study design. Case studies give an intensive holistic description of a single case (Duff, 2007). Case study approaches are best suited for individual researchers since they tend to create opportunity for each aspect, in a specified time to be studied in depth, (Bell, 1987). Within the context of this study, interaction between school principals and SGB members is the key focus area.

Case studies designs are most suitable for studies such as this one, which is aimed at gaining greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of a specific situation (Maree 2007). Flick (1998) describes qualitative research as an orientation towards analysing concrete cases in their temporary and local particularity, starting from people's expressions and their activities in their local context. Unlike Maree (2007) and Flick (1998) cited above, Krathwohl (1993, cited in Wiersma, 2000) brings a different dimension to the discussion by emphasising that qualitative research techniques describe phenomena in words rather than numbers. The researcher employed a qualitative research design because the aim was to obtain rich and detailed description of individual case study sites. There were two case studies in the end undertaken with a view to understanding how principals and SGBs interact, and the extent to which tension unfolded in the three case study sites. Each site was visited more than 8 times to carry out a variety of research activities. The first couple of visits were meant to introduce the study to the schools and establish rapport. Towards the end of the research process the research had to go back to each case study site for verification purposes.

The researcher focused on principals' managing schools working in collaboration with other stakeholders such as parents, learners, and educators. In attempting to understand interactions between principals and SGBs an interpretive research paradigm was followed, and it underpinned the design and methodology used. This paradigm was deemed relevant due to the study's intention of trying to understand participants' lives from their own perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The interpretive approach is associated with symbolic interaction. The focus lies on interpreting the meaning that symbols, actions, words and signs have within the context of participants' interactions amongst themselves (Devos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 1998).

The main data sources in each case study site were the principal, two educators who serve in the SGB and two parents also who serve in the SGB. Principals are a key data source mainly because the study is about them and their interaction with other stakeholders, particularly parents and educators in operating school governance structures. Furthermore, principals are the main players in this study because previously

they had more powers to decide about the functioning of the schools but now they are compelled to work in collaboration with all stakeholders in participative decision making. After the first democratic elections of 1994, and the subsequent legislations and policies, such as SASA, governance powers were shared among parents, educators and learners in secondary public schools. The educators were selected because they form part of the SGB and they (at least in theory) are in constant interaction with principals particularly on governance. Parents were selected for the study because they form the core of the SGB and are regarded as non-professional compared to other stakeholders. Examining this tri-polar interaction between professionals in schools (principals and educators) and the non-professional component in governing the schools would be an interesting project for someone else to do. Within the SGB, the selection of the two parents took into consideration their duties in the school governance, and these participants were the chairperson and treasurer who work closely with the principal.

3.4 Gaining access to the research sites

The process of gaining access to the research sites entailed negotiations at various levels. The researcher requested permission from the Ethics Committee within the Faculty of Education. This Committee scrutinised the proposal to ensure that it complied with all ethical requirements. Furthermore, the Committee facilitated accessing permission of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZNDoe). The researcher also negotiated with schools directly. However, asking for permission at school level only occurred once permission had been granted by the KZNDoe to gain access to the schools.

3.5 Pilot study

The instruments used for the research project were firstly piloted before being administered in this project. Instruments were piloted at a neighbouring school where the principal, two educators and two members from the parent component formed part of the pilot study. The objective of the pilot was multifaceted. It was meant firstly to test

the questions and the problems that can be encountered in the field; to practise the use of the tape recorder and also to expose the researcher to the experience of the interviewing techniques.

The pilot was beneficial to the researcher. For example, it helped in ensuring that all technical issues relating to the tape recorder usage were addressed beforehand. It also assisted the researcher in terms of the interview pace. Seideman (1998, cited in Greef, de Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 1998) urges researchers to pilot their study, to practise interviewing with a smaller number of participants. By so doing the researcher comes to grips with practical aspects of interviewing and becomes alert to strengths and weaknesses of interviewing skills.

3.5.1 The selection procedure

The researcher used a combination of purposive and convenience selection methods in selecting the two schools to participate the study. The size of the sample was considered sufficient as no generalisation on the entire population was sought. Purposive selection methods essentially entail the researcher handpicking the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of typicality (Cohen & Manion, 1986 & 1998). Lankshear and Knobel (2004) seem to agree with Cohen and Manion (1998) when they say that a purposive sample allows researchers to pick informants using his or her judgement to choose participants for specific qualities they bring to the study. Such a view is shared by Burns (1998) who contends that purposive sampling enables the researcher to select participants on the basis of their experiences and knowledge they have. The researcher selected purposely two secondary schools out of approximately 28 secondary schools in the Circuit. From the total number of 28 secondary schools in the circuit, the researcher had a pool of about six to eight schools that were generally regarded as experiencing some problems in terms of management and governance for a few years. Among the key criteria for selection was that schools must have experienced such a phenomenon for some time, and they had to be secondary schools.

Besides purposive selection, convenience also formed part of the method due to the fact that the researcher considered schools that were easily accessible in terms of transport. Once the researcher had introduced the research project to the school, the principals in respective schools assisted in identifying parents and educators. Although selecting individual participants was based on membership of the SGB, their participation remained voluntary.

The researcher used a tape-recorder during the interviews in order to avoid the waste of important data. Cassettes were labelled with the use of codes like Ed1-A, meaning the first educator interviewed in the first school. The aim of using codes while interviewing was to hide the identities of both schools and participants.

In the interviews the researcher examined the knowledge of school policies and the level of literacy, and explored whether there were overlapping of roles between SGB member and the principal. Interviews allowed the participants to give detailed information. This method allowed the experiences of principals and that of members of the SGB in two different schools to be heard. Much information was collected by listening to the individual experiences and understanding of roles in school governance. According to Heyl (2001, cited in Lankshear & Knobel, 2004) the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to probe interviewees' responses and encourages the elaboration of important themes emerging during the course of interview. It also gives a chance to understand how interviewees see and understand the world.

3.5.2 The participants

The table below shows the profile of the participants in terms of their positions and gender.

Table1: list of participants

Participant	Male	Female	Position within SGB
Principal	1		Ex-officio
Principal		1	Ex-officio
Parent	1		Chairperson
Parent		1	Deputy-Chairperson
Parent	1		Treasurer
Educator		1	Member
Parent	1		
Total	4	6	10

3.6 Data production methods

The data production process entailed talking to different stakeholders in each case study site. This was meant to ensure that a balanced view was obtained about each site. These stakeholders, as mentioned in the previous sections, were principals, educators serving in the SGB and parents, also serving in that structure. Furthermore, it was important that another method of data production was used other than semi-structured individual interviews to ensure trustworthy. In this instance, an open-ended

observation method was used. It is always advisable in case study research that a variety of data production methods in order to ascertain a complete picture about the case being studied (Duff, 2007). The different methods used to produce data are explained below.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured individual interviews were the main data production instrument. It is the most used tool in qualitative research (Cohen & Manion, 1989) suggests that qualitative research is holistic in the sense that it attempts to provide a contextual understanding of the complex interrelationships of causes and consequences that affect human behaviour. This type of interview gives the research an opportunity for probing and follow-ups (Cohen & Manion, 1989), and these are appropriate for qualitative research such as this one. Furthermore semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to explain the questions to the participants and ensure that they understand what is required of them (De Vos, 2000).

All the interviews were tape-recorded using a battery-charged tape recorder. Using a tape recorder is recommended for a number of reasons. One of them is that an accurate record of what occurred during the interview process is kept. The other reason is that it allows the researcher to keep a record of the interview without having to be distracted by detailed note keeping, (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Some participants were fast in telling their stories and it was going to be impossible for the researcher to write everything that the participants were saying. Therefore using a tape recorder was quite beneficial. The researcher also kept notes about the participants' posture and conduct during the interview process. That was meant to complement the tape recorder as it is unable to record such issues as gestures. Before recording the interview the researcher asked for the participant's permission to record them. It was explained to the participants that the tape recorder was to be used in order to ensure accuracy of the content of the discussion. Tape-recorded interviews were then transcribed into written text for analysis purposes.

3.6.2 Unstructured observation

Unstructured observations were conducted continuously throughout the research process. These observations were unobtrusively recorded on a note book as field notes. Unobtrusiveness is crucial in trying to ensure that tampering with the research site remains as minimal as possible (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Maree, 2007). Field notes are easy to take without interrupting anyone and attracting much attention (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Although observations were conducted on continuous bases, purposive unstructured observations were done during the fifth or sixth visits. That was after semi-structured interviews had been conducted and the relationship between the researcher and participants had been established and participants were used to seeing the researcher within schools' premises.

Such observations included just looking around the school premises exploring the physical environment of the school and the goings on before and during school hours. What was being observed was a general life of the school from an outsider perspective. That meant that the researcher had to come very early in the morning and stayed on until school days ended. The researcher had asked for permission from the principals to do such observations and in certain instances, the researcher was accompanied by any available educator so to ask questions and get clarity. This took one week in each school.

3.6.3 Documentary analysis

Besides interviews and observations, key documents, such as minute books for SGB meetings, were read with a view to analysing how decisions were arrived at, and whether or not inclusivity of other stakeholders was observed in that process. It was important that a variety of sources were utilised in order to solicit a comprehensive view of the case being studied (Duff, 2007).

3.7 Qualitative data analysis

The researcher undertook the process of qualitative data analysis while the data production process was still underway. This was in line with qualitative research methodologies (see Reuben & Reuben, cited in Mouton, 2001; Oka & Shaw, 2000; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen 1993, cited in Oka & Shaw, 2000). After the data production stage had been completed, the researcher had to read repeatedly in order to familiarise herself with the content. Then the transcribed data was organised. This process included putting together biographical details of participants and schools, and then categorising the other data according to the questions that were asked during the interviews. The second level of the analysis entailed identifying codes of meaning after which these codes were organised into categories and themes as they emerged from the recorded interviews. Coding involved breaking the data into ways that were analytically relevant (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997).

3.8 Limitations

What might be the limitations of the research project conducted in Inanda using the sample of two schools? One danger may be the tendency for generalising from what is found in these two schools to schools in KwaZulu-Natal or even South Africa generally. . There is also the potential to reveal inadvertently the identity of the schools and the people who participated in the study. In terms of the selection of the participants some of the limitations were that the principal determined who should participate and who should not participate in the study. Limitations also include the exclusion of pupils and non teaching staff as are all affected by the tensions in schools.

3.9 Measures to ensure trustworthiness

The researcher used a variety of trustworthiness techniques measures. One of them is what Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007) call crystallisation. Crystallisation is used to ensure the credible and trustworthy of the process of the study and the findings. The researcher preferred the term crystallisation to triangulation because it provides a complex and deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison,

2007). Many qualitative researchers use the term triangulation to refer to a technique of using different sources or methods in order to check if one gets the same answer (Henning, 2004; Cohen et al, 2007; Maree, 2007 & van der Westhuizen, 2007). Richardson (2000, cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2007) argues that triangulation is based on the assumption of a fixed point. Nieuwenhuis (2007) further state that triangulation is used extensively in quantitative studies for confirmation of the hypothesis formulated in the study.

This study belongs in the qualitative research which employed interpretivist research paradigm. Being mindful of that, the researcher used different sources of data , namely principals, educators and parents, and also different data production methods, namely, semi-structured interviews, observations as well as documentary analysis. To ensure trustworthiness in this study, Guba and Lincoln's model (1985) was used, and that model entails using the following criteria; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, cited in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). To make the results of the study credible the researcher used a variety of measures to ensure trustworthiness. These measures included crystallisation of both the data production methods by using both semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations and data sources.

Credibility refers to the ability of the researcher to produce findings that are convincing and believable (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Different data sources ensured that the picture about the life in each case study site was balanced by talking to different key stakeholders (principals, educators and parents). Unstructured observation of the schools allowed creation of profiles of the schools which further enable an understanding of school life. Conformability was ensured by coming back to the participants to check if the researcher's initial interpretation of the content of the interview. Such a practice helped the researcher get more clarity about other issues that were raised during the interview process.

Transferability is achieved through producing detailed and rich descriptions of the contexts (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Transferability is done by other researchers who

intend replicating research done by other researchers. The responsibility of the research with regards to transferability is to ensure that the descriptions about the research process are done in dense detail. That gives readers a detailed account of structures of meaning which develop in specific contexts. The understandings can therefore be transferred to new contexts in other studies to provide a framework with which to reflect on the arrangement of meaning and action that occur in these new contexts. This study describes and analyses data for the purpose of giving the reader a thorough report at what is happening in the schools studied. Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher say it did, (Yin, 2004).

Producing such descriptions does not necessarily mean that other researchers will find similar findings when doing research in the studied schools. As this study utilises the interpretive paradigm, it is expected that participants in this study will behave differently and express different opinions in changing contexts. Confirmability refers to the practice by researchers to go back to the researched with a view to verifying whether or not initial interpretations by the researchers are correct. In this study, the researcher went back to participants after transcriptions and initial analysis had been done to check if what I as researcher was finding was accurate. Other authors refer to this stage as member-checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004).

3.10 Ethical Issues

Issues of ethics are central to the entire research process (Cohen, et al. 2007; Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2007).The researcher ensured that ethical issues were observed throughout the process. One of the key ethical considerations is the issue of anonymity and confidentiality (Henning, 2004; Cohen et al, 2007; Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2007). The researcher had to assure participants of anonymity by protecting their identities and ensuring the maintenance of confidentiality (Burns, 2000).

The ethical process started at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where the ethical clearance application was made, and after scrutiny, permission was granted to proceed

with the research. Then the provincial Department of Education of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN DoE) was approached by our university through its ethics department. The permission to do the study was granted by the DoE and access to schools was granted. The researcher then sent letters to the gatekeepers starting with the circuit manager asking for permission to conduct research project in secondary schools. The researcher then sent letters to the principals in two different secondary schools asking for permission from the principal and Chairperson of the SGB to do the research. The letters also informed these gatekeepers about their rights. These rights included informed consent, voluntary participation, the right to withdraw from the study at any stage of the research process; copies of these documents are attached at the end of this report as part of appendices.

3.11 Codes used

It was important that promise of anonymity made to participants was kept. One element of keeping this promise was to use codes to hide the identity of the participants and that of their institutions. The codes used are presented below:

The codes for school educators were coded as:

Ed1-A: refers to the first educator of School-A

Ed2-A: refers to the second educator of School-A

Ed1-B: refers to the first educator of School-B

Ed2-B: refers to the second educator of School-B

The codes for parents were as follows:

P1-A: refers to the first parent of the School-A

P2-A: refers to the second parent of School-A

P1-B: refers to the first parent of School-B

P2-B: refers to the second parent of School-B

The codes for principals were as follows:

PR-A: refers to the principal of School-A

PR-B: refers to the principal of School-B

3.12 Researcher's reflections about experiences in schools

Different experiences obtained in schools through interacting with both parents and educators before and during the formal data collection phases are explained. Experiences involve experiences of organisational culture, as schools have different cultures although they share common problems. The researcher was lucky enough to be left with a community member in the one principal's office (School-A) while principal attended other problems. During the course of the conversation researcher found out that the parent was an SGB member in the same school. That parent told the researcher about the history of the school and its effectiveness during the 1980s as well as its decline in the later years.

In school-B the angry parents who participated in the study began their story before the dates of interviews. Both parents in School-B felt that they were being excluded in decision making. Participants firstly wanted to know if they were nothing that link the researcher with their school. They then express how they feel about the School Management Team particularly the principal. Parents ended up by saying that the accumulation of tensions between parents who are SGB members and principal will end up in death if the DoE is failing to move principal to other schools.

The researcher's experience in schools during the ice breaking exercises and when introducing the study was a strenuous one. The researcher kept on visiting schools, and making appointments to meet with the principals until the researcher realised that nothing productive would take place in the first two schools. In the one school selected, the researcher met the educator who advised the researcher to select another school

because their principal was a difficult person who would not give the researcher a chance to conduct the study in that school. At first the researcher did not listen to the educator but ended up being well known by educators because of her weekly visits to school, but the researcher never met the principal.

The researcher used to arrange appointments telephonically but when she came to the school the school principal was not at school. After six months the researcher decided not to include that school in the study although the educator component was willing to participate and expressed the hope that there would be some development and changes in tensions within the organisation. Some participants were well informed that the study was not an action research but believed that after discussing their problems they might feel relieved. The three schools were chosen to be part of the study but researcher withdrew from the first two schools due to some problems and added another school to make two.

The second school that had been selected showed interest in the study. One Head of Department (HOD) convinced educators that the study was relevant to their school because of the problems that distract the functioning of the school. The HOD and other educators hoped the project was going to bring about changes in their school. The principal gave me permission to interview educators. Educators were so excited and arrange suitable venue for interviews. The principal was out at that moment, and the arrival of the principal spoiled the arrangements. Participants suddenly changed from being lively and energetic to being reserved and started showing negative attitude towards the study asking different questions like, why are choosing this school? Why don't you conduct your study in your neighbouring school? Without giving me a chance the educator participant ran to the car leaving me amazed. As a result of these difficulties this school was also excluded from the study, and it was decided to limit the schools surveyed to two.

Finally the researcher conducted research project in the other two different schools with fewer problems than with the first two schools. Participants and principals had some basic insight and understanding of what the study was about. Principals proved to be

the most problematic ones as it is difficult to arrange appointments with them. It took almost a year to meet them. On previous occasions, when researcher came to the school on the date and time agreed upon by both parties, the researcher would not find them in schools or if the researcher did, they would make a number of excuses to avoid talking and being interviewed.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter has reported on the design and methodology that was used to gather the data the researcher used to better understand issues of tensions between school principals and members of SGB. The other areas covered in this chapter include participants, sampling, ethical issues, coding and crystallisation used in the study. The next chapter report outlines the data presentation and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology underpinning the methods used in eliciting the data. This chapter presents the data that was produced by semi-structured conversations with principals, educators and parents serving in the SGBs of the two participating secondary schools. This presentation begins with a brief description of each case study site and each site has been given a special phrase or label that characterises it. It then moves on to discuss the themes that emerged from the data.

4.2 Changing time, changing fortunes: The schools' struggle to stay relevant in the new South Africa!

School-A was established in the 1980s with what was then known as form 1, form 2 and form 3 (now known as grade 8, grade 9 and grade 10). It is located in a township next to KwaMashu in an area previously designated for Blacks only. The school became popular to both learners and community for producing good results. Standard 9 and 10 (read grade 11 and 12) classes were later opened and the school continued with its good reputation of producing results. Continued good performance contributed to increasing learner enrolment which ultimately resulted in shortage of floor space in the school. The school was generally regarded by various members of the community as an effective school in terms of the manner in which it was run, Achievement in sports contributed to its popularity, and demand for space in the school steadily escalated. However, the school's good reputation within the community was not to last for much longer as stories of good governance in the school started to gradually wane as the process of structural integration of schools from the former apartheid departments of education gained momentum. Schools that fell under the KwaMashu circuit for example, were dogged by allegations of both internal and external strife which were alleged to

contribute to the rapid decline in the culture of learning and teaching. This gave birth to the new culture in schools and crippled the culture of teaching and learning.

One of the key internal factors that were cited as contributing to the decline of the school's culture of learning and teaching was the leadership style of the principal. The principal of School-A was a male and it was reported by parent participant and also

by the educator participant that he adopted a *laissez-faire* approach to leadership, and to the eyes of many within the school. "*The principal was always away at school, if the principal was at school he could not control learners and educators as they moved in and out at their own time*", said School-A parent participant. This approach was regarded as "I don't care", as one educator commented. Considering that the three components to school governance are involved – educators, parents and learners, it is surprising to the researcher as why such alleged behaviour can proceed without check. In terms of SASA each component is expected to play its role in facilitating school effectiveness. From an outsider's perspective it appears as if learners have enjoyed the lax environment in the school oblivious of the repercussions in relation to their future attainment. Educators were increasingly deviating from their primary goal which is the effective teaching and learning in schools.

There were external factors as well, which were said to have contributed to the decline of the school's culture of learning and teaching and which negatively affected its image. These included the community's inability or lack of commitment to deal with their children who were reportedly harassing educators in different ways including stealing their belongings such as earrings, rings, watches, cash, mobile phones and so on. Vandalism was also reported to be rife and evidence of this was clearly visible – school doors, windows, and sometimes even roofs of some buildings were missing. Both the internal and external factors have changed the school culture and the school is a shadow of its former glory years

The principal, educators and parents told their story about the history of the school. School-A began as the prominent school which had a good image in the community but

gradually it changed until the school community lost hope about its future. The school had a high enrolment and was known to produce the best results. After the first principal who had tight control, different people led the school having their own different agendas like focusing on school cash not the primary objectives of the school which is teaching and learning. Educators were left to manage themselves and learners were scattered on streets and in townships. The school began to experience tensions between parents and educators. Parents then took initiative and chased the principal. The school was left without a principal for a long time. Educators enjoyed self rule and the one of members of school management team was appointed as an acting principal. The appointment of the new principal increased the tensions which put the lives of other people at risk. The principal made it clear that he knew that the educators and some of the parents did not like him, and knew that when he leaves his children in the morning he may not come back alive to them. Principal from School-A said:

"I know that some educators hate me because they were doing as they wish, for a long period as both learners and educators were controlling themselves. I feel threatened but my primary objective is to change this school from being a bush into a proper school. Educators are divided into two groups, those who wish to work with the principal and those who are not prepared to work with me"

Educators also made it clear that they did not want to work with the principal. Parents had different views and expressed their displeasure at the educators' general attitude towards the principal. In their view, the principal was working hard to change the school and return it to its former glory. Parents argue that it was the principal's agenda to change the school for the better which made him unpopular among them, hence their negative attitude towards him. As tensions between the principal and the educators escalated, some educators resorted to leaving the school. The principal was not totally clear as he manipulated the rationalisation and deployment policy to ensure that educators who, in his view were un-cooperative left the school. *"The enrolment is at the lowest level compared to other schools in the neighbourhood"* said School A principal. Notwithstanding all these challenges, the principal has expressed his desire to change school in terms of academic performance and enrolment.

4.3 Shortages in the land of plenty?

School-B has demonstrated enormous spirit of caring for the vulnerable and weak yet internal squabbles among various different members of the school community undermine its potential. School-B was established in 1994. The school has large fertile land where community members plant vegetable gardens that benefit the community through the provision of fresh vegetables for consumption by both the community and learners, particularly those who had lost parents through HIV/AIDS pandemic and other ailments. School is becoming a home to destitute learners. The school provides assistance like food parcels from different sponsors and from school with the help of the provincial DoE. It is situated in the KwaMashu circuit. Many schools in this township have for many years received bad publicity and reputation within the community for problems such as conflicts within school community. Allegations of educators jostling for management positions are rife; allegations of poor management styles by the principal and poor discipline among learners and educators have persisted.

The school is fenced thus ensuring the safety of all people in school, providing controlled access to the school and helping prevent learners from bunking classes. The school is next to transport routes and this allows pupils to choose either taxis or buses. This helps learners who stay far from school to use transport and eliminate late-coming to school which is seen as a major problem to some Black secondary schools.

The socio economic factors contribute in the school problems as the majority of the parents are unemployed, and majority of learners are orphans, coming from informal settlements and some live alone as both parents have passed away. Educators reported *"we have the names of pupils whose parents passed away. Our school donor assists those learners with food parcels"*. School-B like other schools in the area has experienced drug problems which need to be tackled if learners' academic performance is to be addressed in a positive way. Both schools experience the problem of drugs in both boys and girls. In School -A, principal reported *"in community there are people who send learners to school to sell drugs. Here are the things confiscated from learners, dangerous weapons and drugs."*

The parents told their story about their conflicting relationships with the principal. Some parents for instance felt that *“the principal was undermining us because of our levels of education”* as one parent put it. Parents that the researcher spoke to described the principal as the person who did not want to work with the SGB members and they claimed that she hated them and looked down upon other people who have no active role in terms of school development. Their poor working relations had forced them to operate as separate entities in one centre. There is a lack of trust between the principal and SGB members that resulted in the parents wanting an investigation while the principal do not see the need for investigations. Parents emphasised that the principal must leave the school because the accumulation of different problems will end up in the death of other people.

Accusations and counter-accusations prevail in the school. For example, while the principal seems to be aware of the problems in her school, she believes that the parents were being used by some educators to fulfil their agendas. This was seen as a power struggle because the parents mention the name of one of the educators, saying that they prefer to work with that educator rather than the principal. Parents provided reasons that their work is hindered by the principal instead of giving support but principal pushes them too far and does not want to listen to them.

Table2: Participants by School and Age Group

Age ranges of participants	26 – 35	36 – 45	46 and above	Total
School-A	0	4	1	5
School-B	0	3	2	5

4.4 Summary of results

The results of the interviews with the participants of this study indicate generally that major tensions, between the principal and SGB members, emanate from different sources. These areas of tensions are not the same in the two schools studied. Whereas in School-A, the tensions are mainly between the educator components of the SGB and school principal, in School-B, however, the tensions are mainly between the school principal and the parents. Essentially major tensions are with regard to role conflicts, the finances of the school, the appointment of educators, the development of the school, the general working relations of members of SGB with school principals and the discipline of learners. Each of these aspects is discussed below.

4.4.1 The role conflict

The lack of the understanding of roles amongst different members of the SGB and that of two principals seemed to have resulted in the overlapping of roles. This later causes problematic tensions. For example in School-A, the participants interviewed stated that “the chairperson of the SGB sees himself as the deputy principal”. The chairperson believed he should be involved in the day-to-day running of the school and must participate in all decision making by the principal. The chairperson is said to often come into the school to check the attendance register for the educators and learners. The chairperson of the SGB is reported to often come to the school in the morning and stand by the gate to control the coming in of the learners and the educators.

Some SGB members, particularly the parents, are also reported to interfere in the professional management of the school. The participants indicated that parents often tried to tell the principal what they thought should be done with regard to school governance. For example the parents are reported to think that it is their right to appoint and discipline educators without necessarily making recourse to the Department of Education procedures on educators' appointment and discipline.

4.4.2 Problems with school finances

Financial management is an area which requires professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Educators including school principals took initiative where there is lack of required skills and incompetence as it happen in School A as parent participant said *“principal do everything and come to me at work for my signature”*. In School -B the parent participant claimed that the principal view them as uneducated people the parent said, *“ the principal undermine the parents and us that we are not educated and we do not know anything “*. Some of parents in black schools lack financial management skills. Those parents who can be described as competent send their children to better resourced schools outside the township areas where they live. Unemployed illiterate parents form the majority of parents of children in township schools and cannot understand financial statements without clarification. Principals do not involve parents in financial management but only inform chairperson to sign the cheque without transparency.

The chairperson trusts the principal because of good relations and mutual understanding while educators often feel sceptical about the relationship of the principal and the chairperson in School A. Where there was good working relationship between the principal and the chairperson of the SGB, educators often perceived such relationship as based on manipulation of the chairperson by the principal or vice versa. Parent members of the SGB interviewed however felt that educators warm up to school principals because they see themselves and the principals as colleagues. For example an educator participant stated that:

“We cannot turn against the principal in support of the parents because principal is our colleague”(ED 2 -B).

Educator participants of this study reported that parents thought their roles as members of the SGB is only to focus on finances of the school. When finance shows no problems, parents do not look on other areas, if everything is in order, or not. This shows that they can play an important role if they can understand clearly all their duties.

“Parents only focus on school financial management and about how their money is being spent, even when they fail to pay their children’s school fees. Whenever we meet, parents want to know about their money, they want to know the balance and what has been done with their money” (ED 2- B).

It is not only the parents who focus on school finance. Educators do also, particularly in the case where educators have differences with the principal. For example, in School-A, the educator participants indicated that originally when their principal assumed duty in the school the plan was that it was the finance committee of the school that should be in charge of school finance and that the school principal should not be responsible for finances of the school. This was due to a lack of trust in financial matters they had towards the principal. SGB members reported that principals lack financial management skill. For example an educator said that:

“Principal reported to us individually that DoE promised to remove the school from section 21 to section 20 due to the failure of submitting some financial documents” (ED 2 -A).

Section 21 refers to schools that manage their funds while section 20 refers to schools whose funds are being administered by the DoE. Depending on how a school manages its funds, it is placed on section 21 or section 20.

SGBs met and discussed before working with the principal that for the effectiveness of the school principal must not come closer to school finance. The principal from School-A in this study agreed with educator’s statement and stated that:

“I encountered serious problems in this school because I was not allowed to use money (bekungafuneki ngithinte imali). Luckily I have good relations with the parents. I know we must have financial committee and it will start 2008” (PR-A).

Both School-A and school –B had no financial committee and principals did not delegate some of the duties to other members in school. Within the SGB, some members had served in different schools as SGB members playing prominent roles in

financial management of the schools. Some educators have no role in finance. The poor involvement of SGBs in the governance of both School A and School B promoted poor relations and had given rise to problematic tensions and division amongst the SGB members. Tensions around the issue of finance emanate in the argument that the chairperson and principal cannot act in place of the finance committee. School-B shares similar problems with School-A. For instance the principal of School-B reported that:

“Parent component wish to chase me at school and place people they prefer. Parents want to control school finance although they lack required skills. I do not feel safe working in this environment” (PR-B).

4.4.3 Selection of educators for appointment

Selection of educators is one of the areas that cause tensions in schools particularly in Black secondary schools. According to SASA one of the functions of SGB is to recommend to the DoE the appointment of educators. SGBs have powers to hire, pay and dismiss their own staff. This has enabled the SGBs to have false perceptions of regarding themselves as employers of educators.

The educator component in School-B reported that parents lack relevant skills for selecting the best candidate that can contribute in the effectiveness of the school. The educator participants in this study believed that parents do not know the academic needs of the school and therefore cannot know which type of teachers to employ and therefore should not have any say in the selection of educators. Where parents are given free hands to select educators, this gives the space of employing incompetent people who later impact negatively on learners' academic work. The incompetence of educators in organisations is the results of different factors such as school politics, and the selling of educator posts. The principal reserve post for the people either related to him or those who can pay for the post. Sometimes posts are given to people related to either SGB members or the principal disadvantaging the best candidate that will benefit learners. An educator stated that:

“Principals and parents influence the selection committee in selecting the candidate they preferred” (ED 1- B).

The principal of School-A and that of School-B perceived that SGB members lacked the expertise to evaluate educators who have spent many years in obtaining professional diplomas and degrees. Parents should therefore put their trust in the leadership of the school to select educators since the leadership must be familiar with all policies and the knowledge of the needs of school organisation.

Some participants in School-A however reported that principals should not live in the past and did not want to change from the traditional leadership style where all powers were centred to the person leading the school. They should not take decisions alone without involving other stakeholders in the management of the school. For example an educator stated:

“We see newly employed educators without any procedures followed as it appears that the educators are employed unilaterally by the principal” (ED2 -A).

The educators interviewed believed that the source of tension is with regard to the situation where the principal and the SGB are the only ones who make decision about educator selection without involving other educators. The educators thought that principal and parents exclude them from participative decision making. But the parents interviewed also claimed that they were also excluded in educator selection. For instance a parent stated that:

“Principal told us that he will employ educators but we were not there during the interviews, principal alone or together with the chairperson I do not know” (P1-A).

Parents in School-A generally did not express any major problem about school governance by the principal as it seems that there is mutual trust between them. Where parents express no problems in situations where the leaders do things un-procedurally can be viewed as a possible lack of understanding of what should be happen in

democratic school governance. On the other hand, the well informed educators challenge what they perceived as the unjust practices of the principal. The perceived malpractices of principals caused tensions between the members of SGB. However a principal participant of this study indicated that:

“I have long experience in education and I am the one who assesses the teacher to find out whether he or she is the kind of teacher I am looking for (Uthisha usesimweni engisifunayo yini) then tell SGB to recommend to the DoE to employ them without any interviews conducted” (PR-A).

According to the **PR-A** wrong people were employed because of leaving everything to educators. The principal saw himself as the person solely responsible for whatever happens in the school and therefore think that he can use his own initiatives sometimes even if this does not properly agrees with DoE policies, especially when a school seem to be heading towards ineffectiveness and needs urgent rescuing.

4.4.4 Policy Development

School-A and School-B shared common views regarding policy development processes within their respective institutions. However, educators in School-A argued that they were not aware of any policy through which their school was being run. To cite one example, educator from School-A reported that:

“In this school I have never been made aware of the school policies, I know in the previous school where I taught the principal and educators formulated policies and implemented them” (ED 2 -A).

The parent=participants in both schools reported that they never participated in policy development which they claimed is done by the principal and the educators. For example one parent from School-B stated that:

“The parents are not involved in policy formulation as they are seen as uneducated and uninformed about education and school administration” (P2-B).

The South African Schools Act expects both educators and parents to be fully involved in school policy formulation. In this regard the educator participants of this study were of the view that since they are professionals and are responsible for the implementation of school policies, they are bound to dominate in the development of the school policies.

However educators; dominance in policy development at the exclusion of parents contradicts parents' expectations and what SASA prescribes. Therefore parents and educators are not seen as working as partners in the school development. This gives rise to problematic tensions in schools. When the mutual relationship between parents and school proves to be a failure the school organisation suffers. Schools and homes are obliged to collaborate together in promoting school objectives in the education of the children.

4.4.5 Relations between principals and SGB members

The poor relations between principals and SGB members can be categorised into two. The study reveals that there is no harmony between SGB members, between either the principal or the educators or between the principal and the parents. In some cases the educators pushed parents aside and the latter remained silent as if everything was in order. The poor working relations between the principals and the SGB could be attributed to both internal and external factors. Some of the internal factors included poor involvement of stakeholders in meaningful participative decision making processes, the dominance of some of the members, in total disregard for other people's opinions, lack of good rapport, general poor communication, lack of strategic direction and reflective leadership as well as power struggle.

Principals in both secondary schools that participated in this study revealed that their safety was not guaranteed in the school and in the community which they served. They also mentioned a number of educators who lost their lives within the context of such tensions. Parents expressed their anger saying that:

"We do not know why the DoE is not taking the principal away from school or they will intervene when principal dies on the school premises" (P1- B).

The principal of School-B appeared to be still living in the past decades. This was evidenced by her continuous dependence on traditional styles of leadership characterised by a combination of autocracy and bureaucracy. Although PR-A was described by educators as having adopted a laissez-faire approach to leadership, overall the two principals seem to still see themselves as possessing absolute powers to do everything within their institutions. Both were reluctant to devolve some powers to other members of SGBs. Principals still experienced difficulties in applying genuine democratic principles in organisation especially regarding participation of all stakeholders in decision making. People know and understand democratic principles but some find it difficult to implement both locally and internationally. The principal defended himself in using undemocratic leadership style by saying that:

“The school has finally declined in the hands of other principal trying to implement democratic principles. I told DoE officials that I have to violate Department principles of democracy in order to restructure the schools. We have no learners at the moment but I am not worried because this will be the best school in the coming years” (PR-A).

Generally people (especially principals and educators) who have been long in the field resist change without considering that change and reform in education are inescapable. Society and their environment are always changing. Schools and their environment work interdependently as schools operate constantly under the pressure of the dynamic environmental factors. School principals are therefore compelled to lead change so that people involved will have positive attitude.

School principals are known to constitute SGB in schools with all stakeholders represented but in practical reality the SGB structures do not reflect what is expected in a democratic dispensation. Democratic principles are known but not practised by the schools. For example, there is a lack of participatory decision making. Educators and the parents expect to be involved in some of the duties as they have been trained in

workshops. DoE capacitate stakeholders with workshops although it is reported that the workshops are not enough to equip SGB members. SGB find it difficult to link the theory they learnt with the practical due to resistance in schools. Educators from School-A reported that:

“Educators always feel that the principal do not want to involve them” (Ed. 2A).

The above statement is echoed by parents experiencing difficulties in working with the principal in School-B.

“The principal hates SGBs; according to him I should not participate in the SGB. Unfortunately for him I was not appointed by the principal but elected by the parents who saw my potential and reinstated me” (P2-B).

Rapport

The results of the interview with participants in School-B indicate that it is important that leaders improve leadership styles and interaction with all individuals. The participants indicated that they found it difficult to interact democratically because of the lack of good rapport and communication with the principal. For instance a parent participant stated that:

“Parents leave school crying after interacting with the principal. The principal does not respect parents, speaks anyhow, like the person who has no children, has no empathy and no understanding of community problems” (P1- B).

Participants from both schools reported on poor communication especially between the principals and other members of the SGB (educators and parents). Participants complained that their voices were not being heard. For example in School-A, an educator reported that:

“The principal and the chairperson of the SGB usually discuss among themselves about educators and learners but do not consult with the educators and listen to the learners” (ED 1-A).

On the issue of the principal not listening to educators, an educator participant stated that:

“When the principal talks to us on something that we disagree with, we remain silent and do our work without looking at him, or respond to what he said with the intention that we are not going to do that” (ED1-A).

Parents also complained about poor communication between them and the principal. Parents reported that the principal looks down upon them as if he is superior to other stake holders. Some parents reported that the principal easily cuts them off without listening to them and the principal may say “this doesn’t involve you” or “I know how to do it”. The dysfunctional relationship between the principal and the other SGB members is a source of tension which is a result of a lack of proper communication.

Leaders should create good rapport with people inside and outside the organisation, particularly in extreme situations like interacting with angry people. It is important for the leader to show respect when interacting with all different kinds of people either educated or not, young or adult and men or women. Effective leaders create conducive atmosphere in organisations and adopt a therapeutic approach by showing listening skills, an empathetic attitude and communication skills.

The lack of effective communication particularly by leaders negatively impacts on the organisation, learners and community. Effective communication builds the learners and all stakeholders, and gives hope and strength to see them as important figures in the organisation. When leaders lack good rapport with people inside the organisation people distance themselves instead of contributing in the organisational objectives. In School-B, community members distance themselves from participating effectively in the development of their school. In School-B a participant reported that:

“Parents leave school crying after interacting with the principal” (P1-B).

People who can contribute a lot in the development of an organisation become passive and withdraw. In some cases, only people who force people only take initiative, as a

result the primary goal is shifted. The primary goal which is teaching and learning becomes the secondary goals and people focus instead on dealing with the character and undemocratic leadership style of the principal. Problematic tensions then accumulate and destroy schools, which become difficult to govern. Gold and Miles cited in Fullan (1991) revealed that studies conducted in different countries like United State of America, United Kingdom and Canada point to the necessity of parent involvement for classroom and school improvement. They then argued that the role of parents is confusing as the meaning of parent involvement is not often specifically defined. South African schools, particularly the schools that form part of the study, experience the same problem as participants reported the overlapping of roles and withdrawal of the parents.

Assertiveness

In the South African context assertiveness can be linked with human rights. The South African Bill of Rights protects human dignity and promotes democratic values. Section (9) subsection (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act states that no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3) and that national legislation should be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination. Section 10 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act protects human dignity. It states that everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. Leaders should balance the organisational needs and the needs of the learners and community members. Leaders should respect themselves and also demonstrate respect for other people. Some school leaders treat learners as minors who have no needs as learners are excluded in the governance of the schools.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the data collected in two schools regarding their working relations and perceptions that principals, educators and parents have about the problematic tensions and its impact in secondary schools. The emerging themes

supported by the literature form part of this chapter and the next chapter present the summary of the findings, discussion and recommendation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the data from the participants and in this chapter findings are presented, analysed and discussed. This chapter begins with the re-statement of the research questions and the main findings are presented and discussed under the research questions.

5.2 Research questions restated

5.2.1 How do the perceived tensions between school principals and School Governing bodies facilitate or inhibit the functioning of the school?

The finding about this question is that there was no collaboration between the principals and SGBs. Instead there were mistrust and suspicions between them; there were feelings of uneasiness, animosity between principals and SGB members that participated in the study. The scenario expressed above contributed to difficulties which rendered healthy relationship that support and facilitate teaching and learning situation unattainable.

One of the findings is that parents who serve in the SGB disliked educators because in their view, these educators did not like to work, and wanted the principal to allow them to do as they pleased. Educators on the other hand disliked the principal and accused him of being a dictator, conservative and not in line with current changes in schools. They further claimed that the principal's relationship with parents was based on manipulation. Educators also did not like parents because, in their view, these parents did not know anything about education policy and allowed themselves to be used by the principal in achieving his own ends. The tense and uneasiness among SGB members impact negative in teaching and learning. From an outsider perspective, it is easy to conclude that the educators just want to continue with their behaviours un-interrupted

5.2.2 What were principals' perceptions about their roles and that of SGBs in school management and governance in secondary schools in Inanda?

The main finding among school principals was that they felt that there was no significant role to play for the SGB in school governance. The two principals that participated in this study strongly felt that SGBs served no particular purpose in the governance and when it comes to sensitive issues pertaining to the schools, principals preferred to go it alone because they as principals were held accountable in the school should anything go wrong. SGBs did not have any accountability to the DoE as they are not their employees.

One of the ways in which principals do things their own way without consulting SGBs was during the process of employing educators. One principal maintained that as an experienced educator he knew how to identify a good educator, and he saw no need to consult the views of the SGB members. This scenario contradicts the expectations of educator components of the SGB who are very much aware of their respective roles in the process of the appointment of educators.

Principals regarded SGB members as not capable of understanding policy documents. They think of them as unskilled and illiterate, and felt that there was a gap between them and SGB members in terms of understanding the intricacies and complications involved in policy and policy application. Such an idea has been expressed by Lemmer (2000) when he stated that the common problem encountered by school governing bodies was that "not all governing bodies have the good fortune to be served by the skilled professional parents on SGBs" (Lemmer, 2000, p. 143). He further stated that even if those parents were professional people, they would not be knowledgeable about complex educational decision-making matters (Lemmer, 2000).

The discussion expressed in the above two paragraphs further demonstrates the extent to which the conception of the SGB has become limited to just one component, namely parents who serve in that body. Although it was not the focus of the study, it has become clear that principals exclude themselves and educators from the definition of

SGB. There are other findings still to be discussed that point to the same notion of SGBs as parents and not as a structure which comprise a number of stakeholders within the school community. What these principals end up doing is to use parents in the SGB to fulfil their own ends. Basically they use them to rubber stamp decisions that they as principals have already made. The marginalisation of parents who serve in this structure flourish under these conditions; they do not receive any capacity building support from the school management as the SGB members are viewed as opponents instead of allies and partners.

The marginalisation and display of negative attitudes by principals and educators towards parents has been written about in this field of study. For example, Lighfoot (1978, cited in Spindler, 1982) portrays a negative picture whereby parents are being locked out of the school gates and blamed for being uncaring, ignorant, uncooperative and culturally deprived. Lighfoot (1978, cited in Spindler, 1982) argue that parents are systematically excluded from school life. The exclusion of parents from schools tends to keep parents relatively uninformed about what is taking place inside them and these two can retard needed change. This contradicts with SASA, especially section (18), which explicitly compels schools to work in partnership with parents.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

Owens (1991) criticises principals for manipulating the SGB members using participative decision involvement particularly those who are in power like the chairperson and treasurer, who are being induced to believe that the arrangement is appropriate without knowing that principals have their own agendas. That piles up tensions amongst SGB members who observe that manipulation. The DoE has empowered parents to govern schools without taking effective initiative in capacitating them with necessary skills and understanding of departmental policies, financial management or basic education.

Fleisch (2002) contend that although provincial DoE officials provide workshops to the SGB, they have little or no time to judge the effectiveness of the SGB members in a

school, and that is one of the reasons they start pointing fingers to each other. Principals are obliged to take the initiative as they may lose their job if things go wrong in the hands of parents. For instance the lack of understanding by the parents of school needs for which money is to be spent. Parents admitted they rejected some of the educators' needs which they considered as less important whereas the school considers such as of high priority. According to Vandeyar (2002) tension like this comes about because some parent SGB members are laymen who are not knowledgeable about the intricacies of teaching professions and lack the required capacity to manage school finances.

Some of the members of SGB lack understanding of school governance and only focus on the financial aspect as if it is the only function of SGB. Moreover some parents lack financial skills such as accounting principles, drawing up of financial statements, preparing a budget, reconciling records and making good returns on investments. Principals and educators then prepare the budget as there is no financial committee in the school. The consequent poor or lack of involvement of parents in preparing the budget causes problematic tension between the school components of the SGB and the parent members. Anderson and Lumby (2005) contend that school budget preparation should be done by the majority of the members of the SGB, including the parents. The Department of Education (1997) also expect the parents to take part in the budgeting, planning and implementation.

5. 3.4 Appointment of Educators

Appointment of educators in secondary schools is one of the areas that cause problematic tension. This study revealed that problematic tensions in schools regarding appointment of educators emanate from poor involvement of stakeholders in the appointment of educators. The results of interviews with the principals revealed that principals appoint educators without involving other stakeholders, particularly the parents and educators. For instance one of the principals argued for his position that as a person with many years of experience in school administration, the principal should be knowledgeable enough about the qualities of good educators and their having relevant

skills and capacity to contribute to the goals of the school. Therefore there is no need to involve other stakeholders who may not know anything about the quality of educator to appoint for the school.

This principal's position contradicts with the policies of SASA. According to this Act one of the aims of introducing SGBs to schools was to promote the best interest of the school and to try to ensure school development by providing quality education for all learners through democratic processes of involving every stakeholder in decisions. However Vandeyar (2002) seems to support the principal's position by arguing that SGB members lack relevant expertise to evaluate educators who have spent many years in obtaining professional diplomas and degrees. In general what seems to emerge from this study is that educator posts have become like commodities to be bought and sold as candidates pay either to the principals or to the chairperson of the SGB who are perceived to be those who matter when it comes to decision about appointment of educators. In many cases it was stated that educator posts are given to people related to either the SGB members, or to principals. What is happening in schools therefore is not what is in the heart of SASA.

Organisational structure in schools reveals bureaucratic and hierarchical structure with one person, the principal, at the apex, who, more often than not, resorts to the exercise of autocratic leadership style. The principal's autocratic leadership style becomes a barrier to participative leadership style, a leadership style which is encouraged by democratic principles. A participative leadership style promotes collegiality, social relations and harmony among members within the organisation and sharing of organisational norms and values. Democratic principles allow principals to use different leadership styles like participative, autocratic and transformational leadership styles.

Bass and Avolio (1994) emphasise that the principal should employ transformational leadership style for development and new learning opportunity with supportive climate, recognising differences in needs, encouraging two-way communication, appropriate delegation of tasks and effective listening. The principal's leadership style in schools impact on the development and life of the school organisation.

5.3.5 General working relations

Regarding general working relations between the principal and SGB members, there are internal factors as well as the external factors that contribute to the problematic tensions in schools. The internal factors are linked to the leadership style of the principal, such as autocracy, poor communication, lack of good rapport, lack of strategic direction and lack of reflective leadership. Some principals believed that an autocratic leadership style would bring back the culture of learning in secondary schools.

Duignan (1987, cited in Simpkins, Thomas & Thomas 1987, p.132) present a number of voices from different principals regarding the roles of SGB in school governance. These principals showed their concerns regarding working in partnership with all stakeholders. One of them said:

"I feel I am being forced to consult with the wrong people. I am being forced to talk to people who have only two to three years experience" (Duignan, 1987, as cited in Simpkins, Thomas & Thomas, 1987, p.132).

Another principal complained that: *"Principals no longer have authority associated with their positions. The principal's power is more "naked" now especially in respect of the staff"*. The results of the study revealed that principals, particularly those who have been long in the field of education, resist change in schools although they know what democratic principles entail. The principal's perceptions abroad relate to the findings of the study as some principals in secondary schools have poor working relations with the parents, learners and educators in schools. Those problematic tensions between principals and school governors gave birth to the new organisational culture where society labelled some schools as productive while other schools are known as unproductive or dysfunctional.

The study revealed a number of factors that need to be considered regarding learner's academic performance rather than focusing on general working relations in schools. Those factors include educators blaming the parents who move performing learners to multicultural schools and educators enrol learners in township schools who need to be

referred to special schools; issue of drugs and the declining status of educators. According to the researcher's understanding this is the inefficiency of the DoE who need to provide affordable special schools to slow learners. Zafar (1998, cited in Mothata, 2000) in her analysis of the educational crisis in KwaZulu-Natal, lists factors which provide evidence of problematic tensions in some KwaZulu-Natal secondary schools such as insufficient funds, low morale among educators and lack of direction and management from the DoE. Moloi (2005) argues that the effectiveness of the school depends on how the principal effectively manages all the interdependent aspect of school life like school identity, structures, procedures, human resources, culture, technical support as well as strategic and transformational leadership.

5.4 Discussion and summary of findings

The picture that has been painted in the previous paragraphs regarding the relationship between the principals and SGB members demonstrates how serious the tensions are between the two important stakeholders in school governance. The results of the study revealed that there are different categories of tensions between the principals and other SGB members in their perceptions of their roles as well as in the performance of these roles. The three categories of tensions identified include tensions between the principal and educator component while some tensions are located between the principal and parent component.

The other areas of tensions identified were those tensions between the principal and both parent and educator component. Sometimes tensions take different dimensions as tensions can be viewed to appear between the principal and parents while the educators manipulate parents. Moloi (2005) seems to agree with the existence of these tensions, and he contends that changes in education affect the roles of educators and principals, causing uncertainty about their work and how it needs to be done. Principals as transformational leaders find it difficult to change the new culture in schools and that causes problematic tensions between the principal and parents or the principal and educators.

5.5 Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are in terms of various themes that emerged from the data. These include school finance and role conflict.

5.5.1 Recommendations regarding school finance

In dealing with problematic tensions in schools, principals should ensure effective control of school finance such as proper democratic structures like the school financial committees. The financial committee should involve parents and educators. It is recommended that among parents who form financial committees there must be members who understand better the financial management. It is recommended that the financial committee should consider the following: the maintenance of petty cash, banking of funds paid into and out of the school, and the management of the payroll for all employees paid by school not by the DoE. It is recommended that external auditing should be undertaken by people not connected with the organisation to eliminate problematic tensions and mistrust between the organisational members.

School should keep records for both official and unofficial funds like the school fund collected during the issue of learner's reports during the school closing days as this is common in some township school. Learners, parents including some of the educators can raise concern about those payments which can later cause tensions.

Devolution of powers among the members of the organisation could help in reducing tensions between the principal and SGB members, for example different people should share the organisational work like when one person place an order of goods, different person should check goods arrival and make payments.

5.5.2 Recommendations regarding role conflict between principals and SGBs

It is recommended that principals should capacitate SGB members with relevant skills without relying on the Departmental workshops. They should encourage partnership and devolve powers to all members of the organisation. SGB members, particularly the principals, should eradicate barriers to effective listening and capacitate themselves

with strategic listening. The barriers to strategic listening include superiority, control, certainty, parroting, listening without empathy, philosophising and cutting off.

Therapeutic listening is recommended for the leaders as it would help leaders to focus their attention on the speaker, create a supportive environment and listen to all people with empathy without considering their status. It is recommended that all stakeholders should be capacitated with relevant skills for the benefit of the organisation. Principals should take the initiative and ensure that schools capacitate SGB members regarding the understanding of school policies, their roles, as well as duties and responsibilities of all members in the organisation as furnished in SASA.

It is recommended that principals should keep themselves in line with the changing policies, leadership and management skills, leadership theories and different leadership styles as well as different styles of decision making like autocratic, persuasive, consultative and co determinate. Principals should encourage team buildings rather division among members of the organisation. They should assist all SGB members to understand their roles, including learners. School principals are bound to take a lead even if SASA encourage partnership; therefore principals should established sound relations in schools based on the following:

The friendliness and courtesy- This is the crucial factor in any personal relationship.

Respect and warmth- respect and warmth entails acknowledgement and appreciation of the other person as a unique being. It is important that the school principal shows appreciation to all individuals no matter how minor the work they have done. That encourages all organisational members to strive for the best. Leaders should respect themselves, and respect others if they want to be respected.

Honesty and sincerity- principals should build trust among organisational members so that they will be trusted. That promotes good relationship and solidarity among organisational members.

Effective communication is recommended between the principal, SGB members and the broader community. As Steyn and Niekerk, (2005) categorise communication into verbal and non verbal communication. Non verbal communication includes all messages not encoded in words like gestures body language eye contact and facial expressions.

It is recommended that professionals should promote partnership between the school and community by eradicating all barriers that make parents feel ashamed of the level of their education. Principals and educators should commit themselves to get parents involved and help them understand what is needed of them and school policies.

School principals as well as educators should capacitate themselves with conflict management as they encounter conflicts in all levels at schools. Conflict management will help them understand conflict resolution techniques which begin with prevention. All organisational members should be peacekeepers. Davies (2004) recommends that peacekeepers watch for trouble-spots before resolution becomes necessary. Tensions should be quickly identified and dealt with as soon as possible to avoid escalation which will end up in conflict.

To minimise problematic tensions in schools that put the lives of employees at risk, it is recommended that the DoE together with the policy makers should transform their policies. The hierarchical structure which is accompanied with different scales of salaries for example the highest position goes with highest income .can be the contributing factor of problems in schools.

5.6 Conclusion

The results of the study revealed problematic tensions in some of the Black secondary schools between the principal and SGB. Such tensions impact negatively on learner's academic performance as teaching and learning requires effective partnership between the school and community. Some of the problems in secondary schools can be linked with the principal's leadership style, role conflict, lack of relevant skills in SGB members

including the principal, organisational politics, poor involvement of stakeholders in participative decision making.

The poor academic performance in Black secondary schools cannot be linked with only problematic tensions as there are number of factors that need to be considered, like the incapacity of learners who cannot read and write at secondary level, the issue of drugs and alcohol at schools, socio-economic factors and parental involvement in learners academic school work. According to Fullan (1991), studies conducted in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada on parental involvement revealed that in both school and learner's academic work improved. What is confusing is the role parents should play, as well as the meaning of involvement. The educators in this research project also revealed that parent roles either overlap with the roles of educators or they withdraw from their roles

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INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PRINCIPAL

- What is your role as the parent in the School Governing Body?
- What the role of the Chairperson of the SGB at school?
- Do you think that there are some overlapping roles between principal and that of the SGB?
- How do you feel about those overlapping roles?
- How is your relationship with the SGB like?
- What aspect do you think can negatively affect your relationship with the SGB?
- In your opinion, is the SGB performing their responsibilities at an optimal level?
- How have the school been affected by your relationship with SGB?
- What role do you think learners should play in the governance of the school?
- What role are the learners playing in the Governance of the school?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PARENT COMPONENT

- What is your role as the SGB member in the School Governing Body?
- What is the role of the principal in the School Governing Body?
- Do you sometimes perform the task that should be performing by the principal?
- What is the relationship between you as the parent in the SBG and the principal like?
- What are the things that affect your relationship with the principal?
- What are the challenges that you face as a member of SGB at school?
- What have you as SGB member learnt from those challenges?
- What role are the learners playing in the governing of the school?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

- What is your role as the member of School Governing Body?
- How do you feel about the roles that parents playing in the SGB of your school?
- Do you think there are overlapping roles between the principal and the SGB members?
- How do you feel about those overlapping roles?
- Is the relationship between principal and SGB members enhancing the proper functioning of the school?
- What does SGB members in your school do to support teaching and learning?
- What is the relationship like between educator component and other members of the SGBs?
- What role do you think learner component should play in the governance of the school?
- What role do learners play in the governance of your school?

20Palmet Road

Clare Estate

4091

15 March 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

Request to conduct interviews

I wish to request you to give me a permission to conduct interviews with you about my research project

My research project is part of requirements which I must fulfill in order to complete my masters degree. Currently I am reading masters at University of KwaZulu Natal specialising in Educational Management and Leadership. My research topic is: **An Investigation into tensions between principal and the School Governing Bodies in secondary schools in Inanda area**

I humbly seek consent for at least two members of the parent component and educator component of your SGB to be part of the interview. Interviews will be conducted in your school.

Please note the following:

- No personal information is requested of you
- Questions will be asked in Isizulu
- You are welcome to withdraw from this study at any time
- All information obtained will be treated with strictest of confidentiality and will be used for educational research and development.

I am looking forward to your kind assistance

Yours faithfully

S.J. Nyaba

DECLARATION

I.....(Please write your full names) hereby confirm that I understand the consent to participate in the research project.

I fully understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from the research project at any time should I feel.

Signature of participant.....

Date.....



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

KWAMASHU CIRCUIT OFFICE

Address	<i>A186-7 Musa Road</i>	Private Bag	<i>N018</i>	Telephone	<i>031-5031177</i>
Ikheli	<i>KWAMASHU</i>	Isikhwama sePosi	<i>KWAMASHU</i>	Ucingo	<i>031-5031195</i>
Adres	<i>4360</i>	Privaatsak	<i>4360</i>	Telefoon	
				Toll Free No.	<i>0800 360691</i>
				Fax	<i>031-5031178</i>
Enquiries		Reference	PERMISSION TO	Date	
Imibuzo	G.N. MSIMANGO	Inkomba	CONDUCT	Usuku	21-04-2006
Navrae		Vervysing	RESEARCH	Datum	

Ms S.J. Nyaba
20 Palmiet Road
Clare Estate
4091

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. Your application to conduct research in the KwaMashu Circuit refers.
2. In principle the Department of Education supports research efforts that contribute to our understanding of how we can better achieve the strategic objectives of the department. However, we request that your research should not disrupt teaching and learning, which is the core business of the department. You are therefore to liaise with the principal(s) of school(s).
3. The KwaMashu Circuit takes this opportunity to wish you well in your endeavour.


DR G.N. MSIMANGO
CIRCUIT MANAGER



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

6 JULY 2006

MS. SJ NYABA (9603225)
EDUCATION

Dear Ms. Nyaba

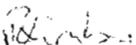
ETHICAL CLEARANCE: "AN INVESTIGATION INTO PROBLAMATIC TENSIONS BETWEEN PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN INANDA AREA"

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the above project subject to grammatical errors being corrected on all forms:

This approval is granted provisionally and the final clearance for this project will be given once the above condition has been met. Your Provisional Ethical Clearance Number is HSS/06205

Kindly forward your response to the undersigned as soon as possible

Yours faithfully


.....
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
RESEARCH OFFICE

PS: The following general condition is applicable to all projects that have been granted ethical clearance:

THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE CONTACTED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY APPROVAL SHOULD THE RESEARCH INVOLVE UTILIZATION OF SPACE AND/OR FACILITIES AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS. WHERE QUESTIONNAIRES ARE USED IN THE PROJECT, THE RESEARCHER SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDES A SECTION AT THE END WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTICIPANT (PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE) INDICATING THAT HE/SHE WAS INFORMED OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND THAT THE INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

- cc. Faculty Research Office (Derek Buchler)
→ cc. Supervisor (Dr. TT Bhengu)