TEACHERS' IMPLICIT MENTAL MODELS OF LEARNERS' COGNITIVE AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT WITH REFERENCE TO THE INCLUSION OF LEARNERS IN THE GOVERNING BODIES OF SCHOOLS
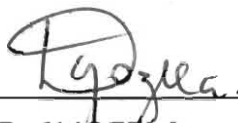
by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation, unless otherwise indicated in the text, represents my own work, both in conception and execution.

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate teachers' mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development, with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

Strauss' ჻ (1996), concept of implicit mental models is used as a basis for the investigation of teachers' beliefs about learners' cognitive and moral development. The study made use of Piaget's stages of concrete and formal operation thinking because learners in the governing bodies of schools fall within that part of the continuum, and Stages 5 and 6 of Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

The research was in the form of a survey. Teachers were interviewed using a tape-recorder and the responses were later transcribed.

The schools in which research was carried out were in Imbali in Pietermaritzburg, and the focus was on the learners in Grade 8 and higher. Teachers who were interviewed were either on the governing bodies of their schools, or who had experience with the learners in Grade 8 and higher.

The findings of the research were of significance. Strauss (1996) found that teachers' beliefs about learners do not coincide with the explicit theories. This study coincided with Strauss' research findings in as far as Kohlberg's theory is concerned and the opposite occurs in as far as Piaget's theory is concerned.

Most respondents (eleven out of fifteen) said higher grade learners question things that they do not understand. The researcher made use of the response to argue that learners can do well in the governing bodies of schools because they have the ability to question things that they do not understand despite the low regard that teachers have about learners' moral development.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As a college lecturer and a student of psychology of education, the researcher has an interest in the developments that have occurred in her field. She is also interested in not only finding out about the extent to which theory informs practice on a day-to-day basis, but also the extent to which theories that are taught our students at college alter their thinking processes.

As a practitioner, one needs to understand, be aware of, and change if possible, as one is informed by practice. The researcher decided to base her research on teachers in the light of the current changes in the Schools Act, in order to find out about the feelings which teachers have about their pupils. This will, perhaps, help us understand why things occur in the way in which they do. It will also help us understand the extent to which policy informs the practice of teachers on the ground.

Today, especially in African schools, there is a concern about the destruction of the culture of teaching and learning. Most of the literature focuses on the macro causes of the destruction of the culture of teaching and learning. It appears that not much work has been done to find out more about the causes of the destruction of the culture of teaching and learning in schools and this survey attempts to do that.

The people who interact most with learners in schools are the teachers. The feelings of these teachers are most often ignored because they occupy the lowest level of the bureaucracy. They have certain beliefs about learners in general and specifically about their recent inclusion in the governing bodies of schools. One would argue that an understanding of the feelings of those people who interact most with learners will go a long way towards addressing the current problem that exists in schools.

1.1   CHANGES IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

South Africa has seen many changes since the 1994 democratic Election. Schools are no exception to these changes. The establishment of governing bodies in schools is based on the recognition that the crisis in schools cannot be adequately addressed without the participation of all affected parties. This establishment of governing bodies forms an integral part of the liberation of people, aimed at establishing a democratic system in South Africa (South African Schools Act, 1996).

The Review Committee appointed by the Minister of Education in 1995 made recommendations to the Minister that all public schools governing bodies should have the same basic powers. These include decision-making on school times, codes of behaviour, and subject choices among other things. Over and above these, the governing body should have a strong influence on the appointment of the staff of its school.

The *Government Gazette* (Nov. 1996, No. 17579) stated that *learners from grade eight or higher should be included in the governing bodies of schools*. The governing body stands in a position of trust in relation to the school. It functions in terms of a constitution which complies with minimum requirements determined by a member of the Executive Council (*Government Gazette*, 1996).

With reference to the above issues, one would ask questions like, what are teachers' implicit beliefs about the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools? Do learners have the capacity to make decisions concerning school matters? Can learners ensure development through the provision of quality education and promote the best interest of the school? Do they have the capacity to adopt a code of conduct for the learners among other things?

One would argue that people who have interest in education have the same or similar questions concerning the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

1.2   PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In the past learners have not been part of the decision-making process in schools. Is it because they have inadequate skills and knowledge to fulfil their function competently? The Review Committee (1995) argued that for effective running of the governing body, all the stakeholders need to be involved.

The interest that the researcher has developed as a practitioner to improve practice has been an encouragement to base this study along those lines.

A study by Strauss (1996:19) reveals that a basic assumption of teachers' mental model is that knowledge exists outside the minds of children. It is in the teachers' minds, books and so forth.

Taking the above factor into consideration, the research aimed to investigate teachers' implicit mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools, to find out whether explicit theories of human development were compatible with implicit theories that teachers possess.

The research also aimed to make explicit, the implicit mental models that teachers possess about learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

The research was carried out in the form of a survey. Interviews were done using semi-structured questions. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

1.3   OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

In Chapter 1, the researcher explored the changes that have occurred in school governance in relation to the learners' involvement in the governing bodies of schools and all the relevant information related to the research question. The purpose of the research was also covered in this section.

In Chapter 2, the three theories which provided the context and the framework of the research question were explored in detail, to find out about teachers' beliefs about learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

In Chapter 3, the process involved in the design of the research will be discussed. This included a consideration of the interview questions and relevant methods for the research, how the samples were selected, pilot study and also the context within which the research was performed was also covered in this chapter.

In Chapter 4, the data gathered during the interviews with teachers in schools, was analysed. The interviews covered two theories which are directly related to the framework of the research question.

Chapter 5 contains the conclusion drawn from the analysis of the data gathered which were relevant to the research question. The limitations of the study, implications and suggestions for further research was also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

With reference to the research question, there are three theories which form the framework within which literature will be viewed. Each of the selected theories will be explained briefly by investigating the rationale for choosing that theory and how it relates to the research question.

People who interact most with the learners in schools are the teachers. They have certain beliefs about learners in general and particularly about their recent inclusion in the governing bodies of schools. Strauss (1993) gives us the concept of the teachers' implicit mental models of children's minds and learning to find out whether teachers' implicit beliefs coincide with explicit theories.

The second theory to be reviewed is Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Piaget's theory is relevant to the study under investigation in the sense that the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies requires discussing, writing and evaluating of school principles (*The Teacher*, October 1997:14). One would argue that the above aspects require thinking by the individual. Piaget's theory is used in this study because it has influence on developmental psychology and education, and it is widely researched. Most psychologists agree with Piaget's insightful description of how children think (Woolfolk, 1995:44). It was felt that it would help us find out about the cognitive development of learners in as far as the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools is concerned.

The third theory is Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Kohlberg's theory is relevant to the discussion of the inclusion of learners, in the governing bodies of schools, because learners will come across situations which will challenge their morality as individuals and they will be required to evaluate their reasoning about certain moral issues. They will also come across situations in

which they will take decisions which might affect other people and in that way they must be able to rise above the situation and be able to understand the views of other people which are different from their own.

2.2   STRAUSS' MENTAL MODELS

2.2.1   Introduction

Implicit mental model is the concept used by Strauss to find out about the beliefs, ideas or common-sense understanding of the teachers about children's minds and learning. Strauss (1993:18) argues that teachers as well as learners are not blank slates, they are active constructors of knowledge but rarely do they discuss what and how learning should happen, despite the fact that schools are culturally designated places where learning takes place.

In dealing with prospective teachers, Strauss argues that it is important to determine the nature of the prospective teachers' mental models of children's minds and learning in order to know what needs to be addressed in prospective teachers' thinking.

In describing the psychological entity (mental models), Strauss argues that implicit mental models are divided into espoused and in-action mental models. The former come into play when teachers speak about how they would teach in a particular situation and the latter occurs when teachers actually teach.

2.2.2   Teacher espoused and in-action mental models

Research done by Strauss reveals that the mental model that teachers possess have very little resemblance to the learning and development that they were taught in educational psychology. Espoused mental models were inferred from interviews with teachers to find out about their implicit mental models of children's minds and learning. In-action mental models were inferred from how teachers' teach in the classroom setting (Strauss, 1993:19). Using video-taped lessons, teachers' and learners' behaviours were analyzed.

A basic assumption of teachers' implicit mental model hold that knowledge exists outside the minds of children, it is in teachers' minds, textbooks, and so forth. Teachers also say that children do have knowledge, but it is incomplete and often incorrect. Therefore, when teachers teach they must find a way to get knowledge into the children's mind and secondly, they must move the new material from the place it entered to the place it will be stored, thus adding to the current store of already learned concepts, skills, and so on. Strauss argues that that is the mechanistic view that teachers hold about learning.

2.2.3 Reference to research

It was against the above assertion that the researcher based the research question. The aim was to find out the common-sense understanding (implicit mental models) of teachers' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools. Teachers have certain beliefs about learners' cognitive and moral development in general and specifically in relation to their recent inclusion in the governing bodies of schools. In that way the research would not only confirm or refute Strauss' research finding, but it will also give us an understanding of the feelings/beliefs that teachers hold about the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools. This will give us an understanding and insight into how schools are functioning in the light of the recent changes that were applied in education.

Making implicit mental model explicit will help enrich and elaborate certain issues which will improve classroom practice, in one way or the other. Having insight into the dynamics of the situation will not only lead to change in behaviour, but it will also help both teachers and learners behave differently in the light of these insights.

The researcher believed that common-sense understanding is the driving force behind the behaviour of human beings because it produces non-reflective behaviours and responses to situations. The researcher saw it necessary to base the research on the teachers' implicit beliefs to find out if it coincided with the explicit theories of human development. It can help the researcher, as an

instructor of teachers, to have insight into the implicit beliefs that teachers hold about learners in as far as their cognitive and moral development is concerned. It would also help the educational planners to understand the dynamics of the situations that have been created in schools.

2.3 FORMAL THEORIES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Theorists differ greatly in their approach to the study of human development. Their emphasis varies, ranging from environment, cognitive, social and moral aspects. However they all agree on three principles of development: i.e.

(i) People develop at different rates

(ii) Development is a relatively orderly process

(iii) Development takes place gradually over a period of time (Woolfolk, 1984:45)

The term 'development' refers to certain changes that occur in human beings between conception and death. A temporary change due to illness is not considered as part of development. The changes that occur in the individual are assumed to be for the better, and result in behaviour that is adaptive, organized, more effective and of a higher level.

Woolfolk (1984:45) argues that human development can be divided into a number of components. These components are:

(i) Physical development - deals with changes in the body.

(ii) Personal development - focuses on an individual's personality development.

(iii) Social development - refers to changes in the way an individual relates to others.

(iv)   Cognitive development - refers to the changes in a person's ways of thinking.

Another aspect of development is known as maturation. This refers to changes that occur naturally and spontaneously and are genetically programmed. Other changes are brought about by environmental influences. Theorists differ greatly on the issue of the person's interaction with the environment and its contribution to development.

2.3.1   Cognitive development (Jean Piaget)

Cognitive development is the development of a person's mental capacity to engage in thinking, reasoning, interpretation, understanding, knowledge acquisition, remembering, organising information, analysing and problem solving (Piaget, 1970). Any theory of cognitive development takes into account the role of maturational, biological and environmental factors, by giving a comprehensive explanation of the child's world and how he understands and interprets it.

Piaget's theory of cognitive development is sequenced with earlier stages forming the basis for development of later and advanced stages. The earlier stages are incorporated in the proceeding stages as the individual progress in his development (Woolfolk, 1995:30)

2.3.1.1   Different ways of thinking

Jean Piaget devised a model to describe how humans go about making sense of their world by gathering and organizing information (Piaget 1954, 1963, 1970). His model explains the stages through which a person's thinking process develops.

Piaget believes that certain ways of thinking that are quite simple for an adult are not so simple for a child. For example children sometimes confuse the past and the future (Piaget, 1979). The reality of a child is not the same as the reality of an adult because of the internal processes that change over time. The changes occur because the individual is trying to make sense of the world. This

development is more than just the adding of new facts and ideas to the existing information. It involves major changes in thinking itself.

At the core of Piaget's model is the idea that cognition is one form of adaptation of the organism to the environment. Adaptation in cognition proceeds by means of assimilation, or relating new information to pre-existing structures of knowledge and understanding, and accommodation by developing the old structures into new ones under pressure from new, externally given information or problem or from the pressure of internal contradiction by incompatible structures (Woolfolk, 1995).

2.3.1.2   Organization and adaptation

Piaget suggests that all species inherit two basic tendencies. Environmental influences lead to adaptive changes in behaviour which in turn change the organization and the mental structure of the organism in predictable ways. As individuals interact with the environment, they adopt and organize the thinking processes which are appropriate to a certain stage of growth. Simple structures are continually combined and coordinated to become more sophisticated and thus more effective. When they are effective they lead to a higher level of organization and adaptation of the environment.

2.3.1.3   Schemes

Schemes are basic building blocks of thinking. As the individual continually adapts and mentally organizes the environment, mental structures are continually reorganized into better systems for interacting with the world. Schemes give us ways to organize data into better systems of interacting with the world.

As behaviour is organized to become more sophisticated and more suited to the environment, a person's thinking processes also become more organized and new schemes develop.

Meadows (1993:200) postulates that there is a sort of natural instinct to assimilate any scheme that tends to arise in an individual, i.e. to incorporate outside elements compatible with its nature into itself, thus driving development. This aspect gives us an account of cognitive processes which are still influential and are in certain respects probably basically correct, but need testing and specification. The above processes happen at three levels:

(i)   Assimilating objects to schemes, as the infant does when grasping new objects;

(ii)   Assimilating between schemes, for example eye-hand co-ordination;

(iii)   The highest level is assimilation between sub-schemes and the totality which integrates them into coherent whole (Meadows, 1993:200).

2.3.1.4   Assimilation and accommodation

As individuals try to interact with the environment to make sense of reality they assimilate new information by fitting it into what they already know. New schemes develop as the individual try to make sense of the world by the process of assimilation and accommodation.

At times the individual may distort the new information to make it fit into existing schemes. New schemes develop as the individual tries to make sense of the world by the process of assimilation and accommodation. Accommodation takes place when the person must change existing schemes to respond to a new situation. It is important to note that individuals are active in the process by altering their thinking to accommodate the new information and not adjusting the information to fit their existing schemes. The individual is active in the process of altering his thinking to accommodate new information and adjusting information to fit his thinking.

2.3.1.5   Stages of cognitive development

Each stage of development depends on the previous stage which is incorporated and integrated into the stages that follow. Because of the cumulative nature of the stages, an understanding of the earlier stages should give a teacher a better sense of how learners have developed the thinking they bring to the teacher's classroom.Knowing a person's age is not a guarantee that one knows the persons' stage of cognitive development. Even being 16 or 17 years of age does not guarantee that a person has reached the final stage of formal operations (Woolfolk, 1995). People use different levels of thinking to solve different problems.

Piaget's stages of cognitive development are shown below:

STAGE	APPROXIMATE AGE	CHARACTERISTICS
Sensorimotor	0 - 1	Begins to make use of imitation, memory and thought.
		Begins to recognize that objects do not cease to exist when they are hidden.
		Moves from reflex actions to goal-directed activity.
Pre-operational	2 - 7 years	Gradually develops use of language and ability to think in symbolic form.
		Able to think operations through logically in one direction.
		Has difficulties seeing another person's point of view.
Concrete operational	7 - 11 years	Able to solve concrete (hands-on) problems in a logical fashion.
		Understands laws of conservation and is able to classify and seriate.
		Understands reversibility.

STAGE	APPROXIMATE AGE	CHARACTERISTICS
Formal operational	11 - adult	Able to solve abstract problems in a logical fashion.
		Becomes more scientific in thinking and develops concern about social issues and identity.

N.B.　The above ages are based on the work with children in developed countries (i.e. North America and Europe). (Adapted from Woolfolk, 1995).

2.3.1.6　Solving real world problems

Learners at the stage of concrete operations are centred on reality. Their logic is based on concrete situations that can be organized, classified or manipulated. Concrete operational learners can deal with questions that call for repetition of facts learned by rote.

Piaget's stage of concrete operations is characterized by understanding the following:

(i)　　The logical stability of the physical world;

(ii)　　The fact that elements can be changed or transformed and still conserve many of their original characteristics;

(iii)　　That these changes can be reversed.

Formal operations are not limited to the physical environment. They consist of scientific reasoning and logical thinking. Although some learners may be able to use this type of thinking, they will not necessarily be aware of the process or be able to describe it. The reason for this is that problems presented to learners may require them to use formal operations but their mental structures cannot handle the diverse variables that are presented by the problem.

Woolfolk (1995:41) argues that people who have not learnt to go beyond the information that lies before them are likely to fall by the way side because social demands require a good deal of formal thinking. Real understanding requires people to go beyond superficial use of memorization.

Another part of healthy cognitive development is being able to apply and test the principles learned in one situation in new situations. The learners can experience success if they can do this successfully. If not, disequilibrium and perhaps new thinking abilities may develop. The mistakes that learners use can be very useful if treated with care and sensitivity. They can give teachers clues about learners' thinking strategies. They can also serve to point out to learners the limitations of their existing strategies.

2.3.1.7   Speeding up cognitive development

Piaget (1979) believes that cognitive development must proceed at its own pace, and therefore cannot be speeded up by teaching interventions. Piaget says that until learners have created an appropriate scheme, they cannot assimilate what the teacher is saying. If the teacher tries to teach something that the learners are not ready to learn, they may be able to give a correct answer but this will not really affect the way the learners think. It is better to wait until the learners have acquired the appropriate operation, otherwise they cannot achieve anything.

There are also arguments that cognitive development can be accelerated. A study done in Mexico revealed that children of pottery-making families learn conservation of substance earlier than their peers in families who do not make pottery (Woolfolk, 1995). This study also reports research indicating that children in different cultures appear to master the various forms of conservation in different orders.

Ashton (1978) argues that children in non-Western cultures appear to acquire conservation operations later than children in Western cultures. It seems that factors in the environment, not just the naturally evolving internal structures of the child, are involved. Ashton also believes that teachers are more likely to be

successful in teaching some things than in teaching others. The stress on the present stage combined with opportunities to advance has much to offer. If acceleration is possible, learners will be given ample opportunity to move to the next stage. This assertion by Ashton is important to note because some psychologists have questioned the existence of four separate stages of thinking. In as far as the research question is concerned, cognitive processes of the learners in African schools have, for instance, been affected by political violence. The culture that exists in schools has also been affected by environmental factors. This can affect teachers' beliefs about learners.

2.3.1.8   Shortcomings/problems with Piaget's theory

The ages at which cognitive stages are attained is problematic. Mwamwenda (1995) argues that ages are influenced by environmental milieu, which account for either acceleration, retardation or normal development.

Woolfolk further argues that some psychologists agree that in Piaget's theory, there is a lack of consistency in the learners' thinking across different tasks. They say that if the learner's thinking at each stage is based on a particular set of operations, then once the learner has mastered the operation, he should be somewhat consistent in solving all the problems requiring those operations. Other psychologists argue that the above is not always true (Woolfolk, 1995:44).

Piaget's theory overlooks the important effect of the learners' cultural and social group. Woolfolk (1995:46) argues that learners in Western cultures may master scientific thinking and formal operations because that is the kind of thinking that is required in the Western Schools. Even basic concrete operations such as classification may not be basic to people of other cultures, e.g. African subjects from the Kpelle people were asked to sort 20 objects, they created groups that made sense to them. The experiment could not get the Kpelle to change their categories (Scriber & Cole, 1981).

Mwamwenda (1995) argues that African children tend to perform less well on Piagetian tasks than their Western counterparts. Cross cultural differences in cognitive development have led to a number of interpretations:

- Those whose performance on Piagetian task is below what is expected of Western children, who are often projected as the ideal, are said to be culturally deprived or retarded, or to have a cultural deficit.

- Adults who do not achieve the concepts tested are said to be childlike, or not better than children in their mental growth.

- The two cultural groups are simply different without the implication that any one is inferior or superior.

- The experiments used for assessing intellectual development are not good enough and do not provide accurate information.

It also appears that Piaget underestimated the cognitive abilities of learners, particularly younger learners. The problems that Piaget gave to young children may have been too difficult and the directions confusing.

Woolfolk (1995) argues that some psychologists criticize Piaget's theory by saying that it does not explain how young children can perform at an advanced level in certain areas i.e., areas where they have highly developed knowledge and expertise. For example an expert 9-year old chess player may think abstractly about chess moves, while a novice 20-year old player may have to resort to more concrete strategies to plan and remember moves (Woolfolk, 1995:46).

It is not possible to expect the two cultural groups to perform equally well on the task. The reason for differences in performance is that the environment contributes to the cognitive development of individuals as they try to make sense of their environment (Woolfolk, 1995:26).

2.3.2 Moral development (Kohlberg)

2.3.2.1   Introduction

Kohlberg's theory of moral development shares the same characteristics with Piaget in the sense that they are both sequenced with the earlier stages forming the basis for the development of later, more advanced stages. The lower levels of moral reasoning and thinking are integrated and incorporated into succeeding stages as individuals progress in their development.

Teachers at school play a significant role in the moral development of the learners in their classrooms. Learners develop well if they are disciplined and they learn to be disciplined individuals because teachers have pointed out the harmful consequences of their misbehaviour. It is important though, to avoid creating a feeling of fear in discipline because it cannot achieve the purpose for which it is meant to achieve i.e. to help the learner develop morally.

2.3.2.2   Stages of moral development

According to Kohlberg, the child develops morally as he moves through stages. In the lower level the child is unable to recognize how other people might feel in the situation. Rules are seen as absolute and concrete and are not supposed to be changed. As children develops they learn to see other people's perspectives and become empathetic. They can imagine the basis for rules. Kohlberg says that people move from one stage to the next to resolve cognitive conflict when they are challenged to resolve issues that require moral reasoning of higher stages. In that way equilibration and social interaction play an important role in moral development.

Kohlberg proposes a detailed sequence of stages of moral reasoning. He divides moral development into three levels:

(i)   *Pre-conventional* - judgement is based on a person's own needs and perceptions;

(ii)   *Conventional* - expectations of society and the law are taken into consideration;

(iii) *Post-conventional* - where judgements are based on principles that go beyond specific laws.

Each of these levels is divided into stages as indicated below:

LEVEL 1: PRE-CONVENTIONAL MORAL REASONING

Stage 1: Punishment-obedience orientation

Rules are obeyed to avoid punishment. A good or bad action is determined by its physical consequences. Children see rules as absolute and concrete and they are not supposed to be changed.

Stage 2: Personal reward orientation

Personal needs determine right or wrong. Favours are returned along the lines of "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours".

LEVEL 2: CONVENTIONAL MORAL REASONING

Judgement is based on others' approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society, and loyalty to country.

Stage 3:   *Good boy - Nice girl orientation*

Good means "nice". Behaviour is determined by what pleases, aids, and is approved by others.

Stage 4:   *Law and order orientation*

Laws are absolute. Authority must be respected and the social order maintained.

LEVEL 3: POST-CONVENTIONAL MORAL REASONING

Stage 5:   *Social contract orientation*

Good is determined by socially agreed-upon standards of individual rights. This is a morality similar to that of the U.S. Constitution.

Stage 6:   *Universal ethical principle orientation*

Good and right are matters of individual conscience and involve abstract concepts of justice, human dignity and equality (Woolfolk, 1995:81).

(Adapted from Woolfolk, 1995:81)

2.3.2.3   Moral dilemmas

In order to evaluate a person's moral reasoning Kohlberg presented his subjects with hypothetical stories or moral dilemmas. These stories describe settings where an individual has to make difficult decisions. Subjects are asked what the person in the story should do and why.

The story that is commonly used is that of a man whose wife is dying. There is one drug that would save the wife and it is expensive. The druggist is not willing to reduce the price. The man consider stealing the drug because he is desperate.

Level 1: It is wrong to steal the drug because you might get caught.

Pre-conventional level: At this level the right thing to do is to do the action with the most acceptable personal consequence. Judgement is based on personal needs and perceptions and on the physical power of the rule makers.

Level 2: It is wrong to steal the drug because the law says it is wrong to steal.

Conventional level: The individual at this stage goes beyond looking at the personal need but takes into consideration the views of others. At this stage the child considers the law to be of great importance and it must not be broken at any cost.

The child at this stage can say that the man should steal the drug because the man loves his wife but the child may start to consider the intention of the act.

Level 3: Its okay to steal the drug because human life must be preserved, but the man may have to face the consequences and go to jail.

Post-conventional level: Judgement at this stage is based on the principles that go beyond specific laws. So the underlying values involved are considered in the situation. This level coincide with Piaget's formal operations (Woolfolk, 1995).

2.3.2.4   Social conventions versus moral issues

Kohlberg's theory does not distinguish between social conventions and moral issues until the higher stages of moral reasoning. Social conventions are what society expect from its members. e.g. it is rude to eat with your hands. Such behaviour would not be inappropriate if there were no social conventions

prohibiting it. Moral issues involve the rights of individuals and general welfare of the group.

2.3.2.5   Personal and social development

Researchers have found that direct discussion with people generally produces significant moral reasoning. During discussion, people are likely to encounter challenges from the others that will create disequilibrium and cause re-examination of their own moral reasoning. Subjects are helped to examine many sides of an issue and in that way they can possibly move to higher stages of moral reasoning because of conflict that they have encountered.

Teachers can influence the issues which may arise in the classroom, to help learners to grow morally. The teacher can address learners' opinions to help them develop because they may have different opinions about the right and wrong aspects of an issue.

2.3.2.6   Honesty

Woolfolk (1995) argues that people generally behave well but there are certain situations which put pressure on them to behave in a negative way. Whether or not people cheat depends more on the situation rather than on the personality of the individual. Individuals seem to have a general tendency to act honestly or dishonestly in similar situations. Burton, (1963) argues that learners cheat because there is pressure to perform well and the chances of being caught are slim.

Staub (1979) believes that as children grow older there is a stronger relationship between belief about the value of honesty and behaviour in real situations. In his research, Schab (1980) listed three reasons why students cheat:

(i)   Too lazy to study

(ii)   Fear of failure

(iii)   Parental insistence on good grades.

The majority (97%) of the subjects in the survey confessed that they had cheated, both boys and girls (Woolfolk, 1995).

2.3.2.7   Aggression

People tend to be more aggressive if they have watched other people model aggressive behaviour. Children watch a lot of television and they are exposed to aggressive behaviour and acts. Research has shown that children who watch more television are more violent in their play (Liebert & Schwatzberg, 1977) and have more positive attitudes about violence as a way to deal with problem situations (Dominick & Greenberg, 1972).

Woolfolk (1995:86) argues that teachers say that they can discern children who watch a lot of aggressive acts, because of the aggression they display in the classroom. They copy the superheroes on television, such as, for example, Batman. They cannot sit still, and interrupt other pupils in class. Woolfolk further argues that researchers believe that the violent acts that children see on television have short term effects but there may be subtle long range effects of viewing television. Parents who approve of the violence that is shown on television may be encouraging their children to be violent.

According to Woolfolk (1995:86), children can be led to violence if there are scarce resources in the classroom or in their families. Too little space and too few toys for play may cause violence. Teachers may discourage aggressive acts by presenting children with non-violent models.

2.3.2.8   Criticism of Kohlberg

The criticism that is levelled against Kohlberg's theory of moral development is that the stages do not seem to be separate and sequenced. The reasons for moral choices reflect several different stages simultaneously. The ordering of the stages reflect two biases e.g., women tend to value pleasing others and being merciful. These qualities are seen as representing lower levels of moral reasoning

(Gilligan, 1977). Stage 6 (good and right are matters of individual conscience) reasoning reflects Western thinking and it emphasizes individualism. In traditional cultures the highest value is putting the opinion of the group ahead of decisions based on individual conscience (Woolfolk, 1995).

Mwamwenda (1995) argues that just as the environment does affect cognitive development, it is also possible that the environment could be harmful to moral development.

Mwamwenda says that literature suggests that improved moral reasoning can be attained by an awareness of cognitive conflict in challenging one's moral concepts. The issues raised above have a bearing on the moral conflict that pupils in the governing bodies of schools will come across.

The above issue may also imply that teachers too may feel that the level of moral development of pupils does not allow them to be in the governing bodies because of the environment that prevailed in black communities. Teachers may feel that environmental influences may prevent pupils from developing improved moral reasoning.

2.4   CONCLUSION

With reference to the investigation of teachers' mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development, the researcher sought to explore teachers' implicit beliefs about learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools. In as far as Strauss' implicit mental model is concerned, the researcher focused on the 'espoused' implicit mental model to find out what teachers believe about the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools. Piaget's theory focuses on concrete and formal operation because learners in Grade 8 and higher are assumed to fall within that part of the continuum. In as far as Kohlberg's theory is concerned, the researcher will focus on Levels 2 and 3 because learners in Grade 8 or higher are assumed to have reached that level of moral development.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research design and methodological issues related to teachers' mental models of the learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

Robson (1996) argues that it is important to note that the specific method of investigation needs to be tied to the particular research strategy. Before choosing a strategy it is important to know more about the issues involved.

The survey used by the researcher was on a small scale, and was chosen because it required few resources. Time was of essence. The researcher used a semi-structured interview to collect information by verbal interaction and to select information relevant to the study under investigation and get clarity on certain issues. Responses of the respondents were tape recorded and later transcribed.

3.2   METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATION

3.2.1 Classification and purpose of enquiry

Enquiries can be classified in terms of their purpose as well as by the research strategy used. Robson (1996:42) argues that an enquiry can be exploratory in the sense that it seeks to find out what happens and to gain new insight by asking questions. An enquiry that is exploratory is also aimed at assessing phenomena in a new light and it is usually, but not necessarily, qualitative.

Enquiries which are descriptive portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations. They require extensive previous knowledge of the situation to be

researched so that one knows appropriate aspects on which to gather information.

Exploratory enquiries explain the situation usually in the form of causal relationships. They may be qualitative or quantitative or a combination of both.

The purposes of an enquiry can help in selecting a strategy because they are concerned with contributing to knowledge in a real world enquiry (Robson, 1995:42). Robson (1996:41) further argues that research strategies do not provide logical partitioning covering all possible forms of enquiry. They are more of a recognition of the camps into which enquiries or researchers have tended to put themselves, signalling their preference for certain ways of working. It may well be that some hybrid strategy falling somewhere between these 'ideal types' is appropriate for a particular enquiry. It sometimes makes a lot of sense to combine strategies in an investigation.

3.2.2 Survey

3.2.2.1 What is a survey?

A survey is probably the "most commonly used descriptive method in educational research" (Cohen & Manion, 1984:71). It was decided that this would best suit the aims of this research project.

Robson (1996:43) argues that there are three traditional research strategies i.e., experiment, survey and case study. A survey has to do with the collection of information in standardised form from a group of people. Features which are involved in a survey are:

- Selection of samples of individuals from a known population.

- Collection of a relatively small amount of data in standardised form from each individual, usually employing a questionnaire or structured interview.

It is however important to note that the three research strategies do not cover all possible forms of enquiry. Also they carry the danger of being "strategy driven" (Robson, 1996:41) in the sense that someone who is skilled in a survey for instance, assumes that automatically every problem has to be attacked through the survey. A survey is passive in that it seeks to describe or analyze, or even in some cases explore, some aspects of the world as it is. This often focuses on what the individuals surveyed think or feel about the topic under investigation. A survey studies the sample not in its own right but as a means of understanding the population from which it is drawn (Robson, 1996).

A danger with the survey is that it may generate large amounts of interpretation of dubious value. If the questions are incomprehensible or ambiguous, the exercise is obviously a waste of time. It is also important to establish a rapport with each respondent so that he is fully involved.

3.2.2.2 Why carry out a survey?

Cohen and Manion (1984) argue that a survey can be carried out for many research purposes. Surveys work best when standardised questions are used and where there is confidence that the questions mean the same thing to different respondents. This condition is difficult to satisfy when the purpose is exploratory. The requirement is that one knows what kind of information one wants to collect.

3.2.2.3 Survey methodology

Robson (1996), argues that surveys are suited to descriptive studies where the interest is, say, how many people in a given population possess a particular attribute, or opinion.

In this study the researcher used a semi structured interview to seek, to explore and explain the situation by collecting data and ultimately coming up with findings based on the investigation. Samples in a survey tend to vary depending

on need and other considerations. The researcher tried to investigate teachers' mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development with reference towards involvement of learners in the governing bodies of schools. The researcher hoped to develop an appreciation of the issue under investigation and generate questions for further study.

It makes sense to combine strategies in an investigation because the method used depend to a great degree on the type of investigation under consideration and its purpose. Behr (1973) argues that to gain maximum value from a survey, a set of procedures has to be followed:

- The problem must be identified and clearly defined.

- Literature relating to previous research on the same or similar problem must be carefully scrutinised.

- Consideration must be given to the design of a survey regarding samples to be studied, research instrument and method of execution to be followed.

- A pilot study should be carried out before survey proper is begun.

- Results must be reported in easy and unequivocal terms.

3.2.3 The interview

According to Connell and Kahn (in Mahlangu, 1987:87) a research interview is a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation.

Mahlangu (1987) considers the interview as a tool for:

- testing and developing a hypothesis
- gathering data as in surveys or experimental situations

- sampling respondent's opinions, as in doorstep interviews (Mahlangu, 1987:88; Cohen & Manion, 1989:307).

It was decided that the interview would be the most appropriate means to collect the data required in this study.

3.2.3.1 The interview as a research tool

Borg and Gall (1979) argue that every effort should be made to obtain the co-operation of all individuals that are selected for an interview. If some of the subjects selected refuse to co-operate, this refusal will certainly lead to some bias in the research results.

The interview involves collection of data through verbal interaction between the individuals. The main advantage of an interview is that it is adaptable in the sense that the interviewer can make use of the responses of the respondents to alter the interview situation.

The interview permits the research worker to follow up leads and obtain more data and greater clarity. Through careful motivation of the subject and the maintenance of rapport, the interviewer can obtain the information that the subject would not reveal under normal circumstances. A skillful interviewer can make respondents reveal information that is difficult to obtain if a good rapport is maintained. In that way the interview tend to yield more complete data.

3.2.3.2 Types of interviews

The shape of the interview is determined by its purpose and design. The interviewer aim to seeks either objective information in the form of facts or subjective information in the form of attitudes, beliefs and opinions. There is a distinction between the structured and unstructured interview.

3.2.3.3   The structured interview

In this the researcher decides on the pattern, the wording of the questions and instructions, and the method of coding or categorising the answers in the interview schedule. Gay (1981:166) adds that the schedule also indicates the nature and order of questions and what additional prompting or probing is permitted. It is important that each question in the interview be related to the objective of the study. A structured interview guides the researcher towards an articulated goal of the study if the questions are pre-stated.

3.2.3.4   The unstructured interview

In the unstructured interview the interviewer may use a set of pre-prepared questions, but is free to deviate whilst probing for answers (Behr, 1973:68). That is why Cohen and Manion (1989:307) refer to this type of interview as less formal. These authors also state that an interviewer may deviate from the formal interview schedule and raise a number of key issues in a conversational style (Cohen & Manion, 1989:307).

Robson (1996:27) further argues that unstructured interview has the advantage of being reasonably objective while permitting more thorough understanding of the respondents opinions and the reasons behind them.

3.2.3.5   Unstructured or open form questions

In the case of an interview, there are two types of questions i.e., structured and unstructured (Robson, 1996:25). In contrast to structured questions, unstructured questions do not include the suggested answers. It gives the respondents freedom to reveal their opinions and attitudes.

Robson (1996:29) further argues that open-ended questions offer a free choice of responses, whereby the respondents may state their views in their own words. But Robson (1996) maintains that open-ended questions can also have the following disadvantages:

(i)   The information generated is difficult to process.

(ii)   The subjects may omit points or emphasize things that are not important for the research.

(iii)   Respondents tend to be reticent in opening up when answering an open-ended question. Also, respondents do not give themselves enough time to answer the questions investigated.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1 Samples

The researcher "must take sampling decisions early in the overall planning of a survey" (Cohen & Manion, 1984:24). Imbali high school teachers form the population from which the sample was drawn. Data was collected from a small sample which was representative of the total population of the study under investigation. The researcher focused on the schools which have Grade 8 and higher. Five teachers in each of three schools formed the sample of the research. The criteria and the rationale for selecting the five teachers in each school was the following:

●   The principal - the reason for selecting him/her is that he/she is *ex officio* member of the governing body.

●   Two teachers - who are members of the school's governing body as stipulated by the Act.

●   The guidance teacher - the guidance teacher has experience with the learners particularly on the moral aspect.

●   Any other teacher - who has experience with Grade 8 and higher.

The name of the interviewee was obtained in case there were issues which needed clarifying. The interviewees were assured of the confidentiality of the information divulged during the interviews.

3.3.2 Data collection

Interviews with teachers were tape-recorded and later transcribed. The questions used were semi-structured. The researcher did not follow the questions as they appear in the Appendix 1, because in answering one question, information relevant to other questions was also given.

3.3.2.1   Permission

Permission was obtained to approach 4 Imbali schools. One of the selected schools had disturbances and the researcher later substituted another school which has Grade 8 and higher.

The principals were approached personally by the researcher and appointment dates were set out with the principals and teachers concerned. Most teachers agreed to be interviewed except for one who made an appointment but failed to honour the appointment time. One teacher refused to give the researcher his name and the researcher did not force him.

3.3.2.2   Procedure

Data collection began on 10 September 1997 and was complete by 19 September 1997. A maximum of five teachers were interviewed per day but that was not on a regular basis. There were disturbances in some schools which made the researcher postpone some appointments. The recording apparatus was set up after briefing the respondents. Most interviews occurred within the expected time limits except for a few inexperienced teachers who were not at ease in engaging in a discussion. They gave the researcher brief responses and the researcher prompted the respondents with no success.

3.4 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions which deal with Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories were asked to find out if the implicit theories are compatible with explicit theories of human development in so far as the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools are concerned.

The following main points formed the framework upon which the semi-structured interview and the analysis of results was based.

(a) **Piaget** - The framework within which the researcher focuses is the concrete and formal operation of Piaget's theory. The researcher has chosen those levels because hypothetically learners in Grade 8 and higher fall within that level. Significant problems remain in the diagnosis of stages whose internal consistency is not clear. Cross-cultural evidence suggests that besides these there are a number of significant variations not just in the rate of development, but in whether the later stages develop in the form Piaget described. The following aspects which reflect the developmental level of the learners and which also address part of the research question was used to analyze the data.

   • Progression from concrete to formal operations is determined by years.

   • Maturity, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and develop knowledge.

   • People try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

(b) **Kohlberg** - In Kohlberg's theory the researcher focuses on Level 2 and Level 3 of moral development. The reason being that the learners who are under investigation fall within that part of the continuum. The following aspects which reflect the moral development of learners was used to analyze the data.

- Moral reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues.

- Judgement is based on others approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society and loyalty to the country.

The above issues are dealt with in detail in the data analysis.

The questions that were used for the interview were divided into three sections:

I.   The first section dealt with the personal details of the respondents in the interview.

The following were included:

(i)   Sex
(ii)   Rank
(iii) Teaching experience
(iv)   Whether or not a member of the governing body?
(v)   Awareness of the learners in Grade 8 and higher being included in the governing bodies of schools?

II.   Questions in the second section dealt with Piaget's theory of cognitive development

(i)   *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

Response to the above question was intended to enable the researcher to assess the respondents belief about Piaget's theory of cognitive development, and their opinions about the inclusion of younger learners.

Within the framework in which data was analyzed, the above question addresses the following statement:

'Progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years.'

(ii) *How does Grade 8 compare to Grade 12 in terms of development?*

The above question was asked, to supplement responses to the first question and to check that the respondent was consistent in answering. Within the framework in which data was analyzed, the above question addresses the following statement:

'Maturity, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and develop knowledge.'

(iii) *In which area do you think learners will develop if they are included in the governing bodies of schools?*

Responses to the above question gave the researcher an understanding of the areas that the learners have developed as they are included in the governing bodies. Woolfolk (1995) argues that social transmission, activity and maturation influence the way people develop.

The framework within which data was analyzed addresses the following statement:

'People try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas'.

Piaget argues that social transmission, activity and maturation influence the way people develop. The researcher hopes to cull that from the respondent.

(iv) *"What do you think influences development?"*

The above question was asked to find out about the respondents belief about the gradual development of knowledge.

The framework with which data was analyzed addresses the following:

'People try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

Again the above question was used by the researcher to strengthen the previous question and to find out if the respondent is consistent in answering.

III.   The first question in the third section dealt with Piaget's and Kohlberg's theory of development.

(i)   *"Do you think learners can question things that they do not understand?"*

The above question requires the respondents to say something about their own experiences with the learners in the governing bodies and/or to talk about their experience with the learners in the classroom if the respondent is not a member of the governing body. The above question addresses both theories of development. The follow up to the above question asked if the learners who question things/issues are lower grade or higher grade learners. The framework within which data was analyzed, addresses the following:

'Moral reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues'.

(ii)   *"Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?"*

The above question was asked to find out about respondents' beliefs about learners' sense of justice and fairness. The framework within which data was analyzed addresses the following:

'Moral reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues'.

(iii)   *"Do you think pupils know about the morals and values of society?"*

The above question was asked to find out about the respondents' beliefs about learners' sense of morals. The framework within which data was analyzed addresses the following:

'Moral reasoning about right or wrong requires argument and questioning of issues'.

(iv)   *"To what extent do pupils question authority that is designed for them?"*

The above question was asked to find out about respondents' beliefs about learners' ability to question the authority that is designed for them. The framework within which data was analyzed addresses the following:

'Moral reasoning about right or wrong requires argument and questioning of issues'.

(v)   *"How do boys compare to girls in terms of morality?"*

The above question was asked to find out about the respondents' belief about learners' ability in terms of sexes in as far as morality is concerned. The framework within which data was analyzed addresses the following:

'Judgement is based on traditional values'.

Kohlberg argues that women only operate at Levels 1 and 2 of moral development and they do not reach Level 3. It is only philosophers and men who reach that level. This question intended to find out if the respondents do see any significant difference.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was carried out to identify problems that were likely to be encountered during the survey proper, to test the length of the interview and the way questions were structured, so that modifications could be made, if necessary, before conducting the main interviews.

The researcher discovered that in some questions the respondents' responses did not provide the required information. The researcher had to probe and prompt the respondent to come up with a more elaborated response.

The respondents coped well with most questions which were asked by the researcher except for one or two which were reformulated with the advice of an observer who has expertise in conducting interviews. The questionnaire covered the areas under investigation. In general the responses indicated that the wording of the questionnaire was found to be satisfactory.

The final study was executed with the amendments mentioned above. The pilot study proved valuable as it indicated to the researcher the task at hand and the possibility of addressing the research questions. The data from this initial study also helped in the procedure to be followed when analysing the data gathered.

3.7 DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN COLLECTING THE DATA

Significant difficulties were found by the researcher when she went to schools to collect data. The researcher was told by the principals that some teachers had a negative attitude towards research in general and were not willing to participate. In that way the targeted number of interviews were not reached.

The principal in a school where there were problems did not want to commit herself to being interviewed. The researcher gave up after 3 visits and moved on to another school which has Grade 8 and higher but which was outside the

targeted population. Appointments were sometimes postponed and rescheduled because of the unforseen disturbances that occurred in schools.

Some schools had no electricity in certain classrooms or venues which were appropriate for the interviews, due to vandalism.

The researcher experienced difficulty during tape-recording. On one occasion the machine was set properly, but somehow the electricity was cut off and the researcher discovered later that the interview was not tape-recorded. The researcher asked the respondent concerned to go over the questions, giving only important points.

Most teachers did not understand what the researcher meant by the question '*What influences development?*' It was vaguely worded and the researcher failed to pick this up during the pilot study.

Some teachers did not always understand the questions asked by the researcher. The researcher had to prompt the respondent to find the answer. Some teachers tended to be emotional in answering certain questions. The researcher inferred meaning to the respondent after several attempts to try and get an appropriate response.

3.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research design has been described. The researcher believed that a survey, using interviews, should be undertaken. Although some difficulties were experienced, as described above, in collecting the data, 15 teachers were finally interviewed. An analysis of the data collected will be described in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The framework within which data was analyzed focused on concrete and formal operations of Piaget's theory, and Stages 5 and 6 of Kohlberg's Moral development.

The rationale for using the above framework in analysing data is that Grade 8 and higher are expected to fall within the above continuum, according to Piaget and Kohlberg.

The following aspects of cognitive and moral development (as explained in Chapter 3) form the framework within which data was analyzed.

Piaget:

- Progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years.

- Maturity, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and knowledge develop.

- People try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

Kohlberg:

- Moral reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues.

- Judgement is based on others' approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society and loyalty to country.

Respondents' responses were analyzed in terms of what the explicit theories of development say about the development of a child. Responses which were similar were grouped together and the theory of cognitive and/or moral development was used to give respondents responses theoretical understanding where applicable.

4.2 PERSONAL DETAILS

Total number of respondents was 15

(i)	Sex:	8	Females
		7	Males
	Rank:	3	principals
		6	Heads of Departments
		6	Assistant teachers
	Total	15	

(ii)   Teaching experience of respondents

Below	15	years	=	1
	10-15	years	=	9
	+ 15	years	=	5

(iii)   Involvement in the governing body

Members	=	12
Non-members	=	3

(iv)   Experience with Grades 8 - 12   = All

4.3 ANALYSIS

Each aspect of the theoretical framework given on the preceding page, within which data was collected, will be discussed below.

4.3.1 I : Piaget's theory of cognitive development

(a)   Progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years

Teachers' responses varies in this regard. Most teachers said they would be happy if higher grades were included in the governing bodies rather than lower grades.

Respondent 1   "I think Grade 12 can do well in the governing body".

Respondent 2   "Whoever is elected in the governing body, I am certain that pupils will elect someone who is capable to represent them but an older student will be most preferred".

Respondent 4   "Yes, Grade 8 can do well but if they will be included the following year". [From the context, the above means that older learners are preferred to younger learners].

"Basically, they are not well developed, but I am positive for their inclusion I would like them to be workshoppers before they are included" [modified response].

Respondent 5   "I would not like Grade 8 to be included in the governing body because they are not mature enough."

Respondent 6   "I prefer older ones".

Respondent 7	"I would be unhappy if the grade level was lowered." The same respondent also said "higher grades can exercise justice and fairness compared to lower grades."
Respondent 9	"I will be more comfortable with higher grades than lower grade." The same respondent also said "I think the older you are, you become acquainted with the problems that go on at school".
Respondent 10	"I will be unhappy if the grade level was lowered although lower grade will say they are neglected".
Respondent 11	"In the meetings that we had I have seen higher grades question issues".
Respondent 12	"Higher grade need to be considered".
Respondent 15	"Maybe the lower grades may feel neglected but I think developmentally they are not ready.

Discussion

Meadows (1993:198) argues that at the core of Piaget's model is that cognition is one form of the adaptation between organism and the environment which is seen through all living world.

The child or the adult is throughout life actively trying to make sense of the world, just as any organism must try to adapt to its environment.

All the respondents prefer older learners. This means that teachers believe that older learners have adapted well as compared to younger learners. They have experience and they can also make sense of the world as compared to younger learners.

Teachers' mental models of learners' cognitive development are compatible with Piaget in the sense that older learners can make sense of the world as compared to younger learners.

Boyle (1969) argues that formal operations coincide approximately with the onset of adolescence. Adolescent thinking is more coherent in structure than the younger child's. Boyle further argues that adolescent thinking is concerned with propositions rather than with the physical situation i.e., the individual is able to deal mentally with the conceivable rather than the actual.

Taking the above factors into consideration the work that is done in the governing bodies requires one to deal with propositions and possible issues among other things, and older learners can do that well, as compared to younger learners.

Woolfolk (1995) argues that formal operations is not limited to dealing with the physical environment, but requires scientific reasoning and logical thinking. One could argue that being on the governing body requires high level thinking i.e., formal operations rather than concrete operations and one can operate at that level as one grows in age and experience.

Social demands requires a good deal of formal thinking and those who cannot deal with information that lies before them are likely to fall by the way side because social demands requires a good deal of formal operational thought (Woolfolk, 1995).

On the issue of maturity mentioned by Respondent 5, one would argue that a mature person is one who is experienced, who makes sense of the world, and who actively creates knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

Another part of healthy cognitive development is being able to apply and test the principles learned in one situation in new situations, one would thus expect older learners to do well as compared to younger learners.

Although the above argument does not touch upon the issue of progression from concrete to formal operational thinking, it does not contradict the issue of development and maturity being influenced by experiences and biological factors respectively.

Taking into consideration the fact that progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years and that teachers prefer older learners to younger learners, one would be led to believe that teachers' mental models coincide with Piaget's theory of human development in this regard.

(b) **Maturation, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and knowledge develop**

There are many aspects to the above statement. The first aspect of the statement is divided into three, i.e., activity, social transmission and maturation and the second aspect is divided into two, i.e., thinking process and knowledge development.

Each respondent's response will be mentioned and a short discussion will follow in order to do justice to the analysis.

> *Respondent 1* "In the past we had a Student Representative Council doing the job and in a way there will be a learning process [for the involvement of pupils in the governing bodies]". She also said, "Activities outside the school and the youth clubs, gave pupils experience".

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools because learners have been involved in

activities such as the Youth Clubs and Student Representative Council's inside and outside the school environment.

The assumption is that activity has an influence in the development of the thinking processes and knowledge. Youth clubs and budget making are activities taking place outside the school which contribute to the learner's cognitive development.

Respondent 2   "The students have been conscientized". The same respondent also said, "The drawing of the code of conduct by the pupils will help to develop their knowledge.

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools because learners are conscientized. [This means that students are aware of the things that take place in society]

The assumption is that conscientization as stated by the respondent is a form of social transmission and the drawing of the code of conduct is an activity which, according to Piaget, influences thought processes and develops knowledge.

Respondent 3   "A kind of training is needed for pupils before they are involved in the governing body."

"Leadership skills of the pupils will improve if they are included in the governing body."

"Activities taking place at school make pupils to reason and be creative."

"Usually debates make pupils to argue and question things."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools because learners were involved in activities such as debates and activities outside the school but they need training.

The assumption is that the leadership skills that learners develop as they are involved in the governing body and activities at school will help learners to develop knowledge, and will influence thinking. The training that the respondent said learners need, can help to develop knowledge and it is a form of social transmission. Debates that learners engage in at school also influence thinking.

Respondent 4   "Pupils will grow in as far as forming communication with the learners."

"I think boys are better than girls because in the community boys have positions that give them experience to be effective members of the council."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools because their involvement will give them experience which Piaget says influences the thinking process.

The assumption is that communicating with other learners as a result of their inclusion in the governing body is an activity that Piaget argues would influence the thinking process and develop knowledge. On the other hand "boys having positions in the community" is an example of social transmission which influences the thinking process.

Respondent 5   "Pupils' involvement in running and management of the school helps them to take whatever is discussed in the council back to the students."

"Pupils will acquire skills that will help them to develop if they are included in the governing body."

"Pupils need to be workshopped."

"There was a boy who was not liked by everybody. After training he was liked by everybody because his thinking had changed."

"Pupils know about values of society."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that the learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools. Involvement in the running and management of school, acquiring of skills, and the boy who improved after training are examples of activities which influence the thinking process and develop knowledge. Learners' knowledge of the values of society is a form of social transmission which also develops knowledge.

Respondent 6   "I think pupils will develop more on the administrative side."

"I think pupils have a good knowledge of what society values are."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that development on the administrative side and knowledge of values, are social transmissions that influence the thinking process and develop knowledge.

Respondent 7   "I think pupils will develop on the administrative side."

"School contributes to the development of the pupils."

"Higher grades know about what society values are."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners will do well in governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that development on the administrative side occurs as a result of involvement in the governing body.

In that way it is a form of social transmission as well as an activity that influence the thinking process and develop knowledge.

Respondent 8   "I think pupils need to be told about their rights."

"Pupils will learn to be responsible. Their thinking will improve."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners need to be told about their rights so that they become effective members of the governing bodies of schools and they will also learn to be responsible when they become members of the governing body. The assumption is that being told about one's right is a form of social transmission which influences the thinking process and develops knowledge. Being responsible will improve thinking. This directly supports the statement under discussion [**maturation, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and knowledge develop**] because being responsible is a form of activity that one will be engaged in.

Respondent 9   "I will be comfortable with higher grades."

"Being involved in the council will help pupils to solve problems and by doing that they will be able to solve their own problems in life."

"I think the older you are you become acquainted with the problems that go on at school."

"Children who come from good families behave well."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners will do well in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that being comfortable with higher grades addresses the issue of maturity as contributing to the thinking process and knowledge development. Being involved in the Governing body and coming from good families are activities that

contribute to knowledge development. ["**Good families**" is used in the context of the socio-economic status of parents].

Respondent 10   "Pupils' involvement in the governing body will accelerate their growth."

"Initially pupils tend to be emotional but I think they will learn to put up an argument in a correct manner."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners' involvement in governing bodies of schools will help accelerate development and learners will learn to argue in a correct manner. The assumption is that being involved in the governing body accelerates development and contributes to cognitive development.

Respondent 11   "Pupils' leadership skills will develop if they are included in the governing council."

"They will learn to listen and understand why other people think the way they do."

"Grade 12 have a sense of justice as compared to lower grades or Grade 8."

The above responses demonstrates the belief that higher grade learners can do well in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that developing leadership and listening skills are as a result of activities which Piaget says are influenced by thinking and develop knowledge. Another assumption is that Grade 12 learners have a sense of justice and fairness is an indication of maturity which influence the way learners think and develop knowledge.

Respondent 12   "When our pupils are not satisfied about something they usually engage on strike and it is the senior students who take the lead and the young ones follow."

The above response demonstrate the belief that learners' negotiation skills will improve as learners are involved in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that engaging in a strike by learners occurs as a result of social transmission, especially in African communities. Learners' thinking is such that when pupils are not satisfied about something, they engage in a strike.

Respondent 13   "Pupils' leadership skills will improve, they will learn to live with other people, they will learn negotiation skills."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners' leadership skills will develop as they are involved in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that learning negotiation skills is an activity that learners engage in and it influences development and the thinking process. Development of leadership skills is assumed to occur as a result of the inclusion of learners in the governing body.

Respondent 14   "Pupils will learn communication skills, they will learn to work with other people at a certain level."

The above response demonstrates the belief that learners will improve in the above aspects as they are involved in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that working with other people at a certain level is as a result of an activity, social transmission or a form of maturity that helps pupils to develop their thinking and knowledge.

Respondent 15 "Pupils know about society values, the problem is that pupils are scared to come out and challenge things because of the environment."

The above response demonstrates the belief that knowledge of the values of society will help learners to do well in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that being scared is an indication that pupils have seen activities taking place in their communities and some of the things, they have learn by social transmission and that has developed their knowledge likewise.

Discussion

All the respondents said something about Piaget's assertion that **maturation, activity and social transmission influence the thinking process and knowledge develop**. Meadows' (1993) argues that at the core of Piaget's model is the idea that cognition is one form of adaptation between organism and the environment which is seen through all the living world.

Respondents mentioned things like:

- Student representative council (Respondent No 1)
  Conscientization (Respondent No 2)
  Leadership skills (Respondent No 3)
  Communication (Respondent No 4)
  Workshops (Respondent No 5)
  Influence from outside (Respondent No 6)
  Schools contribute to development (Respondent No 7)
  Pupils need to be told about their rights (Respondent No 8)
  Being in the governing body will help pupils to solve problems (Respondent No 10)
  Leadership skills will improve (Respondent No. 11)
  Pupils strike when they are not satisfied (Respondent No 12)
  Leadership skills improve (Respondent No 13)

Pupils will learn communication skills (Respondent No 14)

Pupils are scared to come out (Respondent No 15).

All the above aspects require thinking on the part of the learners in order to adapt to their environment. Individuals cannot make sense of the world if they do not think. They need to assimilate what goes on in their environment that will cause disequilibrium and require the individual to manipulate with objects, ideas and things and accommodate what the individual sees as relevant at that particular time.

Respondent 12 said learners engage in strike action if they are not happy. This point illustrates the belief that individuals act that way because there is disequilibrium created in their minds. They therefore acquire information from the environment and make sense of the world or things that are around them and in that way they improve in their thinking. One could argue that at the end of the strike action individuals have assimilated certain information which can create disequilibrium and individuals need to do something about it to restore equilibrium.

To complement the reported improvement in pupils thinking after the strike action is a form of transition from one level to the next but one cannot claim that learners have moved from concrete to formal operations but certain processes have taken place in the individual (i.e., assimilation and accommodation) and that has done something to their thinking processes.

Although the strike action that learners engage into is a form of social transmission in African communities, African communities themselves have conscientized the youth (Respondent 2) and learners have learnt to go beyond that kind of thinking because strikes are not as prevalent as they used to be.

In conclusion, the environment has a bearing on learners' maturity if it is handled well or if that which is transmitted is in accordance with what

society values. It can go a long way towards improving learners' thinking and develop knowledge.

(c)   **People try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas**

Respondents said the following:

Respondent 1   "There will be a learning process as pupils are involved in the governing bodies of schools."

"Learners' leadership skills will develop."

"Pupils have been exposed to activities outside the school."

The above responses demonstrates the belief that the involvement of learners in the governing bodies of schools is a learning experience and it will develop leadership skills. The assumption is that there will be a learning experience as learners try to make sense of the world in order to gain knowledge. Another assumption is that development of leadership skills is as a result of learners trying to make sense of the world and learners also make sense of the world by being exposed to activities outside the school.

Respondent 2   "Pupils have been *conscientized*, and they are not willing to accept what the authorities tell them."

"What we are busy doing is drawing out a code of conduct that will be interesting to see that we can reach a common ground."

"Pupils will learn to work together with parents and teachers."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners' involvement in the governing bodies of schools is something to which teachers do not object. The assumption is that drawing up a code of conduct with learners will help learners to make sense of their world. Working together with parents and teachers is a form of direct experience with people that will help learners to gain knowledge and make sense of their world.

Respondent 3   "A kind of training is needed."

"One has to consult and reason."

"Let the pupils search for a particular response."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that learners can do well in the governing bodies but they need training. The assumption is that training will help learners to make sense of the world and that will contribute to them being effective members of the governing body. One can make sense of the world and gain knowledge by consulting and reasoning and searching for a response.

Respondent 4   "I am positive for the inclusion of pupils in the governing body if they will be included the following year."

"Pupils will grow as far as forming part of the communication with the learners."

The inclusion of learners in the governing body will help them to make sense of the world and they will gain knowledge. Experience and maturity help learners to make sense of the world. Being part of communication with the learners (as explained by the above respondent), is an activity that will help pupils to create and gain knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

Respondent 5 "Lower grades are not mature enough."

"Pupils will acquire skills that will help them to work together with other people."

"Pupils went to workshops before."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that the respondent prefers higher grade to be involved in the governing body of schools. The assumption is that lower grades cannot actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects as compared to higher grades. The skills that learners will acquire will help them to actively make sense of their own world. A workshop is a form of direct experience with ideas, people and objects that will make learners to make sense of their world.

Respondent 6 "Grade 8 are not in a stage of critical thinking."

"I would prefer older ones."

"Older students can question things."

The above responses demonstrate teachers' implicit belief about learners' inclusion in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that the preference for the older learners (as stated by almost all respondents), is an indication that older learners have experience and therefore they can make sense of their world.

Respondent 7 "Pupils will be able to share about the development of the school."

"Higher grade will be effective."

"The school contribute to the development of the pupils."

The above responses demonstrate the implicit belief that learners' inclusion in the governing body of the school will help learners to share in the development of the school. The assumption is that the school is one of the agents in the world which helps learners to create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas.

Respondent 8   "I think pupils need to be told about their rights."

"Pupils will learn to be responsible if they are included in the governing body."

"Pupils can identify pupils who have leadership qualities."

The assumption is that teaching learners about their rights will contribute towards enabling learners to make sense of the world. Responsible people are those who have direct experience with objects, people and ideas and they can make sense of the world, and actively create their knowledge. Workshops will also help learners to make sense of their world and will contribute towards learners being effective members of the governing body.

Respondent 9   "I will be more comfortable with higher grades."

"I will be unhappy if the grade level was lowered."

"Pupils will be able to solve their own problems in life."

The above responses demonstrate that the respondent is comfortable with the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools. The assumption is that the first two responses address the issue of experience and activity that it can help learners to make sense of the world through direct experience with objects. Learners will be able to solve their own problems through direct experience with objects, ideas and people.

Respondent 10   "Involvement will accelerate pupils' growth."

"Pupils have a sense of justice and fairness to a certain degree."

The assumption is that learners' involvement will help them to make sense of the world and they will gain knowledge. The belief that learners have a sense of justice and fairness is an indication that they can make sense of their own world.

Respondent 11   "I do not think lower grades can do well because they are still immature."

"Pupils leadership skills will develop."

"Grade 12 have a sense of justice and fairness."

The assumption is that the first response demonstrates the belief that younger learners cannot make as much sense of the world when compared to older learners. Development of the leadership skills involves manipulation of ideas, and it thus helps to develop knowledge.

Respondent 12   "I think higher grades need to be considered."

"Their leadership skills will develop if pupils are included in the governing bodies."

"Pupils can differentiate between right and wrong."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools will help them to develop leadership skills. The assumption is that the first response demonstrates the belief that younger learners make less sense of the world as compared to the older learners. The indication that learners can differentiate between right and wrong demonstrate the belief that learners have a sense of justice.

Respondent 13   "Lower grades are immature."

"Leadership skills will improve."

"Pupils may know about what is right and wrong."

The first response was addressed under the first heading, "Progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years". The second response demonstrates the belief that involvement of learners in governing body will develop leadership skills. The third response demonstrates the belief that older learners can make better sense of the world as compared to younger learners.

Respondent 14   "I will be unhappy if the grade level was lowered."

"I think lower grades will not be able to understand some of the things that are discussed."

The above responses demonstrate the belief that people try to make sense of the world as they experience the world. The assumption is that lower grade learners cannot make better sense of the world as compared to older learners.

Respondent 15   "I think lower grades are not ready developmentally."

"Their leadership qualities will develop."

The first response addresses the belief that higher grade learners can make better sense of the world because they are mature as compared to younger learners. The second response demonstrates the belief that learners will develop leadership skills as they are involved in the governing bodies of schools.

Discussion

It is believed by all respondents that when learners are in the governing bodies of schools, they will bring certain amount of knowledge with them. The knowledge that they will bring will either be related or not related to the running of the governing bodies. It is also believed that learners' knowledge will improve as they are involved in the governing bodies. People try to make sense of the world through direct experience with objects, ideas and people.

In summary, the respondents said the following:

(i)   With regard to making sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas**:

There will be a learning process as pupils are involved in the governing bodies of schools (Respondent 1).

Drawing of a code of conduct (Respondent 2).

Consulting and reasoning (Respondent 3).

Grade 8 are not in a stage of critical thinking (Respondent 6).

Pupils will be able to share about the development of the school (Respondent 7).

Pupils need to be told about their rights (Respondent 8).

Pupils will be able to solve problems (Respondent 9)

(ii)   People try to make sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas and people**:

Pupils will grow in so far as communication with learners is concerned (Respondent 4).

(iii)   People try to make sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas and objects**:

Skills that pupils acquire will make them to have sense of the world.

(iv)   People try to make sense of the world through direct experience with **objects, people and ideas**:

Pupils will be able to solve problems (Respondent 9).

Involvement of pupils in the governing bodies will accelerate growth (Respondent 10).

Pupils leadership skills will develop (Respondents 11, 12, 13, 15).

With regard to the above analysis most respondents said that people make sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas** (7 Respondents).
This aspect is followed by the belief that people try to make sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas, objects and people** (6 Respondents).
This aspect is followed by the belief that people try to make sense of the world through direct experience with **ideas and people** (1 Respondent).

There are other responses which point to the belief that people try to make sense of the world through direct experience with ideas. With regard to the above statement, Meadows (1993), argues that Piaget's model sets out basic assumptions far more elaborately than any other model and takes into account a uniquely wide range of biological and philosophical considerations.

Woolfolk (1995) argues that knowing a person's age is not a guarantee that one knows the individual's cognitive development. It therefore means that there are lot of factors other than age which contribute to cognitive development and the development of knowledge. One that is revealed in this study is the belief that ideas that people have gained (knowledge) in the environment also contribute to cognitive development.

In conclusion, it would appear that teachers agree with the aspect under consideration i.e., people try to make sense of the world and actively create their own knowledge through direct experience with **ideas, people and objects**.

4.3.2 II Kohlberg's theory of moral development

4.3.2.1 Introduction

In analysing teachers' implicit, espoused mental models of learners' moral development, justice and fairness, values and morals of society and questioning of authority will be grouped together because all the aspects are a yardstick with which respondents say learners should be included in the governing bodies of schools.

(a) *Moral Reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues*

Respondent 1	"The higher grades challenge authority that is designed for them."
	"Pupils know about the values of society but they do not cherish them."
Respondent 2	"Pupils follow the same route that we as teachers do, we discuss something and that all points are heard and a consensus is reached."
Respondent 3	"In debates one has to argue and question things."
	"Pupils have a potential of questioning."
	"I would like them to negotiate things.
Respondent 4	"At our school I have seen pupils display justice and fairness."

Respondent 5	"When you work with pupils the element of justice and fairness does come out."
	"Pupils know about values of society, when there was violence pupils said: 'We need to come together and normalize the situation.'"
Respondent 6	"Boys can argue and question issues as compared to girls.'
	"Pupils do question things, some of them have valid reasons especially the higher grades."
	"I think the higher grades have a good knowledge of what society's values are."
Respondent 7	"I think higher grades know about society's values."
	"Pupils do question authority when they engage on strikes."
Respondent 8	"I think higher grades can question things well as compared to lower grades."
	"Pupils have a sense of justice and fairness, they display that if there is something that they are not happy about."
	"Pupils know about the values of society, the problem is that parents are not willing to accept them."
Respondent 9	"Girls tend to be submissive, they do not question things, boys can do that."
Respondent 10	"Younger pupils tend to be conforming, but older pupils tend to be more questioning."

Respondent 11	"Pupils do question things that they are not happy about."
.	"I have discovered that girls are shy and boys are outspoken."
Respondent 12	"When pupils are not satisfied about something they usually engage on strike and it is the senior students who take the lead and the young ones follow."
	"I would say boys do well as compared to girls because boys are outspoken."
Respondent 13	"Those that we have in the governing body question things that they do not understand."
	"I would say they do question things."
Respondent 14	"Pupils do question things that they do not understand."
	"If there's something that need questioning pupils do question that."
Respondent 15	"I have seen pupils spell out what is right and wrong."

Discussion

All the respondents said something with regard to the statement: "Moral reasoning about right and wrong requires argument and questioning of issues". All the respondents said and some implied that learners do question things if there is something that they do not understand, and they said that higher grades can do better than lower grades. Respondent Nos 5 and 7 even said learners engage in a strike action to show their dissatisfaction. Respondents Nos 1, 5, 6, 15 said learners know about values and morals of the society.

Respondents Nos 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 said learners do question issues if there is something with which they are not happy.

Respondents Nos 4, 5 and 8 said learners have a sense of justice and fairness.

Respondents Nos 7 and 8 said learners know about values of society.

Respondent Nos 1, 3 and 7 said learners challenge authority that is designed for them.

In this analysis using Piaget's explicit theory of cognitive development, it was was shown that teachers' beliefs were compatible with Piaget's theory of cognitive development and the researcher argued that learners can do well in the governing bodies of schools.

With regard to moral development, teachers' implicit, espoused mental models do not coincide with explicit theory of moral development.

Woolfolk (1995:80) argues that schools should not teach values directly but instead should help the students clarify their own values, learn levels of moral reasoning, and learn skills of value analysis. Learners can do well in the governing bodies of schools because they have the ability to question issues and one would imagine that being an effective member of the governing body requires questioning of issues and things and most teachers say they have seen higher grades do that.

It would appear that teachers believe that most learners, especially those in higher grades, do question things if there is something that they do not understand. This could be an essential characteristic for learners to be effective members of the governing bodies of schools. The introduction of governing bodies into schools is a new venture; it is through discussion of issues that all stakeholders know how schools are going to be governed.

Respondents do not have confidence in learners' sense of justice and fairness, values and morals of the society. One respondent said learners know about the values of society but they are scared to speak out because of the environment that prevails in African communities. The situation in the African communities has calmed down in terms of violence, and teachers can make use of the situation that prevails in schools to help learners to clarify their own values and learn higher levels of moral reasoning (Respondent No 5).

In conclusion, most respondents said pupils have the ability to question things that they do not understand. It can be argued that being an effective member of the governing body requires one to be able to question issues and most respondents said higher grade learners were able to do that.

(b)   **Judgement is based on other's approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society and loyalty to the country**

Respondent 1   "We are teaching at Imbali, whatever decision pupils take they think of the community. Pupils cannot come out *[in the open]*."

"One teacher was assaulted by pupils, pupils were afraid to challenge that."

The first response indicates the belief that learners' judgement is based on others' approval. The second response indicates the belief that certain social conventions exist in schools these days.

Respondent 2   "The recent incident that we experienced in July was a way of showing resistance on the part of the pupils."

Resistance to authority is common behaviour in African communities. It is also a form of social convention.

Respondent 3   "Usually in our times we had debates. You put a defence you know where the truth is moving towards."

The above response demonstrates the belief that issues today are debated and a consensus is reached.

Respondent 4   "I have seen some pupils display justice and fairness."

The above response demonstrates the belief that being in the governing body requires one to exercise justice and fairness.

Respondent 5   "I would not like Grade 8 to be included in the governing body because they are not mature enough."

"Pupils have been involved in drawing up a constitution."

The first response which addresses the issue of Grade 8 learners being immature is a judgement based on the belief that younger learners cannot do as well as older learners, and that it is also a traditional value. The second response points to the involvement of all stakeholders in the drawing up of a constitution.

Respondent 6   "Sometimes you find that pupils get influenced from outside."

"It is difficult to practise values of society because of violence."

Learners being influenced from outside the school is an indication that judgement of actions is based on the conventions of the community which requires loyalty.

Respondent 7   "Pupils' leadership qualities will improve if they are in the governing body."

"I have seen that boys are doing better than girls."

The first response addresses the belief that judgement is based on the expectation that acting as a leader improves leadership qualities and people who are leaders are expected to develop leadership qualities. The second response addresses the belief that judgement is based on traditional values.

Respondent 8   "I think pupils need to be told about their rights."

"Parents are not willing to accept pupils."

The first response addresses the respondent's belief of the wisdom of the laws of society and that learners are expected to be loyal to the country. The second response addresses the belief that judgement is based on traditional values.

Respondent 10   "We are talking democracy by including pupils in the governing bodies of school."

"Pupils are in the majority."

Both responses are indications that judgement is based on the laws of society within democracy.

Respondent 11   "Pupils will learn to listen to other people's views and be able to understand why those persons think the way they do."

"Grade 12 have a sense of justice and fairness as compared to lower grades."

The first response addresses the belief that judgement should take into account the approval of others. The second response says that judgement is based on academic achievement.

Respondent 12   "Pupils will learn to live and work with others."

"Higher grades are mature as compared to lower grades."

The first response addresses the belief that judgement is based on laws of society. The second response addresses the belief that judgement is based on academic achievement.

Respondent 13   "I think lower grade are immature." [Lower grade is used in the context of academic level and not in terms of subjects].

"In my experience I have seen that girls are reserved and they do not want challenges."

The first response addresses the belief that lower grade learners, being immature, cannot do as well as older learners; which is also a traditional value. The second response also addresses the issue that judgement is based on traditional values. i.e., that girls behave differently to boys.

Respondent 14   "Lower grades may not be able to understand some of the things that are discussed." [Lower grade is used in the context of academic level and not in terms of subjects].

This response reflects the belief that younger children are not able to fully understand the moral implications of issues discussed on governing councils.

Discussion

With regard to the above aspects, nine respondents (Nos 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 14) said that judgement is based on the laws of society.

Four respondents (Nos 1, 2, 6 and 10) made reference to social conventions.

Three respondents (Nos 7, 13 and 14) made reference to the fact that judgement is based on expectations.

Respondents Nos 9 and 15 did not say anything which related to the fact that judgement is based on other's approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society and loyalty to the country.

Most respondents acknowledge the belief that judgement needs to consider the law of society. The inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools is a law of society which most respondents acknowledged.

In conclusion, two issues appeared frequently in the responses concerning the moral development of learners: the belief that learners question things which they do not understand; and the belief that more respondents made reference to the issue of the law of society.

Other factors which emerge from the teachers' responses include the following:

It is worth noting that only one respondent (No. 2) said boys are as good as girls. All other respondents said girls are not as good as boys. The implication is that boys will cope in governing bodies.

Respondents said something like:

- "Boys are more influential, they exhibit leadership skills" (Respondent No. 1)

- "I would prefer boys because boys have greater influence than girls" (Respondent No. 4).

- "I think boys can do well in the governing body, girls are shy" Respondent No. 6).

- "Boys are better than girls" (Respondent No. 4), etc.

In Kohlberg's early studies of moral reasoning, research revealed that most men progressed to Stages 4 and 5 by adulthood, while most women stayed at Stage 3. This makes it appear as if women are moral midgets (Woolfolk, 1995:83).

Woolfolk (1995) argues that recent studies reveal few significant differences between men and women. It is also interesting to note that experienced teachers and teachers who are in the governing bodies say much more than teachers who are inexperienced and who are also not members of the governing bodies of schools, for example:

Respondents: 2, 3, 4, 5   -   Experienced Teachers
Respondents: 6, 7, 8   -   Inexperienced Teachers

4.4 SUMMARY

Certain assumptions emerged from the analysis of the responses by the various respondents. These indicate respondents' implicit espoused mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development:

That younger learners or lower grades are immature and therefore they cannot do well in the governing bodies of schools;

That progression from concrete to formal operation is not only determined by years, certain factors are responsible for cognitive development of the learners;

That older learners have the ability of questioning as compared to younger learners;

That inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools is a law of society.

The common feature that is reflected in Kohlberg's and Piaget's theory of human development is that the developmental aspect is taken into consideration for the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of school. In Piaget's theory of human development respondents prefer older learners because, they are assumed to have reached formal operation.

In Kohlberg's theory of human development respondents prefer older learners because they are assumed to have reached Stages 5 and 6 of moral development. That is implied when the respondents said older learners can question things if there is something that they do not understand. The difference between the two theories is that in Piaget's theory implicit mental model that teachers possess is compatible with explicit theory of human development, in Kohlberg's theory it is not compatible. It can be assumed that learners can do well in the governing bodies of schools because, as Cholohelo Shoai (*The Teacher*, October 1997) said, governing bodies spend a great deal of time discussing, writing, monitoring and evaluating school policies. One would also argue that a pre-requisite for the formation of school policy is for all stakeholders, including the learners, to discuss issues until a consensus is reached. It is through discussion of issues that a consensus is reached and the policies of the school are developed and higher grade learners possess the skill of questioning as said by ten respondents (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).

Taking the above factors into consideration, the following demonstrate the implicit beliefs about learners inclusion in the governing bodies of schools:

Maturity occurs as a result of experience with objects, ideas, and people;

Knowing a persons years is not a guarantee to the fact that one is at a certain level of development. Therefore there are other factors which contribute to knowledge development;

That learners can be helped to attain high level of moral reasoning through discussion.

With regard to the research question, i.e., **Teachers' implicit mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development, with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools**, the following can be concluded:

Respondents say older learners should be included in the governing bodies of schools because:

(i)   They are mature

(ii)   Certain experiences and activities that occur outside and inside the school environment will make learners to fit in the governing bodies of schools

(iii)   Older learners have the ability of questioning.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.1.1   Strauss' implicit mental models

Strauss' concept of implicit mental models was used in this study as a basis for the investigation of teachers' beliefs about learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools.

This study focused on 'espoused' implicit mental models i.e., those which are deduced from what the teachers say about learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in governing bodies of schools. This is as opposed to 'in-action' mental models which are deduced from observation of teachers' actions.

Strauss' research findings reveal that implicit mental models that teachers possess does not coincide with explicit theories (Strauss 1995:19). The findings of the research reported here do not coincide with Strauss' research findings in as far as Piaget's theory is concerned. Teachers' implicit mental models of learners' cognitive development were found to coincide with Piaget's theory of human development. In so far as Kohlberg's theory is concerned, the findings of this research do coincide with those of Strauss. Teachers' mental models of learners' moral development do not coincide with Kohlberg's theory of moral development. This means that teachers have a low opinion of learners' moral development.

In so far as the research question is concerned, one can argue that the teachers' responses reveal that teachers would like higher grade learners to be included in

the governing bodies of schools because they are mature and they have certain experiences which can make them do well in the governing bodies of schools.

5.1.2   Piaget's theory of human development

Teachers' implicit mental models about learners' cognitive development coincide with Piaget's explicit theory of human development in the sense that teachers say they would like higher grade learners to be included in the governing bodies of schools. This means that they believe that higher grade learners have reached formal operations and can make sense of the world as compared to the lower grade learners. The fact that higher grade learners are preferred by teachers demonstrate the belief that 'Progression from concrete to formal operation is determined by years'.

One can argue that higher grade learners' cognitive development could equip them to do well in school governing bodies. This means that they have the ability to create their own knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas. This is amplified by Meadows when he argues that cognition is one form of adaptation between organism and the environment (Meadows 1993:18).

Taking the above into consideration, one can argue that the thinking processes of higher grade learners is better than lower grade learners because they are more mature and developed and can therefore make sense of the world. As Cholohelo (*The Teacher*, October, 1997) argues that governing bodies spent a great deal of time discussing, writing, monitoring and evaluating school policies one would argue that higher grade learners have the ability which will make them do well in the governing bodies of schools.

What is also revealed in this study in as far as Piaget's theory is concerned is that knowing a person's age is not a guarantee that the person is at a certain level of development. There are other factors which contribute to knowledge development. Respondents mentioned things like involvement in 'student representative council' and 'debates' to mention a few. The experiences that

learners in higher grades bring to the governing bodies will also help them do well because there would be a transference of skills from other areas of learning.

Taking into consideration the above assertions by the respondents and putting it into context, one can argue that the internal processes of older learners is developed as compared to younger learners in as far as cognition is concerned. Teachers' implicit beliefs about learners' cognitive development coincide with Piaget's theory of human development in that regard.

5.1.3   Kohlberg's theory of human development

This study revealed that teachers' implicit mental models of learners' moral development do not coincide with Kohlberg's explicit theory. Respondent 1 said that a teacher was assaulted by a learner but the student representative council members feared the learner and the matter just ended without being resolved. One can argue that this incident demonstrates the belief that the environment has a bearing on learners' moral development if it is handled well or if that which is transmitted is in accordance with what society values. It can go a long way towards improving learners' thinking and make learners behave in a morally accepted way. Woolfolk (1995) argues that teachers need to demonstrate the harmful consequences of the learners' misbehaviour by helping learners evaluate and clarify their moral reasoning. Woolfolk also argues that schools should not teach values directly but should instead "help students clarify their own values, and learn higher levels of moral reasoning and skills of value analysis". What Woolfolk highlights is that it is the teachers' duty among other things to help learners to learn how to reason about moral issues. Taking the above factors into consideration and putting it into context, eleven out of fifteen respondents said that higher grade learners can question things that they do not understand. One can argue that teachers can make use of the learners' ability of questioning things to discuss moral issues so that they can learn skills of value analysis and reach higher levels of moral reasoning.

Cholohelo (*The Teacher*, October 1997) argues that governing body members spend a great deal of time discussing, writing, monitoring and evaluating school policies. One can argue that learners' morality can be clarified by discussing moral issues in governing body meetings if they suffice. In that way learners' moral development can be enhanced by using a skill of value analysis. Woolfolk (1995) further argues that researchers have found that direct discussion with people generally produces significant moral reasoning. Learners can be challenged to examine their moral reasoning, by examining all sides of an issue and in that way they can move to higher levels of moral reasoning.

In conclusion, if learners are helped to clarify their moral values to reach a higher level of moral reasoning, that will help address the low regard that teachers have about learners' moral development and it will also help them do well in the governing bodies of schools. Taking into consideration the research question, the recommendation made by the Review Committee to include learners in governing bodies of schools is not welcomed by the teachers at Imbali schools because of the low regard that teachers have about learners' moral development.

On the other hand one important thing that was said by eleven respondents is that higher grade learners have the ability of questioning things. Teachers can make use of that to help learners clarify their values so that they can reach higher levels of moral reasoning. That will go a long way in not only making learners reach higher levels of moral reasoning but also bringing back the culture of teaching and learning because teachers will have courage to discipline their learners.

Involving all stakeholders in the governing body as recommended by the Review Committee will help people at all levels to have a sense of ownership in the running of the school. This new venture will make people identify themselves with their schools and nobody would like to be associated with dysfunctional institution.

5.2   STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

5.2.1   Strengths

It is important to note that this study addresses an issue which is current and which has been recently applied in schools. No research of this issue has previously been reported.

This research forms the basis for further research to be carried out on the same or similar field since the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools is a new venture.

Teachers' mental models of learners' cognitive and moral development with reference to the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools can be re-evaluated. That will help to find out if teachers are consistent in their responses and also find out more about their experiences with learners in the governing bodies of schools from another vintage point. That will help in either strengthening or disprove this study.

This study will also help educational planners to find out if what they decide to the people in bureaucracy is effective or not in terms of practical applications. It will also help teachers who interact more with learners to find out how the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools is perceived.

5.2.2   Limitations

A small number of teachers were interviewed because of time constraints. One can argue that the results may have been different if a substantial number of teachers participated. This is also compounded by the fact that teachers who were interviewed were not all members of the governing body, but all did have experience with learners in Grade 8 and higher.

During the interviews, the researcher did not probe the respondents well, to address the issue under investigation effectively. The reason for that is that the

researcher was doing the research for the first time. The researcher was supposed to probe the respondents to get an understanding of what the respondents meant when saying lower grades are immature and higher grades are mature.

The above issue was understood at a superficial level by the researcher, however the researcher found something in the text which addresses that issue i.e., 'maturity influence the thinking process and it develops knowledge'. (Woolfolk, 1995). In that way the research findings were not affected significantly.

Some of the responses of the respondents had to be altered slightly to put them into context without loosing the meaning of the responses. A full transcript of the interview is presented in Appendix 2 because not all data collected during the interview has been incorporated into the foregoing analysis.

The question about the differences between boys and girls was put differently to different respondents. The researcher picked that up only when results were analyzed. This aspect did not affect the research finding to the extent that the question had to be taken out. The question aimed to find out the differences between boys and girls in terms of their inclusion in the governing bodies of schools. All the respondents talked about the differences between boys and girls in general because there was no incident where girls were actually members of the governing bodies of schools. Responses reveal that respondents understood the question to be asking for the differences in sexes in general.

It is also important to note that not all the teachers had experience with learners in the governing bodies because the teachers interviewed were members as well as non-members of the governing bodies, but they had experience with Grade level.

Teachers who are not members of the governing bodies said something about their experience with learners in the classroom and their day to day encounters in the school environment.

Teachers who are members of a governing body were unable to answer certain questions because some incidents had never occurred in governing body meetings and in that way the researcher asked the teachers about their experience with learners in general. The above limitation occurs because governing bodies are new ventures.

The research was also affected by the fact that no training has taken place for the governing body members. One would argue that the research finding would have been different from what it is because it would suffice from the interview, the lack of experience of learners as student representative council and their improved performance as governing body members after training.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

As a college lecturer, and a the researcher, I have discovered that theories that are taught at college do not necessarily alter implicit beliefs that teachers possess about learners. This shows that there is a need for ongoing action research in schools for the improvement of classroom practice.

It was interesting to note that one respondent out of fifteen was a white male. The unique feature about that respondent is that he was the only one who said girls are as good as boys. The implication is that the traditional values in African communities still play a significant role and one would argue that classroom practice is affected in this regard.

The low regard that teachers have about their learners' sense of moral values implies that there is a gap that exists between teachers and learners. One can argue that the gap is one of the causes of the destruction of the culture of teaching and learning that exist in schools, especially in African communities. Something needs to be done to help learners clarify their values and equip them with skills of value analysis. One can argue that that will go a long way towards improving classroom practice which in turn can improve the end of the year results.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Ongoing research needs to be pursued to find out how teachers feel about the inclusion of learners in the governing bodies of schools from another vantage point.

Teachers' beliefs about learners is important because how teachers view learners' inclusion in the governing bodies of schools will affect the way they teach in one way or the other. This is because teachers have encounters with learners on a day to day basis. Pursuing this study further will go a long way towards improving classroom practice.

The fact that there were no girls in the governing bodies of the schools where interviews were conducted needs to be pursued further to find out the underlying causes.

It would be interesting to find out from learners who are members of the governing bodies of schools how they perceive teachers as members of the governing body. That will in turn help the educational planners know how what is laid down as an Act apply in practice.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS/PROMPTS

I   **Personal Details**

 (i)   Sex

(ii)   Rank

(iii)   How long have you been teaching?

(iv)   Are you a member of the governing council?

 (v)   Are you aware that pupils in Grade 8 and higher are included in the governing bodies of schools?

II   **Piaget**

 (i)   How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?

(ii)   How can you compare the reasoning of Grade 8 and Grade 12? Is it better and why is it better?

(iii)   In what area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the governing council of schools?

(iv)   What do you think influences development?

III   Kohlberg

(i)   Do you think pupils can argue/question things that they do not understand according to your experience or as you see in the governing council meetings?

(ii)   Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?

(iii)   Do you think pupils know about morals and values of society?

(iv)   To what extent do pupils question authority that is designed for them?

(v)   How do boys compare to girls in terms of morality?

APPENDIX 2

TRANSCRIPT OF THE INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS

TEACHERS MENTAL MODEL OF LEARNERS COGNITIVE and MORAL DEVELOPMENT WITH REFERENCE TO THE INCLUSION OF LEARNERS IN THE GOVERNING BODIES OF SCHOOLS.

N.B.   R = RESEARCHER T = TEACHER
           ALL RESPONDENTS ARE EXPERIENCED WITH THE GRADE LEVEL.

RESPONDENT 1

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	H.O.D.
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Not a member.

R: *Are you aware that Grade 8 and higher are included in the governing council of schools?*

T: Yes.

R: *Do you think pupils are ready developmentally to be included in the governing council?*

T: I do not think there will be a time when we can say there are ready but in the past we had S.R.C. doing the job and in a way there will be a learning process, but I do not think they are ready.

R: *Being in the governing council requires one to be a leader and one of the job of the governing council members is to draw a code of conduct for the learners. Do you think Grade 8 can do that?*

T: I do not think Grade 8 can do that.

R: *Do you think Grade 12 can do that?*

T: Yes I think Grade 12 can do that.

R: *In which aspect do you think the involvement of pupils in council will help them to grow?*

T: Their leadership skills will develop. They will feel confident, they will part of the decision making of the school. They will also be exposed to budget making of the school.

R: *Would you say the social aspect contribute to their being effective members of the governing council?*

T: Yes I think so.

R: *Can the Grade 8 argue or question things that they do not understand?*

T: Some do, they have been exposed to activities outside the school, the youth clubs have given them experience.

R: *Do you think the Grade 12 or 8 can do that effectively?*

T: I think Grade 12.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of what is right or wrong because I would imagine that being a member of the governing council requires one to be just and fair?*

T: We are teaching at Imbali, whatever decision pupils take they think of the community, pupils cannot come out.

R: *So are you saying pupil do have a sense of justice but because of the environment they cannot come out?*

T: Yes, one teacher was assaulted by our pupils but the S.R.C. members feared that pupil who assaulted the teacher, the matter just ended like that, pupils were afraid to challenge that.

R: *Do you think pupil know about the values of the society?*

T: They know about what society values but they do not cherish them.

R: *To what extend do pupils challenge the authority that is designed for them?*

T: They challenge it if it is challenging.

R: *Would you say the higher or lower grade can do that well?*

T: I would say the higher grades.

R: *Who do you think is better suited to be in the governing council between boys and girls?*

T: I would say boys, because they are more influential they tend to exhibit leadership s ils than girls.

R: *Do you think pupils that you teach can make rational decisions?*

T: Gradually they are developing that, they are unlike us who accepted everything that was said and we did not question.

R: *Would you say the higher or lower grades can do that effectively?*

T: I think the higher grade.

RESPONDENT 2

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Male
RANK:	H.O.D.
EXPERIENCE:	13 Years.
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes.

N.B. THE SECOND RESPONDENT HAD A CUT OFF IN ELECTRICITY WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESEARCHER BY THE TIME IT WAS DISCOVERED, IT WAS TOO LATE, BUT THE RESEARCHER MANAGED TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING:

R: Do you think pupils can question authority that is designed for them?

T: Under the old system, I think the government exposed their will on the pupils. Pupils have been conscientized and they are not willing to accept what the authorities tell them. The recent incident that we experienced in July was a way of showing resistance on the part of the pupils.

R: How can you compare boys to girls in terms of being effective members of the governing council?

T: I would like to have seen that there is one boy and one girl. I wonder if that should have been in the legislation. Personally I think that girls are as good as boys.

R: Do you think pupils can make rational decisions concerning school matters?

T: That is based on the individual, some people tend to be emotional. I think that if you can reason something out with the students, they can see the sense of your point of view. The problem is that we have not worked out these issues with the students, what we are busy doing is drawing out a code of conduct that will be interesting to see that we can reach a common ground.

R: You said you preferred higher grade to lower grade?

T: Whoever is elected in the council I am certain that pupils will elect someone who is capable to represent them but an older student will be most preferred than a younger one.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they included in the governing council?*

T: They will learn to work together with parents and teachers.

R: *Do you think pupils will grow in their thinking?*

T: Yes.

R: *Do you think pupils are rational enough to be included in governing council?*

T: I think pupils follow the same route that we as teachers do, we discuss something and that all point is heard and a consensus is reached. So long as there is proper discussion, I think pupils are capable of saying this is the best way to go. I think if we can do that it can work.

RESPONDENT 3

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX: Male
RANK: Assistant teacher
EXPERIENCE: 10 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: Yes

R: *How do you feel about pupils being included in the governing council of schools?*

T: It is a good thing it will make pupils grow. The manner in which it is handled I think it is a problem. A kind of training is needed. To have somebody in the council without knowing how the governing council function and what is expected of that person is a problem.

R: *You said you would love to see pupils being trained as members of the governing council. As a teacher were you trained as governing council members? Do you mean that pupils need training because they are still young and teachers are adults?*

T: It cannot be an adult but the minister should taken upon themselves to train the governing council members. The sponsorship is suppose to come from the government to train the pupils.

R: *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I do not know how that decision was reached but I think the class representative should have been used to include pupils in the governing council.

R: *Would you say Grade 12 is better than Grade 8?*

T: Yes I think so.

R: *In which aspect do you think pupils will grow if they are included in the governing council?*

T: Their reasoning will improve. A mature person has to do that if you are faced with a problem one has to consult and reason and take the best option. So a person in the governing council has to have that mentality.

R: *Would you agree with me in saying that if pupils are included in the governing council their thinking will improve?*

T: Yes I will agree with you but some people will say that leadership skills will improve if pupils are included in the governing council.

R: *Would you agree with me in saying that the school has a direct effect in making pupil to be effective members of the council?*

T: Definitely, the manner you handle the kids whatever you do with them you make them reason. The school is suppose to do that. Instead of giving them an answer let them search for a particular response, make them creative make them reason, let them consider other factors so that they know which one is the best.

R: *Are you saying the school make pupils to be effective members of the council?*

T: Yes it contribute.

R: *Do you think pupils can question issues that they do not understand?*

T: Usually in our time we usually had debates. In debates one has to argue and question things. You do not take the point of what your opponent is saying. You put a defence you know where the truth is moving towards.

R: *So you think your pupils have the potential of questioning things?*

T: Yes, they have the potential, its just that aspect need to be explored and developed. The family also contribute a lot. If for instance the father of the pupil is a lawyer that child will be exposed to argument.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness because I would imagine that being a member of the governing council requires one to be just and fair?*

T: If you win on something that benefit the whole group I think that is just and fair N.B. NOT CLEAR. Researcher failed to pick up what is meant by that particular response.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: They know but are not aware of that. They may only know once that is speculated.

The other thing is that what makes other pupils to be more popular than others become a value. Sometimes what is put as a value is sometimes over valued.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: That is a critical point to know how pupils spell out their dissatisfaction. Pupils rebel and resist authority. I would like them to negotiate things. I have found that pupils do not speak out their ideas but they speak out their anger and mobilise themselves.

R: *Do they accept the authority that you give them?*

T: One thing I realise is that you suggest something to them you make them realise, (N.B. the other part was not clear)

R: *How do boys compare to girls in terms of being effective members of the governing council.*

T: Boys are given freedom and girls are prohibited. You often find that the boy who is suppose to take the lead is sometimes as good as a girl.

R: *Would you say that boys are more capable than girls?*

T: Not really.

RESPONDENT 4

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX: Male
RANK: Principal
EXPERIENCE: 13 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: Yes

R: *Are you aware that pupils in Grade 8 and higher are included in the governing council of schools?*

T: Yes I am aware.

R: *Do you think pupils are well developed to be members of the governing council?*

T: Basically they are not well developed but I am positive for their inclusion, I would like them to be workshopped before they are included.

R: *Are you happy with Grade 8?*

T: Yes they can do well but only if they will be included the following year. The problem is that their inclusion is only a one year thing.

R: *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I would be unhappy if the grade level was lowered.

R: *Are you happy with Grade 12?*

T: Yes Grade 12 is okay.

R: *In which aspect do you think pupils will develop if they are included in governing council?*

T: It will help in bringing about transparency especially in financial matters. We have monthly reports, that will help in bringing about transparency and clarity.

R: *In that way do you think pupils will develop in managing the school funds?*

T: They will grow in as far as forming part of the communication with the learners.

R: *Do you think pupils can argue or question things that they do not understand?*

T: I would say they are able, I do not know whether they chose sensible learners.

R: *What about Grade 8?*

T: None of them are Grade 8, we only have Grade 11 and 12.

R: *But according to your experience do you think Grade 8 can do well?*

T: I do not think Grade 8 can do well but if they are re-elected the following year I think they can do well.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?*

T: At this school I have seen some of them displaying that when they are among the learners they do not change attitude.

R: *Do they become unpopular with the learners?*

T: To some of the learners because some learners are not here to learn.

R: *If you look at the ones who regard them as unpopular is it the ones who are doing well academically or not?*

T: It is the ones who are not doing well in the classroom.

R: *Do you think pupils bring in the values of the society in governing councils meetings?*

T: I am new in this institution

R: *What about your experience in general?*

T: In rural areas pupils do not understand the values of society.

R: *Would you say the school is not doing enough to instill values to the pupils.*

T: It is not the school alone but it forms part of the aspect which should instill values of the society.I think pupils need to be workshopped to be effective members of the council.

R: *Do you think pupils need training to be effective members of the council?*

T: Yes I think so.

R: *What about teachers?*

T: Yes I think teachers need to be workshopped but not as much as pupils.

R: *To what extent do pupils accept authority that is designed for them?*

T: The representation of the learners in the council is only two, it does not carry much weight to perhaps make them question authority. But they do question if there is something that they do not understand.

R: *How do boys compare to girls in terms of morality?*

T: I think boys are better than girls, because in the community boys have positions, that give them experience to be effective members of the council.

R: *Would you prefer boys to girls to be in the council?*

T: Yes I would prefer boys because boys have greater influence than girls and boys are problematic, they need to be represented.

R: *Would you say your pupils are rational enough to be included in the governing council?*

T: No I do not think they are rational, they need guidance.

R: *Do you make them buy your idea if they question things?*

T: Yes we try to convince them and they often listen and accept what is said and they become content.

RESPONDENT 5

PERSONAL DETAILS

    SEX: Male
    RANK: Principal
    EXPERIENCE: 14 Years
    INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL: Yes

R: *How do you feel about pupils being included in the governing council of schools?*

T: I would not like the Grade 8 to be included in the governing council because they are not mature enough. I am happy with the higher grades because they are mature. Their involvement in the running and management of the school help them to take whatever is discussed in the council back to the students. The young ones do not trust the older people, this will help to bridge that gap.

R: *In what area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the governing council?*

T: The aspect that will develop is that of leadership, pupils will acquire skills that will help them to work together with other people.

R: *Do you think pupils can argue or question things that they do not understand?*

T: In our case we have trained the members of the council. They went to a workshop where they were told that everyone has to question things that they do understand and challenge whatever decision that is taken, not to fight but perhaps give reasons as to why they do not agree. Pupils even go to the extent of asking for a caucus in the meeting. They have been involved in drawing up a constitution.

R: *Do you think pupils have improved since they are involved in the governing council?*

T: I would say they have improved, we have a good example of a boy in Grade 11 who was not liked by everybody. After the training he was liked by everybody because his thinking has changed he respond positively in school matters

R: *Would you say the involvement in the council made him to improve his thinking or the workshop that he went to.*

T: I would say both because if students are not workshopped they will just keep quiet in the meeting because they do not have the skill or experience which will make them to question issues. It is important to teach them skills. If pupils are not trained they will quiet be in meetings and go outside and organize themselves and destabilise the school.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness because being in the governing council requires one to be just and fair?*

T: Our children have not been exposed to many things. They have been working within the confines of the family. The same thing happen when they go to school. It is difficult to say but when you work with them that element does come out, to give you an example we had a meeting for drawing up a code conduct for the pupils. One boy said that we need a code of conduct for the teachers as well.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: They know about the values of the society, when there was violence pupils said we need to come together and normalise the situation.

R: *Would you say the school contribute in instilling values?*

T: Yes the school played a big role.

R: *Did the pupils accept those values?*

T: A substantial number accepted them.

R: *How do boys compare to girls in terms of morality?*

T: I think boys perform as well as girls.

R: *In issues which require high level thinking, have you found your pupils participating in that?*

T: They participate in whatever decision that need to be taken. They even go to the extent of reminding us of things that we did not take seriously. I would say the higher grades can do that well.

A

RESPONDENT 6

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Male
RANK:	Assistant teacher
EXPERIENCE:	5 Years.
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *Do you think Grade 8 have the capacity to be involved in the governing council of the school?*

T: Grade 8 are immature they are not in a stage of critical thinking.

R: *Would you prefer Grade 12?*

T: Yes I would prefer older ones.

R: *Would you be happy if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I would be unhappy.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: Not clear.

R: *What will influence their development?*

T: Not that they are just clever (NOT CLEAR)

R: *Do you think pupils can question things that they do not understand?*

T: Some of them do question.

R: *Do they give sound reasons or they become emotional and do not become assertive enough?*

T: Sometimes you find that they get influence from outside, but their argument are not good arguments.

R: *Would you say the higher grades or the lower grades can do that effectively?*

T: I would say the higher grades.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: They are neglected by their society.

R: *Do you think schools should teach the values to the pupils?*

T: It is difficult to do that because of violence.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice?*

T: Some of them.

R: *Would you say those in higher or lower or grades?*

T: Those in higher grades.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: I think they will develop more on the administrative side. They will also improve in the leadership qualities.

R: *What about their thinking?*

T: Their thinking will improve.

R: *Does the school contribute to the development of the pupils?*

T: No I think the environment contribute to making pupils to be effective members of the governing council.

R: *Can the pupils argue or question issues that they do not understand?*

T: Yes they can especially the boys, the girls are too shy.

R: *Don't they become emotional if they question and by that lack facts?*

T: Yes they become emotional. I have seen students do that because they have outside influence.

R: *Do they have sound reasons for their argument?*

T: Yes they do because some of them have valid reasons especially the higher grades.

R: *Do you think pupils know about justice and fairness and are willing to exercise it?*

T: Not at all.

R: *Who do you think can do that well?*

T: I think the higher grades.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: I think the higher grades have a good knowledge of what society values.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: In the beginning of the year pupils are given authority, and later on in the year they say they do not want certain rules.

R: *Do they become convincing to the management?*

T: Yes, especially the older students, but one can see that they get outside influence.

R: *How do boys compare to girls in the governing council?*

T: I think boys do well in the council, girls are shy.

RESPONDENT 7

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX: Female
RANK: Assistant teacher
EXPERIENCE: 4 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: No

R: *How do you feel about pupils being included in the governing council of schools?*

T: It will be of great importance. Pupils will be able to share about the development of the school.

R: *Are you happy about the grade level?*

T: Yes I am happy.

R: *Would you be unhappy if the grade level was lowered*

T: No I will not be happy.

R: *Do you think the higher grade can do better than lower grade?*

T: Yes, they will be effective.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: I think they will develop on the administrative side, their leadership quality will also improve.

R: *What about their thinking?*

T: Their thinking will develop.

R: *Do you think the school contribute to the development of the pupils?*

T: I think it is the environment which contribute to the development of the pupils.

R: *Do pupils question things that they do not understand?*

T: I have seen boys doing that better than girls.

R: *Do you think pupils know about justice and fairness to be included in the governing council?*

T: Not all of them.

R: *Who do you think can exercise that well between the higher and the lower grades?*

T: It is the higher grades.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the morals and values of the society?*

T: I think the higher grades know about what society values.

R: *To what extent do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: They do question authority when they engage on strike.

R: *Are they convincing to the management?*

T: I think the older students are.

R: *How are girls compared to boys in terms of being effective governing council members?*

T: I think boys do well in the governing council.

RESPONDENT 8

PERSONAL DETAILS

    SEX: Male
    RANK: Assistant teacher
    EXPERIENCE: 5 Years
    INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: Yes

R: *How do you feel about pupils inclusion in the governing council?*

T: I am happy but there are certain things that need to be cleared out. Pupils sometimes demand things that are beyond their rights, so I think they need to be told about their rights.

R: *Are you happy with the Grade 8 being include in the council?*

T: I am not happy I think they are still young.

R: *What about Grade 12?*

T: I am happy with Grade 12.

R: *In which aspect do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: They will learn to be responsible. Their thinking will improve.

R: *Would you say it is the school which help pupils to be effective members of the council?*

T: I think it is the school.

R: *Do you think pupils can argue or question things that they do not understand?*

T: Yes I think the higher grades can do that well.

R: *What criteria do you think pupils used to select members of the council?*

T: Pupils can identify pupils who have leadership qualities. The academic performance is also considered, I think.

R: *Do pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?*

T: They do because if there is anything they are not happy about the governing body members discipline them.

R: *Do they then accept what they say?*

T: They do because they regard governing council members as their mouth piece.

R: *Do pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: They know but the problem is that parents are not willing to accept them.

R: *Do pupils question things that they not understand?*

T: Yes they do question but sometimes they question things that are beyond their rights.

R: *How can you compare boys to girls in terms of morality?*

T: Girls are reserved and they do not want to challenge issues.

RESPONDENT 9

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX: Female
RANK: Assistant teacher
EXPERIENCE: 14 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: No

R: *Are you aware that pupils in Grade 8 and higher are included in the governing council of schools?*

T: Yes.

R: *How do you feel about their inclusion?*

T: For transparency reason I think it is a good thing.

R: *What about Grade 8?*

T: I will be more comfortable with the higher grades than the lower grades because they have more exposure than the lower grade pupils.

R: *Would you be happy if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I think the pupils in the lower grades will say they are neglected because there are some pupils in the lower grades who can do as well as the higher grades. But generally I would be unhappy if the grade level was lowered.

R: *Do you think the inclusion of pupils in the council will help them to develop?*

T: I think so, because being involved in the council will help them to solve problems and by doing that they will be able to solve their own problems in life.

R: *What do you think influence their development?*

T: I think the older you are you become acquainted with the problems that go on at school.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness because I would imagine that being in the council requires one to have a sense of justice and fairness?*

T: I do not think so children often agree with the adults. They know about certain things, so they agree with what the adult say.

R: *Do pupils know about the values of society?*

T: I do not think pupils know about what society values. The fact that our pupils are known as the lost generation, they do not know what is expected of them but there are a few who know.

R: *Would you say the family contribute to the development of a child?*

T: Yes children who come from good families behave very well as compared to those who come from broken families, or families where there is no authority.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: It depend on the type of authority. It is important to discuss with the pupils before it is put down as authority.

R: *How do you feel about boys as compare to girls in terms of morality?*

T: Girls tend to be submissive, they do not question things boys do not do that.

R: *Do you think pupils have the ability to make decisions?*

T: Yes, they do.

R: *What would you say influence them to do that?*

T: In most cases when they feel that they are not treated well, they question things and make a proposition.

RESPONDENT 10

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	H.O.D.
EXPERIENCE:	13 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *How do you feel about pupils being included in the governing council of schools?*

T: One part of me is happy, because we are talking democracy but another part of me is saying "I wonder if pupils will not abuse the power that is given to them." So I have mixed feelings. I hope pupils will use their power in a constructive way.

R: *What makes you say that pupils should make decisions about the school?*

T: I say that pupils are in the majority. They have been on the receiving end. I do not say they should run the school but they need to be helped.

R: *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I would be unhappy if the grade level was lowered although lower grade will say that they are neglected.

R: *Do you think the development of pupils will accelerate if they are included in the council?*

T: I think so, their involvement will accelerate their growth, they will know how to conduct meetings.

R: *Would you say pupils are able to argue or question things that they do not understand?*

T: I think they will be able to do that. Initially pupils tend to be emotional but I think they will learn to put up an argument in a correct manner.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?*

T: To a certain degree, they do they are able to differentiate between right and wrong, but sometimes students get carried away by the mob spirit, but if you talk to them individually they can differentiate between right and wrong.

R: *Do you think pupils know about the values of the society.*

T: I am not sure what kind of society you talking about, do you mean their community? But if you take children from a violent community. The values are not the same as those who come from a normal society. I do not think we can make a general statement and say all children have no morals.

R: *Do you mean that if they come from a violent community then they will be violent in the meetings?*

T: I do not mean they will be violent but the probability of being violent in the meeting will be reflected. They will not be violent in a vacuum but if they come from a community where things are discussed then they will bring that to the meetings.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: The younger pupils tend to be more conforming, but older pupils tend to be more questioning.

R: *How can you compare boys to girls in terms of effectiveness in the governing council?*

T: Boys are outspoken girls are conforming.So I think boys can do well in the council.

RESPONDENT 11

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	H.O.D.
EXPERIENCE:	15 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *Do you know that Grade 8 and higher are included in the governing council of schools?*

T: Yes, I know.

R: *Do you think pupils are ready developmentally to be included in the council.*

T: Yes I think they are ready.

R: *Do you think Grade 8 will do well in the council?*

T: Yes I think so.

R: *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I do not think lower grades can do well because they are still immature.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: Their leadership skill will develop. They will learn to listen to other people's views and be able to understand why that person think the way they do.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of justice and fairness?*

T: Yes, they do but I believe that it is the Grades 12 who have a sense of justice and fairness. They can differentiate between the right and wrong.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: The strikes that we experience in our schools are an indication that pupils do question things that they are not happy about, it is only that they do not do it in a right way.

R: *Would you say the higher or lower grades can do that effectively?*

T: I would say the higher grades can do that well, I have seen that in the meetings that we had.

R: *To what extend do pupils accept the authority that is designed for them?*

T: Pupils do question things, but they do not do it the right way, they need guidance.

R: *What would you say about boys and girls in terms of being effective members of the council?*

T: I have discovered that girls are shy and boys are outspoken. Boys are aggressive.

RESPONDENT 12

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	H.O.D.
EXPERIENCE:	15 Years.
INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *Are you happy with the inclusion of pupils in the governing council?*

T: Yes, I think it is a good thing because I believe that for the smooth running of the school all stakeholders need to be involved.

R: *How would you feel if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I think the higher grades need to be considered.

R: *Why?*

T: I think they are matured.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: Their leadership skills will improve, they will learn to live and work with other people.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of what is right and wrong because I would imagine that being in the council requires one to have a sense of what is right and wrong?*

T: Yes pupils can differentiate between right and wrong.

R: *Would you say the higher or lower grades can do that well?*

T: I would say the higher grades.

R: *Any reason for your choice?*

T: Higher grades are mature as compared to lower grades.

R: Do you think pupils in the council know about the values of the society?

T: They do know the problem is that our pupils are scared to come out.

R: Would you say those in the higher grades or those in the lower grades can do that effectively?

T: I would say those that are in the higher grade.

R: To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?

T: When our pupils are not satisfied about something they usually engage on strike and it is the senior students who take the lead and the young ones follow.

R: How are boys as compared to girls in terms of being effective members of the council?

T: I would say boys do well as compared to girls because boys are outspoken.

RESPONDENT 13

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	H.O.D
EXPERIENCE:	17 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *How do you feel about the inclusion of pupils in the council*

T: I think it is a good thing because pupils are going to have a say in the running of the school.

R: *Would you be happy if the grade level was lowered to say Grade 7 or less?*

T: I think the present grade is right.

R: *Why?*

T: I think the lower grades are immature, the higher grades will represent them.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they included in the governing council?*

T: Pupils leadership skills will improve, they will learn to live with other people, they will learn negotiation skills. etc.

R: *I would imagine that being a member of the council requires one to have a sense of justice and fairness. Do you think pupils that you teach have a sense of what is right and wrong?*

T: Pupils may know about what is right and wrong, putting it into practice is a different thing.

R: *In your experience of the meetings that you have do you think pupils display that?*

T: Unfortunately the pupils who are in the council are the older pupils and they can display that very well.

R: *To what extend do pupils question authority that is designed for them?*

T: Those that we have in the council do question things that they do not understand.

R: *Do pupils know about the values of the society?*

T: Yes they know about values of the society.

R: *Do pupils question things that they do not understand?*

T: I would say they do question things.

R: *How can you compare boys to girls in terms of being effective members of the council?*

T: We do not have girls in the governing council, but in my experience I have seen that girls are reserved and they do not want challenges.

RESPONDENT 14

PERSONAL DETAILS

    SEX: Male
    RANK: Principal
    EXPERIENCE: 15 Years
    INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL: Yes

R: *How do feel about pupils being included in the governing council?*

T: I would say it is a good thing to have pupils in the council.

R: *Would you be happy if the grade level was lowered?*

T: I would be unhappy with the lowering of grade level.

R: *Why?*

T: I think the lower grades may not be able to understand some of the things that are discussed.

R: *In which aspect do you think pupils will grow if they are include in the council?*

T: Pupils will learn communication skills, they will learn to work with other people at a certain level.

R: *Do you think their thinking will improve if they are included in the governing council?*

T: Very much so.

R: *Do pupils question issues that they do not understand?*

T: Yes.

R: *Would you say those in the higher or lower grades can do that well?*

T: Unfortunately in our governing council we only have higher grades.

R: *Do they do that well?*

T: Yes.

R: *If there is something that need questioning do pupils do that?*

T: Yes they do that well.

R: *Do pupils know about the value of the society?*

T: Yes, the problem is that they sometimes fear other pupils and we persuade them to do that.

R: *How can you compare boys to girls in terms of being effective members of the governing council?*

T: I would say boys are good.

RESPONDENT 15

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX:	Female
RANK:	Assistant teacher
EXPERIENCE:	15 Years
INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL:	Yes

R: *Do you think Grade 8 are ready developmentally to be involved in the governing council?*

T: Yes I think they are ready.

R: *Will you be happy if the grade level was lowered?*

T: May be pupils in the lower grades may feel neglected, but I think developmentally they are not ready.

R: *In which area do you think pupils will develop if they are included in the council?*

T: Their leadership qualities will develop they will learn to work with other people.

R: *Do you think their thinking will improve?*

T: Yes.

R: *Do pupils question things that they do not understand?*

T: Yes.

R: *Would you say those who question are the ones in the higher or lower grades?*

T: Unfortunately we do not have lower grades in the council.

R: *In your experience as a teacher?*

T: I would say as the pupils grow older they learn to challenge things.

R: *Do you think pupils have a sense of what is right and wrong?*

T: I have seen them displaying that.

R: *Do they know about the values of the society?*

T: Pupils know about society values the problem is that they are scared to come out and challenge things because of the environment.

R: *How are boys as compared to girls in terms of being effective members of the council?*

T: We do not have girls in the council.

R: *What about your experience in general?*

T: I have seen that girls do not like to come out and challenge issues.