

Challenges of Parental Involvement in Rural Public Schools in Ngaka Modiri Moleme District of North West Province (South Africa)

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Abstract: *This article reports on the findings of a research project which sought to explore the challenges of parental involvement in rural public schools of Ngaka Modiri Moleme in North West province. It shows the state of affairs in rural public school of desperate parents who cannot make any meaningful contribution to their learners' education owing to their disadvantaged educational background, and how their non involvement hampers quality public education in South Africa. This article argues that parental involvement is a constitutional imperative which must be embraced properly by all those with vested interest in sustaining quality public education. The paper further argues that parents in rural public schools around Ngaka Modiri Moleme need intervention in the form of capacity building.*

The research project was based on qualitative research design. The participants included two official from the area office, five principals from the cluster, five teachers; five learners from participating schools and five chairpersons of School Governing Bodies of Schools that served as cases in the research. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. Literature review, document analysis, interviews and observation interlinked with reflective journals were used for data collection. Qualitatively derived data was analysed using critical discourse analysis. Involvement of parents for wrong reasons was cited as number one challenge, Also interference of other colleagues in the management issues and lastly failure by the department of education (DoE) to capacitate parents on issues relating to school governance was hinted as another great challenge. Based on these findings it is recommended that the DoE needs to implement regular capacitate building workshops to parents on school governance issues.

Keywords: *parental involvement, challenges, rural schools, quality education, school governance, public schools.*

1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa has inherited a fragmented and racially divided education system which impacted negatively on the rural communities, what rural schools are experiencing today comes as a direct result of the impact of the system and which is hard to overcome. Interest amongst researchers and policy makers has started to shift to factors outside school that might contribute towards improvement in learning, and it is increasingly being acknowledged that support provided at home by parents and other family members can also play a crucial role in how well children perform at school.

The ongoing tension in schools amongst principals and governing body member is a cause for concern. It shows that after almost 20 years of democracy education has not yet stabilise. Some members of the SGB get elected into the governing structure for wrong reasons other than assisting in improving the quality of public education and as such gang against the management of schools almost in everything, they do, as a result this hampers effective schooling and management especially in rural communities. This is against the African National Congress(ANC)(1994:60), being the ruling party's vision that democratic school governance structure were needed in order to fully developed the potential of the human resources of the country on assuming the reins of government in 1994.

The situation in rural public school needs much to be desired. The quality of public education is compromised by the way our stakeholders handle educational issues. In some schools teaching and learning is hampered by those without interest in the quality of results at the end of the year, Most of time is wasted on series of fruitless governing body meetings which do not necessarily benefit the client.

It is accepted and common knowledge that parents and children have expectations of each other. Parents love their children, and want nothing but the best for them; they are responsible for their children's education and want them to achieve the best in school. They are accountable for what eventually happens to their children after formal education is over. Parental involvement in school setting is a sensitive issue which must be handled with care.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Parental involvement in rural public schools in South African Education is viewed with mixed feelings from interested and affected groups to the learners in the classrooms, some feel that it is a waste of time and educational issues is the prerogative of professionals and must be left as such. Whilst others feel it is their democratic right to know what is happening in the school environment.

It has however been discovered with time that parents in rural communities have not been performing according to the expectations of the South African schools act (RSA,1996) for the advancement of quality public education. Most members were elected in SGB committees and did not even complete their term of office, while others created problems for their schools. The fact that parents in rural schools respond at a very discouraging pace on issues related to education in general has been raised as a serious impediment in the basic functionality of the schools These was raised on several departmental meetings as a concern and warranted attention since it impacts negatively on the children's academic performance. The problem investigated in this study was the overwhelming challenges that manifest themselves in rural public schools and how those challenges could be minimised for the advancement of quality public education in Ngaka Modiri Moleme region of the North West Province.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1. Understanding the Concept Parental Involvement

Reference is usually made to "the parents" as a collective term (Dekker & Lemmer, 1993: 153). However, not everyone has the same understanding of the concept. Dekker & Lemmer (1993: 153) refer to "parents as neither an amorphous nor a homogeneous mass, but they all have one trait in common, namely that they have children". For the purpose of this paper the word 'parent' refers to the entire parents' community of a specific residential area.

In clarify the notion of parental involvement Emerging Voices (HSRC, 2005: 119) defines parental involvement as "a way of involving parents in the education of their children in order to make parents supportive of and informed about their children's progress in school". Parental involvement is a catch-all term that is used to describe a wide variety of activities that range from occasional attendance at school functions, efforts to become better teachers of their own children, to intensive efforts of serving in a school governance and make decisions in the interest of their children's education (Dekker & Lemmer, 1993: 154). Ndlazi(1999:10) explains parental involvement as the availability of parents to work with teachers in the governing structures of schools in the determination of School policy and vision, managing the resources and budgets and selecting staff. Squelch & Lemmer, (1994: 93) view parental involvement as the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities, which may be educational or non-educational. It extends from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home. In their opinion Parent involvement entails mutual co-operation, sharing and support.

Sayed and Carrim (1997:95) distinguish four ways of participation in the governance and management of schools in South Africa:

- Community participation that points to common and shared aspects of human interaction. An unqualified allegiance to community participation becomes increasingly difficult because communities become increasingly fragmented on the grounds of class, sex, race and nationality.
- Participation as partners, which implies that legal partners obtain the right to participate in educational processes.
- Regulated participation, according to which constraints are placed on the nature of participation in an attempt to move away from the potential antagonism that can be caused through participation or the participation of partners.
- Weighted participation, according to which certain groups of participants have more rights than others, for example, parental representatives which, in the present situation in South African Schools would constitute the majority in SGBs.

4. PARENTS AS PARTNERS

In South Africa, the implementation of CAPS represents a change in the curriculum and in the teaching methods. There has been a paradigm shift where focus has shifted from teacher –centred learning to more co-operative learning. This new approach concerns itself with the acquisition of skills and competences instead of collection of theoretical facts and regurgitation of information. This implies a more learner –centred learning approach, which requires commitment of learners who must execute the greater part of the work. In order for them to succeed, they may need more resources such as to internet, journals, books, and many more, but most important they will need parental support. Calitz et al. (2000:112) advice parents, especially those in historically disadvantaged areas that although they may not have the required time and skills to assist their children in this new approach to teaching and learning their motivation may be of imperative. Hoover- Dempsey et al. (2000:3) remind us that parents involve themselves in the school activities, because they believe that it is the right thing to do and as such their involvement will make a constructive contribution towards the development of the School. It must be noted that parental involvement covers a wide spectrum ranging from establishing structures for homework performance to teaching, for understanding and developing student learning strategies. Kahn & Haupt (2006:113) argue that parents’ active involvement in school activities such as assisting their children with homework can improve both the academic achievement of children and the relationship between home and the School. Therefore the state of affairs in education legitimises parents as partners in education and in the new order without questioning.

5. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Potgieter, Visser, van der Bank, Mothata & Squelch (1997: 11) define school governance as the core functions of the school governing body to determine the policy and rules by which their school is to be organised and controlled. It includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school. Governance refers to the act of governing a school to ensure that the school fulfils its functions of providing a relevant, quality service to the learners and the community in which the school is situated. In South Africa, school governance embraces the principles of democracy and equity. Potgieter et al. (1997: 2) state that “the democratisation of education includes the idea that stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners and other members of the community must participate in the activities of the school’. The School Governing Body (SGBs) is made up of parents, educators, non-educator members of staff and learners in the eighth grade or higher, together with the principal they are responsible for governing the school.

The SGB deals with the determination of policies and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, which includes among others ascertaining that such rules and policies are carried out effectively. To achieve this, the school governing body members are allocated certain functions as stipulated in the South African Schools Act.

6. CHALLENGES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement has always been problematic especially for blacks in rural schools (Ndlazi,

1999; Christie, 2001; HSRC, 2005) confirm these conditions. The history of parental involvement in rural schools where the majority of people are black is directly linked to apartheid and colonialism of the last century. The reality is that there is no way in which we can turn a deaf ear on the political influence of the past century. Ndlazi (1999:27) argues that the denial of “blacks” to participate in political and educational issues brought about by the discriminatory legislation of the apartheid government in South Africa was the major factor in discouraging black parents from being involved in education of their children. Although black people’s rights were very limited in the 1970s and 80s, some black parents started demanding their right to be involved in the education of their children.

Sayed and Carrim (1997: 91) stressed that demands of decision-making in schools and school governance structures that include all stakeholders concretely manifested themselves in 1980s in the growth and development of Parent Teacher and Student Associations (PTSAs). However, due to apartheid structures, these bodies resulted in individuals nominated by minority white state and consequently were considered to be illegitimate by the oppressed community (Sayed & Carrim, 1997: 91).

The reality of parental involvement during the apartheid years is that the system only appeared to be involving parents but in essence the whole system was under the direct control of the apartheid government, parents had limited rights and could not challenge or criticize the system and its services. Visser (1981: 59) argues, that “the active involvement of parents and communities in the system of education is provided for by means of School Committees, boards of control.” However, the School Boards referred to, had no powers or rights to challenge the government or school principal. Hence many parents withdrew and believed that the principal and teachers was the only people responsible for their children’s education.

Despite the fact that apartheid and colonialism played a major role in discouraging parental involvement in the governance of South African public schools, the need for change in this area has emerged as a focal point for policy and research. This is because parental involvement is seen as part of the decentralisation of education in the new democratic system. However, the progress of parental involvement in post-apartheid South Africa has not been without its problems. In South Africa,

Although the Schools Act (RSA, 1996) says that all schools must establish governing bodies on which parents have the largest numerical representation. For many, this would have appeared to be a quick solution, but in reality the notion of governing bodies was a long process which was full of obstacles and challenges, considering the challenges of parental involvement experienced in the past, one might ask why parents must be in education, specifically in school governance.

7. ADVANTAGES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental’ involvement in education has many advantages that can benefit other stakeholders such as teachers and learners. According to Griffith (2000: 162), “involvement of parents in their children’s education has long been advocated as integral to positive childhood development and school success” Griffith (2000) adds that the beneficial effects of parent involvement are mostly visible in children’s academic learning and performance. In addition Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 93) claim “parental involvement is vital with benefits such as improving school performance, reducing drop-out rates, decreasing delinquency and developing a more positive attitude towards the school”.

Similarly, Dekker & Lemmer (1993: 165) emphasise that “if the school is to be improved, we need parents who are critical and can make sensible judgements and who do not view changes in the education system as a threat’. According to Emerging Voices (HSRC, 2005: 119), it is important for parents to be involved and supportive of their children’s education because children feel encouraged when their parents are informed about their progress at school Thus it is clear that it is not desirable to exclude parents from involvement in school governance when it is their children who are the main clients and potential beneficiaries of educational organisations.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

Parental involvement is a constitutional obligation since the democratic dispensation in South Africa. The African National Congress opened arms for the participation of community especially

parents of the learners who are enrolled in that school. The constitution dictates that parents as key stakeholders must be part of decision making process in all public schools (RSA, 1996). The constitution sets out certain important values on which the democratic state is based. The constitution requires that education be transformed and democratised in accordance with the main values of the constitution. The democratisation of education includes the idea that stakeholders such as parents, teachers and community members beside parents community must participate in the activities of the school. As part of the process of rebuilding the school system, the South African government passed the South African Schools Act (1996) “in an attempt to give parents the responsibility of managing schools where their children attend and legitimizing parental participation in the life of the school” (HSRC, 2005: 120). Therefore, The SASA provides formal power in education to parents as well as communities. It further creates the expectation for parents to be meaningful partners in schools governance. Van Wyk (2004:50) asserts that with the introduction of school governance, the state’s intention was to secure a framework of governance that was characterised by power sharing between SGBs and the school management teams (SMTs).

The SASA section 23(9) states that “the number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body that have voting rights.” Only a parent who is not employed at the school may be the chairperson of the governing body (RSA, 1996, sect 29 (2); 2001, this shows that the Act wants to empower and encourage parents outside the school premises to be fully involved in the education of their children. Van Wyk (2004: 49) highlights that “parents have been placed in a powerful position with authority to influence fundamental issues, such as school budget, language policy, discipline, and appointment and promotion of teaching and administrative staff.” Therefore, parents and guardians have an accepted role in the education of their children. Parents’ involvement in school governance becomes only visible through the roles, responsibilities and powers they have in SGBs.

SASA (1996), sect (20) stipulates the functions of all Governing Bodies of state schools. Even though the functions of School Governing bodies are clearly set out and visible to all stakeholders, problems concerning the execution of these functions abound. Hence, School Governing Bodies have not been working in an ideal situation. Many issues have been identified and boundaries of responsibilities and capacities have clashed. This is especially the case in rural schools where issues related to governance have been problematic. Some of the problems that local researchers , such as Van Wyk(2004), Msila,(2004) and Mestry, 2006) have identified power struggle , illiteracy and finances as main issues of concern in rural school governance.

9. PROBLEMATIC ISSUES IN RURAL SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The findings of Ndlazi (1999) show the significant role played by the historical background of political, economic, social, and educational factors in parental non- involvement in the governance of a rural school. “ parents described the reasons for their less involvement as caused by lack of finance, work commitment, illiteracy, broken family structure and diminishing value of education” (Ndlazi, 1999: 94). Also, the fact that the parents, in rural areas, are largely illiterate and therefore do not understand their school governance roles. These challenges play themselves out in numerous ways, such as:

10. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The functions of the principal and the SGB in school finances are still a problematic issue with the question of who is responsible and accountable for school funds (Mestry, 2006: 31).

According to some researchers the low education level of some parents’ member especially in disadvantaged communities causes the problem of financial accountability. The study of Adam & Waghid (2005: 30) stressed that “Lack of necessary education level and poor economic conditions among parents in rural areas contribute to their lack of financial skills.” The issue of parents’ low education level appears to be the main reason for problems regarding parents and SGBs financially operating and controlling a school. It is highly impossible that a person who can neither read nor write will successfully be responsible for calculating the expenditures and income of a school. In a similar tone Heystek (2004: 310) argues that in a school where parents have limited skills, knowledge or experiences and even lower level of literacy, they may find it difficult

to assume responsibility for drafting and managing the budget and it now becomes the burden of the principal.

In her recent study of the functions of school governing bodies in managing school finances, Mestry (2006: 31) revealed that there is a common misconception amongst various stakeholders regarding the function of the school governing bodies in managing school funds. In accordance with the stipulation of the Schools Act that the overall governance of the school rests in the governing body, the SGB is accountable to the parents for the efficient and effective management of school funds, and may delegate certain financial functions to the principal, who is the accountable to the SGB.

The whole issue of financial responsibility and accountability revolves around the issues of knowledge and power. Mestry (2006: 33) found that there is a lack of collaboration among stakeholders. In many instances, the principals are not prepared to share the responsibility of school governance lest they lose their power, and resort to the intentional withholding of information with regard to school finances. Furthermore, Mestry (2004: 34) states that: "some members of SGB use to be excluded from financial decisions; treasures lack financial skills and merely sign cheques, which they are not sure of."

The South African government remains committed to a long term goal in the schooling system wherein all schools become responsible for managing the non –personnel funds received from the state (DoE, 1993:20). The SGBs should have the capacity not only to manage finances well but also to translate these financial resources into physical resources that will be most cost effectively promote quality education. Lazarus and Davidoff (2002:106) stress that members of the school community need to be equipped to analyse budgets and financial statements and where necessary to manage finances. In many rural schools this might remain a dream as "poor communities tend to lack access to resources, information or organisational skills to appropriately influence decisions about education or other social services" (Mathonsi, 2004:20). Many governors in rural areas have limited skills because of their low literacy level and a "negative attitudes towards school activities" (Heystek&Louw,1999:21). This is not unique to South Africa as Creese and Early (1992:2) stress that a growing body of research shows that schools in disadvantaged and deprived locations are less able to recruit governors or to find governors with the necessary skills and expertise that schools require. "Many people elected to become SGB members lack confidence either to put themselves forward or once appointed found it difficult to contribute fully to the work of the governing body" (Creese& Early, 1992:25).

11. POWER RELATIONS

Foucault (1982:791 -793) asserts that "power always entails a set of actions performed upon another person's actions and reactions". This implies the actions taken by either the SGB or principal in their power struggle over each other in the school, in order to be in a position of authority. Bagarette (2011:225) asserts that there are still many principals who are undermining the status, roles and functions of the SGBs in their schools; a situation that has the potential to lead to a power struggle and ultimately conflict. McLellan (1996:44) states that principals can no longer regard themselves as sole governors of their Schools; they have to share power with the SGBs which is a difficult thing to do. Mestry (2006:28) concurs with McLellan's argument that many principals get threatened by the existence of SGBs since they (SGBs) have been given powers and responsibilities of managing the school's finances. Bagarette(2011:225) adds that it stands to reason that some principals are not willing to share and would resist sharing power, because they are used to having cling to power in order to manage the affairs of the entire school including finances. Now, they no longer possess the sole power of managing the school and of taking decisions.

Financial matters are not the only issues where principals and SGB members fail to draw the line over disputes. Other misunderstandings lie in power relations between the two groups. Power problems and disagreements often erupt in SGBs when there is a feeling that the principal is trying to dominate the rest of the SGB or when the chairperson of the SGB tries to overpower the principal.

12. CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT

Participative management includes the idea of inviting people to share into decision making process. Karstanje (1999:29) asserts that participation involves the assignment of decision making tasks to lower levels. According to him participative decision making is one of the key features of participative management, whereby all members of the organisation are given an opportunity to make a contribution in the affairs of the organisation and be part of decisions making process so that they can easily own them. According to Du Preez, (2003:70) joint or participative decision making will facilitate a pleasant work climate and job satisfaction. Participative decision making requires mutual understanding and co-operation among participants and becomes more effective when all people get involved in making decisions that contribute towards the realisation of the organisational goals and objectives. When people are encouraged to participate in the organisation' activities they always feel motivated and empowered. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002:176) conclude that when people in any context participate in shaping the life and direction of that situation to satisfy all involving parties. Openness, trust, transparency and people participate; the more meaningful they will be able to participate

13. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was conducted in the backdrop of section 24(1)(a) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 which promulgated that parents should be involved in the education of their children. To fulfil this requirement, each school is expected to have a legally constituted (SGB) as part of school governance. The involvement of the SGB does not exclude parents involving themselves in school activities as individuals but as organised groups geared towards on a specific project of the school. Involvement also implies helping the child at home. The study investigated the extent to which parents in rural public schools involve themselves in school activities as envisaged by the SASA.

14. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study is located in the class of qualitative research design. The qualitative approach looks at the events in their natural setting and the meanings people attach on them (Mouton, 2001:150). This entails that there is no social reality, but different interpretations held by individuals and groups. The qualitative researchers therefore are concerned with the interpretive understanding of human experiences of the phenomena (Neuman, 2003:126). Neuman,(2003: 192) adds that qualitative research typically investigates behaviour as it occurs naturally in non-contrived situations, thus there is no manipulation of conditions or experiences.

15. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

In the research report, a broader input was obtained from a functional structure and other stakeholders groups of the school as the units of observation. These units of observation comprised of one official from the district office ; five principals from the cluster; five teachers from each school; five learners of participating schools; five School Governing Body chairpersons of selected schools that served as cases in the research. The sample is representative of the Lichtenburg Area Office.

16. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data were obtained through face- to- face interviews; document analysis and observations interlinked with reflective notes.

17. DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using analytical descriptive approach which aimed at providing an analytical description of promotion of public involvement of parents in rural public schools (Mouton, 2001:150). In this context the steps followed in analysing data were as follows:

Transcribing raw data; organising and preparing data for further analysis; reading through all data; coding the data in order to form themes and categories which ultimately enable the researcher to interpret the meaning of themes (Creswell, 2009:185).

18. THE ETHICAL ISSUES

Guided by Neuman's (2003:126) guidelines, these principles were adhered to:

Permission to conduct research was requested from DOE and the school authorities; no participant was coerced to be part of the study; the purpose of the research was explained; Participants remained unanimous. Participants' privacy was respected and their safety was guaranteed.

19. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE REPORT

This report complied to the suggestion advocated by Maree (2010:80) that multiple methods of data collection such as interviews, observation and document analysis which should be used for confirming trustworthiness. In addition, involving several investigators and peer researchers to assist with the interpretation of the data also enhance trustworthiness. To test the extent to which the study measured whatever it was measuring consistently (Best & Khan, 2003:285); categories of the frequency occurring data were identified and checked. Since the main issue of reliability is dependability (Neuman, 2003:184), data was established by capturing all interviews on a tape recorder and transcribed in writing. During the transcription exercise only irrelevant information was omitted from the transcription and all attempts were made to reproduce the interview scripts as accurately as possible. Interviews were unbiased and researcher avoided asking leading questions in his interview.

20. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study revealed that parents in black rural public schools do not involve themselves in school related activities. It was also found out that the non-involvement of parents in school was to great extent not deliberate and was influenced by factors beyond the control of parents. The following factors were raised as concerns:

21. ILLITERACY

The study identified illiteracy as one of the major factors that militate against the parents', meaningful involvement in school. A parent who is illiterate cannot read and write as a result cannot assist his or her child with anything that requires reading and writing. They cannot also function effectively as treasures and secretaries of the governing bodies of their schools. Cooter(2006:698) differentiated between functional illiteracy and intergenerational illiteracy. A functionally illiterate parent is an adult who does not have adequate reading skills to fill out a job application, read a food label, or read a story to a child. These individual often lack the literacy skills needed to find and keep a decent job. Heystek (2004: 310) argues that:

In a school where parents have limited skills, knowledge or experiences and even lower level of literacy, they may find it difficult or impossible to assume responsibility for drafting and managing the budget and it now becomes the burden of the principal.

22. SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS

It was revealed that many of the participants came from families affected by poverty and most learners live with either their grandmothers because their biological mothers are away from home or dead, Most lived on shacks and mud made houses. Parents were unemployed and survived on government social grants and as such they are challenged by their daily struggle for economic survival. Research has found that parents' socio – economic status is seen as the determinant of their level of involvement in the education of their children. Barbour et al.(2008:73) write that many children from this class of are at risk, meaning that nutrition and health care are minimal, and illness, diseases and neglect are common. It is recommended that school managers develop a strategy by which to identify such learners so that they can provide necessary support to their families, because they learn and develop in the family as well as the school. Risimati (2001:123) maintains that schools support families by providing opportunities to strengthen parenting skills, enhance parental networks and minimise the stresses of parenting.

23. LACK OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Participants' responses revealed lack of honest, two way communication between the school and families. Principals and teachers showed that they used written communication, such as letters,

newsletters, and memoranda to communicate with parents. It is commendable to use these methods, but it is a one way form of communication. Therefore it is recommended that school managers should have scheduled times for parent/teacher contacts spread throughout the year, such as general parents meetings, home visits by teachers, school visits by parents and parents' teacher conferences. Cox-Peterson (2011:92) recommended that school managers must employ multiple communication methods.

24. BARRIERS TO PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Many barriers were sited during interviews as hindrance for lack of parental involvement by participants. Barriers such as time factor, lack of skills, poor communication channels were mentioned. Most of these barriers are realistic; however, school managers should assist parents in ensuring that they support their children in order to succeed in school and life in general. Cox-Peterson (2011:92) writes that all barriers which challenge the development and sustainability of educational partnership will have to be acknowledged, addressed and overcome in order for partnership to be successful. Many governors in rural areas have limited skills because of their low literacy level and a "negative attitudes towards school activities"(Heystek& Louw,1999:21).This is not unique to South Africa as Creese and Early (1992:2) stress that a growing body of research shows that schools in disadvantaged and deprived locations are less able to recruit governors or to find governors with the necessary skills and expertise that schools require.

25. LACK OF CAPACITY

The study revealed that most of the Participants expressed concern in relation to their lack of skills and capacity which can assist them in discharging their governance related issues. Lack of financial skills was referred to on many occasions, and they blame it on the DoE for failing to provide them with the necessary continued capacity building workshops.

Mestry (2004: 34) states that "some members of SGB use to be excluded from financial decisions; treasures lack financial skills and merely sign cheques, which they are not sure of. as a result lack of effective financial control measures was identified.

The South African government remains committed to a long term goal in the schooling system wherein all schools become responsible for managing the non personnel funds received from the state (DoE, 1993:20).The SGBs should have the capacity not only to manage finances well but also to translate these financial resources into physical resources that will be most cost effectively to promote quality education. Lazarus and Davidoff (2002:106) stress that members of the school community need to be equipped to analyse budgets and financial statements and where necessary to manage finances. In many rural schools "poor communities tend to lack access to resources, information or organisational skills to appropriately influence decisions about education or other social services" (Mathonsi, 2004:20).

26. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The DoE should provide regular capacity building workshops and basic reading, mathematical and writing skills to be added to the training manuals for SGB parent component during their training sessions.
- Parents should be encouraged to take advantage of institutions such as AET and enrol in order to deal with the challenges of illiteracy.
- Principals to be train on new approaches to management such as co-operative management and paradigm shift in school leadership and management issues.
- Teachers and principals to be orientated on departmental legislations such as SASA, and be made aware on the dangers of ignoring the contents thereof.
- Parents to be motivated and be shown their importance as key stakeholder in the education of their children.
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27. CONCLUSION

In the light of the preceding findings it has become obvious that parental involvement in public schools is cause for concern. If schools aspire to ensure greater parental involvement there is need to change from their narrow vision approach and experiment with the implementation of measures to ensure effective and active parental involvement as indicated in recommendations of the research report.

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