

**EXPLORING THE RURAL PRINCIPALS'
INTERPRETATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE SOUTH
AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT IN UTHUNGULU DISTRICT**

BY

DAVID SIBONAKALISO CHONCO

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BY

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late parents Mr J.M Chonco and Mrs E.P. Chonco for their endless support throughout my education career even though they had severely limited resources and school experience. It is through their vision that I have been able to venture into some terrains that I have achieved.

It is also dedicated to my lovely wife Sihle, and my children Asanda, Thobeka, Unathi and Nqoba for their emotional and spiritual support.

DECLARATION

I, David Sibonakaliso Chonco, declare that the dissertation: **Exploring the rural principals' interpretation and compliance with the South African Schools Act in Uthungulu District** represents my own work and that all resources have been acknowledged by means of references.

D. S CHONCO

ABSTRACT

Schools are institutions that are responsible for children's education. They are where people exercise their constitutional rights in education and the means for the government to develop its educational goals. This necessitates the presence and existence of clear guidelines, acts and policies of which the South African Schools Act (SASA) is one. All the relevant stakeholders, that is, the learners, educators, parents, professional bodies and other interested parties must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Constitution as everything that SASA tries to achieve is within the framework of the Constitution. The rationale of this study therefore is to determine the gap between what SASA determines to be done in schools and what is obtained in schools with special reference to rural schools in UThungulu District.

The study aimed at answering the following questions:

- How do rural school principals interpret South African Schools Act in Uthungulu District?
- To what extent do rural school principals in Uthungulu District comply with South African Schools Act?

The researcher used questionnaires to gather data. The study revealed that most rural school principals from Nkandla, Umthonjaneni, Mlalazi and Mfolozi Circuits have knowledge of SASA but some of them are selective in complying with. They had challenges on the implementation of the alternatives to corporal punishment and the process of suspension and expulsion. The study further revealed that most principals believed in having morning assembly where religious observances are practised and daily briefings are given to learners.

In view of the findings of the study which indicates that most respondents have knowledge of SASA but have challenges with regard to compliance, the researcher therefore recommends that there must be empowerment programmes for rural school principals regarding the understanding of and compliance with South African Schools Act policies. These must involve empowerment and development of democratic school governing body members on a quarterly basis. Furthermore there should be incentives for school governing body members in order to have ownership of and be accountable for the powers vested in them in the governance of the schools.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In all countries education is governed by number of legislations. It is imperative that the stakeholders know these legislation and South Africa as a country has adopted school act which is termed South African Schools Act (SASA). SASA is one of the most important national laws governing schools. It provides a comprehensive national legal framework that sets minimum uniform standards for the education, governance and funding of schools throughout the country (Barry2006:15). As an Act, SASA's key point is that stakeholders in education must accept their responsibilities concerning the organisation, governance and funding of schools. One of the objectives of this act is to ensure that schools provide good education and that they function properly (Joubert & Prinsloo 2001:19).

The Republic of South Africa has a long history of apartheid and different forms of unfair discrimination in education. Laws like the Bantu Education Act No 47 of 1953, the Education and Training Act No. 90 of 1979, and the National Policy for General Education Affairs Act No. 10 of 1986 confirm that the South African education system was based on race and ethnicity.

The SASA of 1996 replaced all such acts with the intention of abolishing discrimination in education. It provides a theoretical legal framework for employees charged with the responsibility of providing education as a service to communities (Shaba, Campher, Du Preez, Grobler, & Lock 2003:10). In this sense, acts (including SASA) are there to provide leadership to education managers at all levels. A challenge to the application of any legislation lies with securing a common and uniform understanding which would ensure maximum achievement of departmental goals and objectives. This then gives rise to a discrepancy between the standards set out in the Act and levels of performance and interpretation on the ground.

While law is a product of culture and concrete temporal reality, it is rare to find schools where all laws of the Department of Basic Education are applied without any level of difficulty (Oosthuizen 2003:10). In South Africa we have a piece of legislation which

stipulates clearly how schools should be run but there are serious observations that are picked up in different schools which makes the researcher to believe that principals do fall short in their delegated responsibilities as spelt out in the South African Schools Act. Such observations are as follows, dysfunctionality in schools as a result of poor relations between the school principal and the school governing body which is caused by non- accountability of the principal on matters that talks to finances causing the parents close down the school, financial mismanagement by the school governing body, faction fights in the community causing learners to fight within the school premises thus disrupting teaching and learning leading to the total shut down of the school, high level of vandalism and school governing body unable to repair doors and windows, teachers travelling long distances to schools and the governing body unable to provide accommodation for the teachers, school governing body interfering with the day to day running of the school particularly on educator matter and the involvement of traditional leadership in disciplining learners.

This study therefore exposes the gap between what SASA determines to be done in schools and what is obtained in schools with special reference to rural schools in Uthungulu District, and in doing so sheds light on the hypothesis that rural schools in some areas are still stuck in the disadvantaged past of using local principles which, with the dawn of democracy, were replaced by modern acts such as SASA.

As a post-apartheid act, SASA is rooted in the South African Constitution which has the Freedom Charter as its point of reference. In some areas, the terrain on which this legislation is supposed to be implemented is somehow not conducive. South Africa has a challenge of being strongholds of certain political parties other than the ruling party. Therefore this brings the issues and possibilities of resistance and disregard of post-apartheid achievements under the ruling party. This then poses a serious challenge to new acts like the South African Schools Act.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

It is evident from foregoing exposition that South African government strives for a school environment that respects human rights and fundamental freedom. In terms of Section 8 (1) of SASA (DoE 1996:8), discipline must be maintained in schools so that the culture of teaching and learning can run smoothly without any disruptive behavior.

The far reaching outcome of this clause on a national platform is the achievement of critical and development outcomes of educating learners to being able to demonstrate an understanding of interrelationship, working with others as team members and for being responsible citizens of South Africa.

It seems that ever since the abolition of corporal punishment according to section 10 of SASA, the achievements of these outcomes are gradually declining as discipline problems have lately been increasing in schools. More cases of disruptive behavior are reported in schools such as corporal punishment. It is important to find out what is happening in the brain of the learner with behavior problems which can cause the learner to be frustrated and exhausted (Bechuke & Debeila:2012). Van Tassel (2011:01) indicates that educators do not know alternative discipline methods which allow for increased student autonomy. This is also confirmed by Oosthuizen (2007:1) who states that the abolition of corporal punishment left a definite vacuum in methods of dealing with learner misconduct. Thus managing learner behavior has become one of the most problematic in schools since the banning of corporal punishment (Tiwane, 2010:1).

One of the primary responsibilities of the educators is to help student learn (Barbette, Norana & Bicard 2005). It is difficult for learning to take place in a chaotic environment. Thus educators are grappling daily with the responsibility to create and maintain a positive, productive classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. In addressing this challenge, educators find themselves making mistakes in managing common classroom behavior.

This issue of learner discipline is widely regarded as having its roots in the years of protest against the apartheid government. Previously, Black majority used strikes and demonstrations against policies of apartheid government which made it challenging to establish the culture of teaching and learning in schools. This problematic history has led to an emphasis on learners` rights (Pendlebury & Enslin 2004). Mc Lennan (2000:295) links these issues together in her study of schools in Gauteng. Her study identified that in township schools there was a culture of entitlement which made learners unwilling to do any work.

The South African Schools Act 8 of 1996 states that discipline must be maintained in the school and classroom situations so that the education of learners can flourish

without disruptive behavior (DoE. 1996:8). The Act places the responsibility of maintaining discipline on the educators. It also stipulates the regulations for disciplinary measures at schools and categorically states that dangerous objects and drugs are not allowed on school premises. However, learners continue to bring weapons into school premises and at times use them against other learners and their educators (Zulu, Urbani & Van der Merwe 2004).

In any organisation, whether government or non-government organisation (NGO), there must be a legal body that is accountable for and whereby all the relevant affairs are directed to. In a school situation, governance and its affairs is ruled by the SGB which is the representative of the school that is mandated by education law to service the school affairs and the school management. Such laws are stipulated in the South African Schools Act (SASA) No. 84 of 1996. This demands a certain extent of accountability to the parties involved. According to Sagor (1996) accountability is a professional requirement which is established by the knowledge of theories, principles and other factors that determine the relevant decisions about the procedures to be followed which demands a commitment to do what is best for the client. Sagor (1996) argues that the accountable person has been given the powers to legally execute the task given to him or her.

According to UNESCO (2015) governance refers to the structures and its processes that are formulated in ensuring transparency, rule of law, accountability, empowerment, responsiveness, equity and inclusiveness, stability and active participation. It involves the exercising of authority to manage the organisation. This is supported by the Global Monitoring Report (2009) which refers to governance as power relationships, processes of decision making, processes of policy formulation and allocation resources and mechanisms for holding accountability to the government. Buckland and Hofmeyr (1993) affirm that governance is not merely a system of administration and control of the country's education, but it involves the whole process whereby the policies of education are formulated, adopted, implemented and monitored.

Equal Education (2011) states that school governance has to do with the development of policies and rules of the school and its stakeholders that involve the parents, learners and staff. This demands that the SGB, as the people responsible for school governance, make decisions about the smooth running of the school. They collaborate with the

School Management Team (SMT) who is responsible for the management of the school, in dealing with the day- to- day running of the school activities like school curriculum planning and delivery and staff management.

Such education laws are found in SASA in Chapter 3(18) which states that a school governing body must be constituted by the principal, educator, learners (if it is a high school) and parents of learners who are presently enrolled at that school. According to this Act, SGB stands in a position of trust towards the school. It stipulates the functions and the allocated functions of SGB as stated below.

At Uthungulu District the researcher has observed the following practices whereby the educators are administering corporal punishment, expelling learners without following due processes and the use of traditional leaders to instill discipline in schools which indicates the lack of knowledge or non-compliance thereof.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In most secondary schools in rural areas there is a noticeable high level of dysfunctionality in schools, high level of financial mismanagement and misappropriation of funds, non- availability or poor development of learner code of conduct in schools, school governing bodies interfering with the day to day running of the school thus dealing with issues that affect educators which are in line with Employment of Educators Act, high level of learner dropout and the use of traditional leadership to deal with discipline in schools. This happens despite the guidance given in South African Schools Act and you start to wonder whether principals are interpreting the Act correctly. A school is an institution where people exercise their constitutional rights in education and the means for the government to develop its educational goals. Its stakeholders, that is, the learners, educators, parents, professional bodies and other interested parties, must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Constitution. Thus, everything that SASA tries to achieve is within the framework of the Constitution. The problem which is utmost important is:

- How do rural secondary school principals interpret and comply with SASA?

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of the study are the following:

- To explore the rural principals' interpretation of SASA in Uthungulu District.
- To establish the extent to which rural principals' compliance with SASA in Uthungulu District.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aimed at answering the following questions:

- How do rural school principals interpret South African Schools Act in Uthungulu District?
- To what extent do rural school principals in Uthungulu District comply with South African Schools Act?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher has noted that there has been a violation of certain legislation which governs the operation of schools such as SASA which manifests itself in a form of learner dropouts and unprocedural expulsion of learners. This study seeks to explore the rural secondary schools principals' knowledge of SASA and the compliance thereof. It will also reveal if SASA policies are correctly implemented by stakeholders at a school level. It is hoped that the identification of challenges, if any, in the implementation and compliance of SASA will assist policy makers to close identified gap. One of the important aims of SASA is to ensure that transparency and consultation exist amongst the Department of Basic Education, learners, educators, parents and the interested parties therefore ensuring accountability in education.

Improvement in the quality of education is a prerequisite for SASA. This demands that educators, principals and SGBs be well trained and have different skills and knowledge in dealing with every learner regardless of his/her background by using different

teaching methods. This demands commitment and accountability of learners, educators and parents.

1.7 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

1.7.1 School Governance

According to Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997) school governance means determining the policies and rules of maintaining and controlling the school. This involves ensuring that these policies and rules are effectively carried out in accordance with the laws and the budget of the school. Thus it is the process of decision-making and also ensuring that the decisions are being implemented at schools. Buckland and Hofmeyr (1993) confirms that governance is not merely the system of administration and control of the country's education, rather it involves the whole process whereby the policies of education are formulated, adopted, implemented and monitored.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2015) governance refer to the structures and its processes that are formulated in ensuring transparency, rule of law, accountability, empowerment, responsiveness, equity and inclusiveness, stability, and active participation of all the stakeholders involved. In a school situation an SGB, which is democratically elected, involves, in a secondary school, the principal, educators, parents and learners. Amongst other functions to be performed by the SGB, it is responsible for promoting the best interests of the school and strives to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school and also adopting the Constitution.

1.7.2 Rural school principal

This is a school manager that manages a school that is located outside the cities and towns. In most cases such schools are in communities that are affected by poverty and illiteracy.

1.7.3 Interpretation

In this study it refers to the understanding and the meaning that the prescripts of the South African's Schools Act convey to the principals on matters that relate to school governance.

1.7.4 South African Schools Act (SASA)

It is an act that provides a uniform system for the school as an organization. It sets out standard laws for the governance and funding of South African schools. It sets uniform foundations and gives directions through prescribed roles and responsibilities for the learners, educators, parents and the State. It also provides guidelines for a professional management of all public schools, considering the rights of all the relevant stakeholders at schools. It amends, repeals and provides some policies relating to schools. (DoE 1996). These policies involves, amongst others, compulsory attendance, suspension and expulsion from public schools, school funding, religion policy, language policy, admission policy to public schools, code of conduct, curriculum and assessment policy, governance and professional management of public schools.

1.7.5 Compliance

In this study it refers to the capacity of school principals to manage operations in their schools in a manner that conforms with rules, regulations and standards set out in SASA. It is an act of being complaint which demands the principals to be vigilant at the school level.

1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal Province. This province is constituted by 12 districts, namely, Amajuba, Ilembe, Umlazi, Pinetown, Umzinyathi, Harry Gwala, Uthungulu, Umzinyathi, Umgungundlovu, Umkhanyakude, Uthukela and Zululand. This study is limited to rural secondary school principals of Uthungulu District schools. Uthungulu District has five circuits comprising of 686 schools. These circuits are Nkandla, Umlalazi, Umthonjaneni, Imfolozi and Umhlathuze. This study focuses in all Uthungulu circuits except for Umhlathuze circuit.

1.9 METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

To address the research problem, both literature study and empirical investigation based on quantitative research design was undertaken. The researcher consulted literature which was relevant to the topic. This was done to provide a critical synthesis of what has been written on the topic.

A questionnaire which needed closed and open-ended responses was used to gather data in this study. The research design included the delimitation of the field of survey, the selection of respondents (size of the sample and sampling procedures), the research instruments, that is, the questionnaires, the administration of the questionnaires and the processing of data.

1.9.1 Population and Sampling

The researcher used the simple random sampling method to select 120 principals from Uthungulu District. This method was favored for its simplicity, unbiased nature, and its closeness to fulfilling the major assumption of probability, namely that each element in the population stands an equal chance of being selected (Kumar 2011). For ethical reasons, permission to conduct research in schools was requested from the Provincial Head of Department through the relevant district office.

1.9.2 Instrumentation

The questionnaire was used as the research instrument. This quantitative methodology was chosen in the light of the purpose of the study, the kind of information that was required and the available resources. As McMillan and Schumacher (2006) and Kumar (2011) maintain, questionnaires permit anonymity, preclude possible interviewer biases and permit a respondent sufficient time to consider answers before actually answering. Data provided by questionnaires can be more easily analysed and interpreted than those obtained from verbal responses and lastly, questionnaires can elicit information that cannot be obtained in other methods. The researcher believed that this kind of survey would lead to some truths about the rural educators' knowledge of and compliance with the South African Schools Act in Uthungulu District and

provide information on whether certain generalisations presented in the literature were also true for this population.

1.9.3 Administration of the Questionnaires

The researcher conducted a pilot study in three schools in Uthungulu District. The schools were part of the general population from which the sample was drawn, but not part of the sample itself. In the actual study, 120 principals were requested to complete the questionnaires which were later collected by the researcher, using the self-addressed envelope supplied with the questionnaire.

1.9.4 Data analysis

The researcher in this study used the programme called the statistical package of social science as a way of analysing data. After receiving all the questionnaires, the important task of the researcher was to reduce the mass of data obtained to a format suitable for analysis. The responses were coded and frequency distributions were generated.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher read and understood the University of Zululand's *Policy and Procedures on Research Ethics* and its *Policy and Procedures on Managing and Presenting Acts of Plagiarism*. The researcher abided by the general principles set out in the University's policies and the obligations which the policies impose upon the researcher in order to prevent any ethical and other risks that might arise. In particular, the researcher did the following in order to prevent unethical procedures:

- Respected the dignity, safety and well-being of others. In this regard the researcher respected the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants and research sites.
- Considered diversity and was sensitive to the different cultures, languages, beliefs, perceptions, and customs of persons who participated in the study and ensured they are not negatively affected or harmed by the research.
- Ensured that the research is relevant to both the Department of Basic Education and to the individuals who participated in it.

- Conducted the research and produced the dissertation based on the researcher's own academic efforts, subject to normal supervisory and collegial assistance.
- Acknowledged and attributed to others the ideas, designs and writings that were not originally the researcher's own.
- Referenced the work accurately according to the researcher chosen Harvard referencing guide. The researcher complied with copyright requirements and sought the necessary permission, where required.
- Used text-matching software throughout the research writing process, as discussed and required by the supervisors, and submitted appropriate reports in this regard with the proposal and dissertation when they were in final draft form. Should circumstances have arisen that affected the researcher ethical obligations, the researcher should have disclosed them to the supervisor and together would have taken appropriate action in terms of the relevant University policy.

1.11 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 deals with the introductory part to the research where the orientation and background of the study was discussed. This is followed by the statement of the problem, questions of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, research methodology, ethical consideration and chapter division.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 presents the historical and theoretical overview of SASA, conceptualising school governance and educational law, raising past and contemporary issues pertaining to school governance and educational law, a concise historical background of their operations in South Africa.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 outlines the research questions and aims. The researcher further outlines the research design and methodology which includes the data collection instrument, sampling, population and ethical consideration.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presents a quantitative analysis and interpretation of the data using the SPSS programme with reference to the research objectives and questions. The data is coded and put in frequency distribution tables.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presents the findings, conclusions, limitations of the study and recommendations for future study.

1.12 SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the background, the statement of the problem, aims of the study and the research questions. The following chapter will present the literature review as well as the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

2. HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF SASA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the problem under investigation was introduced and highlighted in terms of its nature and scope. The background to this study was also provided, and operational terms and other relevant concepts were defined. The aims and objectives of the study were outlined together with the delimitation of the field and the method of the study, followed by an explanation of the premises and hypothesis. This chapter will concentrate on literature based on the conceptualisation of school governance and education law. It also outlines the past and contemporary issues pertaining to school governance and educational law.

2.2 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Before 1994, South African education was segregated according to race, colour and ethnicity due to the apartheid system. There were different education systems between the Whites, Africans, Coloureds and Indians. After the first democratic election in 1994, the South African government which was led by the African Nation Congress (ANC), formulated the SASA which was aimed at removing the discrimination in the education system. This Act stipulated that all public schools should democratically elect SGB, with specifications on how it has to be constituted and provided clear guidelines and functions in the governance of the school.

The Constitution of South Africa is the supreme law of the country. It provides the legal foundation for the existence of the Republic, sets out the rights and duties of its citizens; and defines the structure of the government. The current Constitution of the country; which is the Fifth Amendment, was drawn up by the Parliament elected in 1994 in the first non-racial election. It was promulgated by President Nelson Mandela on 10 December 1994 and came into effect on 4 February 1997 replacing the interim Constitution of 1993.

This Constitution serves as the basis for the origin of governance and education law like the Educators Employment Act No.76 of 1998, National Education Policy Act No.27 of 1996, South African Council for Educators, Public Administration Measures Act and Labour Relations Act .The South African Schools Act 1996 ushered a new era for the South African education system. The Act provides a uniform system in the organisation, government and funding of public schools, thus bringing to an end the past system (Republic of South Africa, 1995).

The origins of the South African Schools Act can be traced back to the Hunter Commission's report on the organisation, funding and financing of school in August 1995. Its task was to recommend a national framework of schools organisation, funding and ownership for these functions and norms on school governance which were likely to command the widest possible public support (Sayed & Carrim, 1997:92).

The report further proposed that parents, learners, educators, non-teaching staff and principal (ex-officio) should serve on the governing bodies. It also suggested that the parents should make up the majority of members serving on the governing body. However, according Sayed and Carrim (1997:92) this proposal is problematic in that it seemed to militate against teacher and learner representation - the two key constituencies in schools that were instrumental in the struggle for democratic government structures. They further argue that a parental majority on SGBs may be able to hinder equal participatory decision making (Sayed & Carrim 1997).

According to Potgieter, *et al.*, (1997), the school has to deal with various issues such as: policy matters, routine school administration and finance matters. However, these powers and functions are subject to the existing legislation or provision and limitations outlined in the report, and proposed alteration to the rights, powers and functions of public SGB (Republic of South Africa 1996).

School governance concerns the governing body's functions as a means of determining the policies and rules by which a school is to be maintained and controlled. It ensures that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in terms of the law and the budget of the school (Potgieter, *et al.*, 1997). The function of the SGB is to enhance the quality

of education for all learners within the parameters of policy established by both the national and provincial departments of education in terms of their legal responsibilities and competencies.

Many schools systems throughout the world, including South Africa, are undergoing restructuring. Although emergent patterns of power relations are complex, school governance in South Africa shifts responsibility for some functions to the school level, while control of others lie with the provincial heads of department, the relevant Member of Executive Council and National Minister. The compelling momentum of this restructuring, according to the former Minister of Education (Prof S.M.E. Bhengu) is driven by the desire to improve the quality of education and transform our education system (Republic of South Africa 1995:01). This reasoning is based largely on research into school effectiveness and suggests that improvements in learner achievement are most likely to be gained in schools which are relatively autonomous, possess a capacity to resolve their own problems and in which strong leadership particularly by the principal is a characteristic (Dimmock 1995:03) Reinforcing this, Heystek and Louw (1999:21) argue for a collaborative school governance structure with the focus on school based decision making. This gives schools` control over resources in order to develop and support curricula for the benefits of learners.

The South African Schools Act (No.84 of 1996) proposes that SGBs will be recognised as a juristic person. This implies that their powers and duties are guaranteed statutorily and they make decisions as a corporate body. The legislation of the status of governing bodies has great implications for their functioning. It implies that such bodies can be sued that they are legally responsible for the decisions they make based upon the functions and powers devolved to them.

According to Van der Westhuizen (1995:03), the leadership role of the school principal has undergone constant and gradual changes as his or her present role is mainly managerial. This tendency is clearly discernible in current documents. (Employment of Educators Act No76 of 1998, the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 and the Gauteng Department of Education: Guidelines for the School Principals of 1998), which describe the principal`s role as mainly that of a manager. The assumption that emerges from this brief is that principals are expected to become experts in all spheres of schools they are managing in terms of education laws. They are in charge of

instructional, managerial and administrative domains of schools. They must also involve themselves with school finances and must be prepared to create conditions for professional teaching and learning by sharing planning and decision-making responsibilities with staff and parents. Schools are institutions of collective entrepreneurship and need to develop more democratic models of governance and involve educators in planning (Mulkeen, & Cooper, 1992:19).

2.3 LITERATURE ON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' AWARENESS OF SASA AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

Mncube (2008) conducted a qualitative study on "Democratisation of education in South Africa: issues of social justice and the voice of learners." His main aim was on studying the nature and extent of the involvement of learners in the democratisation of education through school governing bodies in South Africa. This study was conducted in four secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Thus, purposive sampling was used. The sample was evenly distributed as one of them is the ex-model C school which accepted only white learners during the apartheid era, another school serves mainly for coloured learners; a rural school, and a township school, both of which were attended by black learners. The sample constituted of chair of the SGB, principal, two teaching staff governors, one non-teaching staff governor, two parent governors, and two learner governors.

He used a variety of data-gathering instruments, including observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis to understand the internal dynamics of the functioning of a small sample of SGBs in secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to learner participation as Representative Council of Learners (RCLs). The documents were used only to complement observations and interviews and enhance accountability that is why they were purposefully not analysed in detail as substantive evidence. The main documents used were meeting agendas and minutes of the school governing bodies, letters to parents, annual reports to parents, discipline records and curriculum materials.

Interviews were transcribed and coded, and responses grouped according to the question asked. The SGBs' responses to each question were studied, thus gauging the views of the majority of respondents. It was noted that there were no negative cases as

the majority of SGBs were positive about learner participation in SGBs, though that was not always possible in practice. His findings revealed that in all the sampled schools and the SGBs, including the principals, are aware of the inclusion of RCLs as part of the SGB. The leadership style of the principal had an influence in the participation of RCLs in SGBs as some principals tend to take over the roles of learners' representatives and take decisions with their Senior Management Schools (SMT). The majority of governors identified certain advantages of learner involvement. They felt learner participation improved the functioning of the SGB as it gave everyone a sense of ownership and accountability and it had helped to reduce some problems that had occurred in the past, such as the incidents of vandalism.

Baruth (2013) investigated the experiences and challenges faced by SGBs in secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The study focused on handling of learners, appointment of staff, formulation of the admissions policy and the management of school finances. Her study was qualitative in nature. She discovered that SGBs were faced with challenges and were not capacitated to handle these challenges. Some of her findings included misappropriation of funds, the lack of proper financial planning, religion and admission policy as the SGBs did not possess the knowledge, skills or expertise to formulate admission policies that were in line with SASA.

She recommended that the Provincial Department of Education must provide support and infrastructure to struggling and failing schools, especially in the previously disadvantaged areas. The Department must take a greater interest in evaluating, monitoring and assessing the SGBs in schools. She further stated that decisions made by teachers, parents and learners must be taken collectively and collaboratively as RCLs are sometimes ignored in some decision making.

Mestry & Khumalo (2012) conducted a study which focused on the perceptions and experiences of SGBs in managing discipline in rural secondary schools through the design and enforcement of learner code of conduct. They discovered that many rural school governors still lack the relevant knowledge and skills to design and enforce the learner code of conduct. The biggest challenge is that the literacy levels of the majority of the SGB members make it difficult for them to design and enforce learners' code of conduct even though the Department of Education has trained them

Findings from researchers like Baruth (2013), Mncube (2008), Xaba (2011) & Modipha (2014) discovered that principals are aware of SASA and the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders. The implementation of SASA policies differs in various institutions. The most common deviations from this Act include amongst others, the management of school funds, ignoring RCLs in decision making and the non-involvement of SGBs in admission and religion policies. SGBs challenges are somehow common and are related to their inability to execute functions prescribed by SASA that demand some specialisation.

2.4 KEY DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS OF PRINCIPALS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION OF SASA

Shefer, Bhana & Morell (2013) conducted a study on teenage pregnancy and parenting at school in contemporary South African contexts: Deconstructing school narratives and understanding policy implementation. They conducted a qualitative study between 2005 and 2007 in two provinces in South Africa, that is, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The study was constituted by a diverse group representing the historical divides of apartheid and included teachers and principals of 11 schools (+ 80 interviewees) and 26 learners (21 females and 5 males) who were already parenting and /or pregnant at schools in Cape Town and Durban. Most learners were from low socio-economic households. The research study represents the voices of young women as they constituted a greater percentage of the sample.

The study used a discourse analysis located in a social constructive framework which is sensitive to gender and power. Their analysis was geared towards assessing the extent to which the national policy is able to meet its intentions and how meanings and belief systems is able to meet its intentions. They were concerned with unpacking the way in which participants` narratives reveal dominant aspects of the macro-social and cultural environment of public discourse and practice on teenage pregnancy, (Macleod, 2011).

In their findings they discovered the presence of positive experiences and more supportive schooling contexts. They also discovered that there are still obstacles that

continue to block the way towards successful implementation of policy designed to assist pregnant and parenting learners. It was evident during interviews that the presence of pregnant girls and parenting learners in schools was discomforting, constructed as reflecting badly on the school and denting the integrity of the school. The pregnant and parenting learners confirmed that they were ill-treated and stigmatized by fellow learners and teachers.

Studies conducted by Macleod, 2011, Jewkes, Morrell & Christofides (2009) revealed that pregnant learners are judged as infringing prescriptions of sexual modesty that are linked to larger social constraints on young female sexuality. Adonis & Baxen (2009), Motalingoane-Khau (2010) & Rooth (2005) stated that teachers have challenges in talking about sexuality with their learners and generally providing life orientation education. Shefer, et al., (2013) stated that teachers and schools need to be adequately supported in order to give appropriate interventions in nurturance of pregnant and parenting learners.

Mncube (2008) discovered that gender still has an effect on the participation of school governors. For example, the chairperson of the SGB at one of the sampled schools indicated that female governors tend to leave most decisions to male members in the hope that they will make sound and fruitful decisions. He believes that this attitude is the result of traditional gender stereotypes prevalent in South Africa, which still affect performance. He further argued that coupled with gender is the issue of power relations, which also has an effect on learner participation. Female learner governors tended to be overshadowed by their male counterparts when it came to decision-making due to the gendered nature of South African society. During the interviews it was disclosed that female learner governors tended to be less vocal than male learner governors and renounced decision-making activities to male learner governors. These findings were confirmed during observations of the SGB meetings.

The above studies revealed that principals have knowledge of SASA but sometimes interpret the Act in a way that suits their interests. For example, gender stereotype in RCLs, and management of pregnant learners. Observations have shown that there is a conflicting of roles in RCLs, prefects and student parliament.

2.5 STUDIES ON PRINCIPALS' COMPLIANCE OF SASA

Mncube (2008) & Shefer, Bhana & Morell (2013) state that schools are aware of SASA but differs on the way they comply towards it. Mncube (2008) discovered that RCLs do not form part of the decisions in disciplinary and financial matters in all the sampled schools as they should make inputs on staff disciplinary matters, except where the discipline of the teaching staff is handled. For example, the chair of governors in one of the schools perceived learner governors as minors who hardly contribute to debates, and who are there purely to listen to the discussions on behalf of other learners. They feel that minors cannot form part in the decision making of the school. This is an unfair exclusion of learners as they have the right to know about disciplinary procedures, the progress of the case and the motivation for expulsion. In this case some school principals indicated that the reason to expel the learner was for the sake of the security of other learners in that RCLs do not form part of these decisions. It would appear that the discussion could have been enhanced by learner participation and the principles of fairness and justice would have been upheld. Some decisions are not taken in the presence of learner governors, but are made for them, in the belief that there is no need for learner governors to comment, as they would be too lenient if decisions were to be taken about their peers.

In some sampled schools they felt learner participation improved the functioning of the SGB as it gave everyone a sense of ownership and accountability. This was proven correct in two schools where they mentioned that it had helped to lessen some problems that had occurred in the past. They further confirmed that it had become easier to meet the needs of learners through the involvement of learner governors and much had been achieved for the learners through their involvement in the SGBs. Furthermore, the composition of the SGBs was constructed according to what SASA stipulates.

Another qualitative study was conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) on the *Educators' disciplinary capabilities after the banning of corporal punishment in South African schools*. This study was triggered by the escalation of cases of learner indiscipline in schools which has risen to safety and security concerns. The sample was constituted by three rural and experienced educators from three rural schools in Eastern Cape. Interviews were used to gather data. The study found that secondary schools, especially those with 500 or more learners and schools located in rural areas reported

the highest incidence of most forms of learner and educator violence and violence-related behaviour.

The researchers revealed that educators generally feel disempowered in their ability to institute discipline in schools in the absence of corporal punishment. Educators stated that learners do not fear or respect them because they know that nothing will happen to them. Although educators are aware of alternative disciplinary measures, they view them as ineffective and time consuming. Educators feel that learners have more rights than the rights for educators. In these sampled schools educators were in compliance with SASA as they were not administering corporal punishment as the Act dictates.

Some researchers like Mncube (2008), Shefer et al., (2013), Maphosa & Shumba (2010) discovered that principals have knowledge of SASA but differ in the way they comply like the involvement of RCLs in decision making, financial management, religion and admission policies.

2.6 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.6.1 A concise historical background of school governance and educational law in South Africa

Educational reform and restructuring initiatives in most parts of the world rest on the conviction that the participation of teachers, learners and parents can enhance the achievement of the desire to have substantial benefits for the school and its members. Participation is deemed to increase morale and productivity, elicit acceptance of and commitment to decisions and contribute to improved student achievement; (Jonstone & Germinario, 1985:91).

Given the painful, complex and controversial history of schooling in South Africa, it was unlikely that any model chosen for the management and control of our public schools would satisfy all role-players. All models which effectively places significant decision-making power over issues such as school fees, admissions and nominations of staff outside the control of state education departments were never going to be acceptable to all. Nevertheless, the decision-making power is inherent in the school governance partnership, which is reflected in the preamble to the South African Schools

Act. According to the Act, a partnership involves the state and learners, parents and educators in accepting joint responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools.

The nature of this partnership does not imply that all partners have to agree on all issues and that there is no room for contestation on important aspects. In fact, the vigor with which contestation has taken place must be seen at least partly as an indication of seriousness with which the various parties take their responsibilities. The ongoing incapacity of most provincial education departments to administer public schooling effectively has, of course, not helped the situation.

The ideal of having a democratic education system in South Africa has a long history. It started with the first slaves under colonial masters in the 17th Century, and in the early 1980s; it became intense and bitter when the students protested against the Apartheid government (Sayed & Carrim, 1997:91).

Parents were involved in school activities and participating in different structures even prior to the democratic elections in 1994. According to Van Schalkwyk (1990), such parental participation was highly localised and made a distinctive contribution to the education system. These structures were named statutory and non-statutory bodies.

2.6.2 Statutory bodies

Van Schalkwyk (1990) mentions that the statutory bodies worked in collaboration with some selected parents and principals of schools in the management of some school activities. This constituted the school board and the local management council. On a school level, the school board was a legal unit which acted as both plaintiff and the defendant. In the district level, it was a management body constituted of 6 -18 members from different institutions. The core function of the board was to be accountable for administrative matters regarding the provincial educational institutions and the education system at large in the local level and provisional maintenance of the school. This body had no powers on any professional matters like the appointment of educators as it does today.

Van Schalkwyk (1990) further states that the local management council was made up of some parents that were personally chosen by the principal to be representative of parents in her/his school. They were responsible for overseeing the function of the school, thus giving directions and determining the spirit of the school. It was their responsibility to provide maintenance for school facilities like school buildings, grounds and any resources, and then make recommendations to the school board. They had to report to the school board regarding the school funds as they had control of the funds they had collected. Like the school board, they were not directly involved in professional matters of the school, but were only allowed to make recommendations to the director of education through the school board.

2.6.3 Non-statutory bodies

Unlike the statutory bodies, these bodies were free and independent entities that were aimed at promoting their interest and their participation in the education system, (Van Schalkwyk 1990). Their members were not chosen by principals, rather they came out from their own initiatives and they had a direct link between the school and the community. These bodies were the parent associations, parent-teacher association and parent-teacher-student association.

2.6.3.1 Parent association

Before 1994, the parent associations were not locally structured in a full sense but in a broader level. These were associations like the Afrikaanse Oervereniging that was established by Afrikaans parents in the early 1980s. Van Schalkwyk (1990) states that these associations operated in the local, provincial, national and the federal council of parent associations. The local unit of the parent association served the interest of the parents and were interested parties to the education system as they organised and managed matters of the community and the school.

The regional unit was constituted by representatives from different branches in various regions. Each region was entitled to nominate a representative to serve on the head committee of the Transvaal Afrikaans Oervereniging (TAO).

2.6.3.2 *Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)*

These associations were commonly found in schools of White communities and were only composed of teachers and parents. According to Van Schalkwyk (1990), they were not allowed to relate with the existing bodies in all levels of education, that is, regional, provincial, and national level. Their core function was to correlate the interests of both the parents and teachers, but they were not permitted to have a contribution on the ultimate issues pertaining policy making. However, they could collect school funds or be of other assistance like learner transportation and entertainment.

2.6.3.3 *Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTSA)*

As the name indicates, this association comprised parents, teachers and students of secondary schools. In primary schools, learners were not represented due to the fact that at this stage they were still young to be part of the decision-making. The active participation of parents was recognised by the Education and Training Act of 1979 through the PTSA. They were taken as community structures as they reflected the belief in community participation, but they had no representation of other races and they were taken as illegitimate structures that were imposed by the apartheid government on oppressed communities. There was limited transparency by these associations to the community. They operated on a parallel level to the bodies as they attempted to take over governance and day-to-day management of schools. According to Sithole (1994) the formation of the PTSA were formed to take over the powers from the school boards and given to teachers, students, workers, parents and their organisations. Members that constituted of the association were not part of the parents of the learners that were presently enrolled in the school. They were elected by the community or seconded by different organisations that were in full support of the apartheid system. Sithole (1994), further mentions that the aim of the PTSA was to combine the interests of the interested parties in the school, thus furthering the school's educational aims, assist decision-making and problem- solving.

Since 1994 there have been a number of legislative frameworks introduced in the education system. This includes policies in education which address governance and

management of schools in South Africa under democratic dispensation. This involved the introduction of the South African Schools Act of 1996 which clearly stipulates the functions of SGBs.

2.7 FUNCTIONS OF ALL GOVERNING BODIES AS PER SASA

20(1) Subject to this Act, the governing body of a public school must:

- (a) promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;
- (b) adopt a constitution;
- (c) develop the mission statement of the school;
- (d) adopt a code of conduct for learners at school;
- (e) support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions;
- (f) determine times of the school day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school;
- (g) administer and control the school property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- (h) encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school;
- (i) recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995); [Para. (i) substituted by S. 3 of Act No. 57 of 2001.];
- (j) recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non-educator staff at the school, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- (k) at the request of the Head of Department, allow the reasonable use, under fair conditions determined by the Head of Department of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school; [Par. (k) substituted by S. 4 of Act No.53 of 2000]; and
- (l) discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act as determined by the Minister by notice in the Provincial Gazette.

2.8 ALLOCATED FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNING BODIES

21 (1) Subject to this Act, a governing body may apply to the Head of Department in writing to be allocated any of the following functions:

- (a) to maintain and improve the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- (b) to determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy;
- (c) to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school;
- (d) to pay for services to the school; (dA) to provide an adult basic education and training class or centre subject to any applicable law; or [Para. (dA) inserted by S. 10 (b) of Act No. 48 of 199]; or
- (e) other functions consistent with this Act and any applicable provincial law.

Section 23(1) of the Act also stated individuals that can be members of the school governing bodies.

2.9 MEMBERSHIP OF GOVERNING BODY OF ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOL

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

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

(2) Elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of each of the following categories:

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

(3) A parent who is employed at the school may not represent parents on the governing body in terms of subsection (2) (a).

- (4) The representative council of learners referred to in Section 11 (1) must elect the learner or learners referred to in subsection (2) (d).
- (5) The governing body of an ordinary public school which provides education to learners with special needs, must, where practically possible, co-opt a person or persons with expertise regarding the special education needs of such learners.
- (6) A governing body may co-opt a member or members of the community to assist it in discharging its functions.
- (7) The governing body of a public school contemplated in Section 14 may co-opt the owner of the property occupied by the school or the nominated representative of such owner.
- (8) Subject to subsection (10), co-opted members do not have voting rights on the governing body. [Sub-s. (8) substituted by S. 11 (a) of Act No. 48 of 1999.].
- (9) The number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights.
- (10) If the number of parents at any stage is not more than the combined total of other members with voting rights, the governing body must temporarily co-opt parents with voting rights. [Sub-s. (10) added by S. 11 (b) of Act No. 48 of 1999.].
- (11) If a parent is co-opted with voting rights as contemplated in subsection (10), the co-option ceases when the vacancy has been filled through a by-election which must be held according to a procedure determined in terms of Section 28(d) within 90 days after the vacancy has occurred. [Sub-s. (11) added by S. 11 (b) of Act No. 48 of 1999.].
- (12) If a person elected as a member of a governing body as contemplated in subsection (2) ceases to fall within the category referred to in that subsection in respect of which he or she was elected as a member, he or she ceases to be a member of the school governing body. [Sub-s. 12 added by S. 11 (b) of Act No. 48 of 1999.].

From these functions it is expected that the SGB must serve and promote the best interest of the school and thus produce quality education to its clients which are learners. Chapter 2 of the Act focuses on the learners. Among other things it looks at compulsory attendance, admission to public schools, language policy of public schools, curriculum and assessment, freedom of conscience and religion, code of conduct, suspension and expulsion, prohibition of corporal punishment, prohibition of initiation process and representative council of learners. It is expected that school governance

and school management are closely connected for the effectiveness of SASA. The Representative Council of Learners (RCLS) are independent entities that represent the interest of learners from grade 8 to higher classes.

The school governance must make policies that do not conflict with the educational laws and the country Constitution. For example, they cannot agree on implementing corporal punishment in their school as it is against the country's education law and pieces of legislation. They have to ensure accountability to their stakeholders for the great performance of their school. In a UNESCO (2008-2015) study where the sample consisted of 49 schools from 11 countries, it was discovered that the common element of the most successful schools was that its executive leaders were closely connected with the governance of the school and the traditional functions of leadership and management.

In the recent past years there have been challenges in some South African schools discipline learners. These challenges include the rise of violent acts in different schools. There have been gaps in SASA when dealing with discipline, hence the insertion of Section 8 in Act 84 of 1996 specifically the random search and seizure and drug testing in schools.

2.10 INSERTION OF SECTION 8A IN ACT 84 OF 1996

7. The South African Schools Act, 1996, is hereby amended by insertion of section 8 which includes:

2.10.1 Random search and seizure and drug testing at school

The researcher talks to the interpretation and compliance to the South African Schools Act and observation that relates to dysfunctionality in schools like: carrying of dangerous weapons which leads to learners fighting, stabbing and killing each other. If the following SASA guidelines as articulated below were adhered to, incidents of this nature would be minimized.

8A. (1) Unless authorised by the principal for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a dangerous object or illegal drug onto school premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on school premises or during any school activity.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the principal or his or her delegate may, at random, search any group of learners, or the property of a group of learners, for any dangerous object or illegal drug, if a fair and reasonable suspicion has been established that:

- (a) a dangerous object or an illegal drug may be found on school premises or during a school activity; or
- (b) one or more learners on school premises or during a school activity are in possession of dangerous objects or illegal drugs.

(3) (a) A search contemplated in subsection (2) may only be conducted after taking into account all relevant factors, including:

- (i) the best interest of the learners in question or of any other learner at the school;
- (ii) the safety and health of the learners in question or of any learner at the school;
- (iii) Reasonable evidence of illegal activity; and
- (iv) All relevant evidence received.

(b) When conducting a search contemplated in subsection (2), the principal or his or her delegate must do so in a manner that is reasonable and proportional to the suspected illegal activity or

This provides an environment that is conducive for learning and teaching thus even minimizing drugs within the school premises and stability will then prevail.

2.11 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN ENGLAND

2.11.1 The role of the governing body and head teacher

The SGBs role in England is stipulated in Regulation 6 of 2013 of school governance. In England the SGB is referred to as a “board”. This regulation distinguishes clearly the functions of the principal and that of the board for effective governance of the school. It states that the role of the board is to let the principal account for his/her professional judgment in all educational matters and in the performance of all the duties related to the position. On the other hand, the principal is held responsible for educational performance of the school and for its entire internal organisation, control and management.

The regulation states that the board should operate at a strategic level whereby the SMT is responsible and accountable to it for the operational activities run on daily basis at

school. It is the board`s responsibility to institute a framework for setting priorities and creating accountability and thereafter monitoring progress. The regulation states that there are three core functions which are consistent with the role of the board, namely:

- Setting a vision and strategic direction of the school;
- Ensuring that financial resources are correctly spent; and
- Holding the principal accountable for academic performance.

For this to be successful there must be a school development plan or other relevant document that will set strategic targets and key performance indicators. The main focus should be on significant strategic obstacles and opportunities for school improvement. This demands that there must be a plan which has to be administered by the principal for those issues that are needed to deliver the headline of the key performance indicators.

In order to create tough accountability, the board is expected to ask challenging questions based on the strong objective data as contained in the Governors` Handbook (2014). This Handbook was compiled by the National Governors Association and its members who developed prompts and a number of topics with detailed, specific questions that can be asked. Therefore the board should not rely on the information given by the principal but should scrutinize the objective national data at least once a year, verify what was said by the principal, and ensure that his/her term report has relevant and more detailed information.

The ways in which inspectors evaluate the functionality of the school governance is stipulated in the *School Inspection Handbook* and it is based on the core functions of the board. Annually the board is expected to announce a governance statement which deals with the attendance of each board member in meetings, the functions of the board, the challenges faced during the course of the year, and all the governance arrangements that are in place. In 2014 the National College for Teaching and Leadership launched workshops for training boards of governors in matters relating to the understanding of financial benchmarking data, or how to understand and use Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through Self-Evaluation (RAISE) the online school performance data.

2.11.2 Membership of the board

There must be a chairperson who is responsible for leading the board and giving directions. A chairperson should always have his/ her vice-chairperson. The roles of the chair and the vice-chair are cited in Regulations 7, 8 and 9. The regulations also stipulate the guidelines to be followed when appointing a chairperson and vice chair. More than one chairperson or vice chair can be appointed to one post provided it is in the best interest of the school. S/he is accountable for ensuring the full functioning of the board and this needs a person with the appropriate skills like team-building and experience. If none of the existing board members has the skills, the regulation allows them to recruit an outsider with the required skills. S/he has to be aware of what is expected of her/him as they undergo the induction process and a number of developmental workshops. The arrangements for succession should always be in place so that any change in the chair does not affect the smooth running of the board. A national programme of leadership development has been developed by the National College for Teaching and Leadership for empowering the chair, vice and the aspiring chairs.

On the board, there must be a professional clerk of high quality that is appointed to achieve perfect administration and organisation and to assist the board in having a good understanding of its roles and legal functions. Regulation 11 states clearly the role of the clerk in the school board. Boards are expected to set the desired standards for the clerk with relevant skills of performing her/his duties. S/he is paid by the board for rendering the professional duties, for which s/he is paid by the board.

2.11.3 Compensation of the school boards

In England, school boards offer voluntary services and are not paid to be board members. However, they are compensated from the delegated budget for travelling expenses or any child-care expenses that resulted in the fulfilment of the board's duties. Such travel expenses must be at a rate that does not exceed the HR Revenue and Customs approved mileage rates which are adjusted annually. When the board is short of such a budget, these expenses are paid at a certain rate by the local authority. Some

other expenses are paid provided the board member has supplied a receipt, and such payment should be bound to the exact amount displayed on the receipt.

2.12 SUMMARY

Research has revealed that SASA is a very complex legislation which has to be implemented by all relevant stakeholders. There is evidence from literature used in this chapter that principals do have knowledge of SASA but differ in their interpretation and compliance thereof. The deviation in the interpretation and compliance varies from the different institutions as they are aimed at suiting the demands of the specific principal or school. The challenges facing the SGBs are mostly common and linked to the limited or lack of specialised knowledge and skills in some of their roles and responsibilities. The next chapter will deal with the research methodology of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the reviewing of literature from different sources relevant to this research where the researcher discussed the historical and theoretical overview of the educational law on school governance, analysing education law on school governance, the origin of education laws in South Africa, education law on school governance in England, in South Africa and the analysis of SASA. This chapter deals with the method of the investigation and the instrumentation used in this study. It also entails a survey where quantitative research data were gathered in a real-life setting. The discussion in this chapter includes the research design used, the population sample, instrumentation and administration of the research tool.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Scholars define `research paradigms` differently although they seem to say the same thing. These conceptualisations are outlined in this section. For instance, research paradigm can be viewed as a framework that defines what is acceptable and what is not, and the way the social world is viewed and perceived by social scientists (Kumar, 2014). He emphasises that a research paradigm monitors the course of inquiry and forms the foundation for practice of science by guiding the researcher towards suitable research methods and methodology.

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), a research paradigm signifies a specific world view that defines, for the researchers who hold the view, what is acceptable to research and how this should be completed .Obviously such a view is closely relate to the one expressed by Kumar (2014).As it has been observed that there are different ways of viewing paradigms, it can also be argued that there are various paradigms. Kumar (2014) further on identifies three research paradigms, positivist, interpretive and critical paradigms. Positivist researchers seek to discover and record the universal laws regarding human behaviour, to be able to use them to change or improve how things

are done, and make predictions. The next paradigm is interpretive paradigm and researchers who subscribe to interpretative paradigm aim to share the mood and clarifications, and perceive or appreciate through the lens of their subjects. Furthermore, interpretive researchers look for what is expressive and applicable, to those whom they study, and how those they study experience and understand their day-to-day life.

In contrast to the first two paradigms, followers of the critical paradigm are dissatisfied with the way things are and seek for dramatic improvements to the lives of the participants, and, as a result, they critique, expose and reveal the underlying truths to encourage dramatic grassroots action (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Through this paradigm, researchers aim to empower the less powerful and marginalised people, (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). According to Kumar (2014), each of these paradigms is based on its ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is quantitative in nature. It involves the collection of numerical data that can be subjected to statistical analysis in a research study, (Cohen et al., 2000). Thus, it assisted in giving statistical information on the interpretation and compliance of SASA by rural secondary school principals. This is supported by Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) when they mentioned that the quantitative method explains a certain phenomenon by gathering numerical data and analysing them using mathematically based methods like statistics. This type of method uses a validated data gathering instrument for measuring and finding out the extent of particular phenomena. In this research study, the data gathering instrument, that is, the questionnaire assisted in determining the deep rural principals' knowledge of and compliance with SASA in the UThungulu District. The researcher used the closed and open ended questions as a way of soliciting information from the participants. As a way of exploring rural principals' interpretation and compliance with SASA the researcher had to generate questions that talked to policies like learner admission, curriculum framework, religion and learner expulsion.

Duma (2014) used a quantitative approach in engaging rural school parents in school governance. In his study, the principals were randomly selected from Sisonke and

Umgungundlovu districts in KwaZulu-Natal. The aim of his study was to explore the experiences of principals on rural schools` parent engagement in governance of schools. His literature findings revealed that it is a crucial element in the South African education system to engage parents in school governance. Through the use of the quantitative method, empirical findings showed that principals from rural schools would like parents to play a crucial role in the governance of schools. He used a questionnaire as his instrument to collect data from 212 school principals.

Cohen et al., (2007) identify the weaknesses of this approach as consuming a lot of time for collecting and analysing data from a large sample, failing to encourage the evolving and continuous investigation of the research into the phenomena and the need of specific software like the SPSS in calculating and analysing the results. Yet despite these weaknesses, this method was found relevant to this study after considering the following strengths as elucidated by Cohen, et al., (2007) and Kealey & Protheroe (1996): It provides a broad analysis of the phenomena, the research problem is very specific and clearly stated; the data is quantifiable and normally generalised to a larger population, and the method eliminates subjectivity of the judgment.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used as a data gathering tool in this study. This research instrument is described by Cohen et al., (2007) as an intrusion into the life of the respondent as it takes the respondent`s time to complete the questionnaire or might in some way violate his/her privacy. McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 169) refers to a questionnaire as a set of questions dealing with some topics or a set of related topics, given to a selected group of individuals for the purpose of gathering data on a problem under consideration. Moorhead and Griffin (1998:05) refer to it as a collection of written questions about the respondent`s attitudes, opinions, perceptions and demographical characteristics. Johnson (1994:37) states that the questionnaire empowers the respondents, who may read all the questions before completing any and return it at a time, which is convenient to them. One has to ask questions in simple unambiguous terms. The researcher must use the language that is familiar to the respondent. Technical terms and jargon should

always be avoided. Questions must be formulated in a clear and unambiguous manner, but will tell the researcher what she /he needs to know.

Closed-ended questions with rating scales and open-ended questions where lines were drawn for free responses were used. Cohen et al. (2007) stated that open-ended questions are appropriate for a small scale research or where questions require an honest and personal comment from the respondent. They say that open ended questions that can catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response and honesty are the trademarks of qualitative research. Besides the strengths of the open-ended questions used, they have limitations that were taken into consideration in this study, like converting opinions into numbers (data handling) which have led the researcher to violate the principle of word-based data and made it difficult for the researcher to make comparisons between respondents as they might have had little in common to compare thus making it difficult for the researcher to classify and to code.

The closed questions consisted of items that were easy to ask, easy to respond to and did not need any further comments from the respondents. Van Dalen (1979) states that the closed items in a data collection instrument are prepared lists of statements or questions with choices of answers to choose from. It is easy to administer such questions to large numbers, assists in the tabulation process and analysis, and also helps to keep the respondent's mind focused on the subject in question (Van Dalen, 1979). However, he also points out that respondents might be compelled to provide responses that do not express their thoughts or views (Van Dalen, 1979).

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that a good questionnaire must have the following characteristics:

- The questionnaire must have clear instructions.
- It must deal with a significant topic, one that the respondent will recognize as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on.
- It must be as short as possible, but long enough to get essential data.
- It must be attractive in appearance, have simple words, neatly arranged and clearly printed.

When constructing the questionnaire, it is crucial that the researcher has to consider the characteristics of a good questionnaire in order to meet the requirements for a reliable research instrument. Van den Aardweg (1998:190) added the following characteristics of good questionnaire:

- It must have a clear direction for the respondent to answer it without experiencing problems,
- It must be as short and straight to the point as long questionnaires are mostly not answered by respondents.
- It must seek only that information which cannot be obtained from other sources;
- Each question must deal with individual concepts and should be expressed as simple and straightforward as possible.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997) identified a number of advantages of using a questionnaire as a data collection instrument which had influenced the researcher to use it. They were, amongst others, the following:

- It is easier to analyse and interpret data from the questionnaires than data from verbal responses.
- It permits anonymity amongst respondents.
- A questionnaire is the least expensive data gathering instrument which makes it affordable to researchers.
- Respondents take their own time in answering the questionnaires and in their relaxed atmosphere and convenient times.
- It is easy to compare data from the questionnaires in order to make inferences.

Despite the advantages of using questionnaires, McMillan and Schumacher (1997) stated the following disadvantages that were catered for in this study:

- Respondents are not compelled to complete questionnaires which at times lead to low returns.
- Questionnaires do not provide space for follow-up discussions where need arises in relation to ambiguous answers.
- It becomes impossible to answer questions that the respondents may have.
- Some respondents are better at expressing their opinions verbally than in writing.

A Likert scale was used in this study which used four levels, namely, fully agree, agree, disagree, and fully disagree. It was found relevant to the study as it provides the full range of responses that the respondents may have wished to respond with. The limitations of using this scale were considered as given by Cohen, et al., (2007). They argued that it is difficult for the researcher to understand the respondents' degree of sensitivity from the data they cannot bear, there is no possible way to verify whether the respondents are telling the truth or falsifying their responses, there is no assumption of equal intervals between the categories, and it is also impossible if the respondent might have wished to add some comments on the point under investigation.

With due consideration for its strength and its limitations, the researcher trusted this research instrument in this study. Great care was taken in the construction of the questionnaire in order to ensure the validity and the reliability of the data to be collected and also in achieving the objectives and answering the research questions of the study. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first question, Section A required biographical data, Section B was about the knowledge of SASA while Section C was about the problems encountered by principals when implementing SASA, and Section D needed the respondents' personal comments on his/her knowledge and understanding of SASA. Simple and straightforward language was used in order to avoid confusions and misinterpretation of the questions by respondents.

3.4.2 Content of the questionnaire

The researcher's questionnaire comprises four sections. Section A of the questionnaire covered the biographical information. It required information from the respondents about gender, age and educational qualification. The researcher believed that it was a crucial part of the questionnaire because it provides the researcher with an understanding of how diverse the respondents were.

Section B of the questionnaire contained closed questions about their knowledge of SASA. This section comprised ten questions. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: *good, average, and poor*.

Section C, with 16 questions, was about the compliance with SASA. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale: Fully agree, agree, disagree, and fully disagree.

Sections D and E of the questionnaire contains open-ended items as part of the research whereby respondents were requested to write down problems they encountered when attempting to comply with sections of SASA, and suggestions in improving their understanding of and compliance with SASA.

3.4.2 Validity of the questionnaire

Behr (2001) refers to validity as an indispensable characteristic of measuring devices. Leedy (1993), Pillay & (1998), Cheety (2003) affirm that validity is the extent to which a measuring instrument fulfils the purpose for which it was created. It is therefore the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure.

Van den Aardweg (1998:237) argues that a valid research instrument is one that has established or detects some real ability, attitude or prevailing situation that the researcher can identify and characterise. If the ability or attitude is itself stable, and if a respondent's answer to the items is not affected by other unpredictable factors, the administration of all the instruments should produce essentially the same results.

Van den Aardweg (1998) identifies the following types of validity:

- *Criterion validity*, which refers to the relationship between scores on a measuring instrument and criterion, believed to measure directly the behaviour of the characteristics in question. The criterion should be relevant, reliable and free from bias and contamination.
- *Construct validity*, where the extent to which the test measures a specific trait or construct concerned, for example, intelligence, reasoning, ability or attitudes.
- *Content validity*, where the content and cognitive processes included can be measured. Topics, skills and abilities should be prepared and items from each category randomly drawn.

Validity indicates whether the instrument is reflecting the true story, or at least something closer to the truth. Chetty (2003) maintains that validity is crucial in a research questionnaire as it provides credibility to the questionnaire. The research instrument used in this study was valid as it was able to measure what it was supposed to measure and was also able to answer the research questions.

For validity purposes the researcher took the questionnaire to five colleagues for verification whose confirmed that it was in line with the guidelines provided .It was also taken to the supervisor of this study who is the specialist in research who also confirmed the adherence to research guidelines as provided for by other researchers.

3.4.4 Reliability of the questionnaire

Maree and Fraser (2004) maintain that reliability of a research instrument refers to the degree of consistency of measuring what it is supposed to measure. Van den Aardweg (1998:237) states that reliability is a statistical concept and relates to consistency and dependability which means consistency in obtaining the same results when measuring phenomena that have not changed. He identifies the following types of reliability:

- *Split-half reliability*. By correlating the results obtained from two halves of the same measuring instrument, one can calculate the split-half reliability.
- *Internal consistency reliability*. This indicates how well the test items measure the same thing.
- *Test-retest reliability* (coefficient of stability). Here consistency is estimated by comparing two or more repeated administrations with the measuring instruments. This gives an indication of the dependability of the result on one occasion which may then be compared with the results obtained on another occasion.

Ken (1998) identifies the following sources of error that affect reliability:

- Differences in the interpretation of results, change differences in what the observer notices and errors in computing scores.

- Random effects by respondents who check attitude alternatives without trying to understand them.
- Mood changes of the respondents because of illness, fatigue, recent good or bad experiences, or temporary differences amongst members of the group being measured.
- Variations in the conditions of administration between groups. These include various distractions.

In this study the researcher believes that the respondents were honest in answering the questionnaire. But respondents were responding differently in some questions as stated by Cohen et al (2000) when they mention that it is sometimes impossible to be totally reliable due to the different responses of the respondents.

3.4.5 Sampling and Population

Mugera (2013) describes sampling as the process of gathering a group to represent the population. Purposive sampling was used in this study. This type of sampling is defined by Mugera as the one where the researcher chooses his/her sample with a specific goal of focusing on particular characteristics to enable him/her to answer the research questions. Thus, participants in this study were intentionally sampled to meet the needs of the study.

In this study the sample is constituted by 120 rural secondary school principals of Nkandla, Mthonjaneni, Umlalazi and Umfolozi circuits in the UThungulu District. The population of this study which is UThungulu Districts has five circuits, namely, Umhlathuze and the four sampled circuits. This district is predominantly rural and most of its schools are in deep rural areas. Only principals from the rural schools in the rural circuits were chosen to be part of this study. These schools fall under quintile 1 and 2 and the educators were all Africans with more males than females.

3.4.5 Data Analysis

The researcher used statistical package of social science (SPSS) to analyse the data. After all the questionnaires were received, they were given to the statistician for

capturing and analysis. They were coded for identification purposes and captured into the computer spread sheet then exported to a computer with SPSS programme version 20.0 which generated frequencies and percentages presented in tables. There 113 questionnaires captured representing 94% return rate.

3.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal Province. This province is constituted by 12 districts, namely, Amajuba, Ilembe, Umlazi, Pinetown, Umzinyathi, Harry Gwala, Uthungulu, Umzinyathi, Umgungundlovu, Umkhanyakude, Uthukela and Zululand. This study is limited to rural secondary school principals of Uthungulu District schools. Uthungulu District has five circuits comprising of 686 schools. These circuits are Nkandla, Umlalazi, Umthonjaneni, Imfolozi and Umhlathuze. This study focuses in all Uthungulu circuits except for Umhlathuze circuit.

3.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

Before the researcher started gathering data, he requested consent from the Provincial Head of Department to conduct a research in the sampled schools, which was given to him in writing. Participants were informed of their rights to withdraw at any stage of the research and that their participation is voluntary.

According to Frankfort-Nachmias (1992) and Cohen et al., (2000), the researcher must make sure that anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents are maintained. In this study, the principals were not allowed to disclose the names of their schools and their identities in the questionnaire. This is supported by Kimmel (1988) who states that some potential participants in research on certain sensitive matters will refuse to take part when affirmation of confidentiality is weak or not understood.

The researcher operated within an ethic of respect to all his respondents. Cohen et al., (2000) states that the researcher must be mindful of the problem in making his decisions on the grounds of race, religion, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. This demands that the researcher be in line with the principle of humaneness where s/he shows consideration to the feelings and sensitivities of the participants. Gardner (2011:05)

states that ethics must be maintained and that individuals must be “treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief, or any other significant difference.” The researcher was careful not to engage in any unethical factors in this research study.

Under no circumstances was the researcher involved in falsification of data references or any research findings. Plagiarism was avoided and other people’s work or data was clearly referenced. Direct quotations taken from different authors are reflected by a quotation mark with accompanying citation. The researcher also applied for the ethical clearance certificate from the research committee of the University of Zululand which was given to him in writing.

The researcher is presently the District Manager for Uthungulu District. He tried by all means to avoid any conflict of interest that should have arisen during data collection. He requested the respondents to provide their personal views freely that have a true reflection of their understanding and implementation of SASA. The American Education Research Council (AERA) states that conflict arises when the researcher’s personal, financial and professional interests badly influence his/her behaviour to the participants and decision for his/her study.

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter described the methods or procedures that were followed in this study during data gathering, namely, quantitative approach, with its research instruments used in generating data, the study’s population and sampling, and ethical consideration. The following chapter contains data presentation and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

4. ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the focus was on research design. This chapter focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the empirical data that was elicited from the respondents by means of the items that were part of the questionnaires.

The first step that the researcher took was to give each response an identification number. The second step was the scoring of the questionnaires. Each response to an item was assigned a number of points, after scoring was done and checked, the results were transferred to a summary data sheet. The scores were systematically recorded. Each item was assigned its column. Since the data analysis involved item analysis, the scores for each item were tabulated.

Presented below are statistical tables drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires, together with brief analyses and interpretation of the data.

SECTION A

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The table below indicates the four Circuits and their 15 Wards where the study was conducted with the number of participants and the number of questionnaires returned.

Table 4.1 Participants

Circuit management	Circuit	No. of participants given questionnaires	No. of questionnaires returned
Nkandla	Godide	05	05
	Chwezi	07	06
	Ithala	09	08
	Sigananda	09	08
	Ntolwane	07	07

Umlalazi	Mbongolwane	08	07
	Entumeni	08	07
	Samungu	09	08
Mthonjaneni	Ndlangubo	09	09
	Ndundulu	08	08
	Ntambanana	10	09
	Obuka	06	06
Umfoloji	Kwambonambi	09	08
	Umbiya	09	09
	Umhlana	09	08
TOTAL		120	113
%		100%	94%

Table 4.1 reveals that 120 principals were given questionnaires but 94% responded. All the participants were from deep rural areas whose schools are quintile 1 and 2. However 06% of the respondents could not turn up. Schools which are quintile 3 and above but belong to the sampled circuits were not part of the study.

Table 4.2 Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	88	78
Female	25	22
Total	113	100

Table 4.2 reveals that a greater percentage of the respondents (78%) were males while 22% were females, thus showing a gender imbalance in the secondary school principals as a greater percentage was from males. This was also discovered by Wanjiru (2011) when she stated that gender imbalance in schools is caused by teachers` self-perception, gender roles, socialisation and gender stereotypes as most teachers believe that female teachers`s place are in the primary schools.

Table 4.3 Age group

	Frequency	Percent
31 – 40	13	12
Above 40	100	88
Total	113	100

Table 4.3 reveals that there were no respondents under the age of 30 and most of them (88%) were more than 40 years and 12% were 31-40years old. This shows that principals in the designated rural secondary schools are fully mature as none of them belongs to the youth category of a mature age.

Table 4.4 Qualifications

	Frequency	Percent
Matric + 3 and above	113	100

Table 4.4 reveals that all the respondents have met the current minimum qualification requirement as all of them fall under the same category of Matric + 3 and above. This means that all of them hold a postgraduate degree/ diploma which is in line with the entry requirement for educators in the Department of Basic Education. Wanjiru (2011) further discovered that educational qualification does not cause gender imbalance in education because the majority of the teachers were graduates.

SECTION B

4.3 KNOWLEDGE OF SASA

Table 4.5 Learner admission

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	1	1
Average	21	19
Good	91	80
Total	113	100

Table 4.5 reveals that a greater percentage of the respondents (80%) were clear about the policy on learner admission. This proves that majority of principals have knowledge on how to enroll learners in schools. There is a concern on whether principals are empowering all the SGB members on learner admission as the findings of the study conducted by Baruth (2013) revealed that SGBs do not have knowledge on learner admission and merely depend on the principal for development which is conflicting with SASA.

Table 4.6 Language policy

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	1	1
Average	24	21
Good	88	78
Total	113	100

Table 4.6 reflects that 78% of principals have a good knowledge of SASA regarding language as 21% are average and 1% are poor. This shows that principals are aware that there are 11 official languages in South Africa and that the SGB has powers to decide the language to be used in their school. But Baruth (2013) discovered that most SGBs rely solely on the school principal regarding the language to be used in their schools.

Table 4.7 Policy on religion

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	2	2
Average	23	20
Good	88	78
Total	113	100

Table 4.7 reveals that more than half of the respondents (78%) indicated that they had a clear understanding on religion. The constitution of the country has stipulated that everyone has the right to religion and each principal has to be clear of this policy. This was also discovered in the study conducted by Modipa (2014) when he revealed that parents and learners who are serving in the SGBs are lacking knowledge in understanding and interpreting the religion policy. He further discovered that one religion, that is, Christianity is given priority over other religions and indirectly forcing the adoption of a Christian character whereby educators and learners have to attend assemblies for religious observances.

Table 4.8 Learner`s code of conduct

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	2	2
Average	19	17
Good	92	81
Total	113	100

Table 4.8 reveals that a high proportion of the respondents (81%) indicated that their knowledge of learners` code of conduct was good. Based on the results, the principals know how to manage their school`s code of conduct. It is worrying whether SGB members are fully involved in the formulation of the code of conduct as the study conducted by Mestry & Khumalo (2012) discovered that the literacy levels of the majority of the SGB members make it difficult for them to design and enforce learners` code of conduct even though the Department of Education has trained them.

Table 4.9 Policy on curriculum framework

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	7	6
Average	38	34
Good	68	60
Total	113	100

Table 4.9 also reveals that more than half of the respondents (60%) indicated that their knowledge of the policy on curriculum framework was good. This however means that 40% of principals need assistance in understanding policy in curriculum framework. Dimmock (1995:3)Heystek and Louw (1999:21) argue for a collaborative school governance structure with focus on school based decision making. This gives schools `control over resources in order to develop and support curricula for the benefits of learners.

Table 4.10 Payment of school fees

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	14	12.4
Average	24	21.2
Good	75	66.4
Total	113	100

All the schools that were part of the sample fall under the category of `no fee schools` as they are in deep rural areas. Table 4.9 also revealed that more than half of the respondents (66%) indicated that they understood the policy of school fees. Lacking knowledge of the policy on the payment of school fees could be a problem in rural areas as most parents are poor and rely on government grants for living. Van der Westhuizen (1995:03), agree with the above findings when he states that the leadership of the school principal has undergone constant and gradual changes as his or her present role is mainly managerial. This tendency is clearly discernible in current documents (Employment of Educators Act No76 of 1998, the South African Schools Act No84 of 1996 and the Gauteng Department of Education:Guidelines for the school principals of 1998) which describe the role as mainly that of a manager and that they are in charge of school finances. Schools are institutions of collective entrepreneurship and need to

develop more models of governance and involve educators in planning (Mulkeen ,& Cooper ,1992:19).This talks to the correct interpretation of SASA by secondary school principals particularly in rural areas.

Table 4.11 Policy on learner discipline

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	3	3
Average	41	36
Good	69	61
Total	113	100

Table 4.11 reveals that the majority of the respondents (61%) indicated that they were familiar with the policy of learner discipline. This requires that discipline must be maintained in each school so that the culture of teaching and learning is maintained without any disruptions. It has been discovered that most principals understand the learner discipline policy but they specifically mentioned problems in disciplining learners as the alternatives to corporal punishment are inconsistency applied and does not have a positive impact on learners (see Section 4.3 Table 4.10). This is also confirmed by the results of the study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) when they discovered that learners do not fear or respect educators because they know that nothing will happen to them. They discovered that educators feel disempowered in their ability to instill discipline as they cannot administer corporal punishment though they are aware of the alternative disciplinary measures but they view them as ineffective and time-consuming. According Potgieter, Mosoge, and Mothaba (1997), good school discipline is an important feature of effective schools. This is supported by Duma (2014) who mentions that in order to achieve good discipline; every school must have a code of conduct, which must be adopted by parents for school governance.

Table 4.12 Policy on expulsion of learners

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	11	10
Average	33	29
Good	69	61
Total	113	100

Table 4.12 also reveals that a majority of the respondents (61%) indicated that their knowledge of the policy on the expulsion of learners was good. This shows that about 40% of the respondents need assistance in understanding the policy. But a number of them indicated that a long process needs to be followed in suspending and expelling the learner. This process involves cases of serious nature. This was reported by Azazi (2001) as cited by Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga (2014) in their study on disciplinary practices in schools and principles of alternatives to corporal punishment that suspensions and expulsions are due to substance abuse, theft, pornography, physical and verbal confrontations.

Table 4.13 Composition of SGB

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	1	1
Average	9	8
Good	103	91
Total	113	100

Table 4.13 reveals that a high proportion of the respondents (91%) indicated that their knowledge on the composition of the SGB was good. Based on the results, it shows that they understand who forms part in the composition of SGB as the composition was in line with the SASA policy. From the sampled schools, all the members constituted of parents of learners at school, educators at the school, members of staff at the school who are not educators, and learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school.

Table 4.14 Status of minors on SGB

	Frequency	Percent
Poor	10	9
Average	34	30
Good	69	61
Total	113	100

Table 4.14 reveals that more than half of the respondents (61%) indicated that their knowledge of the status of minors on SGBs was good. None of the SGBs members were minors which is in line with SASA as only parents who were not minors were members of SGBs.

4.4 PRINCIPALS` COMPLIANCE WITH SASA

Table 4.15 Sending a child to school when turning seven

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	13	12
Disagree	15	13
Agree	46	41
Fully Agree	39	34
Total	113	100

Table 4.15 reveals that the majority of the respondents (75%) were aware of compulsory education and its consequences to parents. Baruth (2013) discovered that most parents serving in SGBs are lacking knowledge in language policy.

Table 4.16 Attending religious morning assembly

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	28	25
Disagree	23	20
Agree	36	32
Fully Agree	26	23
Total	113	100

Table 4.16 reveals that more than half of the respondents (55%) agree that all learners must attend religious morning assembly in school while 45% of the respondents believe that not all learners must attend religious assembly as everyone has a constitutional right to observe a religion of his/her own choice. This was also discovered in the study conducted by Modipa (2014) when he revealed that parents and learners who are serving in the SGBs are lacking knowledge in understanding and interpreting the

religion policy such that one religion, that is, Christianity is given priority over other religions.

Table 4.17 Dagga smokers can be expelled by SGB and principal

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	43	38.0
Disagree	42	37.2
Agree	14	12.4
Fully Agree	14	12.4
Total	113	100

Table 4.17 reveals that 25% of the respondents believed that school principals and SGBs have powers of expelling learners from school but 75% of them disagree as both the principals and SGBs don't have this power.

Table 4.18 Sending learners home who have not paid school fees

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	70	62
Disagree	36	32
Agree	4	3
Fully Agree	3	3
Total	113	100

Table 4.18 reveals that a majority of the school principals (94%) were against the idea of sending learners home who have not paid school fees while only 6% of the respondents agree that learners have to be sent home to collect school funds. This means that a small percentage of respondents would opt for unlawful measures so as to ensure that school fees are paid.

Table 4.19 Learners drinking alcohol to be caned

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	73	65
Disagree	29	25
Agree	2	2
Fully Agree	9	8
Total	113	100.0

Table 4.19 reveals that once again a high proportion of the respondents (90%) disagreed that learners who drink alcohol have to be caned by the principal while 10% agree. This reflects that a small percentage of school principals still believe in corporal punishment which is in line with Table 4.10 where a greater percentage stated that they are familiar with the policy on school discipline and that the administration of corporal punishment is not allowed. This is also confirmed by the results of the study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) when they discovered that educators are not happy about the abolishment of corporal punishment and feel disempowered in their ability to instill discipline as they cannot administer it though they are aware of the alternative disciplinary measures but they view them as ineffective and time-consuming. Educators feel that learners do not fear and respect them anymore that is why they are misbehaving.

Table 4.20 Suspending learners who smoke dagga

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	38	34
Disagree	31	27
Agree	34	30
Fully Agree	10	9
Total	113	100

Table 4.20 reveals that less than half of the respondents (39%) believed that learners who smoke dagga can be suspended by the principal and the SMT. Only 61% of them

were against the suspension of learners. This shows that most principals comply with the policy on suspension as it is not within their power to suspend learners from schools.

Table 4.21 Repeated failure given no return reports

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	80	71
Disagree	23	21
Agree	5	4
Fully Agree	5	4
Total	113	100

Table 4.21 reveals a high proportion of the respondents (92%) disagrees that learners who fail repeatedly must be given `no return` reports and go to other schools. This means that most principals have an understanding on promotion requirements and policy on learner progression.

Table 4.22 Sending parents to prison for learner non-attendance

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	32	28
Disagree	26	23
Agree	45	40
Fully Agree	10	9
Total	113	100

Table 4.22 reveals that more than half of the respondents (51%) were against the idea of sending parents to prison for learner non-attendance. The results show that the respondents are aware of the right of learners to education as per chapter 2 of the South African Constitution and the roles and responsibilities of parents in relation to this chapter.

Table 4.23 Rude learners to be given corporal punishment by their parents

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	73	65
Disagree	21	19
Agree	13	11
Fully Agree	6	5
Total	113	100

Table 4.23 reveals that a greater proportion of the respondents were complying with the policy of corporal punishment as 83% disputed the fact that parents must come to school and give their rude children corporal punishment themselves. This is also confirmed by the results of the study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) when they discovered that principal are aware that corporal punishment is not allowed in South African schools and no one can administer it.

Table 4.24 SMT and principal to develop a school's mission statement

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	29	26
Disagree	26	23
Agree	36	32
Fully Agree	22	20
Total	113	100

Table 4.24 reveals that a small majority of the respondents (51%) supported the idea that the mission statement has to be developed by the principal and SMT while 49% felt that it is the responsibility of the SGB to develop it.

Table 4.25 Expelled learners to be given another school

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	15	13
Disagree	17	15
Agree	29	26
Fully Agree	52	46
Total	113	100

Table 4.25 reveals that a greater proportion of the respondents (72%) were of the idea that if a learner who is less than 15 years old is expelled from school the HOD must find him another school. Most respondents understood that if a learner is expelled from one school, he/she should be accommodated in another school as s/he has the right to education depending on the nature of the offence committed.

Table 4.26 School language policy to be determined by the principal and SMT

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	51	45
Disagree	25	22
Agree	28	25
Fully Agree	9	8
Total	113	100

Table 4.26 reveals that the majority of the respondents (67%) were of the idea that the principal and the SMT must not determine the school's language policy as that has to involve the SGB. These results show that most principals are complying with the language policy, but there is a vexatious concern from Baruth (2013) that parents serving in SGBs are lacking knowledge on such policies but depend on the school principal for language choices.

4.27 Nominating prefects instead of Representative Council of Learners (RCLS) if they like

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	71	63
Disagree	26	23
Agree	6	5
Fully Agree	10	9
Total	113	100

Table 4.27 reveals that a greater percentage of the respondents (86%) disagreed that post primary schools principals can nominate prefects instead of RCL if they like as it is policy that post primary schools have to nominate RCLs. The RCLs are responsible for taking the concerns, grievances and commendations to the governing body on behalf of the learners. These findings are in line with the ones for other researchers like Baruth (2013), Mncube (2008), Xaba (2011) & Modipha (2014) when they discovered that principals are aware of the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders like the RCLs but the implementation of such policy differs from institution to institution. This deviation is made in order to meet the needs of the principals which is conflicting with SASA. It has been discovered that most principals are ignoring RCLs in decision making and financial matters as they regard them as minors.

Table 4.28 SMT and principal to determine the school`s extra- curricular activities

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	42	37
Disagree	31	28
Agree	35	31
Fully Agree	5	4
Total	113	100

Table 4.28 reveals that a greater percentage (65%) of the respondents disagreed that the SMT and the school principal must determine the school`s extra-curricular activities.

SASA stipulates that SGBs must be involved in determining the extra-curricular activities in schools.

Table 4.29 Determining the choice of subjects to be taught

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	51	45
Disagree	36	32
Agree	20	18
Fully Agree	6	5
Total	113	100

Table 4.29 reveals that a greater proportion of the respondents (77%) were against the idea that the SMT and the principal are the only people to determine the subject choices to be taught as SGBs should be part of this process as stipulated by policy.

Table 4.30 Buying textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school

	Frequency	Percent
Fully Disagree	34	30
Disagree	21	19
Agree	33	29
Fully Agree	25	22
Total	113	100

Table 4.30 reveals that more than half of the respondents (51%) agreed that the SMT and the principal must buy textbooks, educational material or equipment for the school and that must involve the SGBs.

SECTION D

4.5 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WHEN ATTEMPTING TO COMPLY WITH THE SECTIONS OF SASA

This section was an open-ended question, where principals were required to mention the problems they encountered when attempting to comply with the sections of the Schools Act. In analysing the responses, the problems were ranked in order of frequency as follows:

4.5.1 Discipline

About 58% of the respondents raised the issue of ill-discipline as corporal punishment was abolished in South African schools and the alternatives prescribed for corporal punishment seem not to be working for rural schools. They quoted detention as an example, for it becomes a leisure time for learners and its applicability is problematic for both the learners and the educators as most educators rely on public transport available at specified times whilst the learners travel long distances home making them vulnerable to criminals. They also stated that educators are not trained to use these alternative measures to corporal punishment.

4.5.2 The process of suspension and expulsion

Forty eight percent of the principals complained that the process of suspension and expulsion takes too long to complete. This process has to go to all levels until it reaches the Head of Department's office, especially if it is a criminal case. Parents in rural areas do not accept this process as being administered by the HoD. They want powers to be delegated to them.

4.5.3 The role of SGBs in schools

Some principals are so unhappy about powers delegated to school governing bodies such that 44% stated that the issue of educators' appointments must be assigned to the school principal as the manager of the school. They also raised the issues of financial

accountability which currently rest with the treasurer of the SGB but some SGB members are illiterate and do not make a sound contribution to debates.

4.5.4. Safety and security at schools

Safety and security at schools is a call for concern as 28% of the principals stated that most schools in rural schools do not have security guards which leave educators and learners vulnerable to criminals. This means school gates are uncontrolled, which makes search and seizure impossible. Lately schools are faced with drug trafficking and gangsterism issues thus compromising learners' safety.

4.5.5 Admission of learners

Principals stated that most rural schools parents do not adhere to the admission policy as stipulated by the rules of the Department of Basic Education. Twenty two percent mentioned that some learners enter grade 8 at the age of 17-18, which poses problems in a schooling system.

4.5.6 Parental involvement

Parental involvement is a concern in rural schools as some principals stated that rural school parents are illiterate and see no reason for commitment to their children's education. Some learners stay with grandparents or non-caring guardians who do not comply with the school's requirements. Such parent-substitutes are unable to help learners with their homework or any other school work.

SECTION E

4.6 PRINCIPALS' SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND COMPLIANCE WITH SASA

In another open-ended question, principals were required to make suggestions on what can be done to improve their understanding and compliance with the South African Schools Act. Their suggestions were ranked in the order of frequency as follows:

About 88% of the respondents recommended that there must be more workshops to develop all educators and SGB. They stated that such workshops should be organised quarterly for its effective implementation. They further suggested that SASA amendments must be available in all institutions of learning with user friendly booklets and handouts.

One respondent recommended that districts and circuits must provide more platforms for newly appointed principals to meet with more experienced principals so as to share knowledge and management skills. Learner pregnancy and late coming seem to be affecting most schools as guidelines given have gaps with regard to implementation.

4.7 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the empirical data based on the responses given by the respondents. To make them understand the data were also placed on various graphs. The next and the final chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 5

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presented data related to questions one and two. This chapter gives the summary, recommendations, suggestions for further study, limitations and conclusions of this study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 includes the introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, the questions and objectives of the research, significance of the study, definition of operational terms, a description of methodology, delimitation of the field of study, ethical consideration and the conclusion. The research problem is indicated in the title of the thesis.

Chapter 1 has revealed that SASA is the most crucial piece of legislation that schools cannot operate without as it stipulates guidelines, roles and responsibilities that should be followed in the administration of schools (see Section 1.1). Chapter 1 also shows that these developments from SASA are bound to alter attitudes with which principals have to manage their schools. The way schools have to be governed requires more knowledge with regard to greater familiarity with this legislation on the part of school authorities.

In Chapter 2, the researcher examines the broader historical and theoretical overview of school governance and educational law including its past and contemporary issues. Examples from the past were cited so as to highlight the fact that the educational problems of the past do in a way, affect the present education system (see Section 2.3). Chapter 2 also presented a concise historical background of school governance and educational law in South Africa (see Section 2.5.1).

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology employed by the researcher in order to obtain data from respondents who were (secondary school principals) pertaining to the

knowledge of and compliance with SASA in schools. This chapter also discusses the research design, which includes the delimitation of the field of study; the acquiring of permission from the Department of Education to conduct research; the selection of respondents which includes the size of the sample and the sampling procedures; the research instrument, which was questionnaires, administration of the questionnaires, the processing of data, and ethical considerations (see Sections 3.3 – 3.5).

The population chosen for this study was the secondary school principals from deep rural schools in the Uthungulu District. Most of the respondents who participated in this research were males as they are dominant in this district. It was noted that all the participants were Africans and particularly isiZulu speaking citizens.

Chapter 4 focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of empirical data that were elicited from the respondents by means of questionnaire items using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. Statistical tables were drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires, together with brief analyses and interpretation of the data. Each item was assigned its column. The scores for each item were tabulated in frequency tables. For processing open-ended questions data, the researcher formulated themes from principals' responses in order to codify the data (see Section 4.4).

The empirical survey reveals that most respondents are familiar with SASA and are complying with it even though they have common challenges in compliance like learner discipline, suspension and expulsion, the role of SGBs, parental involvement, admission of learners, and security in schools.

Chapter 5 reviews the research project as a whole. It also provides a summary of the findings which serves as conclusions from the literature as well as an empirical survey. This is followed by recommendations, limitations of the study and recommendations for future study.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This section deals with several important findings with regard to the knowledge and compliance with SASA. The summary of findings is discussed below:

The study revealed that the greater percentage of the respondents have the knowledge of SASA. In this study all the aspects of SASA were assessed except for the policy on the payment of school fees. The study reveals that these rural secondary school principals understood on the policy on learner admission, but it is conflicting with the age levels of learners in their schools as some of the learners who are in these schools are over age. This can be blamed on their feeder primary schools who give them learners who are over age by the time they start their secondary schooling (see Section 4.3). There is a concern on whether principals are empowering SGBs on learner admission as in the study conducted by Baruth (2013) SGBs do not have knowledge on learner admission and solely depend on the principal for its development which is in conflict with SASA.

It has been discovered that most principals understand the learner discipline policy but they specifically mentioned problems in disciplining learners as the alternatives to corporal punishment are inconsistency applied and does not have a positive impact on learners (see Section 4.3 Table 4.10). This is also confirmed by the results of the study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) when they discovered that learners do not fear or respect educators because they know that nothing will happen to them. They discovered that educators feel disempowered in their ability to instill discipline as they cannot administer corporal punishment though they are aware of the alternative disciplinary measures but they view them as ineffective and time-consuming. Mtsweni (2008) as cited by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) also discovered that most educators feel incapacitated and helpless in dealing with learner discipline after the banning of corporal punishment in schools. According Potgieter, Mosoge, and Mothaba (1997), good school discipline is an important feature of effective schools. This is supported by Duma (2014) who mentions that in order to achieve good discipline; every school must have a code of conduct, which must be adopted by parents in school governance.

The study also revealed that most principals strongly believe in having morning assembly as it has been a norm to have religious sessions (Christianity) and briefings

before the start of teaching and learning where learners and educators have to gather together (see Section 4.3 Table 4.15).

This was also discovered in the study conducted by Modipa (2014) when he revealed that parents and learners who are serving in the SGBs are lacking knowledge in understanding and interpreting the religion policy. He further discovered that one religion, that is, Christianity is given priority over other religions and indirectly forcing the adoption of a Christian character whereby educators and learners have to attend assemblies for religious observances.

SASA mandated that freedom of conscience and religion at public schools:

Subject to the Constitution and any applicable provincial law, religious observances may be conducted at a public school under rules issued by the governing body if such observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance at them by learners and members of staff is free and voluntary.
(p,12).

It has been discovered that principals must always be updated with the developments of SASA through workshops where manuals, gazettes and guidelines will be provided to them. One of the respondents said: *“Principals must be updated timeously with latest developments to keep them informed and have a clear understanding about SASA.”*

This is supported by Mahlangu (2008) who states that SGBs should have access to specialised officials to obtain assistance and support for quality training. Further, school principals must provide school based support, share their expertise, and exhaust all the human resource skills available to them. She concludes that such support can assist in making SGBs functional in the governance of schools.

Results of the study also revealed that principals are aware of the constitution of RCLs in secondary schools but some of them are conflicting their roles and responsibilities. This research finding concurs with the findings of Mncube (2008) when he discovered that RCLs do not form part of the decisions in disciplinary and financial matters in all the sampled schools as they should make inputs on staff disciplinary matters, except

where the discipline of the teaching staff is handled. They feel that RCLs as minors cannot form part in the decision making of the school.

In this study many principals were not happy about powers delegated to school governing bodies such as educators and non-educators' appointments and financial accountability which rests with the treasures of the SGB who are sometimes semi-literate or have no financial management skills. This was also revealed in the studies conducted by Xaba (2011) when he discovered that SGBs' challenges are related to their ability or inability to execute functions prescribed by SASA. He concluded that SGBs are not succeeding in facing the challenges of their roles and responsibilities as the possible cause of these challenges rest in the specialist nature of most prescribed functions.

Parental involvement was also identified as a serious concern in rural schools as the majority of principals stated that rural school parents are illiterate and see no reason for commitment to their children's education. It was found that some learners stay with grandparents or non-caring guardians who do not comply with the school's requirements and such parents and guardians are unable, or do not care, to help learners with their homework and any other work (Section 4.4.6).

In conclusion the study identified problems encountered by rural school principals when attempting to comply with SASA. This involves, amongst others, school dysfunctionality, financial mismanagement, interference of SGBs in day-to-day running of the school particularly on matters relating to educators and the involvement of traditional leadership in disciplining learners. The issue of ill-discipline was raised as corporal punishment was abolished in South African schools and the alternatives prescribed for corporal punishment seem not to be working (see Section 4.4.1). The complication of implementing the process of suspension and expulsion was highlighted as most principals complained that this process takes too long to complete. It has to go to all levels until it reaches Head of Department's office, especially if it is a criminal case (see Section 4.4.2).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

- There must be empowerment programmes for school principals regarding the interpretation of and compliance with SASA. This can be in a form of seminars and workshops which must be conducted by people who are well versed with in SASA (Section 4.5).
- More empowerment is needed in school principals regarding policies like learner pregnancy, non-involvement of RCLs in some discussions, admission and religion policies
- It is recommended that there must be measures taken with to parents who are not involved in their children's school activities. For example, those parents who do not attend parents' meetings or do not turn up when summoned to schools should there be any queries regarding their children as it is with parents who do not send their children to school.
- There should be incentives for SGB members in order for them to have ownership of and accountability for the powers vested in them for the governance of the schools (Section 4.4).
- The Provincial Department of Education must assist SGBs in turning around dysfunctional schools to be centres of education excellence.
- There must be an empowerment and development of democratic SGB members on a quarterly basis. This empowerment should include amongst other things: literacy, financial management, accountability, planning, and roles and responsibilities in the governance of schools. This has to be done by an expert in the field of governance.
- It is also recommended that policy makers have to revisit the learner pregnancy, suspension and expulsion policies as there are gaps in their implementation.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study, like any other, has certain limitations that have to be acknowledged. One of its possible shortcomings is the fact that it was confined to one district which is Uthungulu and only to secondary schools that are only deep rural areas. The results of this study can therefore not be generalised to the entire schooling system.

The researcher is the manager of the district in question. Respondents were hesitant to give their honest responses until they were made aware their guaranteed anonymity when answering to the research questions. Kimmel (1988) states that some potential participants in research on sensitive matters will refuse to take part when affirmation of confidentiality is weak or not understood. A secondary researcher was therefore used in the collection of some questionnaires, as some principals were not open and honest in answering and submitting them.

Another obstacle in this study was the distance to be travelled by the researcher from his place of residence and work to the school for data gathering. He had to travel two or more hours in reaching some schools and the roads were in such poor conditions that they demanded a 4x4 car to drive on which was risky and in turn had financial implications.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further studies can be extended by having RCLs, parents and educators as participants. The involvement of these participants might assist in displaying the knowledge of and compliance with SASA of all the stakeholders involved in the governance and management of the school. The study reveals that there is a great need for intervention programmes regarding the training of parents in the governance of schools.

Future studies in rural areas regarding knowledge and compliance could be conducted. These studies would show whether the stakeholders involved have knowledge and are also complying with SASA. This study has revealed that some of the principals who have SASA do not comply with it in some of the policies where they are familiar with. Future studies could reveal the causes of such resistance. This will assist the policymakers in amending the policies if need be for stakeholders to comply with them.

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter provided the summary, findings, limitations, recommendations and suggestions for future studies. The study revealed that most principals are familiar with SASA and are complying with its policies while others who are knowledgeable of SASA are selective in complying with some of the policies. This should attract the attention of policymakers to review the policies and come up with alternatives which are applicable to all spheres of the schooling system.

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APPENDIX A:
**LETTER TO THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT REQUESTING A PERMISSION TO
UNDERTAKE RESEARCH AT UTHUNGULU SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

P O Box 10335
Empangeni
3880
03 June 2014

Dr SNP Sishi
Head of Department – Basic Education (KZN)
247 Burger Street
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Sir

**RE: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY WITHIN
YOUR DEPARTMENT.**

I am currently doing my Masters degree at the University of Zululand under the supervision of Dr M.A.N Duma in the Department of Education.

I request permission to conduct a research for a M.A degree in Uthungulu rural secondary schools. The title for my research study is: Exploring the rural principals` knowledge and compliance of the South African Schools Act in Uthungulu district. The purpose of the study is:

- To determine the rural principals' knowledge of SASA in Uthungulu district.
- To ascertain the rural principals' compliance with SASA in Uthungulu District.

Participation in this study will be voluntary. They will be free not to respond during the research session. There are no known or anticipated risks if they participate in this study. Data generated for this study will be kept for a period of 5 years and will be locked in the office at the University of Zululand.

Should you have any questions regarding my study or you would like to obtain more information before you reach a decision about my request, do not hesitate to contact me on: 083 275 3429 or you can e-mail me at dschonco@gmail.com/ david.chonco@kzndoe.gov.za. You are free to contact my supervisor at 035- 9026495.

It is therefore up to you to decide on whether to conduct this study in your department, UThungulu District or not.

Your favourable response will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

D. S Chonco

APPENDIX B: A permission from Kwazulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct research



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Connie Kehologile

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:214/8/223

Mr D.S. Chonco
P.O. Box 10335
EMPANGENI
3880

Dear Mr Chonco

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING THE RURAL EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE AND COMPLIANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT IN UTHUNGULU DISTRICT"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 January 2014 to 28 November 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Ms Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Umlalazi Circuit and Nkandla Circuit).

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 12 August 2014

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za; CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;
WEBSITE: www.kzneducation.gov.za

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-030)



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
Tel: 035 902 6887
Fax: 035 902 6222
Email: ManqeleS@unizulu.ac.za

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2015/244						
Project Title	Exploring the rural principal's knowledge and challenges with the South African Schools Act in uThungulu District						
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	DS Chonco						
Supervisor and Co-supervisor	Dr MAN Duma						
Department	Social Science Education						
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year		Master's	x	Doctoral		Departmental

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project proposal and the documents listed on page 2 of this Certificate.

Special conditions:

- (1) The Principal Researcher must report to the UZREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.
- (2) Documents marked "To be submitted" (see page 2) must be presented for ethical clearance before any data collection can commence.

The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this Certificate, using the reference number indicated above, but may not conduct any data collection using research instruments that are yet to be approved.

Please note that the UZREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the UZREC
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

APPENDIX D
A LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PRINCIPALS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Research Project Title : Exploring the rural educators` knowledge and compliance of the South African Schools Act.

Researcher : D.S Chonco

Date : 02/06/2014

Dear Sir/Madam

I write this letter to request for your participation in the Masters study that I am conducting at the University of Zululand in the Department of Education under the supervision of Dr. M.A.N Duma.

You have a right to privacy when you participate in this study. Your identity will remain anonymous unless you wish it to be known. In addition, I will ensure that you are protected from any harm. If it happens that you are physically or emotionally harmed, you will be indemnified against that. You will be free to withdraw if for some reasons known or unknown you no longer want to participate. If you are unhappy with the place and the manner in which the research is conducted, other means will be made to ensure your satisfaction. The results of the research will also be made available to you as well, should you so wish.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You will be free to decline a question during the interview session. If you agree, the interview will be recorded in order to facilitate generation of data and later will be transcribed for analysis. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant/respondent in this study. Data generated for this study will be kept for a period of 5 years and will be locked in the office at the University of Zululand.

Should you have any questions regarding my study or you would like to obtain more information before you reach a decision about participation, do not hesitate to contact me on: 083 275 3429 or you can e-mail me at dschonco@gmail.com/ david.chonco@kzndoe.gov.za. You are free to contact my supervisor at 035- 9026495.

I will highly appreciate your favourable response.

Yours sincerely

D.S Chonco

APPENDIX E:
CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

I..... certify that I am aware of the following:

- The purpose of the research study to be undertaken.
- The right to privacy.
- I will remain anonymous.
- I am protected from any harm, in case I am harmed, there will be indemnity against that.
- I will be in a human manner.
- This information will be kept confidential but be made available to relevant stakeholders, if necessary, and be destroyed after five years.
- I am free to withdraw at any time for whatever reasons.
- The study will be conducted in an appropriate and conducive manner.

I am therefore willing to participate in the study.

Signed aton

this.....day of.....2014.

Participant's Name:.....

Participant's Signature:.....

**APPENDIX F:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

This is not a test, but a questionnaire, which forms a part of a research project to document the rural principals' knowledge and compliance of the South African Schools Act

YOU MUST NOT MENTION THE NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL.

Your co-operation is of great importance.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

SECTION A : DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Put a cross (X) in the relevant space

1.1 Gender of Respondent	
Male	
Female	
Other	

1.2 Age Group	
Under 30	
31-40	
Above 40	

1.3 Education Qualification	
Below Matric (Grade 12)	
Matric (Grade 12)	
Matric + 1 (M+1)	
Matric +2 (M+2)	
Matric+3 and above	

SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT

3 = Good**2= Average****1= Poor**

Use the scale given above to indicate your understanding of the South African Schools Act in terms of the following:

1. Your school's policy on learner admission	1	2	3
2. Your school's policy on language	1	2	3
3. Your school's policy on religion	1	2	3
4. Your school's policy on learners' code of conduct	1	2	3
5. Your school's policy on curriculum framework	1	2	3
6. Your school's policy on the payment of school fees	1	2	3
7. Your school's policy on learner discipline	1	2	3
8. Your school's policy on the expulsion of learners	1	2	3
9. Your school's policy on the composition of the SGB	1	2	3
10. Your school's policy on the status of minors on the SGB	1	2	3

SECTION C: Compliance with the South African Schools Act

Use the scale given below to indicate how much you agree with or differ from each statement.

Fully Agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully Disagree
4	3	2	1

A parent who does not send his child to school when he turns seven can be sent to prison	1	2	3	4
All learners must attend religious morning assembly in school	1	2	3	4
Dagga smoking learners can be expelled by the SGB and principal	1	2	3	4
Learners who have not paid school fees must be sent home to fetch money or their parents	1	2	3	4
Learners who drink alcohol in school should be canned by the principal	1	2	3	4
The principal and SMT can suspend learners who smoke dagga	1	2	3	4
Learners who fail repeatedly must be given 'no return' reports and go to other schools	1	2	3	4
The HOD can send to prison the parent of the 12 year old learner if he does not attend school	1	2	3	4
If the learner is rude, his parents must come and give him corporal punishment themselves	1	2	3	4
The SMT and the principal must develop a school's mission statement	1	2	3	4
If a learner who is less than 15 years is expelled from school the HOD must get him another school	1	2	3	4
The SMT and the principal must determine the school's language policy	1	2	3	4
Post primary schools educators can nominate prefects instead of RCL if they like.	1	2	3	4
The SMT and the principal must determine the school's extra-curricular activities	1	2	3	4

The SMT and the principal determine the choice of the subjects to be taught in school	1	2	3	4
The SMT and the principal must buy textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school	1	2	3	4

SECTION D

Write down the problems you encounter when attempting to comply with the sections of the Schools Act

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SECTION E

The following can be done to improve the principals' understanding of the South African Schools Act

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