

Chapter 74

The Impact of Knowledge and Attitude of SGB Members Toward Adoption of Social Justice and Democracy: Challenges, Implications, and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this literature study was to investigate the impact of the knowledge and attitude of School Governing Board (SGB) members towards adoption of social justice and democratic practices for quality education in South African public schools with special reference to the language policy. Findings indicated that that bias is still a challenge in the institutions of learning in South Africa in terms of the implementation of the language policy by the members of the SGB. It was also found that increasing the level knowledge of the members; SGB members regarding social justice and democratic principles and practices with special reference to the South African language policy will change their attitude and behavior geared towards improved implementation of the same policy. It is also concluded that effective implementation of change management models can also coordinate the link between knowledge development, change of attitude and behavior towards effective implementation strategies of the language policy.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this literature review is to investigate the impact of the knowledge and attitudes of school governing body (SGB) members relating to the adoption of social justice and democratic practices for quality education in South African public schools with special reference to the language policy. The aim is to consider the difficulties associated with the implementation of the South African language policy in primary schools in compliance with social justice and democratic principles. This chapter begins with the background to the study, and then proceeds to the motivation for and objectives of the study. The theoretical framework will be discussed, followed by an examination of the meanings of concepts and the relationship between knowledge, attitude and behavioural change in relation to the implementation of the language policy in the context of change management strategies. A conclusion and recommendations will be offered based on the findings from the literature.

BACKGROUND

This study grew out of the observations made by a number of researchers (Mpanza, 2015; Xaba, 2011; Xaba & Ngubane, 2010; Mestry, 2006) that the adoption and implementation of social justice and democratic practices as relating to the language policy in schools remains beset with difficulties even though more than a decade has passed since the enactment of the South African Schools Act, aimed at correcting the inequalities of the apartheid policies. There is also research evidence to suggest that these difficulties have a significant negative impact on the effective and efficient functioning of schools, the goal of which is to achieve quality education (Amanchukwu, 2011).

Researchers such as Mabusela, (2016) reiterate the principle of every child's right to quality education and the obligation of schools to provide both access to and quality of education as articulated in the South African educational policy framework, and consider this fundamental to the discourse on rights-based democracy and social justice. However, this obligation is not always respected, and the need to eradicate the resulting acts of injustice in organisations, including schools, has given rise to debate on both theoretical and practical approaches and intervention strategies aimed at reviewing and reconstructing policies that are monitored by students, parents, teachers and the school management team (SMT) so as to achieve social transformation (Manamela, 2014; Lekalakala, 2006; Maharaj, 2005). When evaluating the impact of social justice and social democracy on quality education, South African researchers have tended to pay attention to the management of school funds and the assets of public schools (Manamela, 2014), the management of human resources practices (Lekalakala, 2006) and admission policies and the representation of elected members of the school (SGB) (Maharaj, 2005). What they appear to have overlooked, however, is the role played by language as the means of communication during curriculum delivery.

In 1996 Organisation, governance and funding of schools: Education White Paper 2 was published, from which emanated the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA). SASA came into operation at the beginning of 1997, and required that all government schools in South Africa have democratically elected SGBs composed of teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and (in secondary schools) learners. Parents should constitute the majority of the members of an SGB, and the chair of the SGB should be elected from the parent component. Through SASA the state aimed at fostering democratic school governance and in that way introducing a school governance structure involving all the stakeholder groups

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