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**Enhancing parental involvement in children's academic
work: Implications for teaching and learning**

BY

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**Thesis submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Education**

**in the
Faculty of Education**

at the

University of Fort Hare

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October 2018

DECLARATION

I, Gcobisa Victoria Fihla the undersigned, hereby declare that the thesis is my own original work and that it has not been submitted, and will not be presented, to any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late parents, Dreyfus Fihla and Beccarine Nothemba Fihla. Thank you for being good parents and for the wise words you left behind, which have given me the strength and courage to go on with life. You have been wonderful parents. May your souls rest in peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to all the people who have made immense contributions to my study.

In particular, I would like to express my warmest appreciation and sincere thanks to Professor Mzuyanda Percival Mavuso and Dr Jenny Shumba. Their unwavering guidance, continued support and advice were helpful in making this study successful.

Professor Mzuyanda Percival Mavuso, my supervisor, deserves special acknowledgement. He gave much of his time and is indeed a truly knowledgeable supervisor who moulded my thinking and challenged me intellectually through his constructive criticisms and numerous helpful comments and recommendations.

I am also grateful to my colleagues at Fort Hare University Department of education for their encouragement during discussions and interchange of ideas, which broadened my thoughts. Thank you, you are a wonderful team.

I owe special gratitude to my family; I was not always with you, but you always understand and supported me. Thank you for that. I also wish to acknowledge my colleagues at work and all those who have supported me during this study. Most importantly, I thank God for giving me courage and making everything to be possible.

LIST OF APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A	:	Data Set for Principals
APPENDIX B	:	Data Set for Teachers
APPENDIX C	:	Data Set for Learners
APPENDIX D	:	Data Set for Parents
APPENDIX E	:	Instrument for Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Principals
APPENDIX F	:	Instrument for Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Teachers
APPENDIX G	:	Instrument for Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Learners
APPENDIX H	:	Instrument for Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Parents
APPENDIX I	:	Researchers' letter of permission to conduct research
APPENDIX J	:	Letter for Ethical Request
APPENDIX K	:	Supervisor's letter of request to the District Office
APPENDIX L	:	Acceptance letter for conducting research from the District Office
APPENDIX O	:	Ethical Clearance Certificate
APPENDIX P	:	Informed Consent Form

ABSTRACT

Partnership between schools and parents seems to substandard, leading to both parties questioning each other on why children underperform. Most parents view the school as an instrument for the achievement of children and parents with limited or no education may have little or no interest in supporting children's academic work. The aim of this study was to investigate how parental involvement in children's academic work can be enhanced. It focused on three rural secondary schools in the Amathole West Education District in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The study particularly investigated how school schools involved parents in children's academic work and how they, together with principals, teachers and learners view their involvement in children's academic work. Guided by Epstein's theory of parental involvement, this qualitative study was premised on the interpretative paradigm. Face to face interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data from three high schools in the Amathole West Education District. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who comprised a target population of 24 participants. It emerged from the data that although schools were trying to involve parents in children's academic work, their activities were uncoordinated, occurred at school level rather than classroom level and focused less on learners' academic work. Parent' involvement in their children's academic work was not touching the real curriculum issues; rather it touched on the outside. The data also showed that parents' academic statuses influenced their participation as those who had little education seemed to be reluctant to participate on academic issues. The study concludes that there was lack of coordinated strategies by schools to involve parents in children's academic work. The study, therefore, recommends that Coordinated Grade-based Parent-Teacher Forums be established. This will assist in opening a planform for teachers and parents to engage on teaching and learning discussions and curriculum debates.

Key words: Parental Involvement; Academic Performance

LIST ABBREVIATIONS

AO	:	Area Office
CAPS	:	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
DBS	:	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DFES	:	Department of Education and Skills
DoE	:	Department of Education
CGPTAF	:	Coordinated Grade-based Parent Teacher Academic Forum
ESEA	:	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESE	:	Exceptional Student Education
GPA	:	Grade Point Average
ICT	:	Information and Communications Technology
LEA	:	Latino Educational Attainment
NCLB	:	No Child Left Behind
NNPS	:	National Network Partnership Schools
OBE	:	Outcomes Based Education
PTA	:	Parent Teacher Association
PTO	:	Parent Teacher Organization
SASA	:	South African School's Act
SASAMS	:	South African Administration Systems
SCRE	:	Scottish Council for Research in Education Study
SGB	:	School Governing Body
SGB's	:	School Governing Bodies
TIPS	:	Teacher Involvement Parents in Schoolwork

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF APPENDIXES.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
LIST ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	2
1.2.1 Defining parental involvement.....	2
1.2.2 International trends	3
1.2.3 Parental involvement in children's education in South Africa	4
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	8
1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION.....	8
1.4.1 SUB-RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
1.5 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	9
1.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	10
1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY	10
1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	10
1.9 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	11
1.10 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.....	12
1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY.....	12
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	14
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	14
2.2.1 Epstein Theory of Parental Involvement	14
2.2.1.1 Parenting	15
2.2.1.2 Communication	17
2.2.1.3 Volunteering.....	19
2.2.1.4 Learning at home	21
2.2.1.5 Decision making	22
2.2.2 Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theory	29
2.2.2.1 Communication of parental values.....	29
2.2.2.2 Parental goals.....	30
2.2.2.3 Parental aspirations	31
2.2.2.4 Parental expectations	32
2.3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW	37
2.3.1 Conceptualising parent involvement	37
2.3.2 International trends of parental involvement in children's education	44
2.3.3 Cognitive socialization	52
2.3.4 Factors influencing parental involvement in their children's academic work.....	57
2.3.5 Support mechanisms that enhance parental participation in children's academic work.....	65
2.3.6 Parent involvement and classroom emotional support.....	70
2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	71
3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN.....	74
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	74
3.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION.....	74
3.2.1 Positivist Paradigms.....	76

3.2.2	Post-positivist Paradigm	76
3.2.3	The Post-modernist Paradigm	77
3.2.4	The social constructivist Paradigm (interpretivism)	78
3.2.5	Research Approach- Qualitative	83
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN- CASE STUDY	84
3.3.1	Case study selection.....	85
3.3.2	Selection of the case study high schools	85
3.3.2.1	Selection of participants within each case	86
3.4	Case description	87
3.4.1	Choosing Research Site	87
3.4.2	School A	87
3.4.3	School B	87
3.4.4	School C	87
3.5	PILOT TESTING	88
3.5.1	Methods of data collection	88
3.5.2	Data collection tools.....	89
3.5.3	Interview Schedules.....	89
3.5.4	Field Notes.....	90
3.5.5	Data collection process.....	90
3.6	Semi-structured face to face interviews	90
3.6.1	Focus Group Interviews	92
3.6.2	Data analysis and interpretation	93
3.6.3	Analysis of data from semi-structured interviews and focus group conversations.....	94
3.6.4	Data trustworthiness	94
3.6.4.1	Credibility	96
3.6.4.2	Dependability	97
3.6.4.3	Confirmability	97
3.6.4.4	Transferability	97
3.7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	97
3.7.1	Applying for ethical clearance	98
3.7.2	Seeking permission.....	98
3.7.3	Informed Consent	99
3.7.4	Anonymity and Confidentiality.....	99
3.7.5	Voluntary Participation	100
3.7.6	Providing Incentives.....	100
3.7.7	No harm to the Participants	101
3.7.8	Exercising Reflexivity	101
3.7.9	Deception of Participants	102
3.8	CHAPTER SUMMARY	103
4	DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND	105
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	105
4.2	BIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS.....	105
4.2.1	Distribution of parent participants by age	106
4.2.2	Qualifications of principals and teachers.....	106
4.2.3	Distribution of parents by qualifications and their relationship to children .	106
4.3	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK	107
4.3.1	The views of parents on their involvement in children's academic work ...	108
4.3.2	The views of learners about the involvement parents in academic work ..	113
4.3.3	The views of school principals and teachers about the involvement of parents in children's academic work	118
4.4	CHALLENGES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK	125

4.5	STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE PARENTAL INVOLMENET IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK	135
4.6	CHAPTER SUMMARY	146
5	DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	148
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	148
5.2	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT THE PERIPHERY OF CHILDREN LEARNING	148
5.3	PARENTS' ACADEMIC CLARITY	151
5.4	COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND LEARNERS	152
5.5	LACK OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT BY PARENTS	154
5.6	PARENTS' ACADEMIC STATUS VERSUS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	156
5.7	TOWARDS ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN' S ACADEMIC WORK	158
5.7.1	Characteristics of proposed framework for parental involvement	159
5.7.2	Significance of the coordinated Grade-based Parent –Teacher Academic Forums.....	160
5.7.3	Discussing the Grade-based Parent –Teacher Academic Forums	161
5.8	CHAPTER SUMMARY	162
6	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	163
6.1	INTRODUCTION.....	163
6.2	SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS OF THE STUDY	163
6.2.1	Ideas of the study chapter by chapter	163
6.2.2	Summary of cross-cutting issues	165
6.2.2.1	Issue 1: Lack of parent- teacher collaboration and complementarity	165
6.2.2.2	Issue 2: Viewing parents as playing disciplinary role learners	165
6.2.2.3	Issue 3: Tension between academic support and knowledge of curriculum issues.....	166
6.3	SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	166
6.3.1	Uncoordinated school and parent intervention programmes.....	166
6.3.2	Parental support in children's academic work	167
6.3.3	Focusing on providing resources rather than academic support.....	167
6.3.4	A need to introduce Coordinated Grade-based Parent -Teacher Academic Forum	168
6.4	CONCLUSIONS.....	168
6.4.1	Lack of clear strategies by schools to involve parents	168
6.4.2	Parental involvement focusing on providing resources and motivation....	169
6.4.3	The influence of illiteracy and poverty on parental participation.....	169
6.5	CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY.....	169
6.6	RECOMMENDATIONS	170
6.6.1	For practice	170
6.6.2	Recommendations for further research.....	170
	REFERENCES.....	172
	APPENDICES	236
	APPENDIX A- DATA SET 1: INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPALS	236
	APPENDIX-B DATA SET 2: INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS.....	240
	APPENDIX C- DATA SET 3 INTERVIEWS WITH LEARNERS	244
	APPENDIX D-DATA SET 4 INTERVIEW WITH PARENTS	252
	APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR PRINCIPALS	260
	APPENDIX F: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR TEACHERS	261
	APPENDIX G: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR LEARNERS.....	262
	APPENDIX H: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR PARENTS	263
	APPENDIX I: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA FROM THE SCHOOLS.....	264
	APPENDIX J: ETHICAL CLEARANCE REQUEST	265

APPENDIX K: REQUEST FOR PERMISSISON TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: FROM THE SUPERVISOR	266
APPENDIX L: ACCEPTANCE LETTER FROM THE DISTRICTDIRECTOR: AMATHOLE WEST DISTRICT	267
APPENDIX M: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE.....	268
APPENDIX O: ETHICS RESEARCH CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONCSENT FORM	270
APPENDIX P: EDITOR’S CERTIFICATE.....	272
APPENDIX Q: SECOND EDITOR’S CERTIFICATE	273

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4-1: Distribution of parents by qualifications and their relationship to children	107
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1:Some forces shaping educational outcomes in children’s academic work (Tudge et al, 1999) (Lareau,2003)	48
Figure 2-2: A research based model illustrating the concept of parental involvement for school-aged children (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003)	50
<i>Figure 2-3: De Garmo et al (1999) found support for the model of parental influence on to educational achievement for young children</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Figure 5-1: Enhancing parental involvement in their children’s academic work:</i>	<i>159</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate how parental involvement in children's academic work can be enhanced. It focused on three rural high schools in the Amathole West Education District in the Eastern Cape Province. The study particularly investigated how schools involve parents in children's academic work and how they, together with principals, teachers and learners view their involvement in children's academic work. It further investigated what parents did to support children academically. Research shows that parents' behaviour with children, such as stimulation, consistency, moderation and responsiveness influences the children's cognitive and social development (Bempechat, 1992).

Positive impacts of parental participation on student academic outcomes have not only been recognized by school administrators and teachers, but also by policy-makers who have interweaving different aspects of parental involvement in the new education initiatives and reforms (Graves and Wright, 2011; Laroque, Kleiman and Darling 2011; Mattingly, Prislín, McKenzie, Rodriguez and Kayzar 2002; Topor, Kean, Shelton, and Calkins, 2010). Moreover, Domina (2005:245) argues that "the idea that parents can change their children's educational trajectories by engaging with their children's schooling and academic work has inspired a generation of school reform policies". For instance, the significance of parental involvement was clearly emphasized and delineated in the No child left Behind Act (Title 1, Part A). More specifically, schools were instructed to engage families in the education of their children. During this process, participation of parents in regular, two-way communication involves student academic achievement and various school activities (Ratcliff and Hunt, 2009). Although parental involvement is seen to a pivotal role in enhancing learners' academic performance, in South Africa it appears that it is still lacking and learners' academic results, particularly in Grade 12, are still very low

in provinces such as the Eastern Cape (Department of Education, 2016). It is for this reason that a study that concentrates on how parents' involvement in children's academic work can be enhanced was carried.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This section conceptualizes parental involvement and unpacks the debates by other scholars at international, continental and local levels. It also reveals the challenges that go with parental involvement in children's academic work and how involvement plays in different contexts.

1.2.1 Defining parental involvement

There are two basic key drivers that work together to define the concept of parental involvement. One of these is a level of commitment to parental support, which includes encouraging the child, being sympathetic, reasoning and understanding. The other drives the level of parental activity and participation, such as doing something that is observable as parents are the primary educators of children (Vandergrift & Greene, 1992). Parenting a child is an awesome joy and a huge responsibility at the same time (Epstein, 1994). The role of parent is all encompassing to include the role of a teacher. It is not surprising that parents are the first teachers that a child is exposed to; as such parents are the first educators of a child. The role does not cease to exist when children enter school. In fact, families play a critical role in the education of their children, and work hand in hand with the school. This may be achieved by ensuring that parents can help create collaborative partnerships that support all aspects of a child's achievement at school. Increased parental involvement in child's education has many positive implications, including increased achievement levels (Epstein, 1994) who posits that increased parental involvement in child's education has many positive implications including increased achievement levels. Research also highlights that despite continued efforts by teachers, achievement levels are not consistent across all groups of children. Children from diverse backgrounds such as African American, Native American and Hispanic typically lag behind their peers in terms of achievement (Vang, 2006). It is suggested that the education system provides different educational opportunities for students on the basis of their race, gender, religion, social class, language and

ethnicity. Consequently, as children become more diverse, schools face greater challenges in meeting the needs of all children. Undeniably so, studies indicate roping in parental involvement as the most effective way to ensure that children achieve better results in their education (Patrikakou, 2008).

1.2.2 International trends

It is widely recognized that if children are to maximize their potential in schooling, they will need the full support of their parents (Desforges, 2003, Jacob, 2018). Attempts to enhance parental involvement in education has occupied governments, administrators, educators and parents' organizations across North America, Australasia, Europe, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom (UK). It is anticipated that parents should play a role not only in the promotion of their children's achievements, but more broadly in improvement and the democratization of school governance. On the other hand, the European Commission 1996 holds that the necessary degree of parental participation is a significant indicator of the quality of schooling whereas in England the Government's strategy for securing parental involvement was set out in the 1997 White Paper. These are clear indications that the involvement of parents cannot be under estimated but should be viewed as a critical role within any education system. Desforges (2003) also advances that the importance of parental involvement in children is illuminated in 'Excellence in schools' and this includes three elements, which are: (a) providing parents with information, (b) giving parents a voice and (c) encouraging parental partnerships with schools (Desforges, 2003, Jacob, 2018).

Research done within the African context also highlights that parental involvement is critical if children are to succeed. For instance, in Ghana, observations have been made that the nature and level of parental involvement, which includes the engagement and monitoring meant to be done by the parents to the children's work was lacking. This study compared parents who had never been engaged in children's education to those parents who had been involved in the school environment and at home. Nyarko (2011) observed that Ghanaian parents were often engaged in children's schooling in one way or another. However, their involvement appeared to be historically limited to school related activities at home, such as completion of homework. As a result, observations have been made that

parental engagement in children's education varies with regards to socio-demographic and economic circumstances such as marital status, educational level and the child's gender (Georgiou, 2007; Schimpl-Niemans, 2000; Schmitt and Klein, 2010).

In Kenya parental encouragement was the only factor that was not significantly related to academic motivation. Although, the correlations are low, they showed that pupils' motivation to do well in academic work depend on the nature of their home environment (Grusec and Kuezynski, 2000; Chen, Kong, Gao & Mo, 2018). As a result, the poor performance has raised concerns resulting in efforts being made to find out the reasons behind the poor performance. This has resulted in many factors such as lack of facilities in schools, lack of qualified teachers, indiscipline, unfavourable home environment, low intelligence of children, anxiety, pupils' lack of achievement being examined in relation to causes of poor performance (Hussein, 2010). Undeniably so, there is need for public account of what needs to be done to enhance parental involvement. This may assist in ensuring that children attain better grades in schools.

1.2.3 Parental involvement in children's education in South Africa

South Africa inherited a fragmented and racially divided education system which impacted negatively on the rural communities; what rural schools are experiencing today comes as a direct result of the impact of the system, which is hard to overcome (Matshe 2014:1). Moreover, earlier studies soon after the democratic era highlighted that there was visible parents' inability to contribute to children's education due to high levels of illiteracy (Khanyisa, 2006). This gave rise to researchers shifting their interest from inside school factors that promote learner achievement to outside school factors, thus the outcomes of extant literature pinpoint to the fact that support provided at home by parents and other family members cannot be understated if children are to perform well at school. In simple terms, the modus operandi of parental involvement in children's education needs to be addressed (Ndlazi, 1998; Phendla, 2004, Sheridan, Witte, Kunz, Wheeler, Angel & Lester 2018).

However, observations have been made that address on parental involvement should be earmarked in rural communities where concerns have been raised that the most of the parents are not confident about how they can be keenly involved in children's schooling (Nyama, 2010; Risimati, 2009). Maluleke (2014) highlights that partnerships between the schools and parents are substandard, leading to both parties questioning each other on why their children underperform. Accordingly, Van Der Westhuizen (2002) also adds to the body of knowledge in the South African context and posits that these accusations are indicative that parents should view the school as an instrument for the achievement of their children. This can significantly enhance parents' involvement in the school and, subsequently, in children's education. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) and Phendla (2004) further submit that the problem lies in the fact that parents with limited or no education may have the will to help children but, are constrained because they are convinced that they are incapacitated by their limited school education to help their children with their learning. Furthermore, as noted by Epstein and Sanders (2000), teachers, parents, and students have little understanding of each other's interests in children and schools. Most teachers do not know the goals that parents have for their children, how parents help them learn, or how parents would like to be involved. The reason for this is that most of the parents do not know much about the educational programs in children's schools or what teachers require of them. Given this backdrop, new ways have to be found of increasing parent involvement, particularly in rural areas.

In Gauteng Province, studies show that parental involvement has diminished since the introduction of school governing bodies and the consolidation of community schools into state schools (Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2009). Observations have also been made that rural and township parents in South Africa need to become interested and be involved in children's education (Trialogue, 2009). The Eastern Cape Province is not immune to the above. Moreover, the situation in the province is exacerbated by abject poverty, inequality of education and high unemployment rates (Infrastructure News and Service Delivery, 18 November 2014). For instance, concerns have been raised about the infrastructure in schools which is not attended to by the department of education and some of the schools are still mud schools.

The schools have been noted to have no running water and electricity. Some children walk long distances to school. This has raised questions whether effective teaching and

learning is taking place. Also there is lack of school resources (South African School Administration and Management System (SASAMS), Department of Education (Circular No:20 of 2012; Department of Basic Education, 29 May 2014; Mail and Guardian, 08 January 2013). Sadly, literature points to the fact that the democratically elected school governing bodies (SGB'S), which consisted of parents, appears to be fixated in creating, implementing, supervising and evaluating school policies and rules of the school which guide and govern the actions of the school and its members at the expense of the performance of their children. Unfortunately, this negligence resulted in the low performance of Grade 12 learners from 64.9% in 2013 to 65.4% in 2014 and 56.8% in 2015 to 59.3% in 2016 and 65.8% in 2017. Although there seems to be a slight increase in 2017, the matric results are yet to reach seventy percent or more since 1994. This made the Eastern Cape Province to remain at the bottom of the ladder in 2015. As a way to redress this problem, the Department was forced to amend the learner support strategy that led to the induction of a matric count down support program on the 14th of May 2015 in Butterworth (Booklet of the results of 2015). This move was implemented due to the fact that the (DoE, 2015), had realised that schools in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape Province have been noted and continued to have a high failure rate in the grade 12 level of education due to lack of teachers in the most critical learning areas. Further, the failure rates were blamed on the fact that most of the children are ill-disciplined but also came from unfavourable home environments, which results in poor performance at school. This failure rate continued in 2016 and in 2017 Eastern Cape was the worst performing province. It had a 2.5% increase as compared to 2016. In 2013, Amathole West District received 56.6% in matric results (Department of Education, 2013). In 2014, it was the second last performing district with a pass rate of 56.9%. In the year 2015, Amathole West District obtained a percentage of 49.7% with no improvement in the statistics for better results. In 2016 the district was the sixth district from the bottom at 50.9% and in 2017 it had a 53.6% matric pass percentage. In view of these statistics, parental involvement could make a difference in the children's progress if it could be effectively implemented within the education system.

It has been assumed that the academic achievement of learners may not only depend on the quality of the school infrastructure, educators' teaching system, access to reading material and group discussions, but also on the extent of parental involvement in the learners' education (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004). Moreover, in South Africa, the implementation of CAPS represents a change in the curriculum and in the teaching methods. There has been a paradigm shift where focus has shifted from teacher–

centred learning to more co-operative learning, meaning the jur-mug theory does not work anymore; instead learners are expected to put so much more effort than before in their school work. In other words, this calls for more parental participation if their children are to be productive and responsible members of society (Bryan, 2005, Hallgren, Gonzalez, Choi, Kelly, Ochoa & Gill, 2017). In addition, the Public Agenda (2003) indicated that two-thirds of teachers that were surveyed in their study surveyed believed that the students would perform better in schools if the parents were more involved and more responsible in their children's education. A study carried out by (Johnson & Duffett, 2003) also indicated that a resounding 72% of the parents admitted that children of uninvolved parents sometimes "fall through the cracks" in schools.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) also argue that regardless of the government policies, parents have not always been actively involved in enhancing their children's development and educational progress in schools. In addition, though parents are expected to provide necessary information on children's developmental stages and offer advice on learning-friendly home environments (Epstein, 2001), the situation on the ground appears to be the opposite. This is despite provisions that have been put in place to assist parents, such provisions as voluntary bodies, research organizations, national initiatives and LEA (Latino Educational Attainment) initiatives (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003).

In light of the above, it is apparent that researchers have brought to the limelight the challenges and problems that hinder parental involvement. However, there appears to be a void of the applicability and specifications on how parental involvement, especially within the rural set-up, can be promoted. Most studies have focused on researching on SGB's in South African Schools, Parental involvement in Primary Schools and High Schools in different provinces of South Africa. However, there appears to be a dearth of literature that has focused on parental involvement as a means of enhancing children's performance in the Eastern Cape, particularly in a rural context (Maluleke, 2014; Matshe, 2014; Phendla, 2004; Risimati, 2009; Van & Wyk, 2004; Nyama, 2010). This study, therefore, sought to fill in this gap.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Before 1994, the South African education system was provided along racial lines and rural communities which were and are still predominantly black. Rural high schools were negatively impacted by fragmented and racially divided education (Matshe 2014). Parents in rural areas were illiterate and they were not involved in children's education. With the advent of democracy, it was hoped that parental involvement in children's education would be enhanced. However, within the new democratic era, there has been visible parents' inability to contribute to their children's education due to high levels of illiteracy (Khanyisa, 2006). Parental involvement in children's academic work seems to be lacking particularly in rural areas (Ndlazi, 1998 and Phendla, 2004). Parents in rural areas are not showing willingness to participate in children's academic work (Nyama, 2010; Risimati, 2009), and the partnership between schools and families does not seem to assist in enhancing learners' academic performance (Maluleke (2014). Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of strategies by the Department of Education that focus on specifying the application of parental involvement in children's academic work (Maluleke, 2014; Matshe, 2014; Phendla, 2004; Risimati, 2009; Van & Wyk, 2004; Nyama, 2010). This is particularly so in rural high schools. This study sought to fill in this gap by departing from the trend that has been used in existing literature that provides narrow information relating to how parental involvement in rural setting can be enhanced to promote children achievement in education. This study sought to fill in this gap by departing from the trend that has been used in existing literature that provides narrow information relating to how parental involvement in rural setting can be enhanced to promote children achievement in education.

1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

How can parents' involvement in children's academic work be enhanced?

1.4.1 SUB-RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What strategies are used by schools to enhance the involvement of parents in children's academic work?

- What practical assistance is given by parents in children's academic work?
- Why do parents seem to be reluctant to participate in children's academic work?
- What challenges are encountered by schools in involving parents in children's academic work?
- What support mechanisms can be put in place to enhance parental involvement in children's education?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate strategies used by schools to enhance the involvement of parents in children's academic work
- To establish the practical assistance given by parents in children's academic work.
- To investigate why parents, seem to be reluctant to participate in children's academic work.
- To investigate the challenges encountered by schools in involving parents in children's academic work.
- To unearth the support mechanisms that can be put in place to enhance parental involvement in children's education.

1.5 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to establish how parents were involved in children's academic work in three schools in the Amathole West Education District. This was done with the view to enhancing their involvement in children's academic work.

1.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out to develop collaborations between families and schools in efforts to promote academic success. The study is envisaged that it will be a contribution to numerous programs and education policies. Parental school involvement affects achievement and identifies how patterns and amounts of involvement vary across cultural, economic and across developmental levels (Hill, 2009). An in depth study of the implementation of parental involvement is, therefore, necessary in order to inform improvements in High Schools in the Amathole West Education District. The findings have the potential to assist schools in formulating strategies to draw the school policy and to improve the pass rate in High Schools (Catsambis, 2001, Jochim & Opalka, 2017, Yan, 2017).

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitations are those factors that limit the scope and define boundaries of the study as they are determined by the conscious inclusionary and exclusionary decisions made by the researcher (Simon, 2011). The focus of the study was to investigate how parents' involvement in their children's academic work can be enhanced. Only the views of parents, learners and teachers (some of them being principals) from three rural high schools in Amathole West Education District in the East Cape Province were investigated.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations in qualitative study are based upon the validity and reliability of the study and that it is based on the understanding participants have on a particular phenomenon. "Because qualitative research occurs in the natural setting, it is extremely difficult to replicate studies" (Wiersma, 2000; p.211). Furthermore, since this study was a case study of three rural high schools, its findings cannot be generalized to other contexts and the fact that it was conducted on only twenty four participants from three rural high schools in one education district may have

limitations regarding the lack of contextual richness. While the results of this study may be used to reflect the general outcome of parental involvement in children's academic work in senior secondary schools in Amathole West District in the Eastern Cape Province, the conclusions have been limited to the results drawn from the study because they were for the rural high schools. However, in-depth interviews generated data that can be used as a basis for further studies situated in different contexts and focusing on different angles.

1.9 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher sought to understand how parents were involved in the academic work of the children in three rural high schools of the Amathole West District, and it was for this reason that this study was based on the interpretative paradigm, which is discussed thoroughly in chapter 3. This interpretative paradigm aims at understanding people (Babbie & Mouton, 2008, Stuart, Thomas & Donaghue, 2018). Interpretative social science can be traced back to Max Weber (1864-1920) who maintained that all humans attempted to make sense of their worlds. In so doing, humans continuously interpreted, created, gave meaning, defined, justified and rationalized daily actions of learners in schools and in their home environments (Babbie & Mouton, 2008; Stuart, Thomas & Donaghue, 2018). The Interpretativist paradigm predominantly uses the qualitative approach (Nind and Todd, 2011). Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem. This approach was ideal for this study because it describes the purpose of qualitative research, the role that researchers play, the stages of the research that are conducted and the method of the data analysis that is used (Trochim, 2006). The qualitative research methods that were used during data collection were semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. Further details on these are provided in chapter 3. The case study selection was done, and it focused on the environment from which children (Motto, Daniel, Robinson, Walden, Burnette, Angela and Rutherford, 2012). The utilisation of the case study assisted in revealing an in-depth understanding of how illiterate parents and the majority of parents who were mostly grandparents with low income were involved in the academic work of their children.

1.10 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

1.11.1 Parental involvement –It is when a parent participates during the school year in attending a general meeting; attending a scheduled meeting with the child's teacher; attending a school event; volunteering in the school or serving on the school committee (Epstein, 2001). For the purpose of this study, and in line with Epstein (2001), parental involvement is when parents act as partners in children's education, play a key role in assisting in children's learning and are actively involved at school.

1.11.2 Participation-Theoretically, parental participation is defined as taking part in school duties (Epstein, 2005). It is defined as parents associating with adverse adolescents and young adults in the academic domain (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Kgaffe, 2001; Lanther, Wright-Cunningham & Edmonds, 2003; Flett, Sue, Ma & Guo, 2016). Whereas (Nurttala, Ketonen & Lonka, 2014; Olufisayo and Akinola, 2013;) advance that participation can be defined as taking part in school life. For the purpose of this study, parental participation means parents participating in supporting their children's academic work.

1.11.3 Parents- parent refers to a person responsible for a child's welfare, upbringing and education. The word may embrace other members of the family, such as grandparents, older siblings, aunts and uncles, close family friends, neighbours and members of the community who care about the school (Hardaway, 2018; Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2014). A parent is any adult living with children (Patterson, 1968). For the purpose of this study parents are the biological parents and other persons who are responsible for children's schooling.

1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study consists of six chapters as indicated below:

CHAPTER I: Introduction and background of the study: This chapter uncovers the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions,

objectives of the study, purpose, significance, delimitations, limitations of the study and definition of key terms.

CHAPTER 2: Theoretical framework and review of related literature: This chapter delineates the conceptual framework of the evaluation theories in relation to parental involvement to the achievement of their children in high school and also explores the literature related to parental involvement in children's achievement in high school.

CHAPTER 3: Research methodology and design: This chapter unveils the research paradigm that influences the research design and justifies the methodology used in this study. The population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments and ethical considerations are also elucidated.

CHAPTER 4: Data presentation and analysis: In this chapter, data collected through the questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and document analysis is presented. It is analysed and interpreted to formulate meaning out of it.

CHAPTER 5: Discussion of findings: This chapter discusses the findings of the research. The researcher makes comparisons between the findings of this study and other related studies. The main focus in the study was to bring the findings of this study into the existing knowledge on parental involvement in children's achievement in high schools.

CHAPTER 6: Summary, conclusions and recommendations: The final chapter brings to the surface the findings of the study in relation to the stated problem. It delineates the conclusions and props up recommendations for policy makers to review the present system.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is presented in two parts. The first part discusses theoretical frameworks that informed the study. Then the second part focuses on relevant literature in line with the research questions. The review of related literature helped the researcher to have an insight into what other researchers have written about the participation of parents in their children's academic work.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section discusses the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study. Two theories, that is Epstein's theory of parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey and Saddler's theory of parental involvement, served as lenses that guided the study in establishing how parents are involved in their children's academic work.

2.2.1 Epstein Theory of Parental Involvement

This theory is a comprehensive model of partnership developed by Joyce Epstein, a Director of the Centre for school, family and Community partnerships at John's University in Baltimore. Epstein's model redefines the relationship between schools, families and communities as overlapping spheres of influence that have a common concern about the success of a child. Epstein (1996) firstly developed a theoretical model; the main tenet of this theory was to explain parental involvement in three perspectives which are separate responsibilities of families and schools; shared responsibilities of families and schools and sequential responsibilities of families and schools. With regards to separate responsibilities of families and schools, Epstein (1987) argues that the distinct goal of parents and teachers is considered to yield positive results when teachers, on one hand, keep a professional distance from and

equal standards for children in their classrooms. While parents, on the other hand, develop personal relationships with their children at home including identifying individual expectations.

With regards to shared responsibilities of families and schools, Epstein (1987) posits that the school and home should work together in a coordinated manner in which cooperation and complementarity exist between the two institutions. The school and the family work collaboratively towards the socialisation of a child and this can be achieved when teachers and parents are working together. The third perspective, that is, sequential responsibilities between the school and families unpacks the chronology of how teachers and parents are involved in children's education. The sequential perspective emphasises that parents teach needed skills to children until the time of their formal education around the ages of five or six. Then, teachers assume the primary responsibility for children's education (Epstein, 1987). This study therefore sought to establish how parents are involved in children's education in accordance with the three perspectives. Epstein (1987) further developed a typology of six types of parental involvement which are; parenting; communicating; volunteering; learning at home; decision making; and community involvement.

2.2.1.1 Parenting

Early adolescence is often marked by changes in school context, family relationships and developmental processes. In the context of these changes, academic performance often declines, while at the same time the long term implications of academic performance increases. However, in promoting achievement across elementary and high school levels, the significant role of families, family-school relations and parental involvement in education has been highlighted. Parental involvement is positively associated with achievement, with the exception of parental help with homework. Moreover, it has been noted that involvement that reflects academic socialization had the strongest positive association with achievement. Stattin and Kerr (2000); Horpart, Serra & Esteban (2018) differentiated among control, solicitation and disclosure as potential sources of parents' knowledge of their children's whereabouts and activities. In addition to that, there is control, which refers to parent initiated efforts to control adolescent's behaviour through the use of rules and restrictions, also solicitation is the parents' active efforts to obtain information from their adolescents. The combination of solicitation and control describe parents'

tracking and surveillance behaviour that can be considered as monitoring activities, in contrast it refers to the children's willingness to provide truthful information to their parents (Stattin and Kerr, 2000). Kerr and Stattin (2000) further showed that parents' knowledge resulted from parents monitoring efforts which are strongly and consistently associated with disclosure. In parenting, Epstein suggests that parents should be provided with workshops, videotapes, computerized phone messages which could be of help on parenting and child rearing at each stage of growing up and also at grade level (Epstein, 1995). The increased realization that family members should contribute to children's literacy development has given birth to family literacy programs which are designed to support families' participation in children's academic work. In the same vein as Epstein, (Auerbach 2004) argues that parents lack the essential skills to promote school success in children's academic work. However, parents' lack of educational attainment are associated with lower academic achievement, because parents' involvement has been positively related to children's educational performance and may mediate the effects of reducing the achievement gap (Hakkinen, Kirjavainen and Uusitalo, 2003; Bali and Alvarez, 2004). Coleman (1988) described three components of social capital: the obligations and expectations of reciprocity in social relationships (Thayer, 2018) norms and social control and information channels. Coleman viewed social capital as a means to an end by which parents can promote children's school achievement and educational attainment. Social capital obtained through visits to the school may take the form of information (e.g. about upcoming events or available enrichment activities), skills (e.g. how to help with homework and reading, and parenting tip), access to resources (e.g. books, study aids sources of assistance), sources of social control (e.g. school-home agreement on behaviour expectations and educational values); all which can help parents promote children's school achievement. In addition, families and schools' responsibilities for education are sequential. This infers that, previously, families were responsible for preparing children with the necessary skills in the early years, and the schools took over from there with little input from families. However, today, in the context of greater accountability and demands for children's achievements, schools and families have partnerships and share the responsibilities for children's education. Therefore, the focus of the study was to establish how parents and schools work together in a way that allows parental participation in children's education.

According to Epstein's (1992) theory of parental participation, family support programs should be introduced to parents and this could be necessary to assist families with health, nutrition and other services that can help the child to grow. The parent should reinforce the importance of the school, homework and activities that help build academic skills and feeling of success (Epstein, 1992). She (Epstein, 1992) also advocates for formal courses for parents where they can get college credits to encourage them to enrol so that they can assist in their children's school work. The foregoing views indicate that as a basis why the Epstein theory was adopted for this study, taking into cognition that the extant literature as highlighted in the background of the study showed that, most of the parents in the rural Eastern Cape province were illiterate, hence such adult programmes would promote positive and effective involvement in children's schooling. Another type of support she advocates for is home visits especially at transition points such as elementary, middle and high school; which for the South African context may be equated to the Foundation, Intermediate and High school. Though Epstein was dealing with parents in the American context which is probably different from the South African environment. However, it would be interesting to establish what is happening in the South African context in terms of parenting support programs.

2.2.1.2 Communication

Epstein emphasised that communication should take place in multiple ways in order to connect the school, home and communities. This means that, according to this theory, there should be two-way traffic communication between a school, home and parents should understand their children's academic performance. According to Epstein (1995), effective communication is never unidirectional, but always allows and encourages communication from the parent to the teacher and from the family to the school. Epstein encourages that the school needs to arrange conferences with every parent at least once a year to discuss issues pertaining to the child and if need be the services of a language translator may be enlisted. She further notes that regular notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters and other forms of communication are essential for the flow of information. This would also help the parents to know the child's progress and to give assistance where it is necessary (Epstein & Lee, 1995). In addition, communication through technology can be very useful to teaching and learning as a whole. However, social networks such as WhatsApp, Facebook and twitter can be used to open a class account or group chat for homework purposes.

Nevertheless, this would have to be tightly regulated and monitored. Ever since 1994, the South African education landscape has undergone major transformations in governance, management, curricular reform and teacher professional development (Department of Education, 2004). To achieve these objectives, some schools in the Kgetleng River Area Office (AO) have been supplied with tablets. Many schools in the department of education are requesting for computer sponsorships instead of books, encyclopaedia, dictionaries and other physical resources that would improve basic skills without high costs. Therefore, the department of Basic Education (DBE) was responsible in most instances for providing schools with computers and, lately, tablets. The main aim of supplying these tablet computers to schools was to allow learners to be abreast with modern technology for communication. The twenty first century technologies are rapidly spreading into remote rural Africa, Asia and Latin America (Barr, 1999; Sheridan, Witte, Kunz, Wheeler & Lester, 2018). Through the internet, learners are directly and indirectly exposed to all sorts of current information. Some of this information is good and educational, but there is also information that is unsavoury, harmful for the learners and even dangerous. None the less, an educator has to be the one to use forceful measures to protect learners from accessing potentially harmful information. There has been a challenge faced by schools in South Africa that do not use ICT as means of enhancing teaching and learning, this has led South Africa's failing to close the digital divide. The digital divide is defined as the gap between those individuals who benefit from digital technology and those who do not (Best & Mc Lay, 2002; Tarry, 2018). Moreover, the use of ICT in schools is to enhance learning that could help the schools overcome some of the challenges of improving the efficiency of children and productivity of both learning and teaching thereby narrowing the digital divide (Chitami, Van Olst & Vannucci, 2003; Hosseini, 2018). However, the challenge for educators is to stay aware of the type of information available, the technology used to access it and how it might affect learners. Conversely, learners need to develop ICT skills so that they can function effectively in the broader society and can contribute to the sustained use of ICT within it. ICT also includes the technologies which support peoples' ability to manage and communicate information electronically, is also a diverse set of technological tools and resources that are used to communicate, and create, disseminate, store, and manage information. These technologies include not only computers, but also equipment or hardware such as

printers and scanners as well as the software and systems needed for communication such as internet, video recorders, television, radio and digital cameras (Fallows & Bhanot, 2002; Tarry, 2018). However, these are not easy things for educators in rural areas like Amathole West District.

Technology also has an important role to play in education at all levels from Grade R to Grade 12, although it will not be a solution to all educational problems (Kritzinger & Padayachee, 2010). It is the responsibility of both parents and educators to play a part in educating the child on how to make choices. Therefore, it is expected that, educators and parents need to guide and encourage learners to make responsible choices so that they can embrace the positive aspects of technology (Molepo, Khumalo & Mji, 2015; Spencer, 2018). For the current study hoped to establish the channels of communication available between parents and schools pertaining to the children's schoolwork.

2.2.1.3 Volunteering

According to Epstein (1995), volunteering of the parents and community in a school is a very important decision that would make the school grows with less serious problems. A professional learning community emphasizes teamwork of principals, teachers, parents and community to identify school goals, improve curriculum and instruction, reduce teachers' isolation, assess students' progress and increase the effectiveness of school programmes. Professional teamwork is important and can greatly improve teaching, instruction and professional relationships in a school, but it falls short of producing a true community of learners. In contrast, a school learning community includes educators, students, parents and community partners who work together to improve the school and enhance students' learning opportunities. However, one component of a school learning community is an organised program of school, family and community partnerships with activities that linked to school goals. Research and fieldwork have proven that such programs improve rural schools, strengthen families, and invigorate community support and increase student achievement and success (Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheldon, 2003). Nonetheless, the effective school learning community welcomes all families into the school. Many schools serve a diverse range of students which includes new immigrants and refugees, where parents of such students like all parents want their

children to succeed and feel free at school. These children, like all students, do better at school when their parents and teachers are partners that work together to achieve a certain goal as well as ensuring that they are assimilated into the culture of parental involvement from the onset. Additionally, a welcoming school has educators who appreciate differences and involve all families in many ways throughout the school year (Baker & Moss, 2002; Sanchez, 2018). In other words, a school learning community puts laser like focus on student learning and success. For instance, schools in the National Network of partnership have implemented many family and community involvement activities to support and extend students reading, writing, maths and goal setting skills. Teachers have been vocal and showed high levels of enthusiasm because the national networks make them to be active in professional development and staff development. The home school and community connections make school subjects more meaningful for students. In reading, many schools engage parents and community partners by offering workshop sessions on reading, also by organizing reading volunteers amongst the parents to strengthen students in reading skills and encourage reading for pleasure at home (Baker & Moss, 2001; Sheldon & Epstein, 2001). In writing, parents form partnerships with local authors and train students writing skills, whereas in maths, parents are given a session on maths curriculum, assessment and homework support to train their children (Sheldon & Epstein, 2006). An interactive homework process from the National Network of Partnership Schools called Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) helps elementary and middle school teachers design and assign homework that enables all students to share what they are learning with family members (Epstein, Salinas & Van Voorhis, 2001; Van Voorhis & Epstein, 2002). In other words, homework is part of a full program of school, family and community partnerships and extends the learning community to include student learning outside school (Epstein, 2001; Van Voorhis, 2003). A school learning community works with many partners to increase students' learning opportunities and experiences. These activities enrich students' skills and talents and they may be conducted during lunch, after school and other times by the school, family and community partners (Sanders, 2000; Sanders & Harvey, 2002).

In Volunteering the school may recruit and organize help and support from those parents who offer services free of charge to help teachers, administrators, students

and other parents. Epstein's framework goes on to suggest the provision of facilities where the volunteers can work from, for instance to hold their meetings and to store resources for family interventions. Furthermore, a data base of volunteers, their skills, talents, times of availability and locations need to be kept (Epstein, 1992).

2.2.1.4 Learning at home

Learning at home is very important for the child. The child needs both the school and the home assistance, in homework, other curriculum-linked activities, decisions and planning (Epstein, 2005). According to Epstein (2011a; 2011b), families establish home environments and support children as students in schools. Epstein also suggests that schools should choose practices of shared responsibilities of families and schools which would help children achieve important goals that help to meet the needs of the school (Busse & Doganer, 2018). It is for this reason that Epstein's theory of participation was relevant in this study, as this study focused on how parents participate in children's academic work at home. However, school children, especially the educationally disadvantaged whose parents lack resources, need to be exposed to technology in schools as part of preparation for the world after school. That is the power of the internet for learning: moving from the promise to the practice of technology is an important issue that addresses how people learn in the internet age, and how new tools support and assess learning gains. However, the use of technology in education can, under the right circumstances have positive effects on teaching and learning in elementary and high schools (Allman, 2018; Honey, 2001; Norris, Smolka & Soloway, 2000). According to Honey (2001), the benefits of educational technology implementations include increases in standardized test scores, support for the development of early literacy skills, promotion of student mastery of mathematical concepts which also increases the students understanding of core science concepts. Thus it should be noted that these benefits are likely to accrue only when there is leadership around technology, a parent, who would be focussing on clear educational goals, sustained and intensive professional development, adequate technology resources available, sufficient time that allows change to occur, and evaluations that are conducted to identify whether educational goals are met. Norris and colleagues concluded that educational technology has had little impact on teaching and learning, because students have little access to computers especially in rural homes (Norris, Sullivan, Poirot & Soloway, 2003). This framework is based on findings from many studies of what factors are most effective

when it comes to children's education in rural high schools (Epstein, 1995). Nevertheless, parenting pertains to helping children understand the necessity of child learning at home and also the development of both the child and the adolescent. It also helps establishing a supportive home environment for children as students. Hence, the proposal that the school, in partnership with parents, provides information for families on skills required to assist learners in all subjects at each grade level as well as information on homework policies, how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home cannot be understated (Epstein, 1995). For the current study, there is need to find out whether children do any school work at home and how the parents are involved.

2.2.1.5 Decision making

In Epstein's (1992) framework, parents should be involved in decision making in schools. As such, schools need to develop parent leaders and representatives. Epstein supports the involvement of active Parents Teachers' Associations or Organisations (PTA/PTO) or other organisations for parents such as advisory councils and committees for the improvement of curriculum, safety, personnel etc. Epstein notes that there is need for independent advocacy groups that lobby for, and support, school reforms and improvements. She further asserts that decision making should also include District level councils and committees for family and community involvement. Information on school elections for the school representatives should be made available to parents. There should be network links between the parents and the parent representatives so as to encourage free flow of information on issues pertaining to the school so as to enhance shared decision making.

In addition, Epstein's theory suggests that parents' voices need to be heard pertaining to decision making at school. It encourages participation in decision making about school programmes and activities that impact on their own and other children. Allowing parents, the space to participate as "true stakeholders" creates feelings of ownership of the school's programmes and activities. The theory advocates for parents and all other stakeholders to collaborate in decision making in issues pertaining to children's school work (Massi, 2011).

2.2.1.6 Collaborating with community

This type of parental involvement emphasises on the provision of information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer

programmes for students (Epstein, 1995). Epstein's framework also encourages coordination of resources and services from the community for families, the learners and the school. This includes provision of information to families and learners on community health, cultural, recreational, social support as well as other community specific programmes and services. These may not be direct academic activities but they boost the operations within the family and school.

Regarding community involvement, schools in developing countries are usually managed by principals in conjunction with local school management committees which consist of teachers, parents and community members. However, there is some evidence that empowering school management committees may in return help student performance. In a multi-treatment experiment in 520 Indonesian public schools, Pradhan, Suryadarima, Beatty, Wong, Gaduh, Alisjahbana and Artha (2014), evaluate the effectiveness of increasing the legitimacy of the school committee through elections. It was discovered that elections for school committees improved teacher effort and parental engagement, but did not raise learning outcomes. Moreover, these scholars found that building linkages from the school committee to the powerful village council improved learning outcomes. However, policies that solely increase the accountability of school committees may not be sufficient enough to improve learning, as school committees have limited power to enact change without additional support.

Community engagement can play a large complementary role in education production of children's academic work; whereas the community can also hold schools and teachers accountable by voicing concerns, or even by moving their children to another school to where they may feel their views and dissemination of information is taken seriously. Moreover, they can also support the school's fundraising efforts, and can support their children directly from home. The community has the right to be informed about the school development, and also the parents should keep on unlimited interactions with the school (Banerjee, Banerji, Duflo, Glennester and Khemani, 2010). Increased community (or parental) involvement in school management could potentially improve accountability of parents in their children's academic work. A low cost approach is to provide parents with information about the school through community meetings held at school. However, there is also limited evidence on the effectiveness of providing such information to the improvement of children's academic achievement. For example, Banerjee et al.

(2010) carried out an experiment in India where parents were provided with information about learning outcomes, and community members were trained on a testing tool for children. They found that the information intervention did not improve student learning. On the other hand, Lieberman, Posner and Tsai (2014), also carried out an experiment in 26 Kenyan villages where parents received information about child's performance and material about how to help children in their academic work, but found no effect on student outcomes. The reason may be that providing information was insufficient to affect outcomes, due to parents' limited avenues to affect the education system.

The low levels of parental engagement in schools, and the general ineffectiveness of information campaigns could be a rational response by parents, who perhaps correctly surmise that their voice pressure and engagement will have little impact, as they have limited avenues to hold public schools accountable. Collective action problems are also important barriers to parental action, and these may be amplified by ethnic and social divisions within the community. However, Eastern Cape's rural areas continue to be at a digital disadvantage because of rural digital exclusion, which results from a multi-layered divide such as age, income, and educational level, where also elements of infrastructure connectivity and digital engagement are intertwined (Basu & Chakraborty 2011; Whitacre & Mills, 2007). Barriers make it difficult for rural residents and organisations to participate in and benefit from a growing digital economy. Therefore, the rural areas need an integrated approach to digital engagement that account for the interrelations between infrastructure, adoption and usage of ICT in rural areas (Tsatsou, 2011).

The lack of infrastructure and ICT leads to missed opportunities in areas of education in rural societies. However, Berla (1994) also claim that the schools will benefit by parental and community involvement or by improved teacher morale. More support from families will benefit higher student academic achievement. In addition, Clarke (2007) asserts that schools function best when parents and the community are active participants and have a sense of ownership of the school. Therefore, it is safe to say that these six factors not only benefit the students, but also their parents, teachers

and the schools. For the current study, views of parents on their participation in their children's academic work were sought.

Epstein (1995), argues that all schools can encourage greater participation among all families, including minority and low-income families, by developing comprehensive programs of partnership that build meaningful connections between families and schools. Based on earlier studies, she contends; "Status variables are not the most important measures for understanding parent involvement. At all grade levels, the evidence suggests that school policies, teacher practices, and family practices are more important than race, parent education, family size, marital status, and even grade level in determining whether parents continue to be part of their children's education" (Epstein,1990 p. 109).

Several studies indicate that high school students' benefit when their parents are involved (Coleman, 2018). Monitoring homework, for example, is linked with better student efforts on homework (Keith, Reimers, Fehrman, Pottebaum & Aubey, 1986). Involvement improves attendance (Astone and McLanahan, 1991; Epstein & Lee, 1993) and decreases rates of dropping out (Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulos, Ritter & Dornbusch, 1990). Research confirms that many of the parenting practices that are important for success in elementary and middle grades remain important at the high school level. For example, the following findings were established:

High Expectations - high school students are more likely to graduate or go on to college, if their parents expect them to (Coleman, 2018; Conklin & Dailey, 1981 Delgado-Gaitan,1988;).

Homework Assistance - top-performing high school students are more likely to have parents who monitor their homework and talk with their teens about their school experiences (Ginsburg & Hanson, 1986).

Attending School Events - top-performing high school students report that their parents' attendance at school events demonstrates to them that their parents value education (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988 Epstein, Sanders, Sheldon, Simon, Salinas; Jansorn & Hutchins, 2018).

Co-Managing - top-performing high school students have parents who offer their teens many opportunities for adult guidance (Clark, 1988), keep close track of how their teens are doing in school, and assist their teens with post-high school plans (Fehrman, Keith & Reimers, 1987).

Balancing Activities - top performing high school students have parents who help their teens achieve higher grades by monitoring daily activities and ensuring that their teens are engaged in a balanced schedule of learning and leisure activities after school (Fehrman, Keith & Reimers, 1987).

The above are some of the parenting practices associated with student success in high school that some families do on their own, usually without the assistance of the school. For all students to benefit from these and other practices, high schools must incorporate strategies that will help all (or most) families to become knowledgeable about the learning, progress, and future goals of their children.

A professional learning community emphasizes the teamwork of principals, teachers, and staff to identify school goals, improve curriculum and instruction, reduce teachers' isolation, assess student progress, and increase the effectiveness of school programs. Professional teamwork is important and can greatly improve teaching, instruction, and professional relationships in a school, but it falls short of producing a true community of learners. In contrast, a school learning community includes educators, students, parents, and community partners who make decisions together to improve the school and enhance students' learning opportunities (Fehrman et al 1987).

One component of a school learning community is an organized program of school, family, and community partnerships with activities linked to school goals and shared decision making. Research and fieldwork show that such programs improve schools, strengthen families, and invigorate community support, and increase student achievement and success (Epstein, 2001; Epstein, et al ,2018; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheldon, 2003). A school learning community welcomes all families. Many schools serve a diverse range of students, including new immigrants and refugees. The parents of such students, like all parents, want their children to succeed in

school. These children, like all students, do better when their parents and teachers are partners. In a welcoming school, educators appreciate differences and involve all families in many ways throughout the school year. A school should foster a welcoming environment by implementing activities for all six types of family involvement (Epstein, 1992). The school should hold evening discussions about adolescence to help parents share effective parenting strategies and network with one another on important topics. There should be a weekly activity for sending information home; create a database of volunteers; conduct family literacy nights; build connections with business partners; and celebrate Dad's Day. All activities were linked to goals for students in the school improvement plan and help foster an active learning community. There should be a monthly programme activity during which parents have the opportunity to meet with teachers, administrators, and other parents and discuss school activities such as testing, homework, and reading programs. Translators should encourage parents with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to attend these and other school activities. The activities help students develop language skills and other talents and involve diverse families in their children's learning. A school learning community puts a laser like focus on student learning and success. Schools in the National Network of Partnership Schools have implemented many family and community involvement activities to support and extend students' reading, writing, math, and goal-setting skills. The home, school, and community connections make school subjects more meaningful for students (Epstein, 2002). Schools engage parents and community partners by offering workshop sessions on reading, by organizing reading volunteers, and by helping parents strengthen students' reading skills and encourage reading for pleasure at home (Baker & Moss, 2001; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). Many schools in the National Network of Partnership Schools conduct reading-partner programs once a week, twice a month, or on other schedules with a variety of volunteers, including parents, senior citizens, and community groups. Partnerships for writing take many forms, including workshops and the writing process, activities that engage parents in writing, presentations by local authors, and celebrations of student writing before family and community audiences. Family involvement in math may encompass events for parents and students, community connections, information sessions for parents on math curriculum and assessments, and homework support (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005).

The Action Team for Partnerships, in cooperation with parents, teachers, and community partners, provided dinner, conducted teacher-led math sessions on ways to help students with math at home, distributed take-home bags of math materials and information on state standards, handed out coupons from local businesses, and even held a math-related raffle. Because most parents cannot frequently come to the school building to see what their children are learning, new designs for homework hold promise for engaging all parents in weekly discussions with their children about schoolwork. For example, an interactive homework process from the National Network of Partnership Schools called Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) helps elementary and middle school teachers design and assign homework that enables all students to share what they are learning with a family member (Epstein, Salinas, & Van Voorhis, 2001; Van Voorhis & Epstein, 2002). Homework is part of a full program of school, family, and community partnerships and extends the learning community to include student learning outside school (Epstein, 2001; Van Voorhis, 2003). A school learning community works with many partners to increase students' learning opportunities and experiences. Activities to enrich students' skills and talents may be conducted during lunch, after school, and at other times by school, family, and community partners (Sanders, 2001; Sanders & Harvey, 2002).

Organizationally, educators, parents, and other partners are working together to systematically strengthen and maintain their family and community involvement programs over time. Interpersonally, these partners recognize that they all have roles to play in helping students succeed in school—and that, together with students; they are the school's learning community. Similarly, parental reports of involvement at school are significantly and positively influenced by Type 3 Involvement-Volunteering and Type 5 Involvement- School Decision Making. High school educators are becoming increasingly aware of ways in which volunteers and parent associations can assist in meeting the needs of high school youth. For example, Sanders (1998) reports that high school teachers voice a need for volunteers to assist with activities such as attendance and hallway monitoring and academic tutoring. Further, administrators state the importance of having viable PTA's or PTO's that can, among other thing advocate for improved school resources. This study suggests that when high schools develop partnership practices that encourage families to volunteer or become active participants in school decision making,

families respond. The current study also sought to find out how the parents participated in their children's academic work.

2.2.2 Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theory

In 1995-1997, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler offered a model of parental involvement process that focused on understanding why parents become involved in their children's education and how their involvement is influencing the children's outcomes.

Since then, scholars have conducted a conceptual and empirical work to enhance understanding of processes that are examined in the model. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler have combined with Walker's and other authors articles about the scale of development on the model on parental involvement. They identified four forms of parental involvement: the communication of parental values; parental goals; parental aspirations and parental expectations to their children. These are elaborated below.

2.2.2.1 Communication of parental values

The communication of parental values emphasizes that the collectivist is the important value that can be endorsed to the child. However, parents should encourage the child to view themselves as part of the integrated whole of their family, community and society, also not to emphasize their differences from others (Markins & Kitayama, 1991). Parents believe that all children regardless of ability will be able to achieve academic goals if they expend sufficient effort (Chen & Uttal, 1988). In addition to that, parents should exert greater control over children's behaviour in order to stimulate academic goals within the child (Lin & Fu, 1990). Chao (1994) argues that although parents may exert more control over their children, they do so with the goal of training their children to achieve academically and to behave according to social norms.

Nevertheless, children should also be trained to behave in socially appropriate ways. Thus, parents should be authoritative; this will also combine a firm enforcement of rules and standards with warmth and open communication to their children. Parental

involvement improves student achievement, better school attendance and reducing dropout rates regardless of socioeconomic background or ethnicity (Delgado-Gaiten, 1987). Additionally, parental involvement is the professional preparation of teachers who can identify community funds of knowledge for curricular development and school outreach (Yao, 1988). On the other hand, parental involvement support community based education programs which inform parents about school values and expectations and work with parents to help them become advocates for their children (Lopez, 2001).

In Hispanic schools along the Texas or Mexico border where students' performance ratings were among the highest in the states (Young & Pedroza, 1999), researchers found that staff members created a welcoming environment by building on their cultural values: stressing personal contact and communication while facilitating structural accommodations that encourage parental involvement. Williams and Chavkin (1989), offers even elements common to all promising parental programs: (a) written policies that specifically address parental involvement, (b) sufficient resources that keep programs running, (c) ongoing training that prepares staff and parents, (d) approaches that foster partnership between school and families (e) two-way interactions that allow for regular and frequent communication (f) networking with other programs that facilitates external collaboration and (g) procedures or measures that allow evaluation. All these elements, coupled with culturally sensitive outreach efforts and effective communication with parents, are the foundation for successful parental involvement programs for marginalized groups (Chavkin, 1996).

2.2.2.2 Parental goals

Regarding parental a study conducted by Moreno and Lopez (1999) illuminated that rural mothers of high school children reported less knowledge about school activities and more barriers to involvement, but higher level of perceived self-efficacy and higher educational expectations for their children (Moreno & Lopez, 1999). By the third generation, parents may already have become aware of the ways schools expect them to be involved in the academic lives of their children (Suarez-Orozco, Sua-Orozco & Todorova, 2009). However, parents encourage academics (Martinez, DeGarmo & Eddy, 2004), often as a means to make for the sacrifices of migrating and as means to improve families' socioeconomic standings (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez & Aretakis, 2013).

Additionally, evidence of academic socialization can be found in many studies where parents report high levels of expectations and aspirations for their children (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese & Garnier, 2001). Nonetheless, education is even included in the definition of moral development for many parents, as many of them report a child who does well at school as one who is on “the good path” (Azmitia & Brown, 2002). Thus, parents are expected to respond if their children are not doing well at school (Drummond & Stipek, 2004) and their involvement is then associated with higher levels of achievement (Plunkett, Behnke, Sands & Choi, 2008). Moreover, understanding the dynamics implicated with the academic involvement of parents would inform methods utilized to engage parents in the academic work of their children.

2.2.2.3 Parental aspirations

Aspiration as improving the success of underserved students in high school education has become a key goal in the Amathole West Education District and nationwide. The parents are interested in engaging underserved students in high school education. However, the desire of parents to their children is to describe the barriers of the high school students and capture their perceptions and expectations for higher education. These parents need to gain better understanding of their children’s perceptions of higher education leading to the possibility of more effective relationships within and across higher education. Parents are eager to have better understanding of how perceptions, expectations and experiences differ across their children’s groups. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s Strategy Plan (Sponsler & Fulton, 2018) highlights the demographic challenge: “Demographic trends reveal that an increasing number of students will come from racial and ethnic groups who have had less success in our Grade-12 system and have been underrepresented in us in our postsecondary institutions. Not only do these students require more targeted and effective teaching support in Grade-12, they are less likely coming from families with college going experience and less likely to pursue their education beyond high school (Spradlin, Rutkowski, Burroughs & Lang, 2010). There are four categories of underserved students: low income students, first generation students, students of colour and rural students. However, the rural students are what this research is all about. Moreover, rural students are part of the underserved students in our schools.

Despite efforts to increase post-high school enrolment and retention rates among underserved students, barriers to higher education persist. For example, sociologists have documented stark differences in access to post-high school education by class, gender and race. However, high achieving students from low social economic status (SES) are less likely to attend a prestigious University (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Alexander, Holupka & Pallas, 1987; Dougherty, 1987; Persell & Cookso, 1990; Hurst, 2010). Indeed, that is what parents want to break from the rural schools. Nonetheless, parents wish to make their children be able to succeed in every step of the way, because less attention is paid to the student's experiences once they reach higher education. However, according to educational research, the student's transition and experience in high schools is highly influenced by parents' social class differences and parental involvement (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bratlinger, 2003; Lareace, 2000; Reay, 1998). According to SRT Special Resource Teachers 2009, the U.S. higher education system has promoted middle and upper class Americans to pursue a post-secondary education since its inception: Academic success qualifies one for middleclass (managerial and professional) work, because the education system (from kindergarten through college) valorizes a particular class culture that of the (white) middleclass children of the class tend to do well there as measured against children of workers and people of colour. Thus, children tend to stay in the same class as their parents. It is this way that we say education reproduces [short-term and long-term] inequalities (Hurst, 2010).

2.2.2.4 Parental expectations

When parents increase communication, that is deepening relationships among teachers and families, teachers' solicit feedback from families about the school's plans for family engagement, schools are integrating families and stakeholders in the process. This builds a culture of trust and support among staff, students, families and all stakeholders and also positive expectations are built amongst parents. However, the high achieving children tend to come from families who have high expectations, and who consequently are likely to set standards and make greater demands at an earlier age. Regarding the selection of the variables which comprise the two expansions of educational expectations, these are antecedents of parents' educational expectations. The mediating factors by which parents affect academic

achievement were also guided by two different rationales. This selection of antecedents of parents' expectations drew on the definition of expectations stated by Haller (1968) and Finn (1972), while on the other hand the selection of mediating factors was derived from the availability of previous social psychological work on the mediation expectations (Kelly, 1952; Rosenthal, 1974; Sewell, Haller & Portes, 1969). The three antecedents of parents' educational expectations are: (a) school feedback, which pertains to the evaluation school send to parents concerning the child's academic achievement. (b) Parents' aspirations, which refer to academic achievement goals parents set for themselves. (c) Parental knowledge, which pertains to parents as naïve psychologists and educators (Freeland & Lusher, 2000). However, these follow from the definition of parents' educational expectations as consisting of three dimensions: which are realistic, idealistic expectations standards of achievement. The realistic expectations are the predictions made by parents that their child will attain a certain level of academic performance. Idealistic expectations are the dreams, wishes and hopeful anticipations that parents hold for their child in academic realm. However, standards of achievement are the implicit measures by which parents evaluate their child's academic achievement as excellent, satisfactory or unacceptable. Thus realistic expectations would be defined as predominantly hinged school feedback, such as information parents receive from their children's report cards. Idealistic expectations may be the result of parents' aspirations. Finally, the standards of achievement reflect parental knowledge (Lusher, 2000), that is the concept or image which parents hold of their child's personality, ability, and behaviour and also of the children in general.

Further, homework has been regarded as one of the home activities which are supposed to be guided by parents. Hence it is not surprising that it is labelled, as one of the most important practices for establishing a successful academic environment in high school. Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore (1982) conclude in their research that homework and discipline are the two most important particularly found in private schools and these promote a more successful learning environment as compared to public schools. The implication is that if public schools can assign more homework, their students would learn more and the schools would be more effective in producing better results and effective teaching and learning. The notion that more is better may not be true to all students, at all skill levels, at all educational levels.

Indeed, if more homework is assigned than can complete or if inappropriate homework is assigned, this may actually breed counter productivity especially for student achievement. Moreover, homework is viewed as the only serious communication about school and learning between parents and school aged children. Thus, children often need help which encompasses, remembering and interpreting what was learned at school, relearning information that was misunderstood or incompletely learned and deciding whether the parents' approach and presentation will be acceptable to the teacher. Simply put homework provides a reason for parents and children to exchange information, facts and attitudes about school work. Thus a study by Maertens and Johnson (1972) though outdated aligns with the focus whereby they found that students who had homework assignments and who received immediate or delayed feedback from parents had better mastery of mathematics skills than students who received no homework.

Families and schools have worked together since the beginning of formalized schooling. However, the nature of the collaboration has evolved over the years (Epstein & Sanders, 2002). Initially, families maintained a high degree of control over schooling by controlling hiring of teachers and apprenticeships in family businesses. By the 20th century schools were responsible for moral, cultural and religious education. In addition, family and school responsibilities for education were sequential. That is, families were responsible for preparing their children with necessary skills and the school took over from there with little input from families. However, today in the context of greater accountability and demands for children's achievement, schools and families have formed partnerships and share responsibilities for children's education. It is well established that parental school involvement has a positive influence on school related outcomes for children consistently. Cross-sectional (e.g. Gronick & Slowiaczek, 1994) and longitudinal (e.g. Miedel & Reynolds, 1999) studies have demonstrated that an association between higher levels of parental school involvement and greater academic success for children and adolescents.

However, as the focus of this research is about the participation of parents in their academic work at high school level of education, it has been noticed that parental school involvement tends to decrease in middle and high school, reason being parents believe that they cannot assist with more challenging high school subjects and also that adolescents are usually autonomous (Eccles & Harold, 1996). In fact, a few parents stop caring about or monitoring the academic progress of children of

high school age, and parental involvement remains an important predictor of school outcomes through adolescence. Head Start, the nation's largest intervention program for at risk children, emphasizes the importance of parental involvement as a critical feature of children's early academic experiences for children and has positive effects on parents' self-development and parenting skills. Parental school involvement is associated with adolescents' achievement and future aspirations across middle and high schools (Hill

& Craft, 2003). Although directly helping with homework declines in adolescence, parental school involvement during middle and high school is associated with an increase in the amount of time students spend on homework and with an increase in the percentage of homework completed (Epstein & Sanders, 2002).

There are two major mechanisms by which parental school involvement promotes achievement. The first is by increasing social capital; that is, parental school involvement increases parents' skills and information (i.e. Social Capital), which makes parents to be better equipped to assist their children in their school-related activities. As parents establish relationship with school personnel, they learn important information about the school's expectations for behaviour and homework; they also learn how to help with homework and how to augment children's learning at home (Lareau, 1996). Thus, when parents are involved in their children's schooling, they meet other parents who provide information and insight on school policies and practices, as well as extracurricular activities. Indeed, parents learn from other parents which are the best teachers, and it's where difficult situations are handled successfully. In addition to that, when parents and teachers interact, teachers learn about parents' expectations for their children and their children's teachers.

Baker and Stevenson (1986) found that compared with parents who were not involved, involved, those students with parents who were involved in their academics developed more complex strategies for working with schools and their children to promote achievement. Nevertheless, in home-school communication it has been discovered that most parents are too busy with their work and responsibilities that they have forgotten or deviated from participating in their children's learning. Parental participation requires parents to be actively involved in the school and in their children's academic work. However, much is expected out of the parents, yet they

are so committed to their own destiny rather than their children's interests. According to Bouffard & Weiss (2008) parental participation is all about activities by parents that are intentionally linked to learning. Generally, parents do not select randomly their level of participation in school programs. However, parental participation in children's academic work impacts positively on both the child and the school. Jackson & Davis (2000) argue that parents who participate in decision making experience greater feelings of ownership, and are more committed to supporting the school's mission. However, when parents are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in school and stay longer and stay longer within the educational pipeline (Henderson & Berla, 1994). Naturally, parents are more nurturing and restrictive towards their children. According to Duru & Jarousse (1996), there are significant differences for parents' expectations about educational careers of their children which might influence their participation in schools. Moreover, parents who are exposed in schools would give advice willingly to the administration and even criticize them for better improvement in school programs.

Thus, this kind of participation would also create good impression by attracting more parents to be active on school programs. Nonetheless, parents and children should strive for better relationship in order for them to participate actively in school programs.

It can be noted that parents' role construction is concerned about involvement which incorporates parents' beliefs about their role in relation to their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey; Green; Walker and Sandler, 2005). Parents' beliefs about the child rearing and child development and about appropriate home support roles in children's education influence the role construction. In other words, parental role construction also grows from parents' experiences with individuals and groups that are related to schooling and is subject to social influence overtime (Biddle, 1986; Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997). Furthermore, studies of diverse groups of high school children provide empirical support for the power of role construction to influence and shape parental involvement (Chrispeels and Rivero, 2000; Drummond and Stipek, 2004; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski and Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al 2005). Parents who hold active role construction are more involved in their children's education than

parents who hold less active role beliefs (Deslanders and Bertrand, 2005; Gutman and McLoyd, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey et al 2005; Sheldon, 2002). This study attempted to find out if the parents' role construction can be a motivational factor to children.

2.3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews literature related to the study, with the view to exposing insights on the topic of the study by different scholars. It also unpacks knowledge gaps and interrogates how the phenomenon of parental involvement is playing itself out in other parts of the world.

2.3.1 Conceptualising parent involvement

The legitimacy and relevance of parent involvement in addressing the needs of elementary school students with academic behavioural challenges is well documented through numerous studies and research in England, and Lucker (2004) argues that the focus on parental involvement has its roots in research that demonstrates a positive association between parental involvement and academic achievement. Walker (2002) also adds that because parental involvement is linked to improved student achievement, schools are often asked to increase their efforts to involve parents in children's education. However, the importance of addressing the needs of young students is evidenced through research that led to federal legislation to ensure resources are always available to educators, parents and children. This led Epstein (2010) to declare that no topic regarding school improvement has ever received more attention than parent involvement.

Therefore, globally researchers and policy makers around the nation spanning over two decades have agreed that parental involvement positively effects children's achievement (Bauer, 1982; Mc Allister, 1993; Henry, 1996; McKenzie, 2010). Thus, Christen and Sheridan developed national educational goals which embraced the notion of family school failure (2001). Hill and Taylor (2004) further state that one element known to contribute to more successful children and more successful schools across all populations is parental involvement in children's academic work.

Another study states that; “there was a significant interaction between parental support and activity involvement in the prediction of academic competence” (Lagaca-Seguin and Case, 2010.p.459). Thus it is clear as evidenced by a number of studies that parental involvement reinforces to the student the importance of education, enhances effective communication of students’ needs between the parent and teacher, and builds an additional layer of accountability (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Wong; 2008; Mc Bride et al 2009).

Parental involvement is critical to academic success; it has been linked across the country and written into improvement plans as a predictor for student achievement (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Moreover, the influence parents have on their children’s academic success has been acknowledged by researchers, policymakers and educators in schools alike. Mc Bride (2009), highlights that a significant body of research indicates that when parents participate in their children’s education, the result is an improvement in students’ achievement.

The majority of the literature focuses on parental involvement having a positive effect on academic achievement. The extant literature shows that teachers, parents, administrators and students from elementary school through high school agree that parental involvement benefits students, assists teachers, improves schools and strengthens families (Epstein, 2010). However, it has been noted that there are discrepancies exist regarding what type of parent involvement is important and which strategies engage all parents (Epstein, 2009). The literature provides several ideologies and constructs of parent involvement to consider based on the objective, goals, cultural, racial, and class ramification. For instance, by Sy (2006) reports that cultural differences challenge traditional definitions of parental involvement, in which focus is on participation in school activities. This approach is culturally insensitive and fails to recognize or support home-school connection. On the other hand, Sy (2006 p.108) notes that “parent and school contact fails to account for the multiplicity of ways parents become involved, ways such as culture and ethnicity shape parents’ involvement practices.” Additionally, most of the researchers have found that parental involvement which was inclusive of school related activities at home had a strong effect on students’ academic achievement (Brook and Edmunds, 2010).

In the opinion of Norton (2002) parents should be encouraged to determine their own definition of involvement as the parental aspiration or expectation for children’s

education achievement has the strongest relationship whereas parental home supervision has the weakest relationship with students' academic achievement. For example, some families match the description that is meant for the original definition of parent involvement. Moreover, the original consisted of two parent families where the father works and the mother stays at home and could afford to be a traditional volunteer at school (Norton, 2002). Ramirez (2005) argues that the traditional definition of parent involvement (joining the PTA and providing items for bake sales and art sales) has changed throughout the years from specific activities and roles to a more inclusive emphasis on all activities that are in and out of the school that support learning. Abdul-Adil (2006) highlights that in the absence of consensus, a definition inclusive parent involvement consists of parental involvement attitudes, behaviours, styles or activities occurring within or outside the school that support academic and behavioural school success.

Traditional forms of parental involvement consist of providing encouragement, nurturing and academic expectations, instilling cultural values and securing a space at home for school work. Epstein (2009) identifies a form of non-traditional parental involvement and recognized the value by nurturing, instilling cultural values, and addressing students also. "New research and discourse on parental involvement emphasise that schools may need to redefine parental involvement and try to develop broader frameworks that can make parent involvement more inclusive for school families" (Bower & Griffin, 2011p. 78). Unfortunately, Epstein (2010) is of the view that a number of schools and staff members around the country are not equipped to work with children's families. The above school further posits that teachers are not prepared to work with learners' cultures, race, social class and other characteristics children and families bring to school. This suggest that it tends to be difficult for the parents to approach teachers on how they assist children due to race and cultural differences that may be promoted within a school environment.

Though, there is also substantial evidence to suggest that parents' involvement in the education of their children can make a significant difference in the educational attainment of those children (Epstein, 1995; Keane, 2007; Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004a; Lemmer 2009; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Studsrod & Bru, 2009; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). However, there is public outcry for more meaningful and fruitful parental involvement in school matters (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004; Smit and

Liebenberg, 2003; Mmotlane, Wennaar & Wakivilu, 2009), although parental participation in education still leaves much to be desired. The importance of the home environment in the education of the child makes it more imperative for legislation to ensure better participation, recognition and visibility of parents within the school system (Gershbers & Meade, 2005; Mestry & Gobler, 2007).

There is a growing body of literature on the importance of parental involvement in the education of their children's education, which studies have nevertheless shown that parents' involvement in the education of their children still appears to be limited (Keane, 2007; Mncube, 2009; Wherry, 2009; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). The context of parental involvement has been to describe a situation in which parents are perceived as active partners in the process of educating their children. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) have perceived parental involvement as "a combination of supporting children's academic achievement and participating in school-initiated functions". Mncube (2010: 234) highlights that the "concept entails awareness of, and achievement in, schoolwork, with an understanding of the interaction between parenting skills which influences learner success in schooling and also a commitment to consistent communication with educators about learner progress". However, Cotton and Wikelund (2001) conceived parental involvement activities to include telephone communication between parents and their child's school officials, written home-school communication, home assistance or tutoring home educational enrichment that supports the children's educational activities, and also attending school functions. In the same vein Epstein (1995) also identifies six areas of parental involvement, which are; parenting, which helps them create an enabling, academically-friendly home environment for their children; communicating, which assists in designing effective forms of school-to-home communications about the school programmes and children's progress; also recruiting and organising parents for helping and supporting, assisting with child home learning, also developing parent leaders and representatives at school and collaborating with the entire community.

Okantey (2008), as cited by Nicholas Omoregbe (2010), maintains that educated parents, by virtue of their education level, are educationally equipped to recognize the importance of parental involvement and the fact that the parent-teacher relationship promotes educational attainment and academic achievement of their children. However, Nicholas-Omoregbe (2010) further indicates that educational levels, as well as income, are interconnected. That means parents who are educated possess

the potential for increased income. Therefore, children from high socio-economic status families are likely to improve their academic achievement, as their parents, by virtue of their literacy levels, have higher aspirations for their children. The buttress the preceding claims Hemmings (1997: 27), claims that “apartheid South Africa was the only country in the world in which the government deliberately set out to limit education for the majority of its population”. Before 1994 the education system was characterized by imbalances and inequalities that were politically intentional. The needs of the learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds were not considered important. Moreover, learners’ parents and the community were not actively involved in the education of their children. The reason for not involving parents and the community could probably be that the parents were not considered as valuable partners in education or that the parents also did not regard themselves as influential to children’s education and achievement (Department of Education, 1996).

The post 1994 Department of Education introduced new policies that brought change to education to ensure that parents and communities were involved in children’s education and collaboratively worked with teachers to make this change a success. In the same vein Machen, Wilson and Notar (2005:13) argue that “school success and community success are linked.” The Department of Education (1997:1) also recognizes this connectedness in education by stating that “education is an essential component of reconstruction, development and transformation of South African Society”. Thus, the Department of Education (2002) one of its mandate was to promote a vision of a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens who can lead productive self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice. This vision correlates with Wright and Stegelins (2003), which says that the rearing and education of children is complex and requires the work of parents, families, teachers, caregivers, community leaders and policy makers. In the view of the above, the purpose of this chapter is to view a variety of literature on parental involvement in order to provide a theoretical foundation for determining its effects on children’s academic achievement empirically.

Parental involvement is parental intervention in their children’s education in order for the parents to be able to obtain information about their children’s academic growth and participation (Crozier, 1999). Further to this, “Family and community involvement

frequently means helping children to reach the goals defined by the schools (administrators and teachers) that reflect only school values and priorities” (Jordan et al., 2001, p10). Barge and Loges (2003) assert that views and approach of teachers, students and parents to parental involvement are different.

They found that for parents’ parental involvement refers to:

- Regular supervision of students’ homework by parents. Parents reported that it was essential to be sure that their children did their homework completely and to help them when needed.
- Developing individual relations with teachers. Parents thought that if they had adequate relationships with teachers and teachers saw that they paid attention to their children, the teachers’ treatment of their children would be better.
- Taking advantage of extracurricular school programs. Particularly, parents who do not have enough ability to help their children with their homework or other curriculum related tasks state the importance of this involvement.
- Improving supportive collaboration within the community. According to the parents’ reports, developing collaboration within the community plays an important role in students’ educational achievement.

On the other hand, Barge and Loges (2003) found that for students’ parental involvement means:

- Parental assistance with homework
- Stimulation from parents
- Communication between parents and school

Interestingly, students can distinguish whether or not authority is supportive by addressing and stating the importance of authority (Barge and Loges, 2003). Meanwhile the teachers’ perceptions about parental involvement meant that there was - a) contact, b) taking part, c) parental monitoring, and d) discipline- are supportive, while some of them- a) negative contact, b) lack of encouragement, and c) lack of parenting abilities- are unhelpful characteristics for assisting learners with their school work.

Parental involvement plays an important role in students' education, and its advantages for students are numerous (Jeynes, 2003, 2007). For example, parental involvement has a positive influence on the students' academic success (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003; Jordan et al., 2001; Gonzalez-pienda et al., 2002; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In particular, parental involvement has more effect on students' test scores than GPA (grade point average) (Jeynes, 2003). According to Shaver and Walls (1998), students with high levels of parental involvement are better in reading and math than those with a low level of parental involvement. Furthermore, Gonzalez-peinda et al. (2002) submit that parental involvement makes a positive contribution to students' academic achievement by affecting their academic self-concept which is of considerable importance in academic success. Even Hara and Burke (1998) claim that the key to improvement of children's academic accomplishment is boosted by parental involvement. In contrast, Bobbett et al. (1995) found that the effect parental involvement has on students' academic achievement is not significant. Some researchers have even argued that when parents get involved with students' homework and communicate with the school, it negatively affects the students' academic success by decreasing their test scores (Izzo et al., 1999; Shumow & Miller, 2001). In addition, Cooper et al. (2000) found that direct parental involvement particularly negatively affects the students' academic achievement. The current study did not delve into the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement but concentrated on how parents' involvement in their children's academic work could be enhanced.

Based on the aforementioned, there are a number of earlier studies that are not commensurate with the claims that parental involvement negatively affects learners' academic outcomes. For instance, when parents get involved, they make a contribution to their children's emotional development and behaviour (Cai et al., 1997), well-being (Pelletier & Brent, 2002), social skills (Sanders, 1998; Henderson & Mapp, 2002) and even school attendance (Haynes et al., 1989). According to Desimone (1999), parents' participation in school activities may establish connections between teachers and parents that have a positive influence on teachers' impressions of and views about children. In all cases, the importance of relationships between parents and school is inarguable because "the family is the most important and most enduring resource in a child's life" and "family-school

partnerships produce impressive results for children and teachers” (Petr, 2003, p11; Jeynes, 2011). For example, Jeynes found that conversations about school between students and their parents and parental participation at school events have a statistically considerable influence on the students’ academic achievement, whereas the effect of checking the students’ homework by parents is not statistically significant. On the other hand, Jeynes (2007) advances that the effect of parents’ participation at school events on students’ academic achievement is less than parents’ expectancies and parental styles. Interestingly, parental expectancies and discussion have more influence on middle-income students’ academic achievement than on low-income students’ academic achievement (Desimone, 1999). Furthermore, Desimone (1999) asserts that talking with their mother or both parents (mother and father together) positively affects the students’ academic success, but discussion with only their father can lead to a reduction in the students’ test scores. Also, the research conducted by Bobbett et al. (1995) showed that the effects of parental involvement can be different based on the students’ ages. They found that the influence parental involvement has on secondary or high school students’ academic success is not measurable.

According to Fan and Chen (2001), parental control is weakly related to pupils’ academic success, while parental desire and hope for students’ academic success is strongly related to students’ academic success. They found that close parental control may even have a negative influence on students’ academic achievement. Parental involvement plays an important role in general school culture. As Deal and Peterson (2009, p184-185) state, “a school, by its essential nature, must be an open system with highly permeable boundaries,” and “parts of the school culture must reach out and connect with parents”.

2.3.2 International trends of parental involvement in children’s education

In 1965, the United States (US) government, through President Lyndon B. Johnson declared “war on poverty” and acknowledged the importance of educating the poor

(Brauer, 1982). This major piece of legislation expanded the government's role in education and health care. These two areas, whenever left without assistance, greatly contribute to poverty (Brauer, 1982). This was the beginning of Project Head Start, a program created with the goal of providing low-income families services to meet the nutritional, emotional, health, social and psychological needs of pre-school children (Duch, 2003). Involvement of parents of school children, and of the community in general, was penned into the legislation. "Head Start's parental involvement component has always been an important part of the program's operation" (Duch, 2003, p.23). The importance of parental involvement was recognized and required by law; parents were encouraged to become their children's advocate. "By law, Head Start programs must help parents and families support children as they enter Early Head Start" (Duch, 2003 p.23). The Head Start Program is available in every state and has served over three million children and families since inception. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 sought to ensure that all the students would have access to a quality education. The ESEA provided specific funds for instructional material, professional development, support, educational programs and parental involvement promotion (Brauer, 1982). President Bush enacted the "No Child Left Behind Act" as an extension of ESEA, and provided provisions in Title 1 for parental involvement (Martin and Martin, 1996). For every 30 years, policy makers continue to make provisions in legislation for school Districts to increase efforts to ensure parental involvement (Englund and Luckner, 2004). This means that in the US authorities were concerned about the involvement of parents in their children's education and that all the efforts were made to ensure that parents have a say not only their children's education but also in their children's academic work.

These provisions have provided the nation with a conscious display of policy making that recognizes the benefit of involving parents in the education of their children. The legislation seen in PL 94-142 is another example of that policy makers continued support parent involvement in their children's education. The law states that parents are to be active participants, notified in a timely manner and given adequate information regarding any meeting involving educational decisions regarding their child (Gartner and Lipsky, 2002). Although, the law is clear, there are concerns about school professionals' treatment of parents as low parents in directing exceptional student education (ESE) meetings. Parents are given little or no input, resulting in

feelings of intimidation and inadequacy when reviewing previously discussed intervention decisions. Many parents report feeling ill equipped to challenge the professional's decision and go along whether or not they are in agreement (Gartner & Lipsky, 2002).

Parents who value educational achievement and self-regulation tend to provide higher levels of home support (Rushforth, 2014). Employment of a private tutor maybe seen as part of the parental role, and that parent calibrates the need for private tutoring against the family's intellectual capital and resources. Ireson and Rushforth (2011) argue that psychological factors may also play part in parents' decisions to employ private tutors and therefore deserve greater consideration in the research literature. Family financial resources influence demand for private tutoring within a single country, with several studies showing that children in higher socio-economic status families are more likely to have tutors than children in poorer families.

This relationship is found in countries such as England (Ireson & Rushforth, 2011), Ireland (Smyth, 2009), Canada (Davies, 2004), Turkey (Tansel& Bircan, 2006) and Hong Kong (Bray& Kwok, 2003). In these countries, the cost of private tuition can be substantial, especially if continued over several terms, or more than one subject. Even so, as Davies (2004) points out, parents may use private tutoring as an affordable alternative to private schooling. High rates of private tuition in South East Asian countries have been attributed to cultural factors, specifically the influence of the Confucian tradition which values the role of effort in Educational success (Heine, Lehman, Markus & Kitayama, 1999; Salili, 1996, Lee 1996).

A small number of studies have explored psychological factors that may influence the uptake of private tutoring. Lee, Park and Lee (2009) use the expectancy value theory to explain the initial and sustained investment in private tutoring. They propose that motivation to engage in private tutoring is a function of the perceived value of education and parents' expectancy of child's success in achieving target grades (Lee, Park and Lee 2009). They argue that parents see private tutoring as an investment in their child's future economic status.

Hoover-Dempsey and Saddler (1997) argue that parents' decisions to become involved in their children's education are a function of three constructs: the parent's construction of his or her role in the child's life, the parent's sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed at school, defined as a person's belief that he or she can act in ways that will produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997); and the general invitations, demands and opportunities presented by both the child and the child's school involvement. Both types of involvement were predicted by parental beliefs about what they should do and how active they should be in relation to the child's education, parent's sense of efficacy for helping their children with school work, and child's invitations and parents' time and energy for involvement. These constructs would appear to be relevant when considering factors that might affect parents' decisions to seek private tutoring for their child. Parents' beliefs about their role and activity in relation to homework in the UK involve monitoring, support and help (McBeath and Turner, 1990). Cooper Lindsay and Nye (2000) identified three dimensions of parenting style pertaining to parents' role in homework, namely autonomy support, direct involvement and provision of structure. However, when parents provided autonomy support and structure through clear and consistent guidelines for homework completion, their children were able to complete more homework and perform better on school achievement measures.

Parental beliefs about their role and involvement in children's homework tend to change as children grow older and move from primary (elementary) to school. Monitoring, support and help were implied more when children were in primary school and decreased in the high school phase (Mac Beath and Turner, 1990). However, most parents tend to have insufficient knowledge to help their children in secondary school, especially for those parents with less formal schooling (Mac Beath and Turner, 1990). Similarly, most parents in England believe that family members are able to offer sufficient support for school work during the primary phase of education, but fewer feel able to do so when their children are in high school (Ireson and Rushforth, 2011). Cooper et al. (2000) found that parents provided more autonomy support and less direct involvement when their children were in higher grade classes.

Another strategy that has been implemented by parents is to try to help the children in high school by employing tutors to help children after school. Employment of tutors is sometimes influenced by parental belief about learning and educational achievement,

has significant positive influences not only on reading achievement, language comprehension but on expressing language skills (Gest, Freeman, Domitrovich and Welsh, 2004). Parents make the greatest difference to children's achievement through supporting their learning in the home rather than supporting activities in the school (Herris and Goodall, 2007). Feinstein and Symons (1999) found that parental interest in child's education was the greatest predictor of achievement at the age of 16 years. In the same vein, Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins and Weis (2006) argue that family involvement in school, matters for children whose mothers have less education. More specifically, these authors found that increases in family involvement in the school predicted increases in literacy achievement for low income families and family involvement in school matters most for children at greatest risk. Figure 2.2 below illustrates the concept of parental involvement for school-aged children.

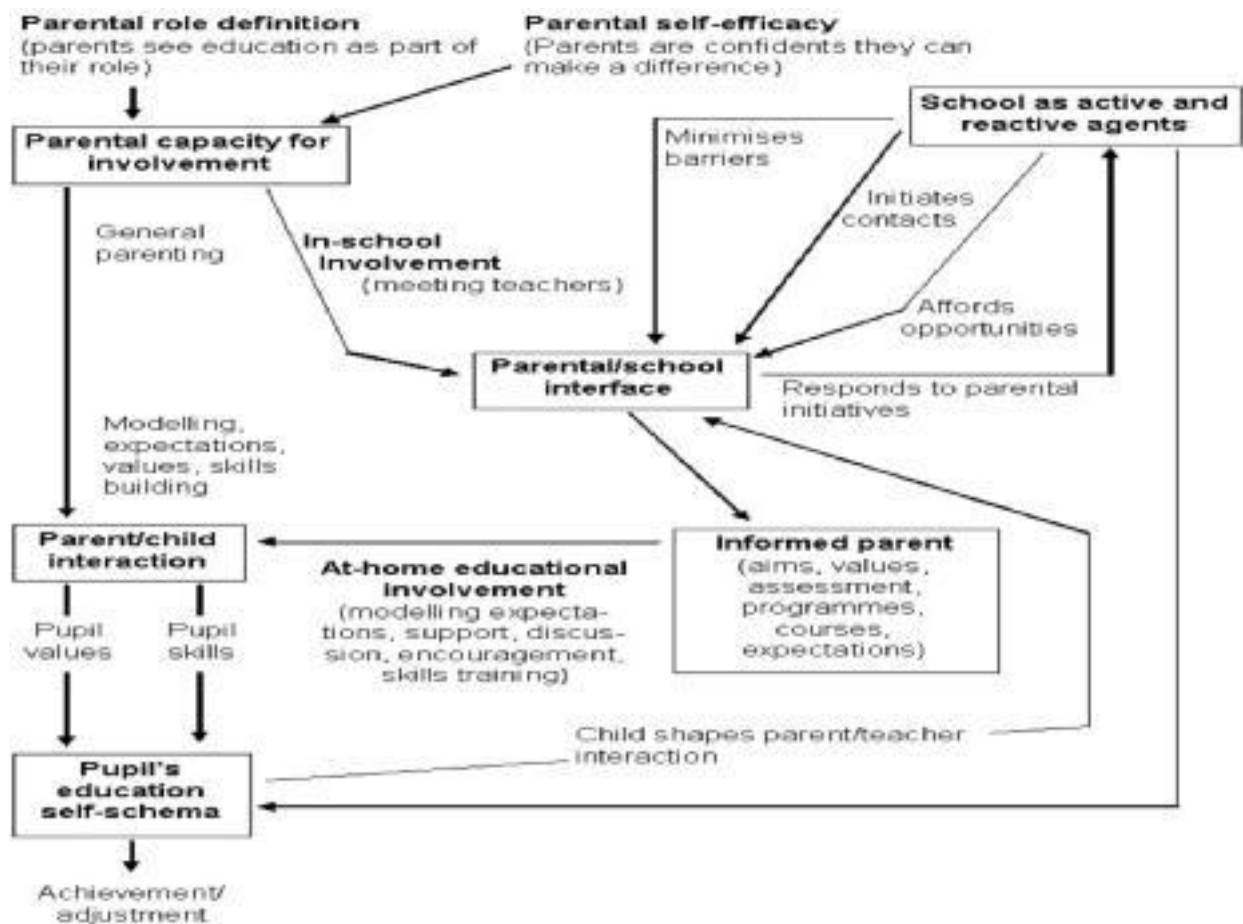


Figure 2-2: A research based model illustrating the concept of parental involvement for school-aged children (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003)

The figure above narrates what is supposed to happen between the home (parents) and the school (teachers). The parents' role is to help teachers achieve the goal of teaching the children successfully. This can be achieved by helping the children at home to do the homework and other activities that are assigned by the teachers. On the other hand, the parents want to prove how they can make the difference in children's academic work. The school, on its part, aims at minimizing barriers by involving parents in the education of their children. Parents and teachers try to close the gap by initiating contact between home and school, which can develop an opportunity for the school and the parents to be able to create smooth communication between the home and the school.

Additionally, the parents would not have fear meeting with teachers and be involved in the progress of their children's academic work at school. Parents would have an opportunity to be informed by the school and what the school wishes to implement in order for the school to improve the academic progress of children. Thus, when such a stance is taken it is bound to build confidence of the parents at home to be able to

have support and encourage children to develop their skills by helping the children in their school work. In addition, this may promote and develop, positive interaction between the parents and the children that would help the children to develop education self-schema. Thus all the foregoing is linked to academic achievement of the child. Fig. 2.3 summarises the relationship between children's literacy development and key factors influencing it, including parental involvement.

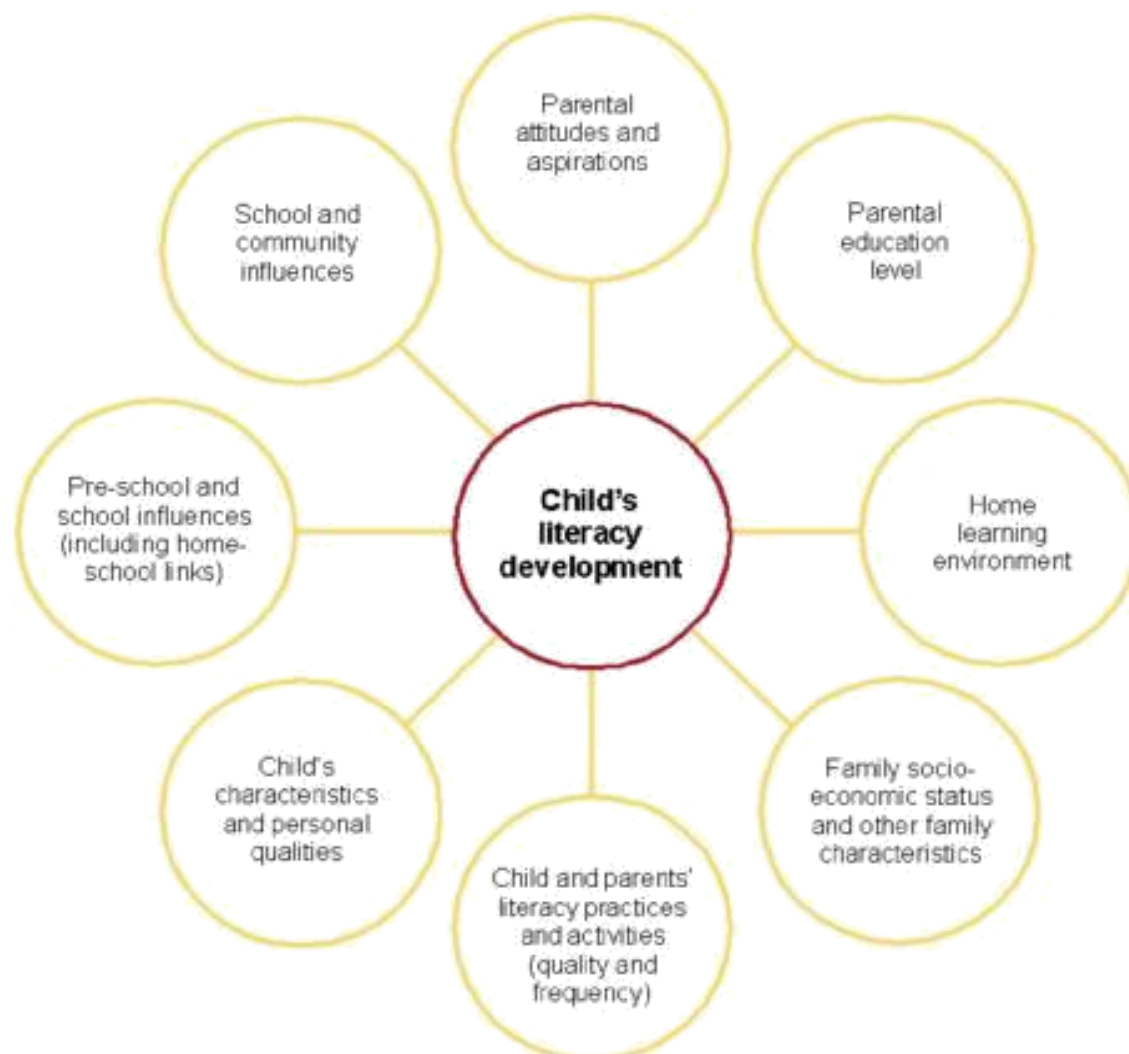


Figure 2-3: Some of the key factors influencing children's literacy development (Wasik and Herman, 2004).

Wasik and Herman (2004, p.7) define literacy as "the ways parents, children and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community". They continue to explain literacy as something which served as a way to facilitate learning in a wide range of subjects that develop one's knowledge. Here the parent is instilling literacy to the child to try to empower the child to develop broader knowledge about

what the child learns from school. The child is supposed to achieve the goal of learning, and participate fully in the society and engage as fully as possible with the school and culture (Wasik and Herrman, 2004). The parents aim at making the child understand and interpret the texts for school information and for pleasure. They should also help the children to create and shape the texts to share ideas and ideally play a role in developing and creating a new culture (Wasik and Herrman, 2004).

Additionally, researchers have since devoted much attention to the ways that parents can foster their children's school achievement. Literature distinguishes between cognitive socialization of how parents influence the basic intellectual development of their children and academic socialization, how parents influence the development of attitudes and motives that are essential for school learning (Baker and Stevenson 1986; Epstein, in press; Stevenson and Baker 1987; Milner et al. 1986). However, in some families the socialization of achievement operates in ways that produce a relative match between the child's learning skills, attitudes and motives and also the demands of the school (Bempechat and Cinsburg 1989; Epstein 1989). In other families, the socialization of achievement operates in such a way that children have difficulty realizing their full potential, they fall behind in their school work and develop poor attitudes, low expectancies, and maladaptive achievement behaviours (e.g. learned helplessness).

2.3.3 Cognitive socialization

In this area, early work showed that children's general level of achievement is associated with such factors as the degree to which parents provide tutoring when it is needed (Haggard 1957; Toby, 1957). The underlying assumption is that the parents function in much the same way as teachers, and their behaviours are contingent on the particular contexts in which they interact with their children. Thus, instruction is not necessarily explicit, nor does it have to involve specific techniques or strategies. Parental teaching is embedded in daily life and occurs in many subtle and indirect ways. In Hess and Shipman's (1965) study though outdated critical points were raised that academic achievement was found to be enhanced by parents who promote an active approach to learning. Mc Devitt and Hess (1985) found that parents' direct control techniques hampered children's cognitive

development by influencing their self-appraisals. Mothers who made appeals based on their authority had children who tended to attribute failure to lack of ability and did not attribute success to ability (Mc Devitt and Hess, 1985). It could be that in not allowing more self-exploration, these controlling mothers foster a lack of confidence in their children.

Ragoff notes that parents may not have explicit instructional goals, but may structure their interactions with their children in subtle ways of promoting their children's social and cognitive development. In the learning process, information and skills are transmitted through pragmatic communication and instruction occurs during the interaction. Initial instruction consists of highly supportive scaffolding, which eventually, through adult encouragement gives way to greater participation by the child. Ideally the child participates at a comforting but challenging level (the zone of proximal development), and the adult continually revises the scaffold for learning as the child's abilities develop. The adult who guides the child's growth in the most optimal way adjusts his or her support to levels just beyond what the child could manage alone. Lareau (1987) argues that "middle class culture provides parents in the school community. This furthers the interdependence between home and school. However, working class culture on the other hand emphasizes kinship and promotes independence between the spheres of family life and schooling." Middle class parents also tend to have higher expectations for their children's academic performance and higher career aspirations (Baker & Entwisle, 1987; Lareau 1987; Rosen & D'Andrade 1959; Toby, 1957).

Epstein (1989) has examined home factors that contribute to academic achievement. She argues that differences in children's motivation and learning can be partly accounted for by the degree to which the environments of the school and home overlap. Her model of educational socialization (Target Structures) identified six interrelated aspects of home environment that are conducive to academic achievement.

Task Structure, or varieties of activities, including intellectual activities, is the activities that children participate in at home and being helped by their parents to achieve them. On the other hand, authority structure is the degree to which the children have responsibility to participate in family decision-making. Sometimes parents become authoritative rather than permissive to their children, where parenting is associated with being independent whereas other parents prefer role modelling behaviour. Another problem parents have is the reward structure, where parents need to recognize advances in learning for their children. Epstein (1992) suggests that, particularly, when children begin formal schooling, parents should be

sure of what can be best done to reward children for intellectual progress in order to encourage their children to be active at school. Also, grouping Structures or ways in which the parents influence the child's interactions with family members and peers at school is necessary, as it encourages the child to learn to interact easily and learn to share information with other children at school. Epstein proposes that the schools can do more to help parents make use of peer groups in socializing academic achievement amongst child.

From the preceding paragraphs, the researcher advances that it would be ideal if evaluation structure or parental standards for judging performance are necessary for the academic achievement of the children. These are clear and realistic standards that are communicated warmly and constructively by parents and which can foster motivation to children at school. Lastly, time structure, or the ways in which parents manage children's time for school work is important; parents that manage children's time effectively support the completion of both school and non-school related tasks which could be done by children every day.

The literature supports the view that parental cognitive and academic socialization practises can foster children's academic achievement. Given that middle-class parents appear to have both the material and social resources to implement such practises, researchers have examined the degree to which we can enhance the achievement of educationally disadvantaged children through parent educational programs. This type of programme can also be necessary in rural schools in the Amathole West Education District which was the focus of the study.

Given the points raised above, the researcher opines that there is need for immediate solutions to the challenges that are aligned with parental involvement towards academic achievement of children in schools. The challenges that are faced by children in education are inadequate funding of the schools by the department of education, lack of infrastructure and educational materials, irrelevant curriculum and more so, the school on its own cannot bring about a balance in the education of children in the economy without reawakening the parents to their roles (Department of Education, 2007). The parents' educational levels have a significant role to play in children's academic performance. Also, the perception of parents on education also plays a substantial role in children's academic excellence (Marjoribanks, 2005).

However, parents' income levels do not affect children's attitude towards academic excellence. But the school-parent partnership should be effectively implemented as this is needed to make the children get the best of education which would help the educational sector in Amathole West Education District to forge ahead (Oduntan and Sobanjo, 2014).

In addition to parents' participation in children's academic work, parents should try to instill independent reading to the children by using information the children can get from the school libraries, that is, parents should try by all means to help the schools build the libraries in order for the libraries to be accessible to the children. The use of libraries influences the children to perform better and is a source of information for the children. Moreover, children learn how to read independently and learn how to research information when guided by their parents wherever they could be struggling. Libraries help children and parents by providing material to meet their various needs and encouraging independent reading (Sepeng, 2014). However, parents should also help their children attend school regularly; attending school is also a challenge in South African schools because it affects the academic performance of the learners especially in rural schools like most schools in Amathole West Education District and it is a concern to the Department of Education (DOE), parents and educators. Additionally, learners who do not regularly attend school perform badly in their studies because when learners are absent at school they miss a lot and it is not easy for the children to catch up alone at home unless there is help of a parent who can assist in catching up with the school work (Modise, 2014).

Parents' participation is explained in Cotton's (2001:51) book entitled *The Schooling Practices That Matter Most*. There are signs that the most effective forms of parental involvement are those where parents work directly with their children. Programmes that show the most effective results include tutoring, doing homework with children and reading with children. These active forms of parental involvement have had a greater impact on achievement than passive forms of parental involvement. Passive forms of parental involvement, however, have still shown to improve children's achievement, and are better than no parental involvement. The book also shows another effect of parental involvement, which occurs when the parent intervenes in his or her children's education at an early stage. The earlier in a child's life the

parents become involved; the greater effects parental involvement would be on the child's educational process. The effectiveness of this approach has been through various childhood education programmes such as Head Start. According to a study conducted by Reutzell and Cooler (1996:19), positive effects increase when choices are provided to parents. The schools that had offered a variety of ways for parents to get involved had an increased effect on student achievement. Giving parents various methods or activities to involve them in children's lives, increased the willingness and ability of parents to become involved. This increase in parental involvement has been shown to have a consistent, positive relationship with student's achievement and development at school.

2.3.4 Factors influencing parental involvement in their children's academic work

Presently, the changing structure of the family affects parental involvement and children's achievement. According to Lee (1991:21), the structure of the family has undergone significant changes over the past thirty years, and as a result many children experience multiple family structures due to the transitory nature of the modern family. Students who have complete families may have problems that affect parental involvement, but according to Parental Student Handbook, Motsinger (2015), having two parents will give a student 200% better chance at success in school. This view does not mean that students who do not have two parents cannot succeed, but they have more difficult time and may have to work harder in order to succeed.

Further, cultural background affects the relationship between home and school. As indicated by Rudnitski (1992), parents from racial, ethnic and cultural minorities, especially those from a low socio-economic status, tend to feel less affinity for the school than in the mainstream middleclass. This shows that the schools in the United States have different values to those of the family, as well as the inability to communicate effectively with culturally diverse families.

Furthermore, Rudnitski (1992:36 and Lontos (1991:47) submit that low income; culturally different parents have traditionally been marginalised through an inability to communicate with schools and inflexibility of the school as an institution. This tradition has fostered feelings of inadequacy, failure and poor self-worth which are cited as reasons for the low participation of parents from marginalized groups. It is proven in this study that these traditions of ineffective communication and cultural differences are among the factors that prevent parents from becoming involved in children's education. Students cannot expect parental support in home schooling when their parents are illiterate. As stated by Liu (1996:20), "Student's academic performance at school is closely related to the family literacy environment and parents' educational levels. Children need families that can provide literacy rich environments, which foster reader's success in school (Edward, 1995: 72). Unfortunately, not all children can have such an environment at the home because many parents have inadequate education and are therefore unable to provide support for their children. This issue is most prevalent among parents whose English proficiency and educational level are low. This problem is compounded when the dominant language in the home conflicts with assignments in English (Finders and Lewis: 1994). The current study teases out the educational levels of parents to establish how this may relate to the learners' school work.

Therefore, if it is assumed that if parents are not literate, it will be impossible for them to assist the child; this study is focused on educational barriers that affect parental involvement. For instance, concerns have been raised that English is not the native language but is the medium of instruction in most learning areas, as a result, most parents think that educational skills are so poor that they cannot be useful in assisting children at school. Involving parents from any background is no easy task and in any light of cultural and educational differences, the minority of parents' languages present a special challenge (Constantino, 1995). Parents whose educational background proficiency is limited may find it difficult or intimidating to communicate with school staff or to be involved in the education of their children in school (Violet-Sanchez, 1993). Lack of educational skills becomes an intimidating factor when parents and schools cannot communicate effectively.

The socio-economic status has been recognised as one of the influential factors concerning parental involvement. According to Coleman (1966), the best predictor of

students' achievement is the socioeconomic status of the parents which led to a flurry of investigations on student achievement. Coleman (1993) also states that some researchers have found that parental qualities are associated with socioeconomic status, which is positively related to parental involvement. Lareau (1987) highlights that the upper middle class parents were engaged in school activities and were influential in school decision-making, while working class parents took on a more supportive role with respect to the involvement with their children's school.

However, Brantliner and Guskin (1987) come up with the idea that low income parents feel that schools discourage their involvement and view them as the problem; they also believe that stereotypes that poor parents are inadequate caregivers who are not interested in children's education persist among educators. Although the low income families may feel unneeded or unable to be involved with children's school work, Henderson (1988) states that these children of low income families are the students who benefits the most when parents are involved in the schools. Further, parents do not have to be well educated to make a difference (Henderson, 1998).

On the other hand, despite the fact that parents with low educational background is viewed as less helpful towards the children's educational outcomes. Earlier research studies pinpoint that even for working parents it is hard for them to participate in parental involvement programme and to attend meetings and events at school (Onikama, 1987). As stated by Onikama (1998), working class parents want their children to do well, but tend to give the educational responsibility to the teacher. According to Singh and Mbokodi (2004), disadvantaged black parents did not seem to understand their role as parents in the education of their children. Kaperu (2004) confirms that parents are not quite sure of their role. In the same vein, Ingram (2007) states that some parents think that their own lack of education precludes them from participation in children's education. The language also constitutes a barrier with parents feeling that no one will listen to them if they cannot speak English, Quezanda Diaz and Sanchez (2003, cited in Ingram 2007). However, the educator and the parent should work hand in hand as they are the elements that are both important in the upbringing of the child, especially in education. Parents know their child better

than any other person. The cultural capital theory emphasises the role of both school and parents, hence they must be involved in children's education (Azzam, 2007).

A framework containing six important factors with regards to parental involvement has been developed by Epstein and her co-workers at the centre of family, school and Community Partnership at John Hopkins University. This framework is based on findings from many studies of what factors are most effective when it comes to children's education (Epstein, 2009). Epstein's six factors are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. Parenting pertains to helping all families to understand the development of both the child and the adolescent behaviour of the child. It also helps establishing a supportive home environment for children as student.

Communication, on the other hand refers to how best to design and conduct effective two-way communication, which is school- to-home and-home to school about school programs and children's progress. The third factor, volunteering, applies to recruiting and organising help and support from parents for school related programs and student's activities. Learning at home pertains providing ideas and information to parents about how they can best assist their children with all the homework and curricular related decisions and developing parent leaders and representatives. Collaborating with the community pertains to identifying and integrating community services and resources to support and strengthen schools, students and their families.

Each of the above factors can lead to various results for students, parents, teaching practices and school climate. Each factor poses challenges to involve all families and those challenges should be met. That is why Epstein (2009) considers it to be important for each school to choose what factors are believed to be the most likely to assist the school in reaching its goal for academic success, and to develop a climate of alliance between home and the school. Even though the main focus of these six factors is to promote academic achievements, they also contribute to various results for both the parents and teachers (Epstein, 2009). However, it may be presumed that parents will gain more confidence in their role as parents, they will show leadership with decision-making, and they will have more effective productive communication

with their children with regard to school work, and will have more communication with other parents and the school.

According to Henderson and Berla (1994), parents also gain a more positive attitude towards the school and its staff, and gain more confidence in assisting children with homework, by being involved with their education. The parents are more likely to gather support for the school and its programs in the community and become more active community members for the teachers, and the benefits for the school may be presumed to be better communication with parents, a deeper understanding of the families of their students and their situation, and more effective communication with both the homes and the community (Epstein, 2009). Henderson and Berla (1994) also claim that the schools will benefit from parental involvement by improving teacher morale, getting more support from families and higher student academic achievement.

Additionally, Clarke (2007) notes that schools function best when parents and the community are active participants and have some sense of ownership of the school. Therefore, it is better to emphasize that these six factors not only benefit the students, but also their parents, teachers and the school.

According to literature related to parental involvement in education, factors influencing parental involvement can be divided into three groups:

- Parent related factors
- School related factors
- Student related factors

- **Parent related factors**

Parental involvement can be affected by several socio-political factors, such as socioeconomic conditions and parents' negative school experience (LaRocque et al., 2011). Studies have shown that one of the factors contributing to the level of parental involvement is parents' educational background (Pena, 2000; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Jordan et al., 2001; Potvin et al., 1999; Crozier, 1999; Baeck, 2010). For example, Lee and Bowen (2006) found that parents with 2-year or higher college degree have considerably more attendance in the activities or meetings organized at school, talk more often about educational issues with their children and expect their children to

be more successful in education. Conversely, parents whose educational levels are low may be less involved, because they do not feel self-confident enough to contact school staff (Lee & Bowen, 2006). However, Pena (2000) asserts that parents with low levels of education more frequently volunteer in different types of activities at schools than those with high levels of education. The researcher stated that the problem for parents with low levels of education, as reported by the parents themselves, is that they cannot help their children with homework or other school-related issues, because their knowledge is limited. Interestingly, when it comes to parents with a university degree, they show lack of time as a main reason for not getting involved (Baeck, 2010).

According to Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1992), parents' beliefs about whether the effects of involvement will contribute to children's academic achievement also influence their levels of involvement. Furthermore, parents' income levels also affect their levels of involvement (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). The researcher found that high-income parents take part more often in the activities organized by school than low-income parents. Furthermore, parents with high socio-economic status try more effectively to get involved than parents with low socio-economic status (Domina, 2005). In contrast, Shaver and Walls (1998) argue that parents' income level is not a contributing factor to their level of involvement. This suggests that parents should not use their income or level of education as an excuse for not being involved in children's academic work.

In addition, family structure also has an effect on parental involvement (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Potvin et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2001). For instance, Astone and McLanahan (1991) found that children with a single parent or step parents are provided with less support and control in comparison to children who live in two-parent families. The interesting fact identified in this research is that single parents' children have a greater desire to talk to their parents. According to Potvin et al. (1999), the indirect influence of family structure on students' school success through parental assistance is impressive. Marital disruption in the family can lead to low levels of involvement by reducing the amount of time parents spend with children. This change is particularly typical for fathers, because the number of children who live with their mothers after divorce is significantly higher (Astone & McLanahan,

1991). Furthermore, parenting style is another factor influencing the level of involvement (Cooper et al., 2000). Interestingly, Mapp (2002) submits that parents' own experiences of parental involvement when they were school pupils also affect how they get involved with children's school work.

Gender, with regards to the phenomenon under study cannot be understated. Not only does the child's gender, but also the parents' gender is a factor contributing to the level of involvement (Feuerstein, 2000). For example, mothers spend more time dealing with children's homework than fathers (Jordan et al., 2001). Another reason why parents do not get involved is that they do not perceive their involvement as a parental duty (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005); to some parents, it is the responsibility of the school to educate students (Carrasquillo & London, 1993).

- Finally, cultural differences, parents' own unsuccessful school experiences (Aronson, 1996) and lack of transportation (Pena, 2000) are also considered as influential factors.
- **School related factors**

Another issue that has an influence on parental involvement is language (Aronson, 1996; LaRocque et al., 2011). The language used at schools can be very academic (LaRocque et al., 2011) and most school staff do not know how to handle parents with a different language background (Aronson, 1996). Even when parents and teachers do not have any problem in understanding each other, teachers' attitudes influence the level of involvement (Pena, 2000; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). According to Mapp (2002), if parents trust the attitude of school staff, they are likely to get more involved because "every parent wants to trust the school and to be trusted" (Deal & Peterson, 2009, p189). Moreover, Pena (2000) submits that parents anticipate the most important stimulation from teachers, but sometimes they do not feel this stimulation. Comer and Haynes (1991) state that teacher requests made within an adequate and attractive school environment have a noticeable effect on parents deciding to get involved. On the other hand, sometimes parents' roles in getting involved are unclear, and they may need clear explanations from teachers about what they are expected to do (LaRocque et al., 2011). Fields Smith (2005) found that parents respond more frequently to teachers' demands that are well defined.

Moreover, many parents confront the reality of a confused academic curriculum that brings its own difficulties: '...parents do experience a significant degree of confusion about what their children are doing in school' (Crozier, 1999, p228).

- **Student related factors**

Parents are likely to get involved if they comprehend that not only teachers, but also students, expect them to get involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Interestingly, students' calls for parental involvement can be prominent or allusive depending on several factors, including their desire for freedom and academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Crozier (1999) points out that although parents frequently quote their children's claim for freedom as a reason not to get involved, most students value parents' support and find it beneficial. Interestingly, Hornby and Lafaele (2011) show students' age as an issue affecting the level of parental involvement. They explain this in addressing the downward trend in parental involvement in upper grades. Even students' gender may be considered as a factor contributing to parental involvement (Deslandes & Potvin, 1999; Carter & Wojtkiewicz, 2000). Deslandes and Potvin (1999) found that male students' mothers contact teachers more frequently than female ones. Interestingly, according to Cooper et al. (2000), male students' parents' involvement levels are higher than females in elementary school, but in high school female students' parents' involvement levels are higher than males. Furthermore, according to Eccles and Harold (1996), parents of students with high achievement are more willing to take part in the activities organized by school than those of students with low achievement.

In conclusion, according to literature evaluated above, it is possible to say that the factors affecting the level of parental involvement are:

- Parents' educational background.
- Lack of knowledge about curriculum.
- Lack of time.
- Language
- School staff attitudes and environment.
- School demands (certain or uncertain for parents).
- Children's invitation.
- Teachers' invitation.
- Children's desire for independency.
- Parents' beliefs about their skill to develop learning.
- Parents' income level.
- Family structure.

- Parenting style.
- Parents' own parental involvement.
- Students' age.
- Students' gender.
- Parents' gender.
- Students' achievement level.
- Parents' beliefs about parental duty
- Culture (Javarof, 2015).

It would be prudent to find out how the current study relates to these factors that Javarof (2015) established.

2.3.5 Support mechanisms that enhance parental participation in children's academic work

Education is essential for the development of society. The more educated the people of a society are, the more civilized and well-disciplined the society might be. Mainly, family also has the responsibility to socialize children for making them productive members of society. Moreover, the more the parents are involved in the process of imparting education to their children, the more the children might excel in their academic career and become the productive and responsible members of society (Bryan, 2005). Thus, Learner support services are vital components that can help the children to achieve. However, parents should introduce support services that should be accessible to school children. Hence, parents should monitor the support services and that should be a continuous and an ongoing exercise which could bring constant improvement through innovations in the support services. However, parents should develop a managerial process which can support delivery of services to children, where there is a high degree of invisibility (Taita & Alant, 2003). This is when the parents try to assist children by advising, giving information, exploring problems and suggesting directions of solving the problems of tasks given by teachers to children. In addition, parents assist by giving feedback to children on non-academic aptitudes and skills. Thus, parents should give practical help to promote reading skills to children. Parents should be able to make out a case for funding that would be useful for the school and for the children. Additionally, parents in their support should try and promote changes within the institution to benefit students (Jha, Ghosh & Mehta,

2006). Figure 2.4 below depicts the model of parental influence on the educational achievement of young children.

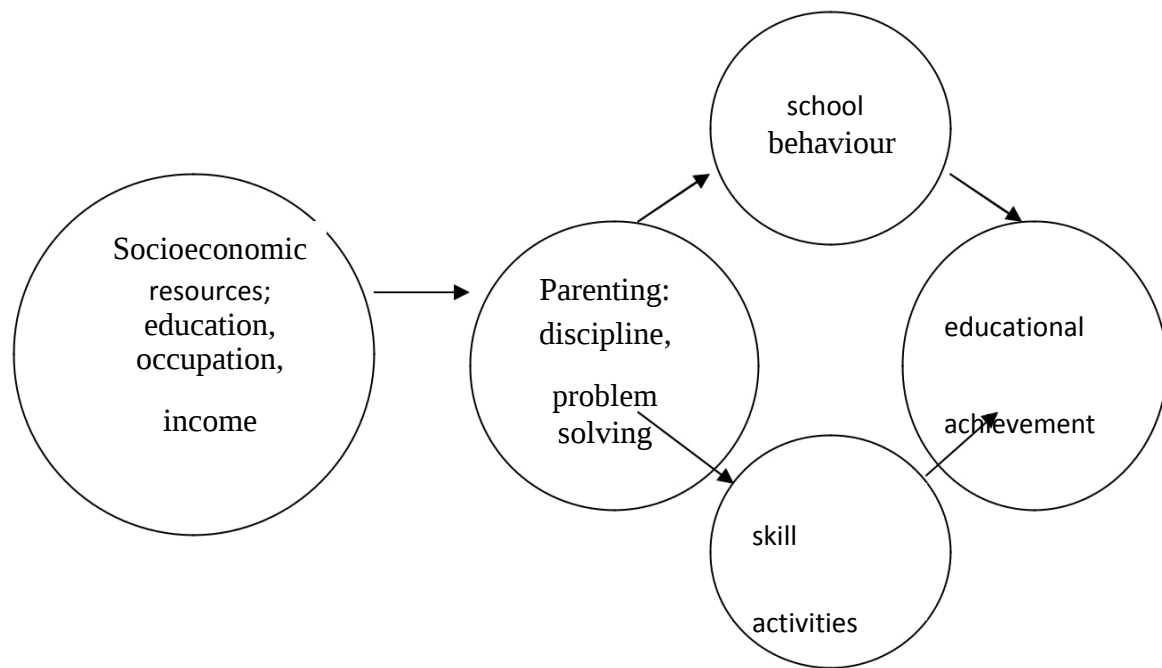


Figure 2-3: De Garmo et al (1999) found support for the model of parental influence on to educational achievement for young children

The ecological perspective maintains that the interaction between home and school is critical for supporting positive child outcomes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Nzinga-Johnson, Baker & Aupperlee, 2009). The Ecological framework posits that there is an independent influence of each setting on the child, and an interactive influence of the home and the school settings that operates in a unique way to further affect the child's development (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). It has been observed that teachers play a significant role in determining the frequency and quality of parent involvement in elementary education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Walker & Sandler, 2005). Similarly, school intervention studies show that efforts to improve students' outcomes can be more effective when the family is involved (Brown, Benkovitz, Muttillio & Urban, 2011). As reviewed by McNeal 2012), one dimension of parent involvement is direct interaction between teachers and parents, and has been related to poor behavioural outcomes. Such evidence has given rise to the reactivity hypothesis (e.g. Catsambis, 1998; Epstein, 1988), or the theory that frequency parental involvement increases when children act out in school. Some authors note that parents may have waited until serious problems occurred at school before becoming involved but other studies suggest a variation in the effects of parent involvement by racial-ethnic background and socioeconomic (SES) status (Crosnoe et al.; 2010; McNeal, 2012).

McNeal (1999) argues that the cultural capital possessed by affluent European American families may magnify the positive effects of parents' involvement on changes in academic and behavioural outcomes from eight through twelfth grade in schools. Moreover, Lareau (1989) contends that the parents of underachieving children in rural high schools are supposed to be the most involved in children's schooling. However, additional work is needed to understand relations between different types of parent involvement and children's behaviours as they operate within samples of rural students and rural schools (El Nokali, et al.; 2010; Fan & Chen, 2001; Mc Wayne et al., 2004). Although parent involvement has been studied at various stages (Crosnoe, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Kuperminc, Darnell & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2008) it is also critical to examine the construct at the start of formal schooling, because early experience of children may influence future involvement activities (Izzo et al, 1999).

To enhance parental participation in children's academic work, the need for strategic planning has been seen as a necessary essential to the initiation and maintenance of parental involvement especially in regard to disadvantaged or hard to reach families. According to Raffaele and Knoff (1999), successful engagement programmes require both strategic planning and organisational change. However, the school should recognize the organisational climate that exists within the school and the messages about involvement that the school needs. This can be particularly important for parents that had negative school experience themselves. Raffaele and Knoff claim that work on home school collaboration should build on a foundation of core beliefs which are:

- Collaboration that should be pro-active rather than reactive, the engagement of all parents should be worked for.
- Collaboration involves sensitivity to the wide ranging circumstances of all students and families.
- Collaboration recognises and values the contributions parents have to make, to the educational process.
- Collaboration must engender parental empowerment; all parents must be given a voice and that voice should be heard. (Raffaele and Knoff, 1999).

However, once a school has decided to implement a home-school collaboration programme, a strategic plan running for at least three years is essential. Moreover, the strategic plan should conform to the general principles of management paying lead to role clarification, resource allocation, target setting, training, monitoring, evaluation and review. This can be done specifically to build collaboration with the rural disadvantaged families, 4 preliminary phases of sequenced action are suggested as follows:

- An external scan and analysis must be conducted to analyse the community's human and material resources and existing links, together with the identification of current and possible local demographic trends.
- An analysis of all stakeholder's perceptions and expectations must be completed, in this way mutual priorities can be established.
- An internal organisational (school) scan should be conducted to identify resources and necessary organisational adjustments.
- A public awareness process should be enacted to help parents and teachers understand the need for the strategic plan (Raffaele & Knoff, 1999).

Additionally, in important respects, this preliminary work is a comprehensive and mutual needs assessment, where it is presumed to maximise commitment of the parents and enhance momentum for a plan of action and to help maximise everyone's use of resources. Therefore, the needs analysis is then fed into an action planning process devised and managed by a team representing all stakeholders. This guiding principle leads to successful programmes which are planned and should be useful for the children and not merely a collection of random or disorganised activities (Raffaele & Knoff, 1999). These authors note that successful projects for home-school collaboration require clear foundational principles, mutual respect between all stakeholders and extensive strategic and operational planning.

Communicating frequently with parents about the curriculum, classroom expectations and ways in which parents can be involved is necessary. Moreover, frequent and positive communication should be applied in helping teachers see the importance of

using frequent, clear and positive communication strategies with parents and also conveying that visitors are greeted by welcoming signs and responsive staff. It is also necessary to develop appropriate strategies by using information from parents, families and community members that would help in focussing on appropriate strategies that would help in academic achievement of the children. Nonetheless, it is also necessary to get information into parents' hands via students. By communicating with parents, parents would feel that they are part of the school community because they are aware of the events and other important school information that are taking place at school. Nevertheless, parents are supposed to be given clear information by the school on children's progress in order for the parents to learn better about the school's curriculum, assessments, achievements levels and reporting methods that are used at school. Parents should be empowered about how to support children at home, and to help them thrive and achieve for the better in education. Moreover, when the school and families share information and strategies, everyone feels connected to the school community and the school teachers would realize the positive ways in which parents have contributed to students' success (Rowe, Ramani & Romerantz, 2016). The present study also looks at how parents and schools collaborate in assisting children with their academic work.

2.3.6 Parent involvement and classroom emotional support

Classroom emotional support is operationalized as an aggregate factor that involves teachers' responsiveness to student needs in the classroom, regard for student perspectives, absence of negativity and presence of safety and enjoyment at school (Hamre et al., 2013; Hamre, Pianta, Mashburn & Downer, 2007). Nevertheless, the class measure is consistent with scholarship on the emotional, organisational and instructional components of schooling (Eccles and Roeser, 1999) and also rooted in theory and research on classroom processes (Brophy, 1999; Pressley et al., 2003). Building on this framework, Hamre and colleagues (2007, 2013) argue for multilevel, latent structure in which teacher practices are organized into a wide range and large number of teacher behaviours in the classroom, which are then broken down into emotional, organizational and instructional components.

Furthermore, in classroom framework, the emotional support component includes the overall climate (presence of positive climate and lack of negative climate), teacher sensitivity and regard for student perspectives. Conversely, teachers who are emotionally supportive demonstrate positive emotion shared by students; students are aware of, and are responsive to, students' views in teaching and learning opportunities (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Such emotional support may be particularly beneficial for children who are at risk for in-school behaviour problems (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Given the ecological theories and empirical work demonstrating that families and schools should work together and are the critical influences in the lives of young children (Nzinga-Johnson, Baker & Aupperlee, 2009; Thelen & Smith, 2006), However, teachers who are emotionally supportive in the classroom can be expected to interact and engage with parents in qualitatively different ways than those teachers who are less emotionally supportive. Additionally, emotionally supportive teachers may be collaborative and respectful, which can result in creating a space where parents feel comfortable, voice their concern. Such teacher directed actions may help parents to have better understanding of their children's school challenges and monitor their problematic behaviours (Lasky, 2000). In contrast, less emotionally supportive teachers may be more directive and dominant in their interaction with parents (Walker & MacLure, 2005), possibly leading to less positive and productive communication about children's problems and progress. Examining the interactive effect of classroom emotional support and parent involvement on children's behaviour may be particularly important in low-income rural communities like Amathole West Education District, where parents typically experience less than optimal collaboration with schools.

2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

As the discussion in this chapter has illustrated, there is a steady and growing body of evidence of how important parental involvement is in improving student's academic achievement. Parental involvement has a positive effect on test scores and grades in core subjects, such as reading, math and science. However, the effect of parental involvement is not only on the academic side, but also on the non-academic outcomes, such as school attendance, student behaviour in school,

student attitudes towards school, and their social skills. It has been argued that these benefits hold for students of all ages, across educational, economic and racial and ethnic background. Thus, generally it is accepted that in order for students to excel in school, they need the support and encouragement from their parents. The benefits emphasise the importance of getting parents involved. It also asserts the importance that parents feel both welcome and respected at school. The key factor to get parents involved is to have an inviting school climate, where parents are frequently invited to be involved at school and where parents perceive themselves to be welcome. Therefore, school personnel need to establish a trusting relationship with parents and to regard them as partners in children's education. Such a relationship influences how parents become involved in children's education and reinforces their willingness to be actively involved. Studies have shown that parents consider their assistance with homework to be particularly effective for children's academic achievement. In addition, students themselves, claim to do better in school, at least some of the time, if they receive help from their parents. The importance for parental volunteerism and participation in decision making at school has also been discussed. It is worth considering whether parents feel more part of their child's education by volunteering and by participating in school decisions. Being a part of something that gives ownership and therefore it is reasonable to assume that such ownership makes it more likely that parents will be active participants in child's education. Since a myriad of studies have shown the importance of parental involvement in children's education, it is vital for both parents and schools to acknowledge that and establish such partnerships.

Parental involvement not only influences students' academic achievement and behaviour but also whether students continue their studies or not. To become involved in our children's education is something most of us can do, regardless of our socio-economic status and situation. For instance, one should all be able to monitor our children's homework and be supportive and inquisitive about schoolwork. As such, schools should do their utmost to encourage and emphasise partnerships between schools and homes. Since there is so much at stake, it must be considered essential for schools to build a bridge between schools and homes, where parents feel welcome and valued and trusted by teachers. Teachers need to build a strong and trusting relationship with parents. It will be much more likely for

parents to become actively involved with children's education, if the school cultivates a rich and inviting atmosphere at school. Research has shown that this kind of a strong partnership between parents and schools is more likely to produce successful students who achieve academically.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research methodology. Methodology is a branch of science which is concerned with investigating the potential and limitations of a particular research technique or procedure of scientific enquiry. It also refers to how logic, reality, values and what counts as knowledge inform research. On the other hand, research methods are the techniques and procedures that are followed when one is conducting a research. Methods are determined by the methodology (McGregor

& Murnane, 2010). All major aspects that guided this research are discussed in this chapter. These include the research paradigms; research approach and design; population, sample and sampling techniques; data collection instruments; issues of validity and trustworthiness; data collection; data analysis; ethical considerations; and limitations of the study. A discussion of each is presented in the following paragraphs.

3.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION

A paradigm or world view is a basic and comprehensive belief system that guides research practice in the field. It is a way of looking at the world. Paradigms are the philosophical assumptions, epistemologies and ontologies (Creswell, 2007; McGregor

& Murnane, 2010). Basit (2010) contends that paradigms are models or conceptual frameworks that guide organization of views, thoughts and beliefs into a logical whole and eventually inform research. Ontology and epistemology are the two major aspects of a branch of philosophy called metaphysics. However, Ontology is the study of claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, which is something that exists in research paradigms. Epistemologists study what is meant by knowledge of a phenomenon. Epistemology is also concerned with what is known about reality. It is the theory of knowledge that is embedded in the theoretical

perspective and thereby in the research methodology (Creswell, 2007). Ontological and epistemological assumptions make up a paradigm. Ontology is about what can exist or what is real, and epistemology is about knowledge (Grix, 2010; Creswell, 2003). Hence, paradigms are a set of commonly held beliefs or values which shape or dictate how scientists and researchers should proceed in carrying out research within the research or scientific community in relation to a field of study. The paradigm underpins the focus of the study, methods to be used and how the emerging results.

The term paradigm refers to an overall theoretical research framework in relation to the theory of scientific revolutions (Mark, 2010). Kuhn, cited in Mack (2010), saw the development of this scientific thought as the emergence of a series of paradigms. He also argues that in this process, one set of beliefs and practices is eventually annulled by a new set; therefore, for any new set is incompatible with the existing one because they are based on very different beliefs. In social sciences, no single paradigm has dominated, therefore, competing paradigms co-exist. However, the exact number of world views and the names associated with a particular paradigm vary from author to author, but there is a generally accepted list which includes three paradigms which are: positivist, post-positivism (critical realism) and interpretivist (Grix, 2010). This study adopted the interpretivist paradigm because the researcher sought to explore the complexity of social phenomena with the view to gain understanding and interpret everyday happenings (events) at school and at home experiences, social structures as well as the values people attach to these phenomena (Collins & Hussey, 2009; 56-57; Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Although this study was premised on the interpretive paradigm it was necessary that the researcher discusses other paradigms such as positivism, post-positivism and post-modernism paradigms with the view to locating the study within interpretivism framework.

3.2.1 Positivist Paradigms

Positivism is only based on the assumption that there are universal laws that governed social events, and by uncovering these laws enables researchers to describe, predict and control social phenomena (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000 and Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Positivists asserts that the nature of social reality is that empirical facts that exists apart from personal ideas or thoughts, and they are governed by laws of cause and effect, patterns of social reality that are stable and knowledge of them is additive (Crotty, 1998; Neuman, 2003; Marczyk, De Matteo & Festinger, 2005). According to Neuman (2003) positivism sees social science as an organized method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human behaviour's. However, Farzanfar (2005) argue that positivists paradigm is the nature of enquiry, is also interpretive and its purpose of inquiry is to understand a particular phenomenon, and not to generalize to a population. Although this study was not guided by the positivist paradigm, but it drew on the positivist rigour from the scientific method, that means it adhered to the canons of rigour and scepticism in carrying out the work to be completed.

3.2.2 Post-positivist Paradigm

Post-positivists do not believe in strict cause and effect but rather recognized that all cause and effect is a probability that may or may not occur. Post-positivism has the elements of being reductionist, logical, empirical, cause and effect oriented and deterministic based on a priori theories. Post-positivist view inquiry as a series of logically related steps, and they also believed in a multiple perspective from participants rather than single reality and espouse rigorous methods of qualitative data collection and analysis. Approaches to qualitative aspects have been identified as belonging to post-positivism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This post-positivist interpretive framework is exemplified in the systematic procedures of grounded theory which is found in (Strauss & Corbin 1990; 1998; Andrews, 2008; Birks and Mills, 2015) the analytic data analysis steps in phenomenology (Moran, 2000) and the data analysis strategies of case comparison of Yin (2013). In the case of this

study, the research questions were not structured in post-positivist study as they are mainly focused on qualitative aspects of reality life.

3.2.3 The Post-modernist Paradigm

Postmodern scholarship poses significant challenges to pivotal assumptions of individual knowledge, objectivity and truth. An emphasis is placed on the communal construction of knowledge, objectivity as a relational achievement and language as a pragmatic medium through which local truths are constructed. The basic concept is that knowledge claims should be set within the conditions of the world today and in the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender and other group affiliations. The conditions included the importance of different discourses, the importance of marginalized people and groups, and the presence of “metanarratives” or universals that can hold truth regardless of the social conditions. These invite a new range of questions about the potentials of research. The questions are vitally concerned with the significance of inquiry in cultural life (Niewenhuis, 2015). Moreover, this emerging view of psychological science opens a new and exciting vista of theoretical, methodological and practical significance. Additionally, increasing manifestations of movement in these directions suggest the possibility of profound change in the profession (Gergen, 2001).

The term postmodern is an enormous domain of dialogue within scholarly world, but central to these dialogues the modernist has been known as a concept of truth, rationality, objectivity, individual knowledge, evidence and scientific progress. It is also difficult to engage with the bracing and concatenating confluence of ideas without getting into a new space of understanding. However, within neighbouring social sciences these dialogues had a great impact on metatheory, theory, methodology and practice (Dickens & Fontana, 1994; Hollinger, 1994; Rosenau, 1992). Thus, because of their strong identification within natural sciences they have vital signs and became fully manifest Fee (2000). Language in Postmodernism assist in generating and sustaining certain forms of cultural practice and participate actively in the interpretive conventions and practices of a particular culture (Niewenhuis, 2015 & Suter, 2016). This is relevant here because language was used in this research and whatever is presented as knowledge in this research is a version of the truth, and cannot be claimed to be the absolute truth.

3.2.4 The social constructivist Paradigm (interpretivism)

Social constructivism, which is often described as interpretivist, is another paradigm or worldview. Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge according to which human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Mertens, 2015). In social constructivism, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They also develop subjective meanings of their experiences; meanings which are directed towards certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participant's views about the situation. These subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. They are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social construction) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives.

In terms of practice, the questions became broad and general as the participants could construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussion or interactions with other people. The more open-ended the questioning the better as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. Thus, constructivist researchers often address the "process" of interaction among individuals (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Mertens, 2015). They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants. Researchers recognized that their own background shaped their interpretation, and they "position themselves" in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural and historical experiences. Thus, researchers make an interpretation of what they found, an interpretation shaped by their own experiences and background (Brown, 2006). The researcher's intent was to make sense (interpret) of the meanings others had about the world. The research interviews were done in a constructivist way. The data for interviews was collected through the question and answer approach.

The interpretivist paradigm was developed as a reaction to positivism; it could also be called the “anti-positivist” paradigm. Sometimes it is referred to as constructivism because it emphasizes the ability of human organisms to construct meaning. The ontological assumptions of interpretivists are that social reality is seen by multiple people and these people interpret events differently, leaving multiple perspectives of a phenomenon (Mack, 2010). This interpretive paradigm was also called the phenomenological approach. It aims at understanding people (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:28). According to De Vos et al. (2011b:8) and Neuman (2011:101), interpretive social science could be traced to Max Weber (1864-1920) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey argues that there were two fundamentally different types of sciences: the natural sciences and the human sciences. The former is based on *Erklärung*, or abstract explanation. The latter is rooted in an understanding, or *Verstehen*, of the lived experiences of people in the school environment (De Vos et al., 2011b:8; Neuman, 2011:101). Weber maintained that all humans, attempted to make sense of their worlds. In so doing, they continuously interpreted, created, gave meaning, defined, justified and rationalised daily actions, for instance, of the learners in schools and in home environment (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:28).

The Interpretivist, thus, focused on exploring the complexity of social phenomena, with a view to gaining an understanding of its dynamics (Collins & Hussey, 2009 & Rubin & Babbie, 2010). The purpose of this study was to understand and interpret everyday happenings (events) at school and at home, experiences and social structures – as well as the values people attached to these phenomena (Collis & Hussey, 2009 and Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Interpretivists believed that social reality is subjective and nuanced, because it is shaped by the perceptions of the participants, as well as the values and aims of the researcher. Gephart (1999) described the interpretivist paradigm as being directed on meaning, and understanding of the social interactions between humans. Consequently, the mind interpreted experience and events, and constructed meanings from them. Meaning does not exist outside the mind. Willis (2007), as well as Fouché and Schurink (2011) agreed with Gephart (1999) when they rejected the notion that the social sciences should apply research principles adopted from the natural sciences. Interpretivists believed that the subject matter of the social sciences is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences. Consequently, a different methodology is

required to reach an interpretive understanding or “verstehen” and an explanation that would enable the social researcher to appreciate the subjective meaning of social actions.

Reality should rather be interpreted through the meanings that people gave to their life world. This meaning could only be discovered through language, and not exclusively through quantitative analysis (Schwandt, 2007). Interpretivists also hold the view that the social world cannot be understood by applying research principles adopted from the natural sciences. The social sciences required a different research paradigm. Interpretivists, on the other hand, took into cognizance of the surrounding situations. These were directly on social life interactions as perceived by individuals rather than the objective of reality that applies to how people experienced these changes including the interpretation of reality, reflection on events and organizational culture (Capper, 1993).

In organizations, critical enquiry made use of the interpretivist epistemologies and methodologies, in order to provide participants’ meaning and understanding to the patterns of behaviour and feelings encountered by persons, especially children, parents and teachers in schools. When these meanings were revealed, it enabled the participant to peer into their own belief systems, attitudes, assumptions and ideologies that underlay educational practices.

Interpretivists argue that simple fundamental laws could not explain the complexity of social phenomena (Blumberg et al., 2011:17). Interpretivists claim that an objective observation of the social world was impossible, as it had meaning for humans only, and was constructed by intentional behaviour and actions. Livesey (2011b:4) explains the interpretivist as a method that sees the social world as something that could only be produced and reproduced on a daily basis by people. Something that holds truth for the moment (now) might not necessarily hold truth tomorrow, or in another society (social environment). Knowledge is developed and theory is built through developing ideas from observed and interpreted social constructions. As such, the researcher sought to make sense of what was happening. This could even generate findings beyond the common scientific knowledge (Rubin & Babbie, 2010:37; Blumberg et al., 2011). In other words, interpretivists attempted to

understand subjective realities and to offer explanations that are meaningful for the participants in the research. It also refers to research in the hermeneutic tradition, which uncovers meaning and understands the deeper implications revealed in the data about people.

The cause-and-effect relationship of positivism is rejected; since social circumstances and conditions continuously change. The social world of people is understood differently in different situations – and in different ways (Livesey, 2011b). Livesey believed that everything in the social world is relative to all other happenings (events) and experiences. The views of Gephart (1999); Schwandt (2007); Blumberg et al (2011) as well as Fouché and Schurink (2011:309) reiterate the view of Norbert Elias (1986:20) who argues that positivist natural scientists believed that the method of natural sciences are the only legitimate method for scientific discovery. Elias (1986:20) states that it is possible to advance knowledge and to make discoveries in the field of sociology via methods very different from those of the natural sciences. In fact, it was the discovery, not the method that legitimized research as being scientific.

Interpretivists reject the notion that research is value-free; since the researcher's interpretation is also socially constructed, reflected his/her motives and beliefs. Human interests not only channelled our thinking, but also impacted how the world was investigated and how knowledge was constructed (Blumberg et al., 2011). Hence, the approach to social phenomena for the current study should also reflect the currently common construction of knowledge; it thus implies the following assumptions:

The social world is observed by seeing what meanings people gave to it and interpreting these meanings from their viewpoint; and Social phenomena could only be understood by looking at the reality. Thus, the researcher is required to dig into the processes of subjective interpretation, acknowledging the motivations, interests, intentions, beliefs, values and reasons, meaning-making and the self-understanding of the participants (Henning et al., 2004:20; Blumberg et al., 2011).

In so far as research methodology is concerned, Henning et al. (2004:20) hold that the interpretive understanding is grounded in an interactive, field-based inductive

methodology, which in turn is intertwined in the practice within a specific context. Livesey (2011b) proposes that the best methods within the interpretive research paradigm are those of observation and interpretation. As a reason, he advances that the researcher should understand how human beings experienced and interpreted their world.

De Vos et al. (2011b) suggest the use of participant observation and field research techniques, where many hours and days were spent in direct contact with the participants. Transcripts, conversations and video-tapes may be studied in order to gain a sense of subtle non-verbal communication or to understand interaction in its real context (Neuman, 2011:101). The researcher engaged in active collaboration with the participants to address real-life problems in a specific context; these were directed towards the offering and implementation of feasible solutions to the problem (Blumberg et al., 2011:17).

Gephart (1999) posits that interpretivist views tended to show a preference for methods, which did not only produce facts, but analysed and described the meaning of the social world (situation). Gephart further indicates that the indicated the primary analytical methods used in interpretative research are grounded theory and expansion analysis. The use of these methods pointed to the use of qualitative data-gathering methods, which suggests that the data was generated mainly through interactions like conversations and interviews.

Regular (constant) comparative analysis provided an alternative for statistical analysis, which bared closer relation to the positivist views. According to Gephart (1999:6-7), interpretivists mainly used comparative analysis as an analytical process to examine all the data in different steps, namely:

- Comparison of incidents relevant to the theoretical category;
- Integration of different categories and their properties;
- Delimiting the theory range; and
- Formulation of theory.

For many years the interpretive approach existed as the opposition to positivism (Neuman, 2006:94). Although some positivist social researchers accepted the interpretive approach as useful in exploratory research, a few positivists considered it to be fully scientific. Positivists placed their emphasis on the individual's interpretation of social interaction (Gephart, 1999:5). The interpretivist research accepted the notion that knowledge and meaning are the results of interpretations. There is no objective knowledge that was independent of human thinking and reasoning. Central to all interpretivists was concern with subjectivity, which in a sense seeks to show how variations in human meanings and sense-making generated and reflected differences in reified or objective realities; In other words this is when one becomes detached from and loses sight of connections or relationship to something created by researchers (Neuman, 2006:97). In other words, the idea of subjectivity was acceptable to interpretivists, and was supported and endorsed by, among others, Gephart (1999:5). In addition, the interpretive approach was the foundation of social research techniques that were sensitive to the context that got inside the ways others see the world, and that were more concerned with achieving an emphatic understanding than with testing legalistic theories of human behaviour. A conclusion could be drawn that quantitative methods of generating data are more suitable for the positivist paradigm, while qualitative methods are more suitable for the interpretive paradigm. This study sought to understand how the parents participated in their children's academic work in the three rural high schools in Amathole West Education District.

3.2.5 Research Approach- Qualitative

Researchers believe that the interpretivist paradigm predominantly uses the qualitative approach (Nind and Todd, 2011). Willis (2007) argues that qualitative approaches often give rich reports that are necessary for interpretivists to fully understand the contexts. In addition to the above, Creswell (2014) also states that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning that an individual or groups ascribe to a social or human problems. This approach was ideal for this study because it describes the purpose of qualitative research, the role that researchers play, the stages of the research that are conducted and the method of data analysis that is used. As such, this approach was adopted in this study, the

reason being that it afforded the researcher to capture the authentic voices of the participants within their natural settings.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN- CASE STUDY

According to Trochim (2006), a research design helps to hold the research project together; it is used to structure the research and to show how all the major parts of the research project, which are the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs and methods of assignment, work together in trying to address the central research questions. Creswell (2012) highlights that a case study is an object to be studied, which may be an individual, a small group of people, an organization, community or a nation (Miles and Huberman, 2002; Yin, 2009). The case in this study was the participation of parents in their children's academic work. In this study only three rural high schools were investigated. The case study design was utilized in this study because the study dug deeper into how parents in the three selected rural high schools participated in their children's academic work. A case study design signifies that the researcher should clarify the boundaries of the system to determine what constituted the case (Punch, 2005).

Punch (2005) further states that if a case study is well conducted people can learn a lot about phenomenon. The case study was regarded as it was relevant as the aim behind the research question is to gain insight of the phenomenon under study. The endeavour was to gain understanding of the participation of parents in children's academic work; however, it needed to provide thick descriptions of the case and to take multiple perspectives into account and to understand the influences of multilevel. (Babbie & Mouton, 2002; Merriam, 1991). Furthermore, the value of a case study is that it allowed the researcher to observe the characteristics of an individual that participated in the study and these comprised of the parents, learners, teachers and the principal. Additionally, the environment and background of a parent and a child were taken into consideration. The purpose of the observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena which constitute the life cycle of a unit with a view establishing generalisation about wider population and environment to which the unit belongs (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Stake, 1994). Thus, the foregoing sentiments were critical in this study whereby the researcher wanted to find out parents referred to concerning their participation in helping their children to

achieve better academic outcomes. Thus the researcher was of the view that establishing these converging lines of evidence would create a sense of convergence in the narrative, the experience of various informants and also of the individual informants. Evidently, this would promote a holistic account of the social phenomena under study.

Case studies are also known to be useful in capturing the emergent and immanent properties of life organisation, also the flow of organisational activities when changes are very fast (Hartley, 1994). The studies can also be useful in capturing the emergent and immanent properties of life organizations, also the flow of organizational activities when changes are very fast (Hartley, 1994). However, there are three types of case studies (Stake, 1995). Firstly, there is an intrinsic case study which focuses on researchers which have genuine interest in the case and should use this approach to better understand the case of the individual case. The second type is an instrumental case study. This case is to understand a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory and often looked at in depth and helps the researcher pursue the external interest. Lastly, is the collective case studies being similar in nature and the researcher could make comparisons between cases and extend and validate theories (Yin, 2003). The study adopted intrinsic and instrumental case study. The researcher had to listen and understand the parents how they were trying to help children in academic work and how teachers and principals were trying to help parents to be able to help children in academic work, and a better understanding of the things parents were doing in trying to make their children achieve in academic work.

3.3.1 Case study selection

This section is informed by the selection of the case and the three rural high schools that participated in the study are outlined. A clear description of the selection of the participants is also given.

3.3.2 Selection of the case study high schools

According to (Motto, Daniel, Robinson, Walden, Burnette, Angela, Rutherford, 2012) it is important to look at the environment in which learners come from when a research is selecting a case. Therefore, in this study the researcher also took into consideration the background of the learners and this comprised of, the children

came from families that are illiterate and have lower income. Most of them were grandparents. Those who were interviewed were principals, teachers, parents and children. The researcher looked at how parents were managing to help their children in academic work if the parents were illiterate and most of them were grandparents. The study was also interested in establishing how children could be able to have equipment to help them learn from their home when parents did not have enough money to buy facilities that could be helpful to their children. What would be the key barriers to the children's academic work at home was there a space for children to do homework? Was there electricity at home? Do children have computers at home (Samani, 2012) were taken into consideration. In addition, the adoption of a case study ensured that the researcher would be in a position to identify if educational achievement was possible on the poor environment. One of the major reasons for roping in such factors was because, theoretically, paying attention to environmental factors of educational environments is not only helping managers and planners in adopting right and realistic decisions, but is also necessary in educational planning.

3.3.2.1 Selection of participants within each case

The study used purposive selection. Parents were purposively selected because the researcher believed they were persons who would give a picture of how they participated in children's education. That meant that they were in a position to offer authentic accounts of the phenomenon under study. In purposive selection participants that were selected were considered as "experts" in aspects of the roles that parents should play in children's education. The selection was in line with Creswell (2014). In this case the participants were members of the three selected high schools. There were 24 participants from the three high schools. The researcher selected 1 principal, 1 teacher, 3 parents 3 learners from each high school. Principals and teachers responded to interviews whereas parents and learners from each high school participated in focus groups discussions. Therefore, total number of the sample size was 24 participants, 8 from each sample school. The vision behind the selection was also to be able to assess the received information, i.e. by analysing what individuals think should be done, what is being done by participants and how individuals at different levels perceived it. The schools were selected because they were located within Amathole West District which was counted among the underperforming Districts in the Eastern Cape Province. It was

anticipated that the information, evidence and data would help to improve the children's achievement in academic work.

3.4 Case description

I purposefully selected three high schools from the Amathole West District in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.4.1 Choosing Research Site

According to (Ragin, 1994) making a wise choice of a research sites is important. The institutions chosen should be capable of having a strong influence on the nature of the qualitative research being so as to be able to meet the research objectives.

3.4.2 School A

The school is about 50 kilometres from the district office, and is situated about 10 kilometres from Alice town. It is a high school with about 250 learners. The reason I chose the school is that it used to have less than 30 percent pass rate in matric results but lately it has shown signs of improvement and in 2016 it reached 60 percent of pass rate although it does not have enough facilities and most of the parents are illiterate and are grandparents.

3.4.3 School B

The school is about 90 kilometres from the district office and 7 kilometres from the R63 national road. It is in a remote rural area. It used to be noted for having good results but at the moment is doing very badly in matric results. Some of the learners are using scholar transport but some are walking to school. As in School A most parents are illiterate and some are grandparents.

3.4.4 School C

School C is about 70 kilometres from the district office. It is situated next to the R63 national road. It is a big school. The matric results are not good. Most of the parents are unemployed and most of them are illiterate.

All of the above schools are in the Amathole West District. In the last nine years, the district has been noted to be the worst performing district in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.5 PILOT TESTING

Although this was not a quantitative study the researcher piloted the instruments used during interviews. Pilot study could be referred to as feasibility studies which are small in scale and are done in preparation for the major study (Polit, Beck, Hundley and Graham, 2001). A pilot study was conducted in this research in one of the high schools located in the rural areas to establish the reliability of the interview guide. It is a pretesting or trying out of a particular research instrument (Baker, 1994). The advantage of piloting is that it gives advance warning about where the main research could fail, where research protocols may not be followed or whether proposed methods or instruments are too complicated. However, pilot studies may also try to identify potential practical problems in the research procedure (Teijlingen, Rennie, Hundley and Graham 2001). A pilot study was conducted in this research in one of the high schools located in rural areas to establish the reliability of the interview guide. The study was carried in a high school other than the three chosen for the main study as its characteristics was similar with the three high schools. Pilot testing must be done preferably with people who share the same characteristics as the actual participants chosen for the study (Punch, 2003). The researcher took the opportunity of the parents' meeting which was held at the opening of the 2nd term of the year where the majority of parents came for the beginning of the term. Six parents volunteered to participate in the group discussion. Three learners volunteered for group discussion, two teachers and a principal volunteered for interviews. The reliability of the interview guide was checked.

3.5.1 Methods of data collection

The data collection technique adopted for this study were guided by the research questions. Two main data collection techniques were used in this study, namely semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. This section presents the instruments used, followed by a description of the process of data collection.

3.5.2 Data collection tools

Data collection is an interactive process in which particular researchers operated in an evolving setting as put by Newman and Ramlo (2010). According to Silverman (2010), the researcher should have a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts. The data collection strategy in this study consisted of: (i) in-depth semi-structured interviews; (ii) focus group interviews.

3.5.3 Interview Schedules

There were four sets of interview schedules. Appendix E was the guide for the principals. This guide focused on what the principals did as a strategy that the school was using to promote parental participation in children's academic work. It also included the strategies that the principals used to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work. Appendix F was the teacher's interview guide; this interview guide was based on how teachers involve the parents in children's academic work especially in teachers' learning areas. It also focused on the strategies that the teachers use as a school to promote parental participation in learner's academic work.

Appendix G focused on learners, how their parents assist them in academic work at home. That included the support materials that were supposed to be used by parents at home as a way of helping the children in academic work. In this guide, the researcher wanted to know the status of the relationship of the parent and the child towards academic work. Appendix H focused on parents. It required parents' qualifications so as to establish whether they could be able to help children in academic work according to the parents' qualifications. The parents' interview guide included the ages of the parents to find out if the parents were young enough to help their children achieve in their school work. It also focused on the relationship of the child and the parent. Therefore, the researcher sought to discover if the parent was a biological parent or a grandparent of the child, if the parent was a grandparent, was the parent able to assist the child in academic work at home or the child would look for assistance somewhere for the school work. The researcher also wanted to know if there were support systems available at home to assist the child in homework such

as laptops or the internet. The parents' interview guide was drawn to understand what exactly was taking place at home to assist the children in academic work.

3.5.4 Field Notes

Field notes are a vital data source. They are meant to open a debate, but they could also be thought to include raw data or material such as notes and everything that has been gathered in the course of fieldwork, such as transcripts and journals (Schwandt, 1997). As they are prepared by an individual, they are, therefore, very much dependent on that individual's style and personality. Field observations are cognitive idiosyncrasies of researcher's thoughts and theories (Kirk and Miller, 1986). However, apart from the technical aspects of recording and classifying notes, what the researcher believes is worth recording depends on the researcher's understanding and beliefs and existing knowledge of the schools or situations (Wolfinger, 2002).

3.5.5 Data collection process

There were two main processes, namely semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. These were conducted with strategic informants who were familiar with dealing with participation in children's academic work in high schools.

3.6 Semi-structured face to face interviews

At this stage, the researcher collected data at three high schools where participants experienced the issue or a problem under study, however, it was not easy to get the interviewees because it was during the mid-year examinations. Therefore, arrangements were made to meet after school, which was sometimes also difficult as the participants were busy marking. Semi-structured interviews, which contained a set of predetermined questions and themes to be explored, were used in this qualitative method of inquiry (Creswell, 2013). Different sets of semi-structured interviews were prepared. An interview guide was used in conducting in depth-interviews and also afforded participants an opportunity to discuss and raise issues that were not considered at first. These interviews enabled the participants to report their thoughts and experiences by providing rich data that was necessary to understand participation of parents in their children's academic work in rural high

schools. The semi-structured interview was chosen because of its primary strength of greater flexibility in the discussion by the interviewee on the topics or themes (Denscombe, 2003). The semi-structured interview method used open-ended types of questions, which were a set of pre-planned core questions that were guiding the interviewees to cover everything about participation of parents in children's academic work. The information was gathered by actually talking directly to the participants and by seeing how the participants behaved and acted within their context as this was a major characteristic of qualitative research (Marshall and Resman and Rallis, 2012). When collecting data, the researcher observed the participant's behaviour and interviewed participants on their experience in participation of parents in children's academic work (Hatch, 2002). The researcher was involved in a sustained and intensive experience with the participants. That also introduced a range of strategic, ethical and personal issues into the qualitative research process (Locke, Spirduso & Silverman (2013).

These interviews were conducted in a conversational way to make the interviewees to be relaxed when giving information, with the view to establish their understanding on participation of parents in their children's academic work, its benefits, how they promoted it at their schools, what they thought were barriers to participation of parents in children's academic work and how they thought participation of parents could be improved at their schools. Interviews were conducted with 'strategic informants' who were familiar with dealing with the participation of parents in children academic work in high schools. Semi-structured interviews were suitable where the researcher was interested in complexity of the researched subject or situation and where the issue of the research was controversial or personal such as the participation parents in children's academic work. In addition, the researcher had a set of guiding questions which guide the interview and were not dictating to the interviewee. That type of interview allowed the principals and teachers of the three high schools to be free and to elaborate on their understanding, practices and experiences when answering the questions. Moreover, these interviews were conducted in a conversational way between the participants and interviewer. This allowed the researcher to have a conversation with informants and attempt to appreciate what was happening from their perspectives, semi-structured face-to face interviews as suggested by Hesse-Biber (2010). In the same line of thought, Denzin

and Lincoln (2011) argue that interviews generate useful information about lived experiences and meanings. The interview gave the researcher the true meaning of what was taking place in terms of participation of parents of children in high schools and the clue to where the problem lied between parents and children in high schools. Moreover, it was anticipated that the interview data consisted of accounts given to the researcher by the purposively selected principals and teachers of the three high schools in Amathole West Education District.

3.6.1 Focus Group Interviews

Basically, focus groups are collective conversations or group interviews that answer the 'how,' 'what' and 'why' questions to generate rich complex nuanced and even contradictory accounts of how people ascribe meaning to interpret their lived experience (Mertens, 2010). In the same vein, Morgan (1988) defines a focus group as small discussions addressing a specific topic which usually involve six or twelve participants other matched or varied on specific characteristics of interest to the researcher. Focus groups offer unique insights into the possibilities of critical inquiry as deliberate, dialogic, democratic practice that critically engages with real-world problems which emerge when people are in a group as compared to one on one interview settings (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2011).

The purpose of interviewing focus groups was to produce qualitative data and to provide collective insights into attitudes, perceptions, opinions and experiences of participation of parents in children's academic work. When the focus group is too small it can be easily dominated by one or two members or may fall flat if too few people have anything to contribute, whereas large groups may lack cohesion and break up into side conversations or people may become frustrated if they have to wait for their turn to respond or to get involved. However, it is often difficult for a researcher to spend time following up on insights voiced by one individual when there is a dozen or more participants. Conversely, large groups are as well more difficult for researchers to control and stimulate discussions (see: Appendix C and D). The discussion may also reach a point of diminishing returns where too many participants would add nothing new. Focus group discussions in this study were conducted with parents and learners in three high schools. These three high schools

were selected because they were affected by the high failure rate of grade 12 learners, their pass percentages were very low in matric pass rate.

The focus group participants were selected purposively. This was because they were parents of grade 12 learners and also these interviewees were able to share their experience of participation of parents in their children's academic work. The learners were sharing what actually parents do in their participation in children's academic work at home. One parent was unable to attend the focus group because of some commitment and was interviewed individually, also in learners focus group there was a learner who requested to be interviewed alone because of the delicate information the learner was to share with the researcher, and the researcher accepted the request. Parents and learners that were involved in focus group discussions were willing to pour out their thoughts and experiences about the participation of parents in children's academic work. The discussions were so fruitful and thought provoking with a variety of experiences concerning the problem of parental participation. The researcher probed all the participants to have an input to each question. Participants were encouraged to interact with one another by listening and commenting and adding some views sometimes giving suggestions on the matter of participation of parents in children's academic work. When the group members were moving out of the topic, the researcher maintained focus by reminding the participants about the topic. However, the researcher viewed focus groups as important in this study because they assisted to illuminate how parents could be involved in their children's academic work.

3.6.2 Data analysis and interpretation

According to Lunetz (2011), Patton (2011) and Niewenhuis (2011), data analysis is the researcher synthesis and interpretation of data and is ideal for summarizing what has been observed through words, phrases, themes or patterns and concepts that were linked to the units of analysis previously identified and caused the researcher to understand and interpret what has emerged from the phenomenon under study. However, interpretation consists in working out what analysis to carry out; how to operationalise key concepts and what significance to attach to the resulting analyses, both for interpreting facts about particular cases and for answering the

overall research question. According to Creswell (2014), data analyses involves segmenting and taking apart the data, as well as putting it back together. A further focus of the analysis was in accordance with the use of case study methods on forming and developing explanations for participation of parents in children's academic work. At this stage the thematic analysis of data was used and the collected data was put into coded themes in which the research attempted to interpret and justify in line with the researched questions of participation of parents in children's academic work, which were used in this study. Analysis of interviewed data would involve reading through focus group and individual interview transcripts and other data, developing codes, coding the data, and drawing connections between discrete pieces of data. The important task in qualitative data analysis was after its organization, it was a rich data descriptions informed by the final constellation of the phenomenon under study (Suter, 2012).

3.6.3 Analysis of data from semi-structured interviews and focus group conversations

The researcher used a voice recorder (with the participants' consent) to record the information according to the themes and subthemes guided by the data sets. The researcher also included the hand notes that the researcher was compiling during the interviews with the information from the voice recorder adding all the information to the themes to make a final report (Bryman, 2012). The information from the participants was dense in as much that the researcher was unable to use all the information and only took the information that was relevant for the themes and interview guide was structured into three categories which were: the biographic information, parental participation and views of participants on children's academic work, challenges of parental participation and strategies that can be put in place to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work. The questions were in line with the research questions.

3.6.4 Data trustworthiness

The importance of trustworthiness in qualitative research was a way of assuring or reassuring the reader that a study was of significance and value (Maree, 2010). It was about the credibility of the research findings. In qualitative research, when dealing with the issue of validity, practicality and effectiveness should address the

issue of quality. In responding to the issues of credibility, the researcher used all the data that was collected by different instruments. Trustworthiness implies asking questions about how the researchers persuaded their audience including themselves about the findings of their research. That included asking questions regarding the validity of the findings (Ibid, 2010). The reports were compiled following the suggestion advocated by Maree (2010) that multiple methods of data collection were useful and confirmed trustworthiness. In addition, involving several investigators and peer researchers to assist with the interpretation of the data also enhance trustworthiness. To test the extent to which the study is measuring whatever it is measuring should be consistent (Best and Khan, 2003).

Since the main issue of reliability was dependability (Neuman, 2003), data was established by capturing all interviews that were recorded through transcription. In order to confirm credibility and dependability, data from the participants was presented to them to confirm whether what was written represented their views and perceptions. The data trustworthiness is discussed by Lincoln & Guba (1985) in *Naturalist Inquiry*, which deals with fundamental problem: "the concept of truth." Lincoln and Guba formulate truth as "a systematic set of beliefs together with their accompanying methods, a paradigm Lincoln and Guba (1985) brought forward alternative constructs to capture these concerns which are: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. However, they offered a set of procedures to help to ensure that these standards of trustworthiness would be met in a case study. In qualitative research when dealing with issues of validity, practicality and effectiveness all should address the issue of quality in a research. However, the potential adequacy of quality assurance techniques is a contentious issue among researchers but some researchers such as (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) agreed that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability could increase trustworthiness, which is (reliability) in a qualitative study. Moreover, the validity of qualitative designs also encompasses the degree to which the interpretations and concepts held common meaning for the participation and the researcher should be employed to ensure minimum interference and at the same time by increasing the quality of the data collected. According to Rossman (2003), data trustworthiness involved trusting the integrity and credibility of the data, and to judge data trustworthiness validity. Reliability, generalizability and objectivity had to

be considered. On the other hand, Hodder (in Guba & Lincoln, 1994) advised the researchers to consider multiple and conflicting voices and differing and as interacting interpretations in order to facilitate crystallisation in a research. That implied that the researcher need to attend to voices that differed from his or her own to enable the researcher to study multiple constructed realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

In this study, the researcher tried to use all questions when interviewing the interviewers and the interviews were transcribed into a data. Richardson (in Janesick, 2000) preferred the use of crystallisation in qualitative research since crystallisation offered more appropriate terms for viewing components (Janesick, 2004). Crystallization could be achieved by applying different methods of data collection to increase the trustworthiness of the study. However, crystallization provides the researchers with deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic Richardson in Janesick (2000). In the case of this study the transcripts of interviews gave a description of events to what the participants had experienced in participation of parents in children's academic work. In this study when considering the reliability of the data, three rural high schools were selected and through semi-structured interviews the researcher managed to compare the variables given by participants from the three rural high schools. The data that emerged from the school principals, teachers, learners and parents was crystallized to measure the consistency and reliability. When results were repeated, stable and consistent proved the reliability in this study was achieved by probing questions during interview process.

3.6.4.1 Credibility

This addresses the confidence in the truth of the study and the findings. There are also techniques to establish credibility which include prolonged engagement with participants, persistent observation, peer-briefing, member checking and also reflecting journaling. It is also necessary that the evidence should be presented of iterative questioning of the data that has been collected and should be examined several times. Negative case analysis or alternative explanations should be explored by the researcher (Connelly, 2016).

3.6.4.2 Dependability

Dependability is the stability of the data over time and over the conditions of the study. It also includes maintenance of an audit trail of process logs and also peer briefings with a colleague. These processes of logs are the researcher's notes of all activities that happened during the study and the decisions about aspects of the study i.e. interviews and what was observed in a research (Connelly, 2016).

3.6.4.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is defined as the neutrality or the degree findings which are consistent and could be repeated. Qualitative researchers keep detailed notes of all their decisions making and their analysis as the research progresses. These notes are reviewed by colleagues or in peer-briefing sessions with a respected qualitative researcher. These discussions prevent biases from only one person's perspective on the research. The researcher may also conduct a member checking with study participants (Connelly, 2016).

3.6.4.4 Transferability

According to (Connelly, 2016) transferability often refers to the nature of the extent to which findings are useful to persons in other settings, it is also different from other aspects of the research, in that readers actually determine how applicable the findings are to their surrounding situations.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section discusses how authors discuss the importance of ethical issues in this study and how they were handled during the research. Ethical issues that were considered relevant in this study were: seeking permission, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, voluntary participation, providing incentives, preventing harm to the participants, exercising reflexivity and non-deception of participants (Locke et al., 2013; Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Ethical issues, have been seen to be necessary and purposefully cultivated (Dugan, 2011; Komives, 2011). Ethical considerations obliged the researcher to inform participants of the nature and purpose of the study. Participants were well prepared to address and

give information to complex and often intractable issues that faced an increasingly global society which contributed to a surge in curricular and co-curricular educational intervention and theory building (Komives, 2011). However, much of this work centred on advancing a particular approach to participants grounded in ethics, shared responsibility and democratic citizenship (Komives & Dugan, 2010). Ethical research practice was grounded in the moral principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice. The researcher had an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informants. Moreover, where participants showed reluctance to elaborate during interviews, such decisions were respected in order to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. Numbers were used to protect real names of schools, parents and children. However, respect for persons captured the notion that in research people participated in this study and were not used as means to an end. Their privacy was respected, their anonymity, their right to participate which was freely consented to. Moreover, the researcher did whatever to ensure that participants were not harmed by participating in the study. When human beings were investigated in a research, the researcher should know and implement ethical implications of what needed to be done (Leedy and Omrod, 2005 and Corey and Callan, 1993). Ethical issues that were implemented to this study are discussed below.

3.7.1 Applying for ethical clearance

Before conducting the research in three rural high schools in the Amathole Education District and as part of conforming with ethical issues, the researcher applied for ethical clearance certificate from the university of Fort Hare (see Appendix J and Appendix O).

3.7.2 Seeking permission

The researcher had to go to the District office in order to seek permission from the District Manager to conduct research in three high schools in the Amathole West District (see Appendix K). The District Manager issued a permission letter addressing it to the principals of the three high schools which granted the researcher the permission to conduct research in those three schools. The researcher submitted the copy of the letter to the principals of the three high schools (see Appendix I). When submitting the letter, the researcher introduced herself to the staff members of

the schools in which the research was to be conducted and stated the type of research that was to be conducted and also left the interview guides in the schools in order for the interviewees to familiarize themselves with the interview guide.

3.7.3 Informed Consent

The researcher informed potential participants both verbally and in writing that participation was voluntary and also informed the participants about the purpose of the study (see Appendix P). The researcher introduced to the participants how the data would be used and what kind of participation the researcher would require of them (Kumar, 2005). The researcher also informed the participants the duration the research was to take place and what was to be covered by the interview guide. After permission was granted to the researcher by the District Manager and the permission was secured from the principals, teachers, learners and parents, appointment dates were issued to the participants preparing for data collection date. During the interview stage, the researcher brought the consent forms as a surety of what has been requested, which also explained the purpose of the study. However, in the consent form the format of the interview was outlined, and the consent to tape recording the interview was also sought from the participants, the participants all agreed and signed the consent form.

3.7.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality were given particular thoughts and it was made very clear to participants that the information was safe guarded and the identity of the people and institutions involved were protected (Punch, 2006; Kumar, 2005). Anonymity refers to the identity of those participants that are taking part not being known outside the research team. That may be comprised if the participation was arranged by or through a third party in case studies and also where there is structural linkage between samples. However, confidentiality means avoiding attribution of comments, in reports or presentations, to the identified participants. In doing so, both direct attribution (where comments are linked to a name or specific role) and indirect (by reference to a collection of characteristics that might identify an individual or small group of people) should be avoided in a research (Punch, 2006). The researcher, in some circumstances, changed minor details to disguise the participant's identity. The voice recorder and transcripts were stored separately and

a coding was labelled by using numbers to promote anonymity of participants and identifying information.

In this case study the researcher took care of confidentiality. Numbers were used for confidentiality and also the schools were given numbers. The principals, teachers, learners and parents were also given different numbers that identifies them separately. For the learners, the parents had signed consent for each learner to be interviewed. The researcher did make sure that all the information was confidential.

3.7.5 Voluntary Participation

In social research participants are not forced to participate. In the current study the researcher located potential participants who were convenient due to their proximity and willingness to participate. The researcher informed the participants through the consent form and verbally that all participation in the study was voluntary, with the option of quitting at any time (see Appendix P). Informed consent was sought and obtained from all participants before commencement of data collection.

3.7.6 Providing Incentives

When the researcher recruited the participants into the interview study, the researcher did not offer nor provide the interviewees with incentives. Although it is stated by Yancey, Ortega & Kumanyika (2006) that the benefits of incentives are that they increase retention in longitudinal studies, the downside is that they provide motivation for fabricating information in the interview in order for the interviewees to get the incentive. In this case study the researcher, for not giving incentives wanted to avoid the danger of gaining 'doggy data.' The researcher was confident that she could resource the required sample without offering financial or coupon incentives. Although the population was a low-income population, the interviewees were willing to give information without incentives. However, the researcher promised the principals to provide them with copies of the study's findings as it would be of great help to the schools to solve non parental participation in children's academic work.

3.7.7 No harm to the Participants

In this study, it was also important to give consideration to ways in which taking part in a research may be harmful to participants, and also to take aversive action. However, the study did not harm the participants. When the researcher took information, the information that was taken was used for the purposes of the participation of parents in children's academic work only. When the interviews were conducted, questions were directed to the topic of the study and questions that could tamper with the participants' feelings and emotions were avoided. Participants were not drawn through ambiguity or confusion into the subjects they would prefer to avoid. The researcher was alert to signs of discomfort. Rew, Taylor, Seehafer and Thomas (2000) present arguments for permitting research with children without parental consent when there was minimal risk or when such consent could place them at increased risk for harm. Even when the young person was considered to be fully competent to give his or her consent, parental consent has also been sought (Greig and Taylor, 1999; Morrow and Richards, 1996; Mullender, Hague, Imam, Kelly, Malos and Regan 2002). As Cooklin and Ramsden (2004) suggest that if researchers wanted to access children's perspectives they need to engaged them in active conversations that aimed at eliciting their true opinions and there should be no harm involved in those conversations.

Ethical issues are present in any kind of research. However, the research process creates tension between aims of the research which make generalisations for the good of others and the right of participants to maintain privacy. Ethics pertains to doing good and avoiding harm. Harm could be prevented or reduced through the application of appropriate ethical principles.

3.7.8 Exercising Reflexivity

According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), reflexivity is where the researcher is seen as being inserted into a social field, with specific relationships of competition and power conditions generating a particular 'habitus, 'which is a pattern of action dispositions, among the participants but also belongs with the participants. Other authors understand reflexivity as a strategy of using subjectivity to examine social and psychosocial phenomena, assuming that social discourses are inscribed in and social practices are embodied by the researcher (Kuenher, Ploder, Langer, 2016).

However, Mats and Kaj (2000) speak of a reflexivity that constantly assesses the relationship between “knowledge” and “the ways of doing knowledge.”

Reflexive practices in qualitative research enable both an examination of the grounds upon which claims to know the social world are based and an exploration of the strengths and limitations of forms of knowledge. Thus, this allows researchers to sharpen subsequent research practices and to correct an instrumental approach to knowledge that is informed by a desire to control, rather than to understand, the social world. There are two different yet, interrelated dimensions of reflexive practices which are endogenous and referential reflexivity (May, Tim and Perry, 2011). Endogenous reflexivity refers to the actions and understandings of researchers which contribute to the modes in which research practices are constituted. That is, endogenous reflexive practice refers to how we think and act in our social and cultural milieus, particularly within academic disciplines and communities. However, referential reflexivity is where the production of accounts meets the contexts of reception which seek to render events, the conditions and experiences are intelligible via a meeting of points of view, also the power to ignore or act upon these is variable among and between different groups (in this study by different groups refers to school, parents and children) it also informs the extent to which production and reception are differentiated, conjoined in various ways or collapsed into the same domain of activity. For this study the researcher incorporated reflexivity in the way she asked questions on parental participation by not influencing the responses and in the analysis of data by remaining impartial.

3.7.9 Deception of Participants

Deception in research may lie in not telling people that they are being researched, and not telling the truth, telling lies or compromising the truth. Also, it may be when a researcher was using participants in a degrading or dehumanizing way. That should be applied in a situation where the researcher knowingly conceals the truth on purpose and conditions of the research, or positively misinforms the subject, or exposes the participants to unduly painful, stressful or embarrassing experiences without the researcher telling the participants the subject of having knowledge of what was going on. Conversely, the deception lies in not telling the truth as it is in what you are conducting.

Deception may be justified if the research serves the public good, and also prevents any bias from entering the research. Additionally, if it may totally protect the confidentiality of a third party (Simon and Usher, 2000). To minimize the negative effects of deception, the subjects should be selected in a way that would exclude individuals who may be vulnerable and also any potentially harmful manipulation should be kept to a moderate level of intensity. However, researchers should also be sensitive to danger signals in the reactions of subjects and should also be prepared to deal with if it could arise at the conclusion of the research. Conversely, the researcher should offer help to the participants to manage their feelings about their experience to whatever degree that may be required. Nonetheless, the primary way of counteracting negative effects of research that employed deception is to ensure that adequate feedback should be provided at the end of each research session (Cooper and Schindler, 2001).

There was no misinformation when the researcher was interviewing the participants. The aims of the research about the study were those that the researcher told the participants before going on with the interviews. The selection of the schools and the selection of the participants were explained by the researcher. The researcher explained everything about herself, where the researcher was coming from, her contacts and the reason behind of conducting this type of research and the purpose of the research was clearly explained.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the empirical phase of this study has been given. The chapter includes a description of the basic research design, ethical measures and also measures to ensure trustworthiness and the description of the data collection process and the data processing methods. In addition, it provides the rationale for the choice of the qualitative approach for the study. The chapter suggests that choice of a particular methodology is dependent on the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research questions and research objectives. With this in mind, the chapter argues that 'the participation of parents in their children's academic work' requires an in-depth case study approach of capturing the complex relationship between the school and the parents that are in the community. The research methods suggest that the qualitative method should be used to improve the validity

and reliability of the research findings. This chapter also acquainted the readers with ethical difficulties that were experienced in the conduct of the research. It also helped the researcher to approach the project with greater awareness and fuller understanding of the ethical dilemmas and moral issues lurking in the interstice of the research process. It also brought to social research a sense of rightness on which the researcher could construct a set of rational principles which are appropriate to their own circumstances and should also be based on personal, professional and on societal values.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents analyses and interprets the data that was gathered from the school principals, teachers, parents and learners in three high schools. It summarises the biographic characteristics of the schools and participants and ensuing sections provide the significant themes that emerged from interviews. Although Epstein's typology was the reference throughout this study, the participants were allowed to give account of parental involvement in their children's education and the data that was generated through interviews and was categorised into themes and subthemes. This chapter presents data on four themes, which are the biographic information of participants; parental involvement in their children's education; challenges of parental involvement in their children's education and the strategies that can be put in place to enhance parental involvement in their children's education.

4.2 BIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Cumulatively, there were twenty-four participants for the research from the three high schools. Each of the two high schools consisted of two males and six female participants. The third high school consisted of four males and four female participants. The overall participants by gender were twelve males and twelve female participants. A total of six participants, comprising three principals and three teachers participated in the face-to-face interviews. There was one male principal and two female principals. Teachers consisted of two males and one female. Eighteen participants were selected for focus groups, which were formed of learners and parents. From the eighteen participants in focus groups five were male and thirteen were female. The participants were all Black Africans.

4.2.1 Distribution of parent participants by age

Since this study was about parental involvement in children's academic work, it was imperative that the researcher understands the ages of the parent participants. The data showed that participating parents were between the ages 20 -65 years of age. The majority of parents were between the ages 36- 45 years, followed by those between the ages 20- 35, and a few parents were between the ages 36-45 years and only 1 parent who was 65 years old. The fact that the majority of the parents were between the ages 36-45 shows that most of them had not gone through the new curriculum (Curriculum and Assessment Policy statement) when they were in school.

4.2.2 Qualifications of principals and teachers

This section presents data on principals' and teachers' qualifications. Of the three principals, two of them had honours degrees and only one had a Master's degree. Meanwhile two of the teachers had honours degrees and one was still doing his honours degree. This means that no teacher was underqualified in the schools.

4.2.3 Distribution of parents by qualifications and their relationship to children

This section presents data on the distribution of parents by qualifications. Table 4.1 below depicts the qualifications of parent participants.

Table 4-1: Distribution of parents by qualifications and their relationship to children

School	Participant	Relationship	Qualification
School A	Parent 1	Biological Mother	Grade 4-7
School A	Parent 2	Biological Mother	Grade 0-3
School A	Parent 3	Biological Mother	Grade 8-12
School B	Parent 4	Grandmother	Grade 0-3
School B	Parent 5	Cousin	Grade 4-7
School B	Parent 6	Biological Mother	Grade 8-12
School C	Parent 7	Biological mother	Grade 8-12
School C	Parent 8	Biological mother	Grade 8-12
School C	Parent 9	Sister	Grade 8-12

It can be noted from table 4.1 that the majority of parents have secondary school education and that none of the parents had tertiary qualifications. Most parent participants were biological mothers of the children attending school. However, there was one participant who was a sibling to one child. This was an indication that some homes are headed by children. One of the participants was a grandmother and the other was a cousin. Another phenomenon, which emerged strongly from the biographic data, was that all parent participants were females. This was an indication that rural females are taking a leading role in children's education.

4.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK

This section presents data on parental involvement in children's education. It also gives an account of practical help that is given by the parents to their children in trying to help them in their academic work. It was important that the researcher sought to establish how parents were helping their children in academic work. This gave the researcher an insight into the academic support given by parents to children. Moreover, this ensured that, the researcher would have an in-depth understanding of how effective the support was.

Through interviews, the researcher learnt that the support offered by the parents differed from parent to parent.

4.3.1 The views of parents on their involvement in children's academic work

The study sought to ask the parents about their views on involvement in children's academic work. Below are the participants' excerpts which indicated their understanding of the questions posed to them. When asked about her views about her involvement in children's academic work

Parent 1 indicated that:

When my child needs airtime for googling information; I give her money to buy airtime. I spare a room at my home for my child to study when she need quiet place to study. I do house chores myself, so that she can have enough time to study her books. For extra information, I borrow the books from other children who have already passed grade 12 **(Parent1/ Data Set 4)**.

Apparently, although the parent is unable to help the child directly in her studies, she is able to assist the child by doing other things that can be of help to the child, like giving the child money to buy airtime, and sparing one of her rooms for the child to use as her study room. This shows that this parent cares about the education of her child; she even does the house chores herself and borrows books from other children in order for the child to have all the quality time and information for her school work. What matters most to this parent is that she is collecting everything that can make her child be able to do the school work comfortably. Although there was no direct academic support given by Parent 1, one can deduce the fact that some parents view their participation in children's academic work as limited to providing a conducive environment for their children to learn. Another factor that could be affecting Parent 1's involvement in her child's academic work could be that her education is limited as she did not go beyond Grade 7.

When asked about how is she involved in her academic work Parent 3 reported thus:

I ask her if she does have homework when she comes from school. I give her a chance to study. I also help her in school work to find the right answers in her text book. I find it difficult for me to understand some of the things in her school work. I give her one of the rooms as a study room with her school mates **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 3, like Parent 1 above, was concerned about her child's school work and like Parent 1 she made the environment friendly for studying without necessarily involving herself in the real academic work of her child. The fact that she lamented that she does not understand what was contained in her child school work was the

indication that she had limitations in terms of participation in her child academic work. Parent 9 further reported that:

There is a teacher who does not attend school but is good at his learning area, he has been expelled at the school due to that behaviour, we as parent we want that teacher to come and help the school for winter school or Saturday classes because he has good results at the end of each year. When there are Saturday classes and winter school here at school we come and cook for our children here at school. By doing that, we want to help our children to improve the results at the end of the year. At the moment we are collecting money for the camp which is to be here at school after trial examinations. We as parent we are looking forward to work hand in hand with the teachers at school to improve the matric results.

(Parent 9/ Data Set 4).

From the above quotation Parent 9 was very much concerned by the fact that one teacher from her child's school did not attend school regularly. However, this parent acknowledged the fact that this teacher was good in his subject and the fact that this teacher was willing to come and teach during some weekends satisfied Parent 9 because the efforts made by this teacher and some parents by cooking on weekends, yielded positive results for the children. This showed that some parents cared for their children, and were according Parent 9, somehow participating in their academic work.

Parent 8 indicated that:

The school is concerned about our children by involving us as parents that is encouraging my child to learn more at school. She likes her teachers and wishes to please them all the time. She is very positive now in her studies and is studying hard to achieve good marks. **(Parent 8/ Data Set 4).**

From Parent 8's point of view there was a change that was noticeable from the child due to their involvement of parents to the children's academic work. The parent noted that the child is now positive in her studies at school and by being positive in her studies also the marks of the child are improving for the better. Although Parent indicated their school involved parents in children's academic work she did not indicate how the school involved the parents in children's academic work.

The data also showed that when children perform better at school parents display interest in children's academic work. This means that if schools could invite all parents every time children perform better their involvement in motivating their children

in their academic work could be enhanced thereby assisting the schools in maintaining

better academic performance by learners.

Parent 1 noted that:

My child progresses at school and that encourages me because my child is very positive about her studies, is a hard working child **(Parent 1/ Data Set 4)**.

From Parent 1's point of view, due to her child's progress at school, sees great progress which may be caused by the care the child is receiving from the school and maybe from the participation of the parent in her academic work at home. The performance of the child is also stimulated by the seriousness of that child to her school work.

This element of parents becoming fulfilled and taking role in motivating their children was confirmed by Parent 2 who excitedly reported that:

My child cares for her books I encourage her to pass grade 12 and proceed to tertiary education **(Parent 2/ Data Set 4)**.

Her child is already motivated to study her books. Parent 2's child needs only the words of encouragement from the parent.

When asked about how is she involved in her child academic work Parent 3 reported that:

I encourage my child to study hard and I also help her in her studies, she is very positive in her academic work **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

The phenomenon of encouragement and motivation emerged significantly from the data and as has been indicated earlier, parents get impressed and their interest aroused when their children perform good. Parent 6 noted that:

I want my child to succeed at school and I try to help her by all means, I wish that teacher, parent and the child should understand each other and help each other in order for the child to succeed **(Parent 6/ Data Set 4)**.

It can be noted from the above excerpt that in School B there was no clear strategy that was used to make parents and teachers work collaboratively in assisting children to perform better in their academic work. From this excerpt, Parent 6 viewed parent-teacher collaboration as significant in enhancing learners' academic work. She commented that teachers, parents and learners should come together and understand each other for the benefit of the children to succeed in academic work.

Parent 8 of School C was concerned about lack of resources in her school. She reported that:

If there was a good library with good books in my area, I would be glad because it was going to be of good help to our children in this area. In our school there are few books in the school library most of the books they do not have good information **(Parent 8/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 2's concern is with the shortage of good books with good information at the school library, which shows that the school has to take initiative in what is happening at the school library when it cannot assist learners with good information. Although Parent 8 was concerned about lack of resources, she did not indicate how she was assisting the school in terms of securing these scarce resources.

The fact that some parents were concerned by lack of resources was confirmed by Parent 9 who noted that:

If there were good apparatus here at school I would be happy, because my child always needs apparatus for doing his practical and I do not have money to buy them. My child also needs computer and here at school there are few of them, not all the students are able to use them **(Parent 9/ Data Set 4)**.

From Parent 9's observation is that the school has got a shortage in apparatus and computers at school as the children are unable to do academic work and finish it in good time. However, both parents did not indicate how their school utilise them to access these resources.

When asked about how she participates in her child academic work Parent 4 noted that:

The child only cook's dinner for us at home and after that I tell her to go and study **(Parent 4/ Data set 4)**.

Parent 4's views are that the child should at least do a chore at home and after her duty can have time for studies. It can be noted from Parents 4's view that this parent believed parental involvement in child's academic work as limited to ensuring that the child has time to do his studies.

Parent 5 on the other hand reported that they do not engage their child in other household chores. She reported that:

My child does not help us at home during the week; he only looks after the cattle on Saturdays only **(Parent 5/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 7 reported that:

Teachers often invite us to the school to tell us as parents about the behaviour of our children. I work hand in hand with the teachers to discipline my child; I tell the teachers to call me when my child is not submitting the school work on time. I always tell my child that education is the key to success **(Parent 7/ Data Set 4)**.

It can be seen from the quotation above that the teachers are frequently inviting the parents to school this shows that teachers from the school are transparent to the parents about their children's progress at school in order for the parents to be able to assist where it is possible.

Parent 3 reported that:

Sometimes I notice that my child is lazy in studying his books. I monitor my child when studying; I also encourage her to rehearse to me what he has studied on his own in order to check on him if he was really studying his books **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 3 can be described as a parent that cares for academic work of her child; however, her intervention in her child's academic work was somehow promoting rote learning as he subjected her child to rehearsal of what she has learnt from school. This is an indication that this parent does not have knowledge of pedagogies that are compliant with the existing curriculum. The contemporary curriculum discourages rote learning and recitation of facts.

Parent 6 reported that:

I ask her if she does have homework when she comes from school. I give her a chance to study. I also help her in school work. I find it difficult for me to understand some of the things in her school work. I give her one of the rooms as a study room with her school mates **(Parent 6/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 6 is a concerned parent because she wants to know if the child has been given homework at school, in her statement the parent tries to help the child in her homework although she finds it complicated to understand some of the things.

Parent 1 indicated that:

The school invites me and explains the weakness of the child in learning areas. If the child pretended that he has been to study groups and yet has not, I report that to the Principal, me and the Principal we deal with the child accordingly **(Parent 1 /Data Set 4)**.

From Parent 1's point of view seems as if is a concerned parent, when the school has made a negative remark about the child that he performs poor in learning areas Parent 1 follows up. The Parent acts immediately by reporting to the principal what she has discovered about the child; that he is not attending the study groups and with the help of the Principal they deal with the matter immediately. One could also see that Parent 1's efforts had positive results of the child being caught and punished.

From the above presentation, one can deduce the fact that parents were not directly involved in children's academics. There was not a single instance where parents reported how they assisted children dealing with the content of their work. This could be because most parents do not understand the requirements of the current curriculum and a significant number of them had not acquired secondary school qualification. What also did not come up clear from the data is the strategy used by schools to involve parents in children's academic work. Even when in some instances parents were invited by teachers to come to school as reported by Parent 7 from School C, their involvement was limited to issues of discipline. The fact that parental involvement in children academic work seemed to be lacking and uncoordinated might be the cause of staggered and differentiated parental participation in children's academic work.

4.3.2 The views of learners about the involvement parents in academic work

As this study was about the involvement of parents in children's academic work, it was important that the researcher interviewed the learners to establish how their parents are involved in children's academic work. The data from the learners revealed that parents do participate in children's academic work. However, their involvement was superficial as it was just scratching the outside without getting deeper into assisting their children how to learn and in teaching them the contents. This means that not skills and attitude that were acquired by children through the involvement of their parents.

When asked about how their parents are involved in academic work, learners have different views. For instance, Learner 2 noted that:

My parents buy airtime for me to google the information from my phone. Sometimes they do not have money for airtime and that causes me not to finish my school work
(Learner 2/ Data Set 3).

Learner 3 further noted that:

My parents buy airtime so that I can google the information from my phone. Sometimes I phone my aunt from Cape Town to assist me for airtime to do my assignments. Sometimes I search the information from the text book or study guide
(Learner 3 / Data Set 3).

It can be noted from the above excerpt that Learner 2 and Learner 3 viewed participation of their parents in academic work as providing necessary resources including purchasing of airtime for his education. The parent of Learner 3 as has been noted above gives support to her child. The fact that parents mainly provide resources to their children was confirmed by Learner 7 who commented that:

My parents only give me financial assistance. With the money I buy clothes, school wear, and matric jacket, I also pay for the camp. I do buy books that I need, for instance I have just bought a business study book and books that I lost at school. When I need money I just call my father and he deposits the money
(Learner 7/ Data Set 3).

It can be learnt from Learner 7's point of that some learners view parent participation to learners' academic work as limited to providing financial support. This confirms what learner 3 noted above. Like Learner2 and Learner 3, Learner 7 did not mention any involvement of her parent in the actual support that involves imparting of content and skills. There was no indication that this learner involves her parents in her academic work.

When asked about how are her parents involved in her academic work Learner 4 noted that:

My parents bought a laptop for me to help me in my studies, they also showed me how to get answers from the laptop and there are also good books that I have to use as reference when doing my school work. This encourages me to work harder for my studies, and to also use the library to get the latest information **(Learner 4/ Data Set 3).**

From Learner 4's point of view parents is supportive, and are participating in the academic work of the child by buying necessary material that could be useful for the

child to use in her studies. Like most learners Learner 4 viewed parental involvement in her academic work as providing resources to her education.

Learner 1 further noted that noted that:

My parents only give me financial assistance. With the money I buy clothes, school wear, and matric jacket, I also pay for the camp. I do buy books that I need, for instance I have just bought a business study book and books that I lost at school. When I need money I just call my father and he deposits the money
(Learner 1/ Data Set 3).

From the above quotation Parents of Learner 1 are assisting their child. This means that both the parents are aware that their participation in children's academic work is needed although focusing on things that are materialistic.

When asked about the involvement of his parent in his academic work Learner 1 who seemed to be frustrated by the manner his parent participated in his study noted that:

I am not satisfied about the negligence of my parents, it decreases my self-esteem. They are angry because I dropped out of school for two years. I am worried because academic work should be handled by teachers, parents and children. Sometimes the school invites our parents to discuss grade 12 term results with our parents and my parents are not there, teachers are supposed to go to our homes if the parents resist to come to school meetings and try to find out what causes them not to attend the school meetings and the school is supposed to do something for that negligence
(Learner 1/ Data Set 3).

It can be noted from the above excerpt that Learner 1 was very annoyed about his Parents as their participation in his school work was not supportive at all. His parents, according to him, were, instead of supporting their child, criticising him for his academic underperformance, thereby negatively affecting his self-esteem. According to learner 1's point of view, parents, teachers and children should work collaboratively in support of children's academic work. Learner 1 was also worried by the fact that his parents were not cooperating when they are called to school to discuss the academic performance of Grade 12 learners and suggested that measures should be taken to force parents to attend school meetings. Although parents were invited to discuss grade 12 performance, there was no indication that parents were taken through the aspect of curriculum.

Learner 2 further commented that:

I feel like a loser when parents are not participating, because I feel that they should give me support **(Learner 2/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be noted that Learner 2 is devastated about what his Parents were doing to him, that he feels like a loser when the Parents are not participating in his academic work.

Learner 4 reported that:

What is happening between me, my teachers and my parents satisfies me, because they know my progress and everything concerning my learning areas. The learning areas I am good at and those that gives me problems. They know what they expect from me **(Learner 4/ Data Set 3)**.

Although Learner 4 displayed a certain level of confidence about her work and reported that her parents and teachers support her, she was not explicit about what were her parents and teachers doing. She only noted that they understand her progress in her academic work.

Learner 5 noted that:

My parents know my performance in my school work and are encouraging me in my studies **(Learner 5/ Data Set 3)**.

From Learner 5's views it shows that the Parents are participating in her academic work and are also encouraging her to do better in her school work. This means that the parents of this learner were mainly focusing on encouraging their child to do academic work. Apart from encouragement, there was no indication of whether the parents were supporting the child in terms of content and at least strategies to learn.

Learner 6 reported that:

I feel good, because the involvement of my parents in my studies gives me the power to study harder. I want to make my parents to be proud of me **(Learner 6/ Data Set 3)**.

Although from the above excerpt Learner 6 reported that her parent involvement in her academic work motivate her to study further, she did not talk about issues that involve supporting content and strategies to learn. Learner 7 further confirmed what Learner 6 reported:

It is not good; it is not encouraging but in other parents who do encourage their children it is good. Parents need to encourage their children because they want them to

succeed. I told myself I can make it through my studies without my parents (**Learner 7/ Data Set 3**).

From Learner 7's point of view now differs from Learner 5 and Learner 8. Learner 7 does not feel good with what her parents are doing to her, and what her parents are doing to her it lowers her self-esteem, Learner 7 is now having confidence to herself because is not expecting motivation from her parents. Learner 2 noted that:

It motivates me too much because not all the work I do at school I know it, it's good to ask from my Parents about my school work (**Learner 2/ Data Set 3**).

It can be seen from Learner 2 that is satisfied to be able to be helped by her Parents when she needs academic help.

Learner 8 noted that:

If I did badly at school teachers and my parents come together and try to push me too much in my studies (**Learner 8/ Data Set 3**).

From this quotation Learner 8 gets help from both the teachers and the parents, by pushing her when they see that it is difficult for her in her studies. This means that both teachers and parents are working together in helping the Learner to achieve.

Learner 3 reported that:

Teachers call parents meetings and give our parents reports about our school progress, but teachers do not visit our homes to find out the matter from our parents who do not attend the school meetings (**Learner 3/ Data Set 3**).

Learner 3 lamented that although the teachers call meetings for parents, but are not visiting the homes of the Parents to see what is actually taking place inside the homes which can affect the progress of the learner at school. Learner 3 added that to visit the homes of the learners is necessary when one wants to improve parental involvement. Learner 6 reported that:

The analysis of results that my parents get from my school motivates my parents to take care of my studies (**Learner 6/ Data Set 3**).

It can be seen from the above that Learner 6's parents were motivated by analysis of results as Learner 3 wants the teachers to visit her home. However, both these home visit and analysis of results could be tools that can motivate both Parents and Learners.

Learner 2 noted that:

My parents help me by just saying I must not do the house chores (**Learner 2/ Data Set 3**).

It can be noted from the excerpt that in some instances, parents do not really know how to effectively help or give their children timely assistance in academic work.

It can be noted from the above presentation that learners have different views with regards to how their parents are involved academic work. What emerged from the learners' point of view is that parents are mainly concerned with providing resources for their children? Although the majority of learners indicated that their parents provide resources for their education, the data collected from the parents indicated that the majority of parents participated in children's academic work by motivating them to learn. In agreement, their motivation role was also confirmed by the significant number of learners. The data from learners also revealed that parents are in some cases called to schools to discuss learners' academic work. However, their participation was not extended to discussing curriculum issues. Even in these meetings, there was no coordinated strategy that was discussed to enhance parents' involvement in children's education.

4.3.3 The views of school principals and teachers about the involvement of parents in children's academic work

This study investigated the involvement of parents in their children's academic work hence it was imperative to listen to what school principals and teachers say about parental involvement. When asked about how parents were involved in their children's academic work the majority of principals and teachers noted that parents were involved when requested to sign their children's school books such as class work and homework books. However, there were no reports from the parents that they were requested sign for their children's classwork and homework books. This might be an indication that parents do not understand the signing of their children's books as involvement in the academic work of their children. The data also revealed that parents and School Governing Bodies (SGB's) work together and assist teachers in the teaching and learning process. However, parents' participation was limited to checking the work of children at home. There were no details that were given by principals and teachers of the aspects of the books that were checked by parents. The data from teachers and

school principals confirmed that the role of parents is limited to checking their children's progress and giving emotional support to their children.

When asked how parents were involved, Principal 3 noted that:

I involve the parents in learners' school work by requesting them to sign the learner's book after the parent has looked at the child's home work (**Principal 3/ Data Set 1**).

It can be noted from Principal 3's point of view that signing of learners' book by parents is part of involving parents in their children's academic work. Principal 3 wanted to make the parents responsible by requesting the parents to sign the school work. Maybe the signing of learners' books by parents was what Principal 3 used as a yardstick to measure the willingness of parents to participate in their children's academic work.

Principal 1 from School C, who seemed to be impressed by how parents participated in their children's work, remarked that:

I am satisfied with what parents are doing in the school. The parents and the SGB are trying to make their best in order for the school to get best results. The parents are helping the teachers in academic work because parents are frequently checking the children's work at home and also the SGB makes all the effort in disciplining the learners at school as a form of helping the teachers to achieve the best results at the end of the year (**Principal 1/ Data Set 1**).

This was an indication that in School A, parents and the school were working hand in hand to achieve best results. This looked like the parents are making it their responsibility to help teachers in their children's academic work that was the reason the school was getting the best results. Although parents and the SGB seemed to be assisting the school in terms of learners' academic work, their support did not go beyond dealing with issues of discipline. This was an indication that even the SGB parents who by law are tasked to assist teachers and principals in executing their duties; their support was based on auxiliary aspect of teaching and learning. Principal 1 reported that parents helped teachers to do their academic work, however, there was no clear role that he reported in terms of what exactly do parents play in helping teachers in their academic role, or how they helped teachers in the teaching and learning process. Even the "checking" that Principal 1 reported was not clear if parents have an understanding of curriculum issues. What surfaced from Principal 1's report?

was that the parents checked if their children do school work, and the issue of how they assisted their children in doing their school work was not reported meaning that parents, apart from making resources available for their children, did not help their them with the content part of their academic work.

Principal 1 further reported that:

I involve grade 12 parents by inviting them to the school in one on one session, to discuss the progress of performance of each learner to the parents of the learners. This exercise is done to all the learning areas of the school. I also discovered that not all the parents like this exercise. In our school SWOT analysis is done because the school wants to check thoroughly the ability of the learner's school work
(Principal 1/ Data Set 1).

It can be seen from what was noted by Principal 1 that it is necessary to involve grade 12 parents and discuss their children's progress and performance, this would be necessary for the parents as it would be motivating them to see the necessity of helping their children in learning areas that are not good at. However, this involvement is limited to checking and informing parents about their children's performance with a view to encouraging them to motivate their children to concentrate on their books. Principal 2 indicated that:

I try to involve the three bodies who are supposed to be responsible about the academic progress of the learners. These bodies are the teachers, parents and learners. We at the school we call the meeting of parents to have one on one sessions with the children as to try to motivate the parents to be able to help their children in school work, and also is trying by all means to develop intrinsic motivation to the learners so that they can develop self-motivation **(Principal 2/ Data Set 1).**

Principal 2 viewed parental participation differently by including the three bodies to be responsible for participation in their children's academic work. Principal 2 differs from Principal 1 as Principal 1 is only focussing on the parents only. The one on one interaction between the parent and the learner during the meetings Principal 2 is trying to make it practical that it is happening under her supervision and to see to it that if there is a problem and can be able to advise the two bodies immediately. However, by trying to develop intrinsic motivation to the learners is the way of trying to develop learners to be independent though working together with the help of the parent. By doing that he is also trying to come up with further input on parental participation.

The fact that parents did not go beyond monitoring their children discipline and providing resources for them was confirmed by Teacher 1 who reported that:

Some parents come to the school to look at the progress of the learner and question the levels of the learners. I sit down with the parent and try to attend the problem and invite the learner to join us and it will be a teacher, parent and the learner. The illiterate parents will not be actively involved with the report. They only concentrate on the marks rather than the levels of pass rate. I then explain to the parent what is happening with learner's academic work **(Teacher 1/ Data Set 2)**.

The above excerpt confirms that parents were mainly concerns with their children's results than focusing on assisting them on their academic work.

Principal 2 reported further the lack of explicitness in terms of how parents assisted their children:

Parents if they want anything better in results of their children, they should participate in their children's academic work. My sister was travelling a lot in her job as a result her child was not doing well at school. When my sister was suspended in her job and she started to focus in her child's progress at school, by helping her child in her school work and there was a great improvement in her child's academic work. In her child's grade 12 results the child had six distinctions. Children really need the support of the parent in their school work **(Principal 2/ Data Set 1)**.

However, Principal 2 indicated that children are in need of their parents to help them in their academic work. This might be an indication that even though parents' assistance in their children's academic work seemed to be unclear their emotional supportive role was important.

Principal 2 lamented that:

I think parents of the learners are not helping the children at home with their home work because most of the children are not doing their homework here in our school. Even those learners who had managed to do the homework do not submit the work in good time **(Principal 2/ Data set 1)**.

In Principal 2's point of view, this shows that there is a problem in her school of the learners who not do their homework as expected by the school and those who managed to do the work fail to submit the work in good time. The point that the principal

brought was that there is something wrong at the homes of the learners and he attributed this to the lack of academic assistance by parents.

Principal 1 reported that:

At our school we try by all means to implement commitment and involvement of parents in children's academic work. The school decided to introduce different types of registers. When inviting the parents to parents meeting as the school we ask the parents to sign a register as to see which parents are attending the meetings regularly. In our classrooms, there is a subject register to see if the learners are attending their respective learning areas regularly, as the school, we give the report of learning area's attendance of learners to the parents meeting in order for the parents to know exactly what is exactly taking place inside the classrooms during tuition time. If registers are not used parents will lose focus and will not concentrate because they are not involved fully in academic work of their children **(Principal 1/ Data Set A1)**.

It can be noted from the above quotation that the focus was on issues of monitoring and control which were peripheral to the process of teaching and learning. Although control and monitoring is the prerequisite of the teaching and learning process, it does not necessarily touch the core of the aims of curriculum. Principal 3 reported that:

We write letters and inform parents of what is taking place at school. We ask parents to come as individuals to see the progress of their children in academic work. The school also invite Community leaders to attend school meetings and share with community leaders the problems encountered from the grade 12 learners by the school, after the meeting the community leaders go and share what has been discussed at school meeting with the communities when they call the Imbizo in their villages, this helps in those community members who does not like coming to school to be aware of what is taking place at the school **(Principal 3/ Data Set 1)**.

It can be noted that the above point of view is different from the other views concerning the meetings. The Principal invited the community leaders to attend school meetings so that they can share what has been said at the school meeting to the community and also share it at their 'Imbizo' meetings, because most of the parents like to attend 'Imbizo' more than the school meetings. That would make the parents to be always up to date with what has been discussed at the school.

Teacher 1 indicated that:

I give my learners questions that they are supposed to ask from the Parents at home. I ask them to listen from the news at home over the radio and Television. I do this exercise on daily bases to stimulate the responsibility to the child. I ask them to be assisted by Parents when listening from the media. I use that information as my introduction every day **(Teacher 1 /Data Set 2)**.

From the above quotation, Teacher 1 wanted to be sure that the homework is done by the learner, at the same time trying to involve the parent by making the parent to be responsible about the homework by guiding the learner throughout. Teacher 2 noted that:

Each teacher at my school is responsible of his or her learning area. They invite parents of the learner individually after hours. Some parents appreciate this invitation but some learners do not appreciate it. We always do this exercise because learners do not want to be known by their parents of how they perform in their studies. When some learners are absent from school we tell the parents about that. In my experience the parents' ignorance is not because they are illiterate but they always say that they are busy. Parents are demotivated because they do not have money to take their children to tertiary level **(Teacher 2/ Data Set 2)**.

Teacher 2's point of view presented a different point that some of the parents do appreciate being invited to school but some of them do not appreciate the invitation. Maybe those who do not want to be invited, are those who do not check their children's books to see what is written inside, that maybe the reason why they are reluctant to go to school. On the contrary, other parents appreciate the invitation that makes them familiar with their children's work. Teacher 2 came up with demotivation of parents which may be the cause for ignoring the learners in their schoolwork. Teacher 1 and teacher 2 came with different ideas which may be of remedy in parents' participation in children's academic work.

Teacher 2 remarked that:

Parents of grade 12 are invited twice a month in our school to come and inquire about learner's academic progress and also us teachers we educate parents and tell them how to look at their children's portfolios at home and to know what is said about reports. This helps parents to be able to learn more about the school work of the child. We have noticed that learners do not like the invitation of their parents at school **(Teacher 2/ Data Set 2)**.

From this point of view Teacher 2 comes with the solution to the problem that the parents are experiencing of being unable to assist the learners at home. From this excerpt one can deduce the fact that by involving parents in children's work, they need to be educated and to acquaint them on how to look at the children's portfolios at home. It is also necessary to make the parents to be able to analyse the contents of the portfolios and interpret the reports of their children. It also appears from the quotation that Teacher 2 views the changes in parental involvement as focusing on making an impact on Grade 12 learners' results. She also argues that although the changes are for the better but learners showed no interest of their parents' presence at school.

Principal 2 reported that:

As a school we have academic awards on quarterly basis. The school displays the grade 12 results on the screen in order for those who does not work harder can start to work hard so that they cannot be embarrassed by their results on the screen. The school also does crash course with the parents in order for the parents to be able to interpret the learner's report. As a school insist to the parents that if the parent does have the child who is doing grade 12 at school, the parent is supposed to be visible at school to check the child's progress. If the learner is lazy to study, as the school we invite the parent in writing or by calling the parent to come and assist the school in his or her bad child's behaviour or laziness in the child's studies. As the school we also want to find out from the parents especially the illiterate parents of what is exactly taking place at home concerning the child's academic work, in order for the school to be able to assist the parent if possible. For grade 12 learners we also compare the levels of the child in all the terms. The school also asks assistance from the parents if the child had poor levels in June results. As the school we make the learners to sign down and make the promise of improving the results in front of the parent and the teacher, because in our school we believe in engaging parents all the time. The school also does not allow the learners to have cell phones in school premises, because the phones can disturb the learners in their studies

(Principal 2/ Data Set 1).

It can be seen from this quote that Principal 2 in her school is making all the efforts to work with parents in their children's academic work to the extent that the school organises crash courses for parents. However, these efforts are only based on assisting parents to understand learners' reports, and were not designed to assist parents to understand curriculum issues.

The above data from the teachers and principals shows that the schools have no clear strategies to involve parents in their children's academic work. The fact that their participation varied from parent to parent, and mainly concentrated on provision of resources and emotional support, is an indication that parents were not clear on the role that they were supposed to play in the teaching and learning process. Maybe they assumed that their role does not go beyond emotional support and resource provision. Their assumption and varied participation might be the indication that their role was not clarified by schools and maybe the teachers themselves were not clear about what role should parents play in their children's academic work.

4.4 CHALLENGES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK

In researching about parental involvement in their children's academic work it was imperative that the researcher asked the participants about the challenges of parental involvement in their children's academic work. All the participants were asked about the challenges of parental involvement in their children's academic work. This was done to juxtapose the data from all the categories of participants, with the view to understanding the essence and the thrust of these challenges.

When Teacher 1 was asked about the challenges of parental involvement in their children's academic work the teacher reported that:

Parents are not participating inactively because most of the parents in our community are illiterate and are unable to assist children in academic work, he also added that there are few parents who are educated in the community that is surrounded the school **(Teacher 1/ Data Set 2)**.

It can be noted from the above excerpt that parents' illiteracy is a hindrance to the participation in their children's education. The question is, if the majority of parents were illiterate, what form of academic assistance would they give to their children? Issues of illiteracy therefore, might be the reason that makes parents' support to be limited to providing resources and emotional support and focusing on children's discipline. The data also showed that even the children themselves were reluctant to show their parents their schoolwork. This is an indication that children knew that their parents' contribution would not assist them acquire certain knowledge and skills.

Teacher 3 noted that:

Some parents are resistant in participating in children's academic work and that affects the academic work of the child **(Teacher 3/DataSet 2)**.

This reluctance by parents might be caused by the fact that parents do not have the knowhow of the curriculum requirements. From this point of view, Teacher 3 believed that poor academic performance by learners is caused by lack of participation of parents in their children's academic work.

When asked about how she is involved in her child's academic work Parent 3 commented that:

School is inviting me when the school gets some problems from my child. The most common problem is when my child is not doing homework regularly and is also missing classes **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 3's point of view above attests to the fact that parental involvement was limited to just monitoring their children's commitment to the academic work without any input in assisting them to acquire knowledge and skills. This was confirmed by Parent 4 noted that:

It's painful when you are not able to help your child because of the little education you have, you only encourage the child to go to join study groups **(Parent 4/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 4 has a problem, she is not able to help her child in academic work because of her little education the only help that she can give to her child is to encourage the child. However, it is arguable that encouraging without actually dealing with the academic work cannot not bring any improvement to the progress of the child. In other words, in this situation both the parent and the child need assistance.

Parent 5 noted that:

It is painful when the child does not understand his problem, because last year he was told to write 3 learning areas but he insisted to write 7 learning areas and he failed all of them **(Parent 5/ Data Set 4)**.

One could see from this quote that, the child of Parent 5 is not accepting the to write 3 subjects although to write 3 learning may be caused by his lack of ability to her studies but, the child needed to be convinced by the teachers together with the parent and also need an in-depth explanation of the danger of writing 7 subjects instead of 3 subjects. Maybe the child's stubbornness was because of peer pressure.

Parent 7 reported that:

If I had money I would buy a laptop for my child, I would even make photocopies of the information that would help my child progress at school **(Parent 7/ Data Set 4)**.

It is clear that the parent had financial constraints, although she had problem with the money but thinks positive about buying a laptop with the money she does not have. Her wishes are controlled by money to be able to help her child to succeed in her studies.

Parent 8 noted that:

If there was a good library with good books in my area, I would be glad because it was going to be of good help to our children in this area. In our school there are few books in the school library most of the books they do not have good information **(Parent 8/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 8 in her point of view is criticises the books that are used at the school library that they are outdated. However, the point that she wanted to raise was that the school should keep latest version of books at the library with latest information. Principal 1 noted that:

Parents need to be motivated and be taught of what is needed at school and the school is supposed to interpret everything to the illiterate parents especially the school report, explaining the meaning of the levels from those reports. Children can go far if they can be motivated, especially be motivated by their parents first. The problem is that this area that we are working on does not have gloomy background **(Principal 1/ Data Set 1)**.

It can be seen from this quote that the Principal 1 is taking the responsibility of making the parents aware of what is taking place in what is written at the reports of them children. That would make the illiterate parents to be able to know the progress of them children and also be able to read what is written on the reports with the help of the teachers. That would make the Parents to be able to motivate their children when they know their performance at school.

Principal 1 reported that:

Teachers need to motivate parents first. In our school every year we always have grade 12 Camp. Parents are always reluctant to pay for the camp if the department has not indicated to help the school but once the Department of Education has offered little support for the Camp, is then that the parents would start paying the money for the camp. This year very few parents have paid for the Camp, this shows that parents need to be motivated first in order for them to motivate their children. Parents in our school know the good work of the camp. In 2013 the pass percentage

of grade 12 was 39% in 2014 it was 40% in 2015 was 59% and in 2016 was 62.9%. All of this improvement in percentages was caused by the Camp **(Principal 1/ Data Set 1)**.

This was an indication that according to Principal 1's point of view, the camp is improving the results of the school yearly and according to the statistics which are escalating every year the Parents should see the good work of the camp to their children. But instead the parents needed to be motivated in order for them to pay for the camp that is helping their children. It seems as if these parents are totally not taking responsibility to improve the progress of their children, although the school is doing everything to improve the results.

Principal 2 reported that:

On my point of view, this is a painful situation, parent participation is 0%. In our school we have 90 learners in grade 12, but 10 parents would come to attend meetings and the rest is not coming to our school meetings. The parents do not support their children when the children are having Camp at school, by staying at school to see to it that everything is running smoothly, they do not even monitor the children to see to it that they are studying in the evenings, the children study alone and some children are reluctant to study when they do not see an adult around. The parents expect the teachers during the Camp to do everything for their children

(Principal 2/ Data Set 1).

From the above quotation, it is obvious that the Parents have distanced themselves from their children's academic work due to what is said by Principal 2 that the participation of the Parents is 0% percent. When these Parents are not coming to the meetings it is impossible for the teachers to let them know where the problem lies with their children and to assist them of how to help their children. The teachers are doing their part by introducing the Camp at school and the school needs Parents to furnish what the teachers has started in motivating the Learners. Teacher 3 indicated that:

I have never seen a parent at the school that has come to enquire about the learner academic progress. The parents here only come when there is dispute. Most parents are illiterate. Even parents who have University qualifications do not come at our school to enquire about school work of their children. They only come about issues which are affecting the school not academic **(Teacher 3/ Data Set 2)**.

It can be seen from this excerpt that Teacher 3 comes with what differs from Teacher 2, because in his own point of view, parents come only for disputes at school not in

connection with what will involve them with the children's work, may be it is because of their lack of education as he has pointed that they are illiterate. Teacher 3 had to engage the parents on exercises that deal with parental involvement if he wanted to achieve his objective of making parents master parental involvement. Learner 3 noted that:

I am not satisfied because my parents are supposed to be my shoulder to cry on. They always say it's my own life, my own education and they do not care for it, and do not see the need for me to be educated (**Learner 3/ Data Set 3**).

One could see from this quote that Learner 3's parents care less about her education by saying that it is her own life and her own education, by their comments it is clear that they do not bother about what she is doing in her studies, there is no participation at all that they are giving to their child. Principal 3 reported that:

Because of this environment, parents are not willing to come to school; they are not clear of their contribution to the academic work of their children. They always come with an excuse that there are many changes in this present syllabus and they do not understand it clearly, that is why it is difficult for them to help their children (**Principal 3/ Data Set 1**).

From the above quotation, Principal 3 has noticed that parents are reluctant to come to school and are unable to meet the standards of helping their children at home with their school work because they are not familiar with the new syllabus and do not understand it clearly.

Teacher 3 noted that:

There are companies who donate calculators here at school. The only text books learners have been those given by the school. In our school there is no book that is bought by parent for the child. Few students are given practical assistance by the parents in our school (**Teacher 3/ DataSet 2**).

It can be noted from what is said by Teacher 3 that the companies are donating to the school is that the school cares about the academic work of the learners. It is clear that at the school all what can be expected from the learners are good results. Although the school is supplying the Learners with calculators and books, a few of the parents are assisting the learners in practical work.

Learner 1 reported that:

I seek help all by myself and I do not succeed in doing that. My grandmother is too old, even her pension money is handled by my mother who does not stay with us at

home; both my grandmother and my mother are unable to help me (**Learner1/ Data Set 3**).

From the point of view of Learner 1, one can see that there is no assistance of the Learner at all from his home. This is an indication that Learner 1 for assistance is only depending on his school. There is supposed to be a follow up from the school of the situation of Learner as he has noted that he seeks help but is failing to succeed. Learner 1 noted that:

The meeting with the parents is encouraged by the school. If the parents do not make it to the meeting the child will be expelled from the school (**Learner 1/ Data Set 3**).

It can be seen from the excerpt that Learner 1 is against the Parent who does not attend the school meetings, coming with the suggestion that the child of the parent should be expelled from school as this is a sign of negligence from the parent of the child.

Learner 2 noted that:

When my parent sees another child getting an award, my parent becomes motivated and helps me to improve in my academic work. That competition improves my performance in my studies (**Learner 2/ Data Set 3**).

From above quotation, it is obvious that Parents want to see the child progressing. By seeing another child getting award it makes the Parent to be motivated in help in helping the child to achieve in her studies. This motivates both Parent and the child. One could see from this quotation that the rewards are good to be implemented at school as they are the motivating tool in schools. Teacher 2 reported that:

When we give homework to the learners as teachers, we call the parents and inform them about the work learners have been given by the school. As the school we even form what's up group with the parents. The problem is that some of the parents do not have cell phones; sometimes the message is seen by the child and deletes that message before the parent saw it. The school is always emphasising that parents should have cell phones. Some of the learners come from scattered villages that are the reason the school is appealing to the parents to have cell phones so that the parents can be contacted at any moment (**Teacher 2/ Data Set 2**).

From the above quotation, Teacher 2 highlighted that they are appealing to the Parents to have cell phones in order to communicate easily with the school, and that would enable the school to form what's up groups which would be convenient and a cheaper form of communication.

Parent 5 reported that:

The problem is the transport for our children to come to the morning classes, sometimes the child walks to school in order for him to attend the morning classes
(Parent 5/ Data Set 4).

From the point of view of Parent 5, the children have a problem of transport to come to school for morning and afternoon classes. Learner 4 argued that:

Teachers and parents even if they put more emphasis in helping us with academic work but the learners still do not like to do homework, and some of the learners are not serious enough about their academic work, learners still continue to perform badly at school. Some dodge classes and that has to be reported to the parents by teachers. Learners are supposed to have personal study time table, where they are supposed to divide their study time accordingly, but most of the learners have nothing to guide them when they are studying. Sometimes show no respect to the teachers and parents **(Learner 4/ Data Set 3).**

One could see from the quote that the learners are unruly; they do not accept the help that is given to them by teachers and parents. As was argued in chapter two that Parental involvement is defined by some writers as something that improve student achievement and reduced dropout rates but if these learners do not listen from teachers and parents there is no way that they can achieve at school. Learner 4 also put it clear that they do not want to do homework and are also dodging classes, dodging is a sign that they do not value academic work at all. That is the reason they perform badly at school all the time, learners do not commit themselves in academic work and by showing no respect to the teachers and parents means that they won't take orders from them and without the guidance of the teachers and parents there is no education.

Learner 6 argued that:

Some learners do not commit themselves in their books; they spend a lot of time on cell phones. Bad behaviour leads to a high failure rate and it drops the pass rate of the whole school. These learners that are misbehaving should be expelled from school because they are disturbing the whole school **(Learner 6/ Data Set 3).**

It can be seen that learner 6 is putting an emphasis to what was argued by learner 4 and learner 6 and adding to that all what these learners are doing is going to affect the results at the end of the year, it will lead to high failure rate and a huge number of dropouts in our schools. Learner 6 is also convinced that to reduce all of this, these students should be expelled from school.

Learner 9 reported that:

Many learners like to play at school and waste their academic time. Some do not come on Saturday without any reason. In our school, if you do not come to classes on Saturday you are being sent back home on Monday to call your parent. What the learners did, affect the teachers and parents **(Learner 9/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be argued from Learner 9's point of view that these learners are lazy to come to school without any valuable reason to do so. Teachers are trying to help them by coming on Saturdays but they do not honour that. Learner 8 and Learner 9 are having a common problem of learners who do not like to go to school. Learner 7 reported that:

There is also a challenge parents' face when supporting children in academic work. The challenge is communication because my dad does not want to come to school meetings. He has a lack of interest on my progress at school **(Learner 7/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be seen from the quotation that the parent does not comply with the school policies that parents' child is supposed to be expelled from school. This shows that the parent is not working together with the school to motivate a learner to achieve his or her goals.

Learner 8 lamented that:

Some learners do not come to school for two weeks, but in our school there is scholar transport, we get books for free and we have nutrition at our school **(Learner 8/ Data Set 3)**.

One could see from this quote that learner 8 is concerned about what these learners are thinking about their future in education when transport, books and nutrition are provided for free by the Department of Education but still they do not go school.

Parent 1 noted that:

My child has to go to the camp and I do not have money to pay for the camp, I live on grant I do not have a job even now my child is suffering, at grade 12 he does not have school shoes **(Parent 1/ Data Set 4)**.

From Parent 1's point of view it is clear that the parent has money problems that she is unable to solve, the child is supposed to pay the money for the camp and also the same child does not have shoes to wear at school, in this quotation one can see that although the parent my wish to fulfil all these commitments, she cannot because of the shortage of money.

Parent 2 reported that:

We leave on pension; we do not have enough money to support my child. I try to buy things that would help my child in her studies although we do not have enough money at home **(Parent 2/ Data Set 4)**.

It can be seen that Parent 2's views are like those of parent 1, as both parents have money problems Parent 2 wishes to buy what could be of help for her child's studies, but due to the shortage of money there is nothing she can do, pension money is not enough to fulfil the needs of the family.

Parent 3 reported that:

I wish that the school should have computers, because we do not always have money for airtime all the time when the child needs airtime to google information **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

Because she has shortage of money, Parent 3wishes that the school should have computers for her child to be able to do her school work, although Parent 3 does not have the tools to help the child but she has a positive mind towards education.

Parent 3 noted that:

My main problem is finance that is my major problem. I cannot assist my child at all like buying my child a computer which can be of help even at home when he is doing his school work **(Parent 3/ Data Set 4)**.

From this quotation, Parent 3 is willing to give help to her child but is hindered by funds, Parent 3 knew that the child needed assistance to do the school work at home but there is no material at home to assist the child. Both Parents 3's have money problems. Parent 9 noted that:

My child likes to be always on the phone, and I fight with her for that. Peer group pressure is disturbing my child. Sometimes she does not need to be controlled by me **(Parent 9/ Data Set 4)**.

It can be seen from the quotation that the child does not care that much about the school work as she is always on the phone, the child prefers friends than to be controlled by parents, which can give Parent 3 some difficulties in future when the child refuses her control as a parent.

Parent 2 reported that:

I have a problem with the current curriculum. Things are not done as they were done before **(Parent 2/ Data Set 4)**.

It can be seen that Parent 1 and Parent 2 are willing to assist their children but the problem that is affecting them is not to have the knowledge of the current syllabus.

Principal 3 reported that:

Parents in this community are illiterate most of them. The biological parents of the children are in urban areas seeking for jobs. The children are staying with grandparents who are not able to help the children with academic work. The only thing that should be done to motivate the parents is to keep on pushing them to attend the school meetings so that they can be assisted by the teachers to be able to help their children at home **(Principal 3/ Data Set 1)**.

Parents are relying on teachers to be motivated for the education of their children and to attend school meetings so as to get assistance in a form of workshops from teachers at school. This shows that parents are in desperate need to be motivated and to be workshopped in order for them to be able to motivate the children, Teacher 1 reported that:

Having a challenge of parents not involving themselves with their children, some of the children show little respect to their parents. Other children are staying with their guardian's and the guardians are not having a chance to look at the child's work. Where the parent is unable to come to school to ask about the learner's progress, we as a school we go and visit the parent. As a school we encourage the learners to manage their time by drafting their own study time table, by that we want the learners to get used in managing their time when studying. We ask the learners to submit their study time table where we want everything that the learner does even at home appear in the time table, like home chores should appear on the study time table. This helps us as a school to be able to give suggestions to the learner of the

amendments of dividing the time accordingly to his or her commitments (**Teacher 1/ Data Set 2**).

The point of view of Teacher 1 is that as the school they see the problems of the learners that learners are not getting the help they deserve from their parents because they are staying most of them with the guardians who do not have time to look at the learners work. As the school they try to help the learners by making them manage the study time in their study time table.

Teacher 3 reported that:

Parents are resistant to help their children. If they can change their mentality that the school is for certain people, they can improve the progress of their children by monitoring their children (**Teacher 3/ Data Set 2**).

Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 are experiencing the same problem of the Parents who do not want to help their children in school work. Teacher 3 has even come up with the lament that if these parents would change their way of thinking, maybe there will be an improvement in their monitoring of children's school work.

The school immediately invites the parent when the school gets a problem from the child. Most of the parents cannot help their children due to illiteracy problems and do not understand the current syllabus; some parents are feeling a great pain for being unable to help their children in academic work. Some parents do not even have money to buy laptops for their children to be able to get the good information. Although the parents are not assisting their children academically, they also do not want to assist them even when they are on camp to cook for them and see to it that they are studying on camp.

4.5 STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE PARENTAL INVOLMENET IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK

This section deals with the strategies that should be implemented in order to help the learners achieve in academic work. Parental involvement is seen as an effective strategy to ensure student success, however, increased parental involvement leads to early social competence, which will ultimately lead to academic success. Learners are

able to access additional support or resources such as tutoring, when parents are not able to help the children due to lack of education enrichment opportunities or access to curriculum and extensions beyond the school, in order to achieve academic success. Furthermore, because of the increased academic success as parents become more involved, parental involvement has been identified as a strategy to decrease the achievement gap. Parents should communicate with the teachers about whatever they wish to know about their children. Teachers at school should tell parents to reinforce at home whatever the children were told at school. Moreover, teachers are supposed to provide parents with the skills that should be effectively implemented in home learning activities in a more personal setting. These strategies are focusing on empowering parents to be educational partners within the home, which may have more significant effect on academic achievement and be meaningful on homework's. Learner 6 indicated that:

My parent can contact the teacher and ask about my performance, the parent should be involved in helping me in my school work and check the things that I am studying every day and be in touch with my teachers always (**Learner 6/ Data Set 3**).

One could see from the quote that even the learners are not happy with non-cooperation of the parents in school work. Learner 6 even emphasised that the parent should be involved in helping him in his school work. This means that the learner is also longing for assistance from the parents who are unable to help him. It also appears from the quotation that learner 6 is wishing that there can be a connection between his parents and his educators in order for them to have discussions about the school work for the parent to be able to assist the learner at home.

The contemporary curriculum requires that parents are involved in children's education. To achieve this, the researcher wanted to know from the principals how do they manage to work with the parents of the learners. Some of the principals came with the idea that conceptual models for family involvement should be established and there should be shared goals with the school and monitoring child's success should occur in a variety of home and school based activities to engage families in education. Parents should be part of a contextually focused school of improvement process which is designed to create positive relationships that support children's total development. Parent involvement programmes that are instituted in traditional bureaucratic and inflexible school environments are less likely to yield positive results than those that

is part of a more collaborative organizational structure? The researcher discovered from the principals that parents should be involved at all levels of school life through general support of school's educational programs, active participation in daily activities, and in school planning and management. However, parents should work together with school's staff to establish academic and social goals and to develop and implement comprehensive school plans.

Principal 3 noted that:

All stakeholders e.g. Departments and, Indabas need to inform parents by workshops of how to assist parents in participating in children's academic work. As in our school we inform parents of what they are supposed to do to support their children in academic work but the parents are not willing to do their part **(Principal 3/ Data Set 1)**.

It can be seen from the quotation that Principal 3 is trying by all means to appeal to the community around the school to assist the Parents of how to participate on learner's academic work. Principal 3 as a school they also need assistance from outside about what can be of help to motivate the Parents to be able to assist the children at home.

Learner1 noted that:

There should be a meeting between the class teacher, a parent and a learner, and also a meeting with the teacher of each learning area. I think the reason the school calls a meeting is to make our parents closer to the school to see problems concerning school work and also the progress **(Learner 1/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be seen from this quote that the meetings between the three bodies which are the teacher, learner and parent are necessary because the parent is to be informed by the teacher whatever is happening concerning the learner. If the parent frequently attends the school meetings is able to track the progress of the child and be able to find out early when the child needs to be assisted in his or her weakness in that particular learning area.

Teacher 1reported that:

We need to have a plan called 'I lima' project, where the learners are sleeping at the school, where learners are capacitated with everything at school. In 'I lima' project parents are expected to volunteer to monitor their children's studies at night by making sure that the gates are locked at night. Parents are supposed to be working together with the teachers and learners. These three bodies should know the

starting time of the studies and the breaking time of studies. This program is done two months before the final examinations. In term 1 and term 2 we do have Saturday classes on weekends. During the week there are morning classes and afternoon classes but only on key subjects **(Teacher 1/ Data Set 2)**.

From the above quote to enhance parental participation, in our school we should hold meetings about performance and encouraging parents to support their children in academic work. Parents are taught about their responsibility that they work hand in hand with teachers, teachers teach during the day but parents should take over to help the learner at home. During the 'I lima' project where learners are sleeping over at school, parents are expected to volunteer to monitor their children's studies in the evening and to make it sure that the gates are locked at night. These three bodies, teachers, learners and parents should know the standing time for studies. This is because learners should sacrifice for their progress in academic work by sleeping over at school and should also play their role of studying because teachers get bored if they have been doing the same job even after tuition time. The problem is parents resist change. However, the contribution that can be given by parents together with the teachers could assist children to become better children of the future. Learner 4 reported that:

Teachers should make sure that we go home with our scripts and the parents are supposed to append signatures on my scripts showing that the parent has seen my work, this motivates the parent and me about my school work **(Learner 4/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be noted from Learner 4 that by going home with the scripts a sign of making the Parents to be responsible about the children's academic work. When Parents are able to see the work of the child it helps the Parents to see where the child needs help and can motivate the Parent to look for the necessary help that can be offered to the child, whether is to look for a tutor or to buy the necessary book or apparatus that the child can use on his/her school work.

Learner 8 noted that:

If the teachers and parents agreed on Saturday classes, there should be a letter that is signed by parents on agreement on Saturday classes **(Learner 8/ Data Set 3)**.

Learner 2 is concerned about what Teachers and Parents do when they decide on something, this shows that the Learner needs something that is written down as a confirmation of an agreement. To commit Parents on letting children attend Saturday classes.

Learner 9 noted that:

Parents should sign forms so that Saturday classes should be attended by the learners. Parents want us to have better results **(Learner 9/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be seen from the excerpts that Learner 3 and Learner 2 are emphasizing the same point of the letter that should be signed by the Parents on agreement for Saturday classes. In this, it shows that the children are in need of Saturday classes, they need support for their idea from the Parents and Teachers. Principal 1 reported that:

Parents should be called at school to motivate learners or a motivational speaker from outside who can be an ex-student, Reverend from the local community, lawyer or any other person who can be a model to learners should be invited to come and motivate learners. We invite a person from a local community to come and motivate learners. The school prefer someone who is familiar to the student from their surroundings, the school think that it will be more effective to the student to choose the person that is known to the students rather than choosing the person who is not familiar to the student **(Principal 1/ Data Set 1)**.

It can be seen from the quotation above that Principal 1 by inviting someone from the surroundings is to show the students that it is possible also to them that they can achieve if they do their academic work with patience. Especially if they consult the teachers and parents to help them with their school work when it is necessary to do so.

Principal 3 reported that:

There should be community programs on local radio stations like, Umhlobo Wenene and Fort Hare FM, where it can be necessary to use these stations to encourage parents to take care of their children's academic work **(Principal 3/ Data Set 1)**.

From the quotation above, Principal 3 raised a different view from Principal 1 and Principal 2. His comment was that the radio stations should be used to motivate Parents to care for their children's academic work. There should be programs for parental motivation. The reason for Principal 3 to choose the radio stations could be that most of local people often listen from these radio stations. Teacher 1 reported that:

As a school after each semester we issue reports to the parents. When teachers are issuing reports they explain what is written on the report to the parents of the

children. Other parents are convinced others are not convinced with the practice of the school, us teachers we need parents to bring someone who can understand and motivate the learner and be a model to the learners e.g. a person who was once a student at the school **(Teacher1/ Data Set 2)**.

Teacher 1 viewed support from Parents as something that would change the pass rate of the schools, Teachers need to explain the reports to the illiterate Parents in order for the Parents to understand what they mean. Parents are also given a duty to search for somebody who can motivate the learners, which duty may change the attitude of parents to the positive because they can see that they have a contribution to make to the school and the learners inside the school. Learner 5 noted that:

For morning and afternoon classes teachers should invite other teachers from neighbouring schools for a variety of teaching to their learners, also the teachers should pressurise learners to obtain higher levels during examinations. The levels should be explained to the parents in order for the parents to know whether the child is performing good or bad at school **(Learner5/ Data Set 3)**.

It can be seen from the quotation that Learner 2 is serious about the academic work because in suggesting that the other teachers should be invited the learner wants to make sure that they are getting all the ways of attacking a problem from different people. They want a variety of teaching skills that can help them in their learning areas. Learner 2 seems to be willing to study, by saying teachers should put on pressure to the learners for the learners to get higher levels in the examinations. It means that it is true that learners needs to be motivated and needs to be supported by other people, by failing to do that as teachers and parents means that we are failing our learners. Learner 2 also needs the Parents to know their progress whether they are doing good or bad at school, that everything should be transparent to their parents.

Learner 8 reported that:

Every parent's cell numbers should be here at school, because there are learners who do not know what they are here for in our school. Our school is very strict, cell phones are taken away from the learners during tuition time if the learner has been seen carrying a cell phone in the school yard, it is taken away and be given back to the learner at the end of the term **(Learner 8/ Data Set 3)**.

Learner 8's view point is that no student should have cell phones in the premises of the school; the cell phones to students are retarding the students in their books. That

maybe the reason that the school is taking the cell phones from students during tuition time, and is given back at the end of the term, that period should be long enough to be the punishment if the learner is obeying the rules of the school.

Parent 4 noted that:

Groupings, winter school, morning and afternoon classes are done here at school to help the child pass grade 12 **(Parent 4/ Data Set 4)**.

Parent 1's views shows that the school is already doing the necessary things that should be done at school to give an extra time for studying to the students who are doing grade 12.

Teacher 2 reported that:

I gave my learners work from indigenous knowledge group. I ask the learners to get the answers from the parents, the response from the parents was that if the teacher does not know the answer, does she think that I as the parent will know the work, she is the teacher and I am not the teacher." As I can see the parents are not willing at all to help their children, Learners do the house chores at home and parents are not encouraging children to study their books. By the way it's not me who is studying; it's the child who is studying; this was said by one of the parents (Asindim ofundayo ngumntwana ofundayo) "Most of learners stay with grandparents, most of them their biological parents died of HIV and AIDS which are hammering our area and most of learners are orphans they leave on foster care grant **(Teacher 2/ Data Set 2)**.

From teacher's point of view, the parents do not care for their children, maybe it is because they are not the biological parents of the children. That was clear when the parent was responding like "she is the teacher and I am not the teacher is supposed to know the answer" referring that to the teacher when the child is sent by the teacher to ask for the questions. That shows that these parents do not care for the child's education.

It appeared from the data that parents should be in touch with the teachers. There should be stakeholders, departments and Indaba's that should be able to inform parents by workshops on how to assist parents in children's academic work. There should also be community programs on local radio stations to encourage parents to take care of their children's academic work. Parents should also try to make the children to develop intrinsic motivation in order for the child to be able to be independent and not to depend on his or her peers. However, it was also necessary

for the teachers to educate parents to be able to look at learner's portfolios at home, this help the parent to be able to learn more about the school work of the child and to be able to assist the child on academic work. The parent should encourage the child to rehearse what the child has been studying as to make sure that she has grasped what she was studying. When teachers are giving homework, they should give questions that the learner is supposed to ask from the parent at home as to engage both the parent and the child in doing homework and the parent would be forced to help the child in academic work. The school should also introduce different types of registers; these registers should be signed by parents when attending school meetings as to track how regular the parent is attending school meetings. Additionally, to control learners in class also, there should be a subject register to see if the learners are attending their respective learning areas regularly. The school should also give report of learning areas attendance of learners to the parents meeting in order for the parents to know what exactly is taking place inside the classroom during tuition time. For spreading what has been discussed to school meetings, the school should invite community leaders to attend school meetings and share with community leaders problems encountered from learners at school especially grade 12's. The community leaders would go and share what has been discussed at school meetings with the communities when they call the Imbizo in their villages.

The SGB's should be able to assist the teachers in disciplining the learners at school; discipline goes hand in hand with academic work. While teachers will be concentrating on the curriculum disciplined learners will concentrate more on their books. The schools should have computers and internet for the learners to be able to be able to get the latest information. However, teachers, learners and parents should help each other in helping learners in academic work. Parents should always check the school homework books and should have teacher's cell numbers to check if the children are submitting the work in good time at school, parents should see to it that the children are studying at home after finishing their homework. When there is someone whom the school knew that the person has good reputation of having good results, the school should utilised that skill by letting the person to teach on Saturdays and on winter and spring schools for the learners to earn good results.

Learner 6 reported that:

The school should hold more meetings with parents, where they can explain academic performance of the learners. There should also be a competition with neighbouring schools about academic performance; this would help learners to study hard because they should be afraid to be out classed by other schools in academic performance **(Learner 6/ Data Set 3)**.

From the quote Learner 6, the emphasis is that parents should know everything that concerns their studies, Learner 6 comes with a slightly different idea that they should compete with the neighbouring schools on academic performance. The bottom line is that people should work together to achieve higher goals.

Learner 7 noted that:

Teachers in our school should not accept phone calls from parents who do not attend school meetings. They should not accept any type of excuse from parents who do not attend school meetings. If the parent is not there, the child should be expelled from school **(Learner 7/ Data Set 3)**.

Learner 7 viewed non-attendance of parents in school meetings as something that should not be tolerated by the school and is putting an emphasis that even the excuses should not be accepted as they will be breaking the policy of the school, she comes with the suggestion that the child of the parent who does not attend the school should expel the child from the school as a sign of punishment to the parent.

Learner 2 reported that:

I am a disciplined learner, and I read my books to reach the highest levels at school, my parents should know that, as a learner I need time to study my books and the time to do house chores **(Learner 2/ Data Set 3)**.

Learner 2's point of view is that the learner is dividing her time accordingly, the time for studying the school work and also the time for house chores. According to her plans, learner 2 is hoping to get high marks in the school work as she will be encouraged by her work schedule.

Learner 3 noted that:

I do not have challenges because I am humble enough for my studies. I am responsible for my studies **(Learner 3/ Data Set 3)**.

Learner 3 from the above quotation differs from Learner 1 and Learner 2 as we are observing what he is saying he does not have a problem in his studies at all. This means that he does not need to be assisted by anyone in his academic work.

Learner 5 noted that:

There are temptations that some peers influence other children not to study, and the weak learners are influenced easily (**Learner 5/ Data Set 3**).

It can be seen from the quotation that Learner 5. However, Learner 5 presented a point that these learners are influenced by their peers that is the reason they are not doing the right things at school. They do not listen from teachers and parents and do not have guidance for their studies that is a sign of losing interest in studies.

Learner 5 noted that:

My parents should help me in my homework by checking what we have done at school (**Learner 5 /Data Set 3**).

Learner 5 stressed that the parents should play their part at home. Learner 5 further stated that it is also the responsibility of the parent at home to look of what he has done at school. Learner 5 is not satisfied of his work to be known by the teachers at school only. He stated that he needs to be supported at home, and during the week-ends there is no one to help him at home in school work. That is why he is appealing to the parents to do their part in assisting him in school work at home. This means that there is no parental involvement at home in academic work.

Learner 1 reported that:

There should be a meeting between the class teacher, a parent and a learner, and also a meeting with the teacher of each learning area. I think the reason the school calls a meeting is to make our parents closer to the school to see problems concerning school work and also the progress (**Learner 1/ Data Set 3**).

Learner 1's point of view is that a meeting with the teacher, a parent and a learner is necessary for these three bodies at school to discuss about the future of the child in academic work, also a meeting with the teacher of learning area could also be fruitful to know how the child's performance in learning area, this could help the parent to know the strengths and weaknesses of the child.

It can be noted from the above presentation that meetings should be motivated especially between the class teacher, parent and a learner and also meeting with the teacher of each learning area. The importance of these meetings is to make the parents closer to the school to see problems concerning children's school work and also the progress of the children. School teachers should visit parents who do not participate in learners' school work. Additionally, teachers should make sure that the learners take their books home to their parents for the parents to see the work that the children have done during the day, as the sign that the parents have looked at the work, the parent should append a signature on that work. This motivates the parent and the child on academic work. Moreover, the parent should also be aiming at motivating the child to get a merit award at school and helping the child towards getting it. Focus group discussions presented a view that the school should hold more meetings with parents, where they should explain academic performance of the learners. Academic competition with neighbouring schools was also suggested as a way of boosting academic performance, this can motivate learners to study hard as a way of defending their performances from other schools. Also, teachers should not accept excuses from parents who do not attend school meetings. If the parent is not there, the child should be expelled from school. Parents are supposed to come to school fortnightly to check for the progress of children at school.

From this presentation, it is apparent that the participation of parents is needed to the learners. There is also a great lament from the learners as they are longing for the assistance from their parents. It can be clear from the data that there are parents who take the initiative of participating in the children's academic work by making a follow up of what is happening to her child's school work. Principals and teachers are also supporting the parents by calling meetings and making demonstrations by showing the parents what is needed in the portfolios as to come up with the solution to the problem. It also emerged from the data that though some parents are participating in children's academic work they in most cases do that on request or when there is a problem with poor performance of the children. There are also challenges parents faces when supporting children in academic work, and finance is one of them. Most of the parents do not have jobs; they live on grant and on pension which is not enough for the needs of the families. There is no money to pay for the camp, though the camp is necessary for the children. Some children do not have shoes to wear at school, at

grade 12 level of education. However, as parents wish that there were enough computers for the learners at school because there is no money to buy airtime all the time when a child wants to google information. Conversely, the problem with the cell phones is that sometimes children spend most of the time chatting or playing games on the phone instead of studying or be busy with homework. Peer group pressure also is disturbing to both the children and parents; because a child does not want to be controlled by parents although he or she will be doing things that are disturbing to the parent. Also, parents encounter some problems with the current syllabus which does not allow parents to have a freedom of assisting their children because are not familiar with the new concepts.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

From this presentation, the data revealed that the principals, teachers, learners and parents had different views with regards to how parents are involved in their children's academic work. Although the teachers indicated that parental involvement was lacking from the parents but they indicated that parents are invited to come to school sometimes, however, there was no explicitness in terms of how parents are involved in their learners' academic work. Although the data showed that sometimes teachers visited the homes of those parents who were not attending the school meetings, there was no indication that these visits were designed to involve parents in the learning of their children. It also emerged from the data that parents did not understand what parental involvement entailed and were unaware of the full benefits of involvement beyond activities such as the camp, parents' meeting, class meeting and subject meetings at school. Even in these meetings issues of teaching and learning were discussed at a superficial level. Various factors seem to cause challenges regarding the involvement of parents, such as the illiteracy of many parents in the community, parents of the learners are not active enough in helping the learners in home works, most of the parents were the grandparents and guardians to the learners, the biological parents were in urban areas for jobs as a result most of learners were noted of not doing their homework and those who did manage to do the homework were not submitting it in time, and means of transport to school, some learners did have scholar transport but others did not have transport. On the other hand, teachers

were trying to assist the parents on how to help the learners in school work at home by conducting workshops at school. Although the teachers were not trained to promote parental involvement or even to work with adults, but devote themselves to do it for the benefit of the learners. It also emerged from the data that parents perceived their involvement in their children's academic work as encouraging their children to attend extra classes like, attending morning and afternoon classes, checking children's homework and by encouraging children to join study groups for discussions. Other factors that were reported to play a role in parental involvement were poverty, illiteracy, single parenthood or foster parenthood and the like. Participants suggested that home efforts by the parents in terms of their children's education can greatly improve pupils' achievement. Moreover, parental involvement programmes should consider the various parental backgrounds in adapting strategies for parental involvement to the needs of all parents. The positive factors that promote parental involvement include good relationships between principals, teachers, learners and parents, having similar values and exhibiting positive attitudes towards each other.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study. It is divided into four main sections. The first section interrogates how parents are participating in children's academic work and strategies they employed to assist children in academic work. The second part discusses the views of the participants on parental participation in children's academic work. The third part gives an outline of the challenges that parents come across when trying to participate in children's academic work. The last part is about the strategies that can be put in place to enhance parental participation in children's academic work.

5.2 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT THE PERIPHERY OF CHILDREN LEARNING

It emerged from the data that participants have different views about how parents are involved in their children's academic work. The majority of the parents viewed parental involvement as limited to providing resources to their children and making the atmosphere conducive for learning to occur. This included, among other things, buying airtime for children, relieving children of some house chores, motivating children and the like. All these were not about supporting children to acquire specific knowledge and skills. If this was what they perceived parental involvement to be it means, then their understanding of parental involvement in their children's academic work was just scratching the outside and not touching real issues that were about academic work. This was despite what Epstein (1992) purported parental involvement to be. This scholar further states that parents should reinforce the importance of the school; homework activities that help build academic skills and feelings of success to children. Furthermore, communication should take place in multiple ways in order to connect with the school, home and communities. This means that there should be two-way traffic communication between schools, home and parents should understand children's academic performance. Although parents

were invited to school to be made aware of children's performance, this was limited to informing parents about their children's academic achievement. There were no indications that parents are involved in the teaching and learning process nor were they given task that were academic in nature. The fact that schools seemed to be lacking in engaging parents in children's academic work might be an indication that schools were faced with a challenge of illiteracy among parents.

For instance, Principal 3 commented that most of the parents in the school community were illiterate and that the fact that learners stayed with their grandparents worsened the situation. He suggested that at least parents should be encouraged to motivate their children to do school work. This means that this school regarded parental involvement as a separate responsibility to what the school should do.

Linked with the above, Epstein (1987) argues that the distinct goal of parents and teachers is considered to be best achieved when teachers on one hand keep a professional distance from and equal standards for children in their classrooms, and parents on the other hand develop personal relationships with and individual expectations for their children at home. In this kind of arrangement complementarity does not exist, that is, the school does not see parents having the capacity to assist their children academically. In this case a parent prepares a child emotionally and materialistically for the school. Parent 3 reported that she wished that the school could have computers, because they as parents did not always have money for airtime all the time when the child needs airtime to google information. Her comments had nothing to do with how she assisted her child in her academic work. Furthermore, Parent 9 reported that when there were Saturday classes and winter school they went and cooked for their children and by doing that they wanted to help them to improve the results at the end of the year. She further reported that parents collected money for the camping during examination period. This confirmed the fact that parents viewed their involvement in children's academic work as limited to providing resources.

A few parents reported that they helped their children with their school work. Parent 3 for instance reported that she always asked her child if she had homework when she came from school and gave her a chance to study. She also helped her in school work to find the right answers in her text book. However, Parent 3 reported that she found it difficult to understand some of the things in her school work. This was an indication that though this parent was willing to assist her child she could not do so as she was not conversant with curriculum issues. The little she could offer was to check the number of right answers as reflected in the child's school book. This might also be an indication that schools were not properly guiding parents to participate in academic related activities. This means, that schools do perceive family school collaboration in line with Epstein's (1987) family and school shared responsibility.

With regards to shared responsibilities of families and schools, Epstein (1987) posits that the school and home should work together in a coordinated manner in which cooperation and complementarity exist between the two institutions. The school and the family work collaboratively towards the socialization of a child and this can be achieved when teachers and parents are working together. What emerged strongly was that parents' frame of the participation in children's academic work was in line with Lin & Fu (1990) who suggest that parents should exert greater control over children's behaviour in order to stimulate academic goals within the child. Chao (1994) argues that although parents may exert more control over their children, they do so with the goal of training children to achieve academically and to behave according to social norms. This study revealed that the majority of the parents did not do anything further than preparing children for school. In other words, some schools and parents perceived their role as levelling grounds for teaching and learning that occurs inside the classroom. This confirms what Hoover-Dempsey and Saddler (1997) posit, that the communication of parental values emphasizes that the collectivist is the important value that can be endorsed in the child. Parents should encourage the children to view themselves as part of the integrated whole of their family, community and society, also not to emphasize their differences from others. However, this preparation differed from parent to parent.

5.3 PARENTS' ACADEMIC CLARITY

The study revealed that the majority of parents were not clear about their role in their children's academic work. The lack of academic clarity, which was caused in most cases by the fact that parents were illiterate, led to the majority of them resorting to supporting children with materialistic resources rather than getting involved in the actual process of imparting knowledge and skills. Teacher 1, for instance, confirmed that the majority of parents did not participate actively in their children's academic work because they did not have clue of what knowledge and skills children were supposed to learn. This was exacerbated by the fact that most of the parents were illiterate. Teacher 1 further commented that some parents came to the school to look at the progress of the learners and asked questions about learners' progress. Teacher 1 also reported that most of parents' participation was limited to checking learners' marks and giving any support to children's academic work. Although the data showed that parents' participation was limited to knowing their children's marks, there were no indications that schools were assisting parents to be involved in children's academic work. This means that the issue of parental involvement in children's academic work was not in any way coordinated by the selected schools. If some parents were not involved in children's academic work, it means that Epstein's (2005) idea of learning at home was not understood by schools.

Furthermore, Epstein (1992) argues that home learning builds positive home conditions that support school learning and good school behaviour that is appropriate for each grade and that the school's responsibility is to design effective forms of communication for the families to get informed of the school's programmes and the children's improvement in academic work (Epstein, 1992). If schools do not design programmes that seek to assist parents master their participation in children's education and implement these programmes in a coordinated way they may not see improved parental participation in children's academic work. For schools and parents to work effectively they need to have proper communication structures (Epstein, 1992) so that each of them understands their role with regards to learners' academic work. The fact that some parents were resisting to participate in children's academic work might be a confirmation that they were clueless about curriculum issues and

that there was not proper guidance on the part of the schools. Unfortunately, this was exacerbated by the fact that the schools lacked proper guidance given to parents.

5.4 COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND LEARNERS

Data revealed that there was serious lack of cooperation and coordination between schools, teachers and their parents. This could be an indication that each of the three parties was not clear about its role when it comes to supporting learners' academic work. This was despite the fact that research shows that parental involvement is positively associated with achievement, especially parental help with homework and that involvement that reflects academic socialization had the strongest positive association with achievement (Stattin and Stattin, 2000). Stattin and Kerr (2000) differentiated among control, solicitation and disclosure as potential sources of parents' knowledge of children's whereabouts and activities. Therefore, it may be inferred that parents, schools and learners should form a tripartite in which all the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. If parental participation is defined as limited to motivating and providing material resources, which must be clearly documented to avoid a situation where each party blames the other.

Although Stattin and Kerr (2000) refer to learners' academic socialisation at home, this might be difficult in terms of the rural context where most of the parents are illiterate and do not have any clue of curriculum issues. This suggests that it is important that parents volunteer where their children are learning. Parents need to assist teachers, principals and children in classrooms or in other school based activities for children's academic achievement purposes. Additionally, parents should come to school to support students' performance and sport activities, attend workshops or other school education and training programmes in order to equip themselves to be able to assist their children in their learning areas at home. Additionally, parents should be involved in home learning activities where parents' involvement is needed, which can assist children in home learning. In this, parents should initiate activities or it should be a child's initiated request for help or the instructions from the subject teacher which are structured for the parent to assist

their own children at home, on learning activities that are coordinated with the children's classwork (Epstein, 1995).

Data also showed that principals are relying on motivating the parents to attend school meetings; they only get assistance in doing that from teachers at school. It was argued in chapter two that there is also substantial evidence that parents' involvement in education of their children can make a significant difference in the educational attainment of the children (Epstein, 1995; Keane, 2007; Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004a; Lemmer 2009; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Studsrod & Bru, 2009; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). There is also a popular opinion about, and public outcry for, more meaningful and fruitful parental involvement in school matters (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004; Smit and Liebenberg, 2003; Mmotlane, Wennaar & Wakivilu, 2009).

Furthermore, it also emerged from the findings that due to parents' non-attendance in school meetings, the principals had also opted to incorporate the community leaders in school meetings as a way of sharing what has been discussed in the school with the communities as it was noticed that some of the parents were not interested in attending the school meetings, but were interested in attending the Imbizo meetings in their communities. So, by inviting community leaders, the schools wanted everybody in the community to be informed of the school issues. Nonetheless, parental participation in schools remains questionable.

The results of the study also revealed that parents were still encouraged to come to school meetings to be informed about their Grade 12 children's performance and to also meet with the teachers of the learning areas concerned, especially when the child was not performing well at school, but the parents were failing to honour these invitations although these meetings were meant to assist them in the academic performance of their children. Gershbers & Meade (2005) and Mestry & Gobler (2007) argue that the importance of the home environment in the education of the child made it more imperative for legislation to ensure better participation, recognition and visibility of parents within the school system. What appeared to be seen as involvement of parents was when the schools were inviting the parents to school meetings and wherein they were made to sign attendance registers as a way of keeping records for the school. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) have perceived

parental involvement as “a combination of supporting children’s academic achievement and participating in school-initiated functions”. Conversely, according to the findings of this study ten out of ninety parents attended school meetings, although the principals were trying by all means to have one on one session with parents to try and discuss the progress of each learner to the parent concerned.

Mncube (2010, p.234), in relation to parental involvement, highlights that the “concept entails awareness of, and achievement in schoolwork, with an understanding of the interaction between parenting skills which influences learner success in schooling and also a commitment to consistent communication with educators about learner progress”. What has been highlighted by Makgoba and Mokhele (2013) is that parents need to support children’s academic achievement and to participate in school initiated functions; because in order for the parents to be functional in children’s academic work they need to be visible in schools, which could make it easier for the teachers to assist them to be able to assist children in academic work. This could result in parents being effective in their children’s academic work. There was no indication of any coordinated programmes that sought to engage parents in children’s academic work.

5.5 LACK OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT BY PARENTS

It appeared from the data that the majority of parents did not support children academically. In chapter two it was noted by MacBeath and Turner (1990) that most parents tend to have insufficient knowledge to help their children in high school, especially for those parents with less formal schooling. However, parents’ beliefs in the importance of developing conformity, obedience and good behaviour in children have been related to poorer school outcomes while beliefs in the importance of developing personal responsibility and self-respect, have been associated with better performance. Nonetheless, in older elementary school children strong parental endorsement of children as respectful and well behaved has been linked to poorer cognitive competence, lower self-esteem, high rates of conduct disorders and increased withdrawal at school (Brody & Stoneman, 1992). Lareau (1987) argues that working class parents had what she termed separated view of home and school.

These parents tended to believe that their roles involved getting children ready for school and ensuring that their children have good manners and getting them to school on time, but did not believe that children (regarding classroom placement or retention) believed that the schools, not parents, were primarily responsible for decisions about educational progress (Lareau, 1987, 1989). Parents seemed to abdicate some parental responsibilities to teachers once their children entered elementary school (Stevenson, Lee, Chen, Stingler, et al., 1990).

Thus, it may be argued that some parents' general life experiences may have taught them that parents do not get active in children's education but send their children to school and hope for the best. It has been noted that parents from the low income families were unable to help children in academic work and only referred them to the study groups or relied on teachers' help only. When parents do not have enough money to take their children further in education they ignore to help them in academic work. Some parents do not even look at children's academic work because of illiteracy. Unfortunately, this is one of the major challenges that most parents had with regards to the phenomenon under this study, it could be deduced from the responses of the parents that though they are capable and willing to buy educational materials that could assist children in academic work they were unable to assist children academically. Some parents coming from lower socioeconomic status did construct positive, active views of their roles in children's education.

Data showed that parents who can be volunteers in helping the children at school could not be found to motivate learners at school as most parents were illiterate. Parents were showing interest of helping their children at school only when their children were doing grade 12, but were showing less interest when the grade 12's were on camp and they were supposed to be assisted by their parents. This shows that the parents were not fully involved in helping children in academic work, were less devoted to carrying the responsibility of being parents to their children. Other findings from the study were that parents only come to school not to socialize information about progress of their children but for different matters altogether. Other children stayed with their grandparents, who did not attend meetings and were unable to help the children in academic work at home. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) point out that those parents with low levels of belief in their ability to help their children were likely to avoid contact with the schools because of their

ignorance of not wanting to be involved with the education of their children. Such ignorance would not bring about positive outcomes for their children as it was pointed from the findings. Some parents lacked confidence in helping their children due to language of teaching and learning and they also felt like they cannot communicate effectively with teachers. In addition, lack of confidence may also come from parents taking the view that they have not yet developed sufficient academic competency to effectively help children in academic work.

5.6 PARENTS' ACADEMIC STATUS VERSUS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It emerged from the data that parents' academic achievement had a serious bearing on how parents participated in children's academic work. Although the majority of parents were literate, the few that had achieved higher grades were, to some extent, assisting their children. This was an indication that the issue of illiteracy influenced how parents participated in children's academic work. Parental participation has been found to be lower for minority parents in schools and is always related to parents' income and educational level (Marshall, 2006). However, the parents and family involvement in education where parents attend a general school meeting was higher in households where parents had completed higher levels of education (Vaden-Kieman & Mc Manus, 2006).

In the same vein, Griffith reports that lower participation in school activities, including classroom volunteerism, in families who have an ethnic minority background (e.g. Africans), low socioeconomic status (low education, income and occupational level) and special child or circumstance having children in special education classes or English as a second language programs). Adolescents appear to be at an increased risk for lower academic performance, by completing fewer years of schooling and lower career aspirations. Parents of these children may exhibit fear, aggressiveness or apprehension towards children's school or education in general (Plevyak, 2003). Due to different backgrounds, some parents often encounter socioeconomic difficulties in participation (Hill et al., 2004), as it is found in this study that parents did not participate in children's academic work, and the child is the only one who is in charge of her academic work and as result, sometimes gets involved in what other

teenagers do because of the negligence of the parents who are supposed to be involved in the child's academic work.

Further, other factors involved in lower parental participation include cultural differences, fear of authority based institutions and parental illiteracy. In findings concerning parental illiteracy, children did not get assistance from parents, especially those that stay with the grandparents, because the grandparents do not know how to assist them in academic work. Findings also indicate that some parents just send money to their children and do not even guide their children on how to spend that money, which shows that the future of the child is out of their hands. This shows that there is huge negligence on the part of parents concerning the academic performance of their children. On negative educational experiences, it is noted from the findings that parents were not even happy when the child got results, which means that if the child cannot be motivated by parents it was difficult for that child to be motivated, which on its own dropped the self-esteem of the child towards education.

Meanwhile, the other factors were job related issues, economic conditions, health, arrangements and lack of resources needed for participation where a child, according to the findings, could not get the apparatus that he/she needed for doing the academic work at school. Additionally, parents who did not have the constraints of work, other barriers such as limited, lack of transportation, and child care burden found their presence at the school difficult. Conversely, parental involvement among low-income parents is not a matter of not valuing education, which is a common assumption among teachers; rather, what may be the issue here are the cultural differences among parents in the enactment of their beliefs about the value of education.

Meanwhile, other factors were job related issues, economic conditions, healthy, arrangements and lack of resources needed for participation where a child, according to the findings, could not get the necessary resources at school. Parents who did not have the constraints of work, other barriers such as limited, lack of transportation and child care burden found their presence at the school difficult. Conversely, parental involvement among low income parents is not a matter of not valuing education which is a common assumption among teachers, rather, what may

be the issue here are the cultural differences among parents in the enactment of their beliefs about the value of education.

Parents need to assist children in academic work by trying to motivate them in their academic work and staying with them to show them how responsible they are for their future and assisting them in whatever they need to help them in their studies.

5.7 TOWARDS ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN' S ACADEMIC WORK

Although literature shows that parental involvement is crucial in learners' academic work, this study revealed that there were still serious problems with regards to how parents were involved children's academic work. Parents should introduce support services that should be accessible to school children. They should monitor the support services and these should be a continuous and an ongoing exercise, which could bring constant improvement through innovations in the support services that, should be vital in promoting the achievement of learners in academic work. As suggested by Taita & Alant, (2003), Epstein, Sanders, Sheldon, Simon, Salinas and James & Hutchins, (2018) schools should develop a managerial process which can help support delivery of services to children, where there is high degree of invisibility of parents. This is where the parents should try to assist children by advising, giving information, exploring problems and suggesting directions of solving the problems or tasks given by teachers to children at school as well as giving feedback to children on non-academic aptitude and skills. Thus, parents should give practical help to promote reading skills in children as a way of assisting children at home. The researcher therefore suggests the Coordinated classroom-based parent-Teacher academic Forum as framework for coordinated strategies, with the view to enhancing parental involvement in children's education. This is illustrated below.

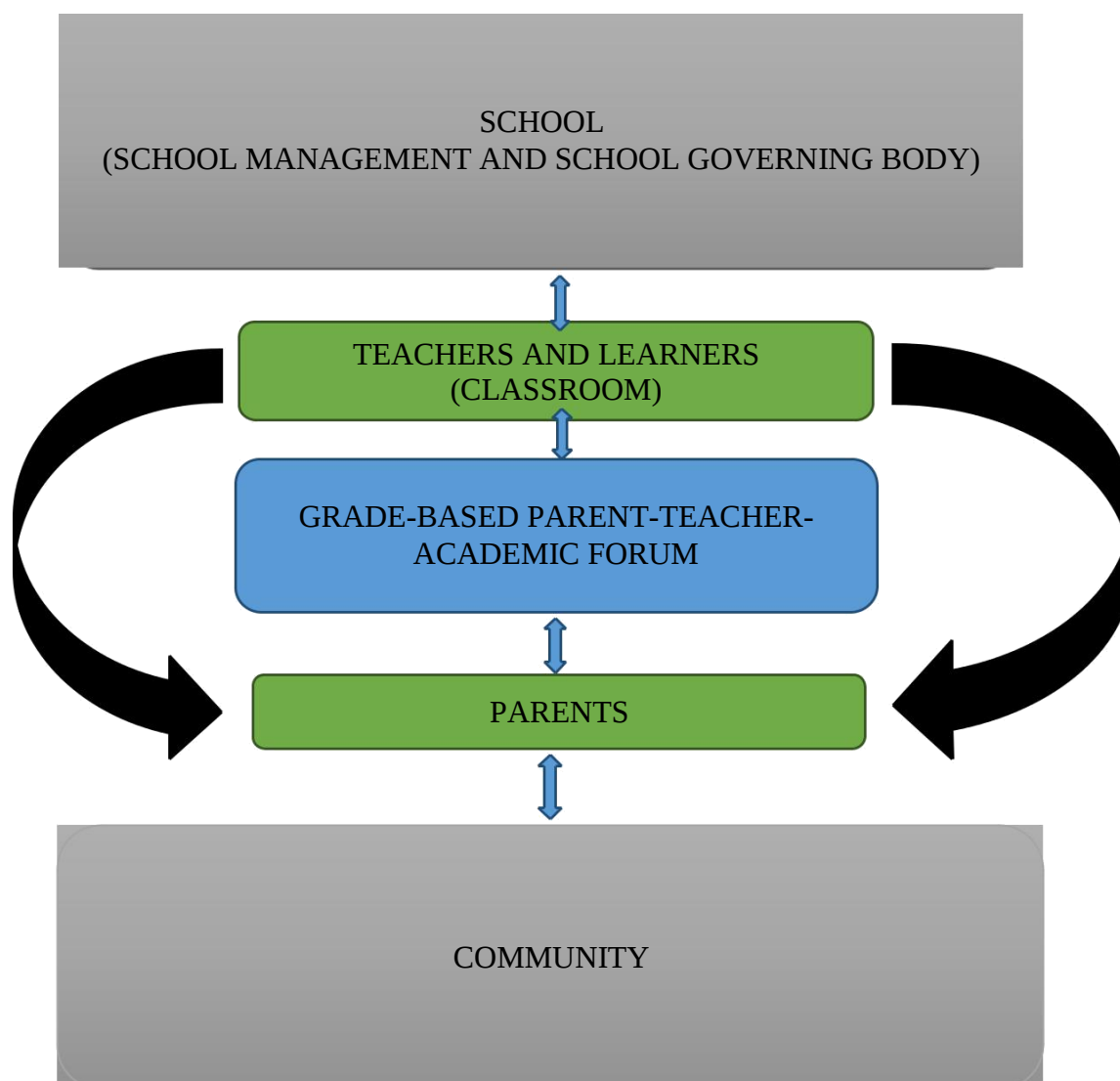


Figure 5-1: Enhancing parental involvement in their children's academic work:

5.7.1 Characteristics of proposed framework for parental involvement

Figure 5.1 above illustrate how schools should involve parents in children's academic work. At the top of the framework is the school. The school is deliberately put at the top as it is an institution that should give guidance to parents on issues that pertain curriculum. Below the school are the teachers who are the experts on curriculum development and implementation. The arrows indicate that teachers should take parents on board on issues of curriculum. Teachers interact on daily basis with their learners and they therefore know their learners better. Teachers, as experts in

curriculum, should serve as coordinators of the CGPTAF and should compile reports for the school authorities.

The illustration also highlights that school authorities should garner teaching and learning support materials informed by the CGPTAF reports and make the atmosphere conducive for parents' engagement with the schools. Below the teachers is Coordinated Grade-based Parent-Teacher- Academic Forum (CGPTAF). In this forum, teachers, parents and learners should discuss curriculum issues and each of the stakeholders is made to understand its role. Below CGPTAF there are parents, followed by the community. Parents, on one hand, are expected to communicate to the community at large on curriculum issues and to school through CGPTAF community expectations. Teachers on the other hand are expected to communicate with school authorities on curriculum issues and parents' expectations. This is therefore a two-way traffic at all levels.

5.7.2 Significance of the coordinated Grade-based Parent –Teacher Academic Forums

The CGPTAF would create an environment that will be teaching and learning focused and curriculum specific rather than other school meetings that focus on issues of school management and governance. In the CGPTAF, teachers and parents discuss curriculum issues and clarify roles of each stakeholder. This forum is important because it will help parents, illiterate or literate, to better understand curriculum issues and to be able to support their children in a more informed way. Although this forum may not explain in detail content related issues, at least certain knowledge and skills that learners must possess will be unpacked. The researcher recommends that these forums occur at least twice a year. This forum should also serve as a platform to report the general performance of the learners and the challenges each stakeholder encounters with the view to charting the way forward. In other words, this CGTPAF should serve as interactive workshop where teachers and learners debate issues concerning learners' academic performance and where the role of parents in children's academic work is emphasized. Conducted properly, the CGTLAF would also help deepening teachers' understanding of their learners' parents and this might in turn motivate them in their jobs and understand their

learners better. However, this forum should not replace the one-on one meeting that usually occurs between teachers and parents.

Undoubtedly, this kind of arrangement is in line with Epstein's (1985) theory of parental involvement, which advocates shared responsibility of schools and families and sequential responsibilities of parents and schools. With regards to shared responsibilities of families and schools Epstein (1987) argues that the school and home should work together in a coordinated manner in which cooperation and complementarity exist between the two institutions. The school and the family work collaboratively towards the socialization of a child and this can be achieved when teachers and parents have unity of purpose. Regarding sequential responsibilities between the school and families, Epstein (1987) & Rowe, Ramani & Romerantz (2016) unpacks the chronology of how teachers and parents are involved in children's education. The Sequential perspective emphasizes that parents teach needed skills to children until the time of their formal education around the ages of five or six. In the proposed CGPTAF emphasis is put on coordination of the elements, that is, the shared responsibility and sequential responsibility of Epstein's theory.

5.7.3 Discussing the Grade-based Parent –Teacher Academic Forums

Participants made various suggestions with regards to strategies that can be used to enhance the involvement of parents in their children's academic work. For instance, Learner 1 when asked about how the involvement of parents could be enhanced noted that there should be a meeting between the class teacher, a parent and a learner with the view to making parents closer to the school so that they can understand school work and learners' progress. However, Learner 1 did not unpack how parents could be involved in children's' academic work. Learner 2 reported that parents should be made to understand that learners need more time to focus on their studies. This was an indication that this learner perceived parents as not understanding the need to spare time for children to focus on their studies. All participants recommended that parents should be involved in learners' academic work. However, their suggestions were not touching the real issue of teaching and learning. With the CGPTAF, teachers and parents would focus on teaching and learning and this might assist in enhancing parents' participation and learners'

academic achievement. In the CGPTAF sessions learners could be invited so that their parents and teachers, together, get an opportunity to motivate them and talk to them in one voice about issues of discipline. Coleman (1988) & Javarof (2016) views social capital as a means to an end by which parents can promote their children's school achievement and educational attainment. Social capital, obtained through visits to the school, may take the form of information (e.g. about upcoming events or available enrichment activities), skills (e.g. how to help with homework and reading, and parenting tips), access to resources (e.g. books, study aids sources of assistance), sources of social control (e.g. school-home agreement on behaviour expectations and educational values); all which can help parents promote children's school achievement.

5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the main findings of the study in relation to theoretical framework and literature unpacked in chapter two. What came sharply out of the data was that parents' involvement in children's academic work was not concentrating on the real curriculum issues; rather their involvement was touching on the outside. It emerged that parents' academic status influenced their participation as those who had little education seemed to be reluctant to participate in academic issues. The data also showed that although schools were trying to involve parents in children's academic work, their activities were uncoordinated, occurred at school level rather than classroom level and focused less on learners' academic work. The researcher, therefore, recommends that a Coordinated Grade-based Parent-Teacher Forums be established to open a platform for teachers and parents to engage on teaching and learning discussions and curriculum debates.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the main findings of the study. This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

6.2 SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS OF THE STUDY

This section gives a summary of the main ideas that were raised in the study. It starts by summarizing ideas chapter by chapter. This summary is followed by a summary of cross-cutting issues.

6.2.1 Ideas of the study chapter by chapter

Chapter 1: In this chapter the background of the study was outlined to contextualize the study. The chapter summarised approaches to parental involvement in children's academic work from different countries of the world, moved to African countries and then discussed South African trends. In the world the trend of involvement of parents in their children's academic work clearly emphasized in the 'No child left Behind Act.' In Africa parental encouragement was not significantly related to academic motivation. In South Africa much emphasis has been but on issues of governance; however, in the Eastern Cape Province, especially in the Amathole West District, SASA did not give the SGB's of the schools the mandate to contribute at the achievement of the children that are at the bottom of the hierarchy. The motivation for the study, research questions, definition of terms and summary of methodology were covered. The chapter ended with an outline of the whole study.

Chapter 2: This chapter reviewed the literature that was relevant to the study, focusing on the theoretical framework and important concepts. These concepts were related to the terms of 'parental participation' 'children's achievement' and 'support mechanisms'. The theoretical frameworks used in this study were used to understand parental involvement in children's academic work. The first theoretical framework indicates the good parenting styles associated with high levels of student's achievement in academic work.

The second theoretical framework offered a model of parental involvement that focused on the understanding on why parents became involved in their children's academic work and how their involvement influences children's outcomes. In other concepts, parental involvement has been seen as having a positive effect on the academic side of the child and also on non-academic outcomes, such as school attendance, student behaviour in school and student attitudes towards school and children's social skills. It has been noticed that economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds influenced children in education. It has also been emphasised that in order for the children to excel, they also need support and encouragement from their parents. Parents should be visible in the schools and the school personnel need to establish a trusting relationship with parents to form partnerships in children's education and reinforce parents' willingness to be actively involved in children's education. Parents should assist their children with homework in order to be effectively involved in children's academic achievement.

Chapter 3: In this chapter the methodology of the study was presented. At the beginning it anchored the study on philosophical ideas and dealt with different ontological and epistemological types of research. These were followed by an outline of the research design and also the methods of data collection and fieldwork processes. The study was then discussed under the title, 'research quality.' The chapter ended by outlining ethical considerations that guided the study.

Chapter 4: Chapter four presents, and analyses the data that was collected from three secondary schools. It is divided into several themes, which were drawn from research questions while others emerged from the data.

Chapter 5: Main research findings are discussed, which emerged from the data in chapter 4. The findings are related to conceptual and theoretical frameworks that were discussed in chapter 2. In this chapter, a framework was also developed of parental participation in children's academic achievement; which shows how parents are supporting children in education. This chapter also proposes a CGPTAF which would enable parents and teachers to engage on academic focused debates.

6.2.2 Summary of cross-cutting issues

6.2.2.1 Issue 1: Lack of parent- teacher collaboration and complementarity

The data showed that some teachers felt that they were not assisted by the parents in doing their work. One teacher commented that most parents did not encourage their children to attend extra classes. According to this teacher, learners should be encouraged by both parents and teachers to attend extra classes. The reason for learners attending these classes is to strengthen where the learners show weaknesses in their learning areas. In these extra classes the teacher should try to drill the learners in these weaknesses and pay extra attention to those areas that the learners show weaknesses in. For the teacher to be able to know learners' weaknesses he/she needs to sample the scripts after the learners have written a test and analyse the test question by question, and the question or questions that most of the learners have performed badly in is or are the questions that the teacher is to pay attention to during extra classes. This means that in some cases the mere encouragement of children by parents was viewed as part of parental involvement in children's academic work. There were no clear role parents play in support of the children academically.

6.2.2.2 Issue 2: Viewing parents as playing disciplinary role learners

The majority of participants viewed parents as having to play a role of ensuring that children behave in an appropriate way. Disciplining learners needs both the parents and the teachers. The parents are to discipline a child at home to do homework and to study his or her books and to see to it that the child is at school on time. At school, the teachers should see to it that the learner is attending all the learning areas,

and does the school work during tuition time. The good connection between the parent and the teachers could help the child achieve at school. If the child does not comply at school, by not attending the classes and not doing the school work, the school should invite the parents to try to solve the problem.

6.2.2.3 Issue 3: Tension between academic support and knowledge of curriculum issues

The issue of parents being not well conversant with curriculum issues caused tension as they had to grapple with what they did not understand. Principals and teachers were expecting parents to support children at home and parents, on the other hand, when supporting their children were not dealing with curriculum issues. Rather, they were providing resources. Most of the parents in the Amathole West District suffered from what is called 'deficit hypothesis' which is the parents' lack of essential skills to promote children's academic work.

6.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.3.1 Uncoordinated school and parent intervention programmes

The majority of parents did not know exactly what was expected of them when it came to helping children academically in school work. Most of them thought that to help their children meant preparing them to be on time at the school premises, forgetting that the co-business is to prepare them academically. What parents were doing was to move away from Epstein's (1992) ideas about parental involvement, which focus specifically on homework activities that the parents do not know how they can prepare children to achieve at school. It seemed that teachers had ignored to put parents on board in academic activities that the parents should focus on when helping children with school work. According to Epstein (1987), the goal of parents and teachers is to share responsibility of family and schools. The emphasis by Epstein is that school and home should work towards a better achievement of the child. According to the findings of this study, there is a gap which is supposed to be filled between school and home in order for the child to achieve academically in his or her school work.

6.3.2 Parental support in children's academic work

Parents need to have clarity on how to help children in school work. Parents should be brought up to date by the teachers at school on how to help their children academically, as it would be the way to improve the children's results at school. It is indicated in this study that most of the parents were illiterate and that caused them to have difficulties to help children academically. When these parents decided to help their children, they bought material resources instead of getting involved academically. Because of illiteracy, the parents did not know what kind of knowledge and skills were needed for children to achieve. Even when the parents were invited to the school to see the progress of the learners, they concentrated on the marks earned by the child, instead of concentrating to the quality of the work done by the child. The schools did not have a strategy of helping the parents to be able to help children at home. That caused the idea of parental involvement in children's academic work to be meaningless because it did not bring any improvement to the progress of the child. That resulted from the fact that meaningful learning of the child was one sided, it was at school only. The schools did not support Epstein's (2005) idea of parents helping the learners at home. Schools needed to try effective ways of implementing parental involvement positively in the progress of the child in school work.

6.3.3 Focusing on providing resources rather than academic support

Mac Beath and Taylor (1990) established that insufficient knowledge in parental involvement led the parents to be unable to help their children in school work, especially at high school level. Parents did not cope with the terminologies that were used in senior secondary schools as some of them did not even have the grade 12 level of education. That resulted in children who could not get good results at grade 12 level of education. Parents' inability to help their children resulted in high dropouts of children at the matric level of education. According to Lareau (1987), there were divergent views of home and school that needed to be bridged to form unity between the school and the home. Parents have put all their responsibilities of school work on the teachers and, moreover, when the parents are experiencing lack of funds to take their children to the tertiary level of education, they ignore to help the children academically and even when they can be able to buy resources to assist the children parents do not know how to assist them

academically using the resources they bought for them. That shows that parents are not yet able to help their children for positive outcomes academically.

6.3.4 A need to introduce Coordinated Grade-based Parent -Teacher Academic Forum

Parental involvement is very important for the achievement of the child in their school work. This study revealed that parental involvement needed to be improved or revived in order for the child to be able to achieve at school. Parents should try to have support services that are accessible to help the children achieve at school. The support services should be jointly monitored by the parents and teachers, and this should be a continuous and ongoing exercise in all schools, which could bring continuous improvement of grade 12 results as this study focused on grade 12. Parents should develop managerial processes that can help to support delivery of services to children (Taita & Alant, 2003). Parents should develop skills that should be able to assist by advising, giving information where necessary, exploring problem and suggesting directions needed to be taken by children to achieve academically. Parents should also drill children in reading skills at home. In order for this idea to be implemented, the researcher has introduced a Coordinated Grade-based Parent-Teacher Academic Forum as a framework that would enhance parental involvement in children's academic work.

This section summarizes the main findings of the research which are categorized under the following headings: Parental participation in their children's academic work; The views of participants on participation of parents in their children's academic work; Challenges of parental participation in their children's academic work and Strategies that can be put in place to enhance parental participation in children's academic work.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

6.4.1 Lack of clear strategies by schools to involve parents

From the findings it can be concluded that there is lack of clear strategies to involve parents in children's academic work as there was not a single instance where parents reported on how they assist children dealing with the content of their work. Even when in some instances parents were invited by teachers to come to school

their involvement was limited to issues of discipline. The fact that parental involvement in children's academic work seemed to be lacking and uncoordinated might be the cause of staggered and differentiated parental participation in children's academic work. Maybe they assume that their role does not go beyond emotional support and resource provision. Their assumption and varied participation might be the indication that their role was not clarified by schools and maybe the teachers themselves were not clear about what role parents should play in children's academic work.

6.4.2 Parental involvement focusing on providing resources and motivation

Although the findings show that learners had different views with regards to how their parents were involved in academic work, it can be deduced from the learners' points of view that parents are mainly concerned with providing resources for their children. Although the majority of learners indicated that their parents provided resources for their education, the majority of parents indicated that they participated in children's academic work by motivating them to learn.

6.4.3 The influence of illiteracy and poverty on parental participation

It can be concluded from the findings that parents' illiteracy levels had a negative influence on their participation in children's academic work. Findings indicated that most of the parents could not help their children due to illiteracy problems and did not understand the current syllabus; some parents were feeling bad for being unable to help children in academic work. It emerged from the data that even though some parents were willing to assist their children they did not even have money to buy resources for their children to be able to perform well at school.

6.5 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Most studies have focused on school level involvement of parents and less at classroom level, where the actual teaching and learning process takes place. This study, therefore tries to change the thinking of parental involvement that focuses outside classroom situation and provide a framework by which parents could be involved in children's academic work. The proposed CGPTAF seeks to open a platform in which parents and teachers of a particular grade will engage in

discussions and debates which are curriculum focused. This means that parental participation in children's academic work would be more guided and schools would involve parents in a more structured and coherent way.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

6.6.1 For practice

As indicated above, the researcher proffers the Coordinated classroom-based parent-Teacher academic Forum as framework for coordinated strategies with the view to enhancing parental involvement in their children's education. It can be concluded that the CGPTAF creates an environment in schools that would be based on teaching and learning and focused on curriculum rather than school meetings. By introducing CGPTAF teachers and parents discuss curriculum issues and try to find good ways of supporting their children in an informed manner. It would be deepening on teachers' understanding of their learner's parents as well and would motivate their performances and to understand their learners better. The CGPTAF, focusing on parental involvement as a way to improve the academic achievement of the learners, should be implemented in all high schools for better results. Principals and teachers with the help of parents should form structures that would help for the implementation of CGPTAF and CGTLAF to be the extension of teaching and learning process where grade based curriculum related issues are discussed by teachers and parents in schools.

6.6.2 Recommendations for further research

- This study should be done in primary schools as this was conducted in high schools. This will help in the smooth flow of efforts and strategies to improve the achievement of children from primary schools to high schools.
- Another study on enhancing involvement of parents in their children's academic work should be done in urban areas, as this study was done in rural areas.

- A comparative study should be conducted focusing on rural and urban schools with the view to establishing the factors that affect parental participation in children's academic work in different contexts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A- DATA SET 1: INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPALS

1. **Researcher:** How do parents participate in their children's academic work?

Principal of school 1: "I am checking the progress in school terms 1, 2, 3, and 4. When teachers are giving the reports to the parents they are supposed to interpret the levels that their children have obtained and the meaning of levels."

Principal of school 2: *worried* "I am encountering a lot of problems from parents, because parents are not doing their work as parents, they are not participating at school and also at home children are not doing their homework and if ever homework is done, they are not submitting in good time or sometimes not submitting the work at all."

Principal of school 3: "I involve parents in children's academic work by letting the children take the homework and classwork books at home and giving it to the parents, parents are requested to sign the homework books and classwork books as to give an evidence that they have looked the work done by their children."

1. **Researcher(Probe):** How does your school involve parents in learner's academic work, why?

Principal of school 1: "All parents from grade 8-12 are invited to the parents meeting, class meeting and subject meeting. This exercise is done to check thoroughly the progress of the children. Parents are told the exact performance of each learner and also, the performance of each class. This is done by dealing with each learner and together with the parent of the learner concerned. Some parents like this invitation of this nature but some parents does not show any interest in it. With those parents who are illiterate the teachers translate everything to their own understanding. The SWAT analysis is also done to check the ability of each learner."

Principal of school 2: "The school is made of three legs, the teachers, the parents and the learners. When learners are not submitting their work we invite parent concerned to the school by calling the parent to the to have the meeting on one on one bases, this is to inform the parents of what is taking place to his or her child. As a school we inform the parent by lying down everything of what is taking place to the child concerned. By inviting the parent we also need the help of the parent to solve the existing problem. The learners need to do the work even without the teachers and parents pushing the children to do the work. Children must be self-motivated to do the school work. Parents should move according to the vision and mission of the school. If you want good results at school, parents should be involved. We want learners to own their work in order for the school to get good results."

Principal of school 3: "As a school we invite grade parents meeting, we try to find assistance which parents can provide to improve children's performance in school results, some children are academically challenged, it is then that as the school we interact with the parent concerned to re-direct the child for better results."

2. **Researcher:** What practical assistance is given by parents in their children's academic work?

Principal of school 1: *emphasising* "As the school we ask the parents to check the children's school book at home, and beg the parents to support the grade 12 learners by paying funds for the camp that is held at the school yearly, and also parents volunteer to cook for their children at school during the grade 12 camp. This has shown a great improvement of grade 12 results, as a result there is an escalation of improvement of grade 12 results in our school, the school has improved from 29 % to 69.2% due to the parents motivation to their children."

Principal of school 2: "As the school we practically call the parents quarterly to report about the learner's progress to the parents. There is nothing that is done by parents. Parents always say teachers should beat the learners, which is not solving the problem because the beating is out of the law according to the South African Schools Act of 1994. Parents only come to school when invited by the school. As the school, we involve parents with children's work and academic work by putting the results of their children

on the screen and discuss with parents what the child had obtained. When we are unpacking these grade 12 results, some of the parents come but some parents do not come to see the progress of their learners which shows the negligence of parents in their children's school progress." **Principal of school 3:** "We call them to come to school for grades parent meetings especially for grade 12 level of education, after the grades meeting the school call individual meeting per learning area in order for the parents to look at the individual progress of his or her child. We always request the parents to append their signatures in their children's school books, our school is in rural area, and the parents do not see the significance of coming to the school is to discuss the education of their children.

3. Researcher: How willing are parents in volunteering in learner's academic work?

Principal of school 1: "Parents are hundred percent willing to do their effort to help the children pass in our school. SGB is taking an extra work, like coming to school to explain the code of conduct to the children at school, learners who are doing silly things at school in our school; parents are taking care of that. Academic work is also controlled. Parents are checking the school work when they wish to do that. Learners are no longer going outside during tuition time. Some parents are coming to check learner's progress in each term.

Principal of school 2: *sad* "There are very serious areas in our black schools and villages. Most the time parents want to go to the funerals and churches, they do not want to come to our schools, this is a thorny issue, they do not come to school to check for the progress of their learners, they always want to be invited by the school in order for them to know the progress of their children, are not taking responsibility in changing their children for better progress. I want to see an immediate improvement especially in this part of parent participation in children's academic work."

Principal of school 3: "Because of this environment, parents are not willing to come to school, they are not clear of their contribution to the academic work of their children. They always come with an excuse that there are many changes in this present syllabus and they do not understand it clearly, that is why it is difficult for them to help their children."

4. Researcher: What are your views about parents' participation in learners' academic work?

Principal of school 1: "Parents need to be motivated and be taught of what is needed at school and the school is supposed to interpret everything to the illiterate parents especially the school report, explaining the meaning of the levels from those reports. Children can go far if they can be motivated, especially be motivated by their parents first. The problem is that this area that we are working on does not have gloomy background."

Principal of school 2: "On my point of view, this is a painful situation, parent participation is 0%. In our school we have 90 learners in grade 12, but 10 parents would come to attend meetings and the rest is not coming to our school meetings. The parents do not support their children when the children are having Camp at school by staying at school to see to it that everything is running smoothly, they do not even monitor the children to see to it that they are studying in the evenings, the children study alone and some children are reluctant to study when they do not see an adult around. The parents expect the teachers during the Camp to do everything for their children."

Principal of school 3: "All stakeholders e.g. Departments, Indaba's need to inform parents by workshops, of how to assist parents in participating in children's academic work. As in our school we inform parents of what they are supposed to do to support their children in academic work but the parents are not willing to do their part.

5. Researcher: What strategies do you use as a school to promote parent participation in their children's academic work? Why?

Principal of school 1: "At our school we try by all means to implement commitment and involvement of parents in children's academic work. The school decided to introduce different types of registers. When inviting the parents to parents meeting as the school we ask the parents to sign a register as to see which parents are attending the meetings regularly. In our classrooms there is a subject register to see if the learners are attending their respective learning areas regularly, as the school we give the report

of learning area's attendance of learners to the parents meeting in order for the parents to know exactly what is exactly taking place inside the classrooms during tuition time. If registers are not used parents will lose focus and will not concentrate because they are not involved fully in academic work of their children."

Principal of school 2: "As a school we have academic awards on quarterly bases. The school displays the grade 12 results on the screen in order for those who does not work harder can start to work hard so that they cannot be embarrassed by their results on the screen. The school also does crush course with the parents in order for the parents to be able to interpret the learner's report. As a school insists to the parents that if the parent does have the child who is doing grade 12 at school, the parent is supposed to be visible at school to check the child's progress. If the learner is lazy to study, as the school we invite the parent in writing or by calling the parent to come and assist the school in his or her bad child's behaviour or laziness in the child's studies. As the school we also want to find out from the parents especially the illiterate parents of what is exactly taking place at home concerning the child's academic work, in order for the school to be able to assist the parent if possible. For grade 12 learners we also compare the levels of the child in all the terms. The school also ask assistance from the parents if the child had poor levels in June results. As the school we make the learners to sign down and make the promise of improving the results in front of the parent and the teacher, because in our school we believe in engaging parents all the time. The school also does not allow the learners to have cell phones in school premises, because the phones can disturb the learners in their studies."

Principal of school 3: *confident* "We write letters and inform parents of what is taking place at school. We ask parents to come as individuals to see the progress of their children in academic work. The school also invite Community leaders to attend school meetings and share with community leaders the problems encountered from the grade 12 learners by the school, after the meeting the community leaders go and share what has been discussed at school meeting with the communities when they call the Imbizo in their villages, this helps in those community members who does not like coming to school to be aware of what is taking place at the school."

6. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies do you think can be used to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work? why?

Principal of school 1: "Parents should be called at school to motivate learners or a motivational speaker from outside who can be an ex-student, Reverend from the local community, lawyer or any other person who can be a model to learners should be invited to come and motivate learners."

Principal of school 2: *voice shaking* "God depend on parents to take the child to another level, if you are a parent you should be closer to God. The parents' duty is to teach the child to be independent. Children should be trained by parents to develop self- motivation. The doors are open in our school to assist the parents in whatever way. Some parents are surprised by the behaviour children display at school as contrary to the behaviour they show to their parents at home. Parents should walk the talk of helping their children with academic work."

Principal of school 3: "There should be community programs on local radio stations like, Umhlobo We Nene and Fort Hare FM, where it can be necessary to use these stations to encourage parents to take care of their children's academic work."

7. **Researcher:** Is there anything that you want to share with me regarding parents' participation in learner's academic work?

Principal of school 1: "Teachers need to motivate parents first. In our school every year we always have grade 12 Camps. Parents are always reluctant to pay for the camp if the department has not indicated to help the school but once the Department of Education has offered little support for the Camp, is then that the parents would start paying the money for the camp. This year very few parents have paid for the Camp, this shows that parents need to be motivated first in order for them to motivate their children. Parents in our school know the good work of the camp. In 2013 the pass percentage of grade 12 was 39% in 2014 it was 40% in 2015 was 59% and in 2016 was 62.9 %. All of this improvement in percentages was caused by the Camp."

Principal of school 2: “Parents if they want anything better in results of their children, they should participate in their children’s academic work. My sister was travelling a lot in her job as a result her child was not doing well at school. When my sister was suspended in her job and she started to focus in her child’s progress at school, by helping her child in her school work and there was a great improvement in her child’s academic work. In her child’s grade 12 results the child had six distinctions. Children really need the support of the parent in their school work.”

Principal of school 3: “Parents in this community are illiterate most of them. The biological parents of the children are in urban areas seeking for jobs. The children are staying with grandparents who are not able to help the children with academic work. The only thing that should be done to motivate the parents is to keep on pushing them to attend the school meetings so that they can be assisted by the teachers to be able to help their children at home.”

END

APPENDIX-B DATA SET 2: INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS

1. **Researcher:** How do parents participate in their children's academic work?

Teacher school 1: *furious* "Parents are participating inactively in children's academic work, because most of the parents are illiterate, passive and unable to assist their children on school academic work, but the few parents who had education try to help their children in academic work. Those learners who are assisted have good improvement in school academic work. They have also moved up the levels in their reports. Some of the students are orphans, there is no one at their homes who can assist them, and they are depended on their relatives of any available help the relatives can give them."

Teacher of school 2: "There are parents who take their children's education serious and others do not care for their children's education. Some parents encourage their children to join study groups and encourage their children to study at home. When parents have monitored their children you see the improvement of the child. You as a teacher you could see if the child was monitored and not monitored by the parent."

Teacher of school 3: "I would say some parents participate but some do not participate fully, in a scale of ten those who are participating I would give them five. Some are resistant in participating in children's academic work and this affects the academic work of the child."

1. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve parents in learner's academic work? Why?

Teacher of school 1: "In our school when children are given homework, the parent should sign the learner's books. Parents who are illiterate put an x as a sign that they have looked on their children's books, us as teachers we then hope that the parents have looked on the children's books. The school want the parents to be always actively involved in children's academic work."

Teacher of school 2: "The parents are invited to school twice in a month. This invitation is to tell them about their children's progress and also to educate the parents and tell them how to look at their children's portfolios and reports. This helps the parents to be able to tell their children to learn more at school. What we have noticed as teachers is that learners do not like the invitation of their parents at school."

Teacher of school 3: *feeling concerned* "I have never seen any parent here at school to come and inquire about the learner academic progress in our school. The parents only come for disputes in our school. Most of the parents are illiterate and they are afraid to come to school and inquire about the school work. There are parents who had University qualifications but these parents never come to school being concerned about the academic work of the school, they only come about the issues that are affecting the school not the academic work of learners. I have never have sessions with parents ever since I came in this school."

2. **Researcher:** How do you involve parents in their children's academic work in your learning area?

Teacher of school 1: "In my learning area I give the learners questions to ask from their parents. The learners should listen from the news on economic aspects from television and those who does not have television listens from the radio; I do this exercise because economics happens on daily bases this is making the learner to be responsible by listening with the help of the parents. I also use these questions as my introduction in my lesson every day."

Teacher of school 2: "The teacher in my school is responsible for his or her learning area. The teacher invites the parents of the learners individually after school hours because the teacher does not want to disturb the tuition time of the school. Some parents do appreciate this invitation from teachers but most of the learners do not appreciate this kind of invitation. As school teachers we do this exercise because

we know that learners do not want to be known by their parents how they perform in their studies. Some of the learners are always absent from school, we tell their parents about that. I cannot say the reason for parents to ignore their children is because they are illiterate, they always say that they are busy with their own chores at home. Parents are demotivated because they do not have money to take their children to tertiary education, although some parents do have grade 12. Socioeconomic status affects the parents because most parents are not working.”

Teacher of school 3: “Whenever I give them tasks a parent have to sign that work as the proof that he or she has seen the work at home. Some of the parents are so distant to participate in their children’s academic work. Some parents do sign some do not sign the children’s books. There are few parents who are willing to look at the academic work of the children.”

3. **Researcher:** What practical assistance is given by parents in their children’s academic work?

Teacher of school 1: “Some parents come to the school to look at the progress of the learner and question the levels of the learners. I sit down with the parent and try to attend the problem and also invite the learner to join us and it will be a teacher, parent and the learner. The illiterate parents will not be actively involved with the report. Will only concentrate on the marks rather than the levels of pass rate. I then explain to the parent what is happening with learner’s academic work.”

Teacher of school 2: *yhaz’* “ About 98% of parents do not have anything to help their children at home something like computers, laptops, smart phones, calculators, good latest books and other important material because they are not working. Some just append their signatures on learner’s book as a surety that they have looked at learners books.”

Teacher of school 3: “There are companies who donate calculators here at school. The only text books learners have are those given by the school. In our school there is no book that is bought by parent for the child. Few students are given practical assistance by the parents in our school.

4. **Researcher:** How willing are parents in volunteering in learner’s academic work?

Teacher of school 1: “We do not have parents who volunteers from parents to come and help us to motivate our children at our school because most of our parents at our school are illiterate. To motivate our learners we ask the former learners to come and motivate learners.”

Teacher of school 2: “Parents are willing to help learners, when learners are doing grade 12 level of education, their enthusiasm is visible. They will check their children’s work and even come to school to check the grade 12 learner’s progress. When we have ‘Ilima’ the parents do not want to come overnight and monitor their children because they do not want to participate in their children’s academic work.

Teacher of school 3: “Parents come for other things in our school not for academic work of the learners. I never saw the parents being invited by the school to come to look at the progress of academic work of their grade 12 learners. The problem is that biological parents of the children are not staying with them, they are in the urban areas for jobs, and the children are with the grandparents who are unable to monitor their progress and attending school meetings, the parents as a result are showing no willingness of helping the children because they are unable to help them.”

5. **Researcher:** What are your views about parents’ participation in learner’s academic work?

Teacher of school 1: “On every academic meeting parents should be educated by teachers in order for them to be able to help their children at home.”

Teacher of school 2: “I do not know if I empathise or sympathise with the parents, there are those who are willing to participate and those who does not care. As teachers we encourage the parents to help their children at home. What we have noticed is that parents do not know how to help their children in their academic work.”

Teacher of school 3: “The first education is at home, but the sad thing is that children are not taught responsibility at home concerning their academic work. They do not sit down and revise own their work at home, even those that are in grade 12 level of education. These learners dodge classes after break time. It seems as if these learners do not have fear to be asked about their school work at home. This

makes things difficult for the learner's academic work, if parents can play a role by helping children in their academic work, learners can improve their pass rate."

6. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies do you think can be used to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work? Why?

Teacher of school 1: "We need to have a plan called 'I lima' project, where the learners are sleeping at the school, where learners are incapacitated with everything at school. In 'I lima' project parents are expected to volunteer to monitor their children's studies at night by making sure that the gates are locked at night. Parents are supposed to be working together with the teachers and children. These three bodies should know the starting time of the studies and the breaking time of studies. This program is done two months before the final examinations. In term 1 and term 2 we do have Saturday classes on weekends. During the week there are morning classes and afternoon classes but only on key subjects."

Teacher of school 2: "At school we are carrying on with meetings about performance and encouraging the parents to support their children in their performances. We refer the parents to social development to get the social grant. As a school we work hand in hand with other departments to promote education. It does help the children when we refer them to other departments for help. I personally go myself to seek help to social department."

Teacher at school 3: "The school need to involve the parents by calling a meeting to teach the parents first and give parents clarity of about the danger of not involving themselves in children's academic work, telling them that they have a responsibility of their children's progress. To teach parents first, about their responsibility. You have to sacrifice for the progress in your academic work as a grade 12 learner. Learners should also play their role of studying, because teachers get bored if the teachers have been doing the same job for a long time. People resist change; the contribution from a parent, the contribution from a teacher can assist the child to be a better person."

7. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies do you use as a school to promote parent participation in their children's academic work? Why?

Teacher of school 1: "As a school after each semester we issue reports to the parents. When teachers are issuing reports they explain what is written on the report to the parents of the children. Other parents are convinced others are not convinced with the practice of the school, us teachers we need parents to bring someone who can understand and motivate the learner and be a model to the learners e.g. a person who was once a student at the school."

Teacher of school 2: "When we give homework to the learners as teachers, we call the parents and inform them about the work learners have been given by the school. As the school we even form what's group with the parents. The problem is that some of the parents do not have cell phones; sometimes the message is seen by the child and deletes that message before the parent saw it. The school is always emphasising that parents should have cell phones. Some of the learners come from scattered villages that are the reason the school is appealing to the parents to have cell phones so that the parents can be contacted at any moment."

Teacher of school 3: "The school is in the centre to all the other surrounding schools. Private companies come and disturb our tuition at school. Our school hosts departmental workshops. The principal should be strict that all the activities that have nothing to do with the school should be done afterhours. When there are Saturday classes, parents should play a role and come and sit in class to see what is actually taking place on Saturday classes, this can also provide security for the students. Parents can see the seriousness of the learners for attending Saturday classes and can also assist the teachers."

8. **Researcher:** Is there anything that you want to share with me regarding parents' participation in learner's academic work?

Teacher of school 1: *face showing sadness* "Having a challenge of parents not involving themselves with their children, some of the children show little respect to their parents. Other children are staying with their guardian's and the guardians are not having a chance to look at the child's work. Where the parent is unable to come to school to ask about the learners progress, we as a school we go and visit

the parent. As a school we encourage the learners to manage their time by drafting their own study time table, by that we want the learners to get used in managing their time when studying. We ask the learners to submit their study time table where we want everything that the learner does even at home, like home chores should appear on the study time table. This helps us as a school to be able to give suggestions to the learner of the amendments of dividing the time accordingly to his or her commitments.”

Teacher of school 2:“I gave my learners work from indigenous knowledge group. I ask the learners to get the answers from the parents, the response from the parents was that if the teacher does not know the answer, does she think that I as the parent will know the work, she is the teacher and I am not the teacher.” As I can see the parents are not willing at all to help their children, Learners do the house chores at home and parents are not encouraging children to study their books. By the way it’s not me who is studying; this was said by one of the parents.”

“Most of learners stay with grandparents, most of them their biological parents died of HIV and AIDS which are hammering our area and most of learners are orphans they leave on foster care grant.”

Teacher of school 3: “Parents are resistant to help their children. If they can change their mentality that the school is for certain people they can improve the progress of their children by monitoring their children.”

END

APPENDIX C- DATA SET 3 INTERVIEWS WITH LEARNERS

SCHOOL '1' LEARNERS

1. **Researcher:** What do you understand about parental participation in your academic work?

Learner 1: "It is a help of a parent to a child."

Learner 2: "It is the assistance you get from your parents."

Learner 3: "The help you get from a parent with your school work."

2. **Researcher (Probe):** How do your parents participate in your academic work at home?

Learner 1: "Parents does not directly help me with my school work at home." "My parents do not participate but encourages me to study so that I can succeed."

Learner2: "They help me by saying I must not do house chores. At home we only depend on social grant, and we do not have money."

Learner3: "I stay with my grandmother; because my mother is drinking liquor does not care about me and my studies. The only thing that my grandmother does is to tell me to go to school every day that is the only help my grandmother is offering. Sometimes I don't feel like going to school. Living with my grandmother who is not educated is difficult, because she cannot help me with my school work."

3. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve your parents in your academic work?

Learner 1: "My school knows that my parents do not like to participate on my studies. If my parents are invited to a school meeting they do not come to those meetings they just send a neighbour to attend a school meeting on their behalf. My parents ignore the school invitation even if I have done something wrong at school."

Learner 2: "If I do not attend Saturday classes my parents come to school to report me. They do not come to school to ask for my academic progress."

Learner 3: "The only time that my parents come to school is when they come to fetch my school results."

4. **Researcher (Probe):** Which practical assistance do your parents offer as support in your academic work?

Learner 1: *showing bitterness* "I seek help all by myself and I do not succeed in doing that." My grandmother is too old, even her pension money is handled by my mother who does not stay with us at home, both my grandmother and my mother are unable to help me."

Learner 2: "My parents buy airtime so that I can google the information from my phone. Sometimes I phone my aunt from Cape Town to assist me for airtime to do my assignments. Sometimes I search the information from the text book or study guide."

Learner 3: "My parents give buys airtime for me to google the information from my phone. Sometimes they do not have money for airtime and that causes me not to finish my school work."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** How do your parents assist you in your academic work?

Learner 1: "I do not see any assistance from my parents, my grandmother feels so good and proud of me when I am progressing but doesn't know how to assist me."

Learner 2: "They do not even seem to be happy when I get my results. They just assist me verbally."

Learner 3: "They do not assist me directly but they encourage me when I pass. They also support me by encouraging me."

6. **Researcher (Probe):** What is your relationship with your parents concerning your academic work?

Learner 1: *sad* "My parents say that I should ask assistance from educated people in my neighbourhood. My neighbour assists me during the week-end only, during the week it's difficult to be assisted by my neighbour because he is busy with his work duties and always tired."

Learner 2: "My parents do not discuss my academic work with me, they never do that. They only assist me when I am given IsiXhosa school work, maybe because they understand the language. They do not assist me in other learning areas because they are illiterate."

Learner 3: "They just support me but not assist me. They always say they want me to be educated because they are not educated."

7. **Researcher (Probe):** What connections do your teachers and parents have concerning your academic work?

Learner 1: "There is no connection at all between my teachers and my parents, because my teachers are always interested to meet with my parents, but my parents are not interested to meet with my teachers. In 2012 I dropped out from school and my parents neglected me ever since then, telling me that I am not serious enough about school."

Learner 2: "My parents feel that it is a waste of time to come and meet with my teachers. They are always busy with their own businesses. They complain if I ask them to come to school even for school meetings."

Learner 3: "My parents are always complaining when they are invited to school meetings. They also say they are busy to come to school even if they are invited by teachers."

8. **Researcher (Probe):** What are your views about participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 1: *angry* "I am not satisfied about the negligence of my parents, it decreases my self-esteem. They are angry because I dropped out of school for two years." "I am worried because academic work should be handled by teachers, parents and children. Sometimes the school invites our parents to discuss grade 12 term results with our parents and my parents are not there, teachers are supposed to go to our homes if the parents resist to come to school meetings and try to find out what causes them not to attend the school meetings and the school is supposed to do something for that negligence."

Learner 2: "I feel like a loser when parents are not participating, because I feel that they should give me support."

Learner 3: *with confidence* "I am not satisfied because my parents are supposed to be my shoulder to cry on. They always say it's my own life, my own education and they do not care for it, and do not see the need for me to be educated."

9. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 1: "There should be a meeting between the class teacher, a parent and a learner, and also a meeting with the teacher of each learning area. I think the reason the school calls a meeting is to make our parents closer to the school to see problems concerning school work and also the progress."

Learner 2: "School teachers should visit parents who do not participate in learners school work."

Learner 3: “Teachers call parents meetings and give our parents reports about our school progress, but teachers do not visit our homes to find out the matter from our parents who do not attend the school meetings.”

10. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 1: “There should be a meeting between a parent and a class teacher.”

Learner 2: “Each parent should have a meeting with the teacher of the learning area concerned.”

Learner 3: “The school should visit a parent who does not attend the school meetings.”

11. **Researcher:** What challenges are your parents' and teacher's encountering in supporting you in your academic work?

Learner 1: “I do not participate in house chores at home, and also my challenge is that; I do not read my books.” “My parents do not care about my studies and in return I do not care for house chores when I am busy studying. I want them to see that my studies are important to me.”

Learner 2: “I am a disciplined learner, and I read my books to reach the highest levels at school, my parents should know that, as a learner I need time to study my books and the time to do house chores.”

Learner 3: “I do not have challenges because I am humble enough for my studies. I am responsible for my studies.”

(Interviews with School '2' Learners)

1. **Researcher:** What do you understand about parental participation in your academic work?

Learner 4: “It when a parent is involved in a child school work, when the parent checks the performance of the tests, class works and assignments I have written, that shows that the parent cares for me, the parent sometimes contacts the class teacher to check about the progress of my work. Sometimes to check if I need assistance in my school work, the parent helps me if the parent is unable to do that, the parent seeks help somewhere.”

Learner 5: “It is when your parent supports you in your school work. When a child is given school work a parent should be involved by seeing to it that the child is doing the work that has been given by the teacher.”

Learner 6: “Parent can also contact a teacher to ask about my performance, the parent should be involved in helping me in my school work and check the things that I am studying every day and be in touch with my teachers always.”

2. **Researcher (Probe):** How do your parents participate in your academic work at home?

Learner 4: “Parents should participate by going through my school books every day and tell me what is expected of me at school.”

Learner 5: “My parents should also check from my teachers how I perform at school.”

Learner 6: “My parents should help me in my home works and by checking what we have done at school.”

3. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve your parents in your academic work?

Learner 4: “I think that it is necessary for the school to invite the parents and report our performance as learners to our parents. The school is supposed to show our parents the books or scripts where we have written our school work, this would help the parent to see the exact performance of the child.”

Learner 5: "The school should invite the parents in a meeting situation and analyse the learners' results in front of the parents and inform the parents about our performance."

Learner 6: "I feel good about the school when it is inviting my parents, so that my progress should be transparent to my parents. I get the strengths of my books when I know that my progress is transparent to my parents before the end of the year. Even if I can fail my parents would be embarrassed and not be surprised about my failure at school."

4. **Researcher (Probe):** Which practical assistance do your parents offer as support in your academic work?

Learner 4: "My parents bought a laptop for me to help me in my studies and also good books that I have to use as reference when doing my school work. They encourage me to work harder for my studies, and to use the library to get the latest information."

Learner 5: "My parents buy calculator to help me when I am practicing mathematics at home. The school supply us with calculators but we do not take them home. They also take me to the library to get information from the library computers and books, because at home we do not have a computer."

Learner 6: "My parents buy books that I do not have. They instill in me that I have to be serious at school because education is important. My parents also hire tutors to assist me in my learning areas that give me problems in order to improve my performance."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** How do you parents assist you in your academic work?

Learner 4: "They check my group work and try to help me in those learning areas that are difficult for me."

Learner 5: "My parents are encouraging me to attend afternoon classes, check my homework, by taking me to study groups and also my parent reports to the teacher concerned what I have done in my study group because my parent allowed me to use one of the rooms at home as a study room where I would invite some of my classmates and study with them. My parents have always putting it clear to me that I have to honour my study hours."

Learner 6: "They encourage me not to give up on school, also checking my books and contact my teachers to search for my progress at school and everything that I do at school."

6. **Researcher (Probe):** What is your relationship with your parents concerning your academic work?

Learner 4: *very happy* "I appreciate the participation of my parents to my studies; I also discuss my performance with my parents and telling my parents how I feel about my performance at school."

Learner 5: *very happy* "My mother encourages me in my studies and she frequently checks my school work. She tells me how important education is. I feel so happy now that she is always watching me throughout my studies."

Learner 6: "My parent gives me some tips of how I should study my books and perform better in my studies. I want to solve my academic problems in order for my parents to be proud of me."

7. **Researcher (Probe):** What connections do your teachers and parents have concerning your academic work?

Learner 4: "The connection between teachers, me and my parents is very good; and also my school teachers update the parents with everything that is happening at the school. My parents know the learning areas I am good at and those that I am bad at. The relationship between me and my parents is functionally, teachers tell my parents about my progress at school."

Learner 5: "The teachers and my parents freely discuss about my school performance, which concerns my tests, classwork and my assignments."

Learner 6: "My teachers always involve my parents in everything at school. Teachers at my school always encourages my parents to help me at home, and also tell my parents everything about my performance and my school work."

8. **Researcher (Probe):** What are your views about participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 4: "What is happening between me, my teachers and my parents satisfies me, because they know my progress and everything concerning my learning areas. The learning areas I am good at and those that gives me problems. They know what they expect from me."

Learner 5: "My parents know my performance in my school work and are encouraging me in my studies."

Learner 6: "I feel good, because the involvement of my parents in my studies gives me the power to study hard. I want to make my parents to be proud of me."

9. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 4: "Teachers should make sure that we go home with our scripts and the parents are supposed to append signatures on my scripts showing that the parent has seen my work, this motivates the parent and myself about my school work."

Learner 5: "When my parent sees another child getting an award, my parent becomes motivated and helps me to improve in my academic work. This competition improves my performance in my studies."

Learner 6: *happy* "The analysis of results that my parents get from my school motivates my parents to take care of my studies."

10. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 4: "Teachers should tell the parents about the role parents should do at home to encourage us more in our school work. This gives parents advices on how to help us in our academic work. Parents should be more involved in our academic work."

Learner 5: "For morning and afternoon classes teachers should invite other teachers from neighbouring schools for a variety of teaching to their learners, also the teachers should pressurise learners to obtain higher levels during examinations. The levels should be explained to the parents in order for the parents to know whether the child is performing good or bad at school."

Learner 6: "The school should hold more meetings with parents, where they can explain academic performance of the learners. There should also be a competition with neighbouring schools about academic performance; this would help learners to study hard because they should be afraid to be out classed by other schools in academic performance."

11. **Researcher:** What challenges are your parents' and teacher's encountering in supporting in your academic work?

Learner 4: "Teachers and parents even if they put more emphasis in helping us with academic work but the learners still do not like to do homework, and some of the children are not serious enough about their academic work, learners still continue to perform badly at school. Some dodge classes and that has to be reported to the parents by teachers. Learners are supposed to have personal study time table, where they are supposed to divide their study time accordingly, but most of the learners have nothing to guide them when they are studying. Sometimes show no respect to the teachers and parents."

Learner 5: "There are temptations that some peers influence other children not to study, and the weak learners are influenced easily."

Learner 6 "Some learners do not commit themselves in their books; they spend a lot of time on cell phones. Bad behaviour leads to a high failure rate and it drops the pass rate of the whole school. These

learners that are misbehaving should be expelled from school because they are disturbing the whole school.”

(Interviews with School ‘3’ Learners)

1. **Researcher:** What do you understand about parental participation in your academic work?

Learner 7: “Parental participation means parents should be involved in a child’s school work; the parent should take part in encouraging the learner about all the work that is given at school.”

Learner 8: “Parents play an important role, without the combination of teachers and parents our schools will be nothing. Parents should always be involved at school.”

Learner 9: “It is very important to be supported by parents at school all the time.”

2. **Researcher (Probe):** How do your parents participate in your academic work at home?

Learner 7: *very sad* “I leave alone, my parents do not participate in my school work, and they only support me financially. I am the only one who is in charge of my school work. As a teenager, I get to follow things that others do. Sometimes I am in charge but sometimes I get involved in what other teenagers do.”

Learner 8: “My parents participate a lot, they always ask what we were doing at school. They want to know every step of the way. What was taught at school that day? They play a big role in my life.”

Learner 9: *satisfied* “They ask about homework, assignments every day. I always do my homework every day.”

3. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve your parents in your academic?

Learner 7: *not happy* “The school try to set up meetings with my parents, once or twice a term.” If you do not come with your parent, the school chases you away. I call my dad to say that he must come to school; if he is not coming I will be expelled from school, after telling my dad that, my dad calls the principal and tell him that he cannot come to school.”

Learner 8: “After writing examinations, there is always a parents’ meeting which is discussing about the results of term 1. This year there are 23 grade 12 students but only 15 students pass in term 1. My parents said I had to pull up my socks and focus on my studies.”

Learner 9: *shy* “In term 1, I did very badly, I failed the examinations. My mom saw that my report was very bad; I fail the economics and mathematics literacy. Today the school is discussing winter school and a camp with parents to improve the results.

4. **Researcher (Probe):** Which practical assistance do your parents offer as support in your academic?

Learner 7: “My parents only give me financial assistance. With the money I buy clothes, school wear, and matric jacket, I also pay for the camp. I do buy books that I need for instance I have just bought a business study book and a books that I lost at school. When I need money I just call my father and he will deposit the money.

Learner 8: “The school always does fundraising for the camp and winter school. The school also receives money from sports tournament. In connection with the text books, the school does have text books; we don’t need to buy text books as students.”

Learner 9: “My parents assist me by giving me money. They always come to school to check my progress. At our school we do not need to buy calculators, textbooks and computers they are all for free.”

5. **Researcher (Probe):** How do your parents assist you in your academic work?

Learner 7: *voice shaking* “They just send money. The only care is financially. I can’t say they really do care, as long as they send money my future to them it’s out of their hands.”

Learner 8: *happy* "At home my parents help me to answer the questions that I do not understand, my mother also help me a lot. Some of the questions I do them myself. My parents ask me about my homework every day I come from school. I feel very proud of them when they are helping me."

Learner 9: "Each and every time I do my homework my parents assist me and ask questions if I do understand my homework."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** What is your relationship with your parents concerning your academic work?

Learner 7: *crying* "I am the only one who calls them, they do not call me. My dad always says my future is in my hands, whatever I do wrong it will be my fault. My father is willing to pay fees for all my studies. I do not think my dad is interested in my future."

Learner 8: "The relationship between me and my parents is very strong. My parents want me to pass. I do minor house chores, most of the time I concentrate on my academic work. At six in the evening I start to study my books."

Learner 9: "I start to do my academic work at five in the evening."

6. **Researcher (Probe):** What connections do your teachers and parents have concerning your academic work?

Learner 7: "My dad always calls the principal in connection with my studies, he does not call me. If there is a teacher who wants to talk to my father about my school work, the teacher connects with the principal and the principal calls my dad."

Learner 8: *looking down* "Some teachers do have my mother's number, if I failed a test, by the time I go home my mother knew everything I have done at school. My mother was a student at this school."

Learner 9: "The connection of teachers and my parents is my report. Teachers complain to my mother about my progress when she comes to fetch my report."

7. **Researcher (Probe):** What are your views about participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 7: *bold* "It is not good; it is not encouraging but in other parents who do encourage their children it is good. Parents need to encourage their children because they want them to succeed. I told myself I can make it through my studies without my parents."

Learner 8: "It motivates me too much because not all the work I do at school I know it, it's good to ask from my parents about my school work."

Learner 9: "If I did badly at school teachers and my parents come together and try to push me too much in my studies."

8. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 7: "The meeting with the parents is encouraged by the school. If the parents do not make it to the meeting the child will be expelled from the school."

Learner 8: "If the teachers and parents agreed on Saturday classes, there should be a letter that is signed by parents on agreement on Saturday classes."

Learner 9: "Parents should sign forms so that Saturday classes should be attended by the learners. Parents want us to have better results."

9. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote the participation of your parents in your academic work?

Learner 7: *emphasising* “Teachers in our school should not accept phone calls from parents who do not attend school meetings. They should not accept any type of excuse from parents who do not attend school meetings. If the parent is not there, the child should be expelled from school.”

Learner 8: “Every parent’s cell numbers should be here at school, because there are learners who do not know what they are here for in our school. Our school is very strict, cell phones are taken away from the learners during tuition time if the learner has been seen carrying a cell phone in the school yard, it is taken away and be given back to the learner at the end of the term.”

Learner 9: “Parents are supposed to come to school fortnightly to check for the progress of children at school.”

- 10. Researcher:** What challenges are your parents’ and teacher’s encountering in supporting you in your academic work?

Learner 7: “The challenge is communication because my dad does not want to come to school meetings. He has a lack of interest on my progress at school.”

Learner 8: “Some learners do not come to school for two weeks, but in our school there is scholar transport, we get books for free and we have nutrition at our school.”

Learner 9: “Many learners like to play at school and waste their academic time. Some do not come on Saturday without any reason. In our school, if you do not come to classes on Saturday you are being sent back home on Monday to call your parent. What the learners did affect the teachers and parents.”

END

APPENDIX D-DATA SET 4 INTERVIEW WITH PARENTS

SCHOOL '1' PARENTS

1. **Researcher (Probe):** How do you participate in your child's academic work? Why?

Parent 1: "Sometimes my child needs airtime for googling information; I give her money to buy airtime. I spare a room at my home for my child to study when she needs a quiet place to study. I also help my child for house chores, so that she can have enough time to study her books. When she needs extra information for her studies she sometimes borrows the books she needs from other children."

Parent 2: "I help my child in Agriculture and he will give me feedback that he has done well on that work at school. I am able to help my child in English, Agriculture and IsiXhosa, but I am not able to help my child in Maths literacy because I am not clear about the numbers."

Parent 3: "I allow her to go to study groups. I help her with English and History because I was good at them. I even allow my child and other children to sleep at my house so that they can study overnight. I organize someone to help them in Maths Literacy because they do not understand it quite well."

2. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve you in your child's academic work?

Parent 1: "The school invites the parents and explain the weakness of the child in learning areas. When the child pretended as if he has gone to the study groups and yet has not, I report that to the principal and we deal with the child."

Parent 2: "The school is concerned about our children, that encourages my child to learn more and she likes her teachers and wishes to please them all the time. The child is positive to study hard at this school."

Parent 3: "The school gives us the information about the progress of each term. In term 1 she did well maybe it's because I always assist my child in her academic work."

3. **Researcher:** What practical assistance are you giving to support your child's academic work?

Parent 1: "I bought calculator for my child to encourage her to be able to study Business studies."

Parent 2: I buy airtime for my child to be able to google information for her studies."

Parent 3: "My child sometimes asks me to buy cattle stripes in order for him to do practical for Agriculture."

4. **Researcher:** What is your relationship to the child you are living with?

Parent 1: "I am the child's mother, we are staying together and I help her a lot in her academic work."

Parent 2: "My child tells me everything in connection with her studies. I tell her to ask for information from Fort Hare students that are in our neighbourhood."

Parent 3: "Sometimes I notice that my child is lazy in studying his books. I monitor my child when studying; I also encourage her to rehearse to me what he has studied on his own in order to check on him if he was really studying his books."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** Is your age (between 20-35) (between 36-45) (between 46-65) (older than 65) makes you able to assist your child in academic work? Why?

Parent 1: "I am 40 years old; I am able to help my child in her school work."

Parent 2: "I organise some people to help my child, I also organise students from Fort Hare who are doing commerce to help my child in Business studies."

Parent 3: "I help him when it is necessary, I even organise students Fort Hare or someone who can help my child in his school work."

6. **Researcher:** How is your marital status affecting you in assisting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent 1: "I do not have husband, I try to help my child in academic work on my own."

Parent 2: "My husband helps our child sometimes but sometimes he organises someone to help her."

Parent 3: "I do not have a husband, but I help my child myself if I am able to do that or I see that I can be able to solve the problem."

7. **Researcher:** Which level of education did you manage to attempt (Grade 0-7) (Grade 8-12) Tertiary level?

Parent 1: "I only passed grade 9 at school."

Parent 2: "I am not able to help my child because I only pass grade 7 at school."

Parent 3: "I did go to college; I do help my child when it is necessary."

8. **Researcher:** How is your level of education assisting you to participate in your child's work?

Parent 1: "Some of the problems that my child comes across in her studies I can solve them, but usually I look for someone to help my child."

Parent 2: "I organize people to help my child always."

Parent 3: "Most of the time I organise people to help my child."

9. **Researcher:** What are your views about your participation in your child's academic work?

Parent 1: *smiling* "My child progresses at school and that encourages me because my child is very positive about her studies, is a hard working child."

Parents 2: "My child cares for her books I encourage her to pass grade 12 and proceed to tertiary education."

Parent 3: "I encourage my child to study hard and I also help her in her studies, she is very positive in her academic work."

10. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote your participation in your child's academic work? Why?

Parent 1: "There are morning and afternoon studies in our school; our teachers encourage our children to attend winter school."

Parent 2: *satisfied* "The school gave my child a bursary that encouraged my child in her studies very much. Even when she is given home work at school she tries her best to work on it."

Parent 3: *satisfied* "Our teachers in our school go an extra mile for our children; they even come to school on Saturday. Sometimes invite us for the progress of our children so that we can discuss it with the children at home."

11. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote parental participation in their children's academic work?

Parent 1: "Our children are going to attend winter school and camp; we praise our teachers for that."

Parent 2: "Our school formed a camp for our children to study. Our teachers informed us with every step of the way of our children's progress at school."

Parent 3: "Our children are to attend winter school and camp, so that they can be having enough chance to study."

12. Researcher: What challenges do you encounter in supporting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent 1: "My child has to go to the camp and I do not have money to pay for the camp, I live on grant I do not have a job even now my child is suffering, at grade 12 he does not have school shoes."

Parent 2: "We leave on pension; we do not have enough money to support my child. I try to buy things that would help my child in her studies although we do not have enough money at home."

Parent 3: "I wish that the school should have computers, because we do not always have money for airtime all the time when the child needs airtime to google information."

(Interviews with School '2' Parents)

1. Researcher (Probe): How do you participate in your child's academic work? Why?

Parent 4: "I give her time to study at home, if there are questions that she does not understand I ask her to re-read the question. I also ask my child to look for the word she does not understand from the dictionary or we try to re-read the whole sentence to try to get the meaning of the word me as a parent helping my child."

Parent 5: "I am the cousin to the child, helping the grandmother when there is a school meeting or the school invites the parent when the child has done something wrong at school. We try to encourage the child to come to school every day; at home we make sure that he has a chance to study his books. The problem is that he is lazy to go to school maybe is because he stays with his grandmother who is very old."

Parent 6: "I ask the child if she does have homework when she comes from school. I give her a chance to study with other children after school. I also help the child with school work though sometimes I find it very difficult for me to understand some other things in her school work. There is a room that I have given to her as a study room where she can study with her school mates."

2. Researcher (Probe): How does your school involve you in your child's academic work?

Parent 4: *shy* "The principal invites us to school if the child did something that is wrong at school even if the child is not performing well in her studies. My child is repeating grade 12, I encourage him to concentrate more in his books."

Parent 5: "The school encourages that the learners should have school transport because they live far away from school. My child is a slow learner this year is repeating grade 12 but I try to encourage him in his study. The principal invites me to the school frequently for my child's progress at school."

Parent 6: "The principal invites me to the school to inform me about the progress of the child. Sometimes the principal tells me about how weak the child has performed in his tests, and appeals to me to help the child always in his study."

3. Researcher: What practical assistance are you giving to support your child's academic work?

Parent 4: "I am illiterate, but I buy books for my child so that she can make references. Sometimes I borrow books from my sister's children who has already pass grade 12."

Parent 5: "The grandmother buys everything to help the child in academic work. The biological parent of the child works in Cape Town."

Parent 6: "I buy a scientific calculator for the child; I do not have computers or laptop at home."

4. **Researcher:** What is your relationship to the child you are living with?

Parent 4: "I am the child's grandmother; the child's mother is late, what I have noticed about the child is that she likes her books."

Parent 5: "I am the cousin to the child; I have noticed that the child is very lazy to study his books."

Parent 6: "I am the mother to the child; I encourage her to be open to me as I am her biological mother."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** Is your age (between 20-35) (between 36-45) (between 46-65) (older than 65) makes you able to assist your child in academic work? Why?

Parent 4: "I am over 65 years old, but I help the child with the little I have because I am not educated I emphasise that the child should read his books always."

Parent 5: "I am 45 years old; I encourage him to join study groups."

Parent 6: "I am 45 years old; I do give my child help in her studies when it is necessary."

6. **Researcher:** How is your marital status affecting you in assisting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent 4: "There is no one who is helping me to look after him, my husband has passed on, he always has problems with maths literacy but for me I do not know it, I am familiar with arithmetic's."

Parent 5: "The grandmother is alone; we encourage him to join study groups because we are unable to help him."

Parent 6: "I do not have a partner, my husband is late I do not have a problem in helping my child. I do everything to help my child in academic work."

7. **Researcher:** Which level of education did you manage to attempt (Grade 0-7) (Grade 8-12) Tertiary level?

Parent 4: "I have form 3 only, I did not study further."

Parent 5: "I passed grade 12, I did not go further with my studies."

Parent 6: "I managed to pass grade 7 in the olden days I did not go further."

8. **Researcher:** How is your level of education assisting you to participate in your child's work?

Parent 4: "It is difficult to help my child because of the change in curriculum."

Parent 5: "The new syllabus is different from the old syllabus that is why it is difficult to help our children."

Parent 6: "I am not able to help my child fully because of my little education."

9. **Researcher:** What are your views about your participation in your child's academic work?

Parent 4: "It's painful when you are not able to help your child because of the little education you have, you only encourage the child to go to join study groups."

Parent 5: "It is painful when the child does not understand his problem, because last year he was told to write 3 learning areas but he insisted to write 7 learning areas and he failed all of them."

Parent 6: "I want my child to succeed at school and I try to help her by all means, I wish that teacher, parent and the child should understand each other and help each other in order for the child to succeed."

10. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote your participation in your child's academic work? Why?

Parent 4: "The principal and staff invite us when she sees that the situation of your child is bad at school. She even encourages my child to join study groups."

Parent 5: *shy* "I was once invited here at school and I was told that the child is very weak in his studies and he is always absent at school."

Parent 6: "The school invited me, and told me about the progress of the child so that I can be able to help my child at home."

11. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote parental participation in their children's academic work?

Parent 4: "Groupings, winter school, morning and afternoon classes are done here at school to help the child pass grade 12."

5: "The problem is the transport for our children to come to the morning classes, sometimes the child walk to school in order for him to attend the morning classes."

Parent 6: "We work hand in hand as teachers and parents for the child to achieve and we both encourage the child to succeed."

12. **Researcher:** What challenges do you encounter in supporting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent4: "The child only cooks dinner for us at home and after that I tell her to go and study."

Parent 5: "He does not help us at home during the week; he only looks after the cattle on Saturdays only."

Parent 6: "My child likes to be always on the phone, and I fight with her for that. Peer group pressure is disturbing my child. Sometimes she does not need to be controlled by me."

(Interviews with School '3' Parent)

1. **Researcher (Probe):** How do you participate in your child's academic work? Why?

Parent 7:*sad* "I do not understand the current syllabus. I always check my child's school work; if he does not understand his homework I try to help him."

Parent 8: "I look at my child's school work almost every day; I help my child when he does not understand how to do the homework, although sometimes I experience some problems especially in maths literacy."

Parent 9: "I ask my child if they do have homework of that particular day. If I do not understand the work I ask for a person who is familiar with that work to help my child."

2. **Researcher (Probe):** How does your school involve you in your child's academic work?

Parent 7: "The school invites us to meetings and inform us about the difficulties our children get from the learning areas."

Parent 8: "The school also invites the parent of the child who is having some difficulties in school work; the teachers also appeal to the parents of those children to help them also at home."

Parent 9: "The school invites the parent when the school experiences some problems from my child. Most common problem is when the child is not doing homework regularly and also when the child is missing the classes."

3. **Researcher:** What practical assistance are you giving to support your child's academic work?

Parent 7: "I bought a dictionary for my child to help him when he is practising English, because sometimes he does not understand the meaning of some words in English, I also bought a scientific calculator for practising accounting."

Parent 8: "I bought a cell phone for my child in order for my child to be able to google important information from the phone."

Parent 9: "When my child needs to google some information he uses my cell phone because I do not have money to buy him cell phone."

4. **Researcher:** What is your relationship to the child you are living with?

Parent 7: *sad* "It's my child; he does not like to study at home at all. There was a time that he wanted to quit school. My child needs to be pushed in order for him to progress at school."

Parent 8: "It's my brother's child, it's not difficult to help him, he is always keen to study his books and I assist him so much in his studies and do not let him do the house chores because I want him to do well in his books."

Parent 9: "It's my brothers child, is very lazy in studying his books. This child needs to be motivated always in order for him to study his books. At my house I reserve a room for them to study."

5. **Researcher (Probe):** Is your age (between 20-35) (between 36-45) (between 46-65) (older than 65) makes you able to assist your child in academic work? Why?

Parent 7: "I am 28 years old, but the child respects me a lot, I do not have problem with the child."

Parent 8: "I am 34 years old; he listens whenever I tell him to study his books at home."

Parent 9: "I am 35 years old, but he respects me, he respects the whole family members and he always takes our advices when we tell him to study hard for his own future."

6. **Researcher:** How is your marital status affecting you in assisting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent 7: "I am not married, but I help the child a lot, I help him with his homework and I am always there for him all the time when he needs help."

Parent 8: "I help the child with everything that is in connection with the school work. I even sit down with the child and help him with the problems that he encounters in the learning areas that I am familiar with."

Parent 9: "I help the child if I know the kind of work that is difficult for him to handle. I also attend school meetings regularly in order to show the child that I care for him."

7. **Researcher:** Which level of education did you manage to attempt (Grade 0-7) (Grade 8-12) Tertiary level?

Parent 7: "I have grade 12, the syllabus now is not the same kind of syllabus that was being studied in the olden days. Even the Business Studies that my child is doing now, I am having problems with it, it's different. I always try to find someone who is familiar with the new syllabus to help him."

Parent 8: "I passed grade 12 long ago during the time of OBE that syllabus is different with the present one."

Parent 9: "I pass grade 12, but I ask for assistance from other people to assist my child in homework."

8. **Researcher:** How is your level of education assisting you to participate in your child's work?

Parent 7: “No, I do not manage to help the child at all because of the new syllabus, and the concepts are not the same as the old one.”

Parent 8: *shy* “I am unable to help the child because the OBE is different to CAPS, but I just organise other people to assist him.”

Parent 9: “It’s difficult to help the child, because some of the things that are done now I am not familiar with them.”

9. **Researcher:** What are your views about your participation in your child’s academic work?

Parent 7: “If I had money I would buy a laptop for my child, I would even make photocopies of the information that would help my child progress at school.”

Parent 8: “If there was a good library with good books in my area, I would be glad because it was going to be of good help to our children in this area. In our school there are few books in the school library most of the books they do not have good information.”

Parent 9: *confident* “If there were good apparatus here at school I would be happy, because my child always needs apparatus for doing his practical and I do not have money to buy them. My child also needs computer and here at school there are few of them, not all the students are able to use them.”

10. **Researcher (Probe):** What strategies does your school use to promote your participation in your child’s academic work? Why?

Parent 7: “The principal inform us as parents about the late coming of the children, and we were even told that some of the children were in the toilets during tuition time. I decided to help the school by making sure that my child comes early at school, and also I would like the school to inform me if they find my child in the toilets during tuition time, in order for me to deal with the child accordingly.”

Parent 8: “Us parents we encourage the learners to study hard in preparing for the school work by giving the child less house chores at home, also the teachers gave parents their cell phone numbers to be able to report the bad behaviour of the child at home concerning his studies. When my child has attended Saturday classes I ask for the evidence of what they have done that day at school and sign it as a proof that I have seen it.”

Parent 9: “I monitor the child by staying with her at my house because is my sister’s child and I want a better future for him, my sister pass on long time ago. I even check his books and sign them as a surety that I have looked at them.”

11. **Researcher:** What strategies you think your school should employ to promote parental participation in their children’s academic work?

Parent 7: “Teachers often invites us to the school to tell us as parents about the behaviour of our children. I work hand in hand with the teachers to discipline my child; I tell the teachers to call me when my child is not submitting the school work on time. I always tell my child that education is the key to success.”

Parent 8: “We as parents we try to talk to our children and advise them that education is the key to success. The problem we are having here in our school as parents is that there is a good teacher, who is very good in commerce and has good results in matric but does not attend school regularly. This has been happening for a long time but, recently the school has decided to expel the teacher from the school. Although we are aware of the problem, but we think of the good results that he always produces in our school.”

Parent 9: “There is a teacher who does not attend school but is good at his learning area, he has been expelled at the school due to that behaviour, we as parents we want that teacher to come and help the school for winter school or Saturday classes because he has good results at the end of each year. When there are Saturday classes and winter school here at school we come and cook for our children here at school. By doing that we want to help our children to improve the results at the end of the year.

At the moment we are collecting money for the camp which is to be here at school after trial examinations. We as parents we are looking forward to work hand in hand with the teachers at school to improve the matric results."

12. Researcher: What challenges do you encounter in supporting your child in his/her academic work?

Parent 7: "We do not understand the current syllabus and that gives me a challenge when I want to help my child at home."

Parent 8: "I have a problem with the current curriculum. Things are not done as they were done before."

Parent 9: "My main problem is finance that is my major problem. I cannot assist my child at all like buying my child computers that would be of help even at home when he is doing his school work."

END

APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR PRINCIPALS

ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INSTRUMENT 1

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

I am GCOBISA VICTORIA FIHLA a PhD student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on Participation of Parents in their Children's Academic Work in the three Rural High Schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for Teaching and Learning, Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential and only pseudonyms will be used. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the participation of parents in their children's academic work to improve the pass rate of learners. Before we begin the interview itself, I'd like to tell you that you must read and sign the informed consent form, understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In this study I will also use a tape recorder if you allow me to do so.

1. How do parents participate in their children's academic work?
2. How does your school involve parents in learners academic work (Probe) Why?
3. What practical assistance is given by parents in their children's academic work?
4. How willing are parents in volunteering in learners' academic work?
5. What are your views about parents' participation in learners' academic work?
6. What strategies do you use as a school to promote parent participation in their children's academic work? (Probe) Why?
7. What strategies do you think can be used to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work? (Probe) Why?
8. Is there anything that you want to share with me regarding parents' participation in learners' academic work?

Thank you.

APPENDIX F: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR TEACHERS

ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INSTRUMENT 2

SCHOOL TEACHERS

TEACHERS INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

I am GCOBISA VICTORIA FIHLA a PhD student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on Participation of Parents in their Children's Academic Work in the three Rural High Schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for Teaching and Learning, Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential and only pseudonyms will be used. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the participation of parents in their children's academic work to improve the pass rate of learners. Before we begin the interview itself, I'd like to tell you that you must read and sign the informed consent form, understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In this study I will also use a tape recorder if you allow me to do so.

1. How do parents participate in their children's academic work?
2. How does your school involve parents in learners academic work (Probe) Why?
3. How do you involve parents in their children' academic work in your learning area?
4. What practical assistance is given by parents in their children's academic work?
5. How willing are parents in volunteering in learners' academic work?
6. What are your views about parents' participation in learners' academic work?
7. What strategies do you think can be used to enhance parental participation in their children's academic work? (Probe) Why?
8. What strategies do you use as a school to promote parent participation in their children's academic work? (Probe) Why?
9. Is there anything that you want to share with me regarding parents' participation in learners' academic work?

Thank you.

APPENDIX G: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR LEARNERS

ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE INSTRUMENT 3 SCHOOL LEARNERS

LEARNER INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

I am GCOBISA VICTORIA FIHLA a PhD student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on Participation of Parents in their Children's Academic Work in the three Rural High Schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for Teaching and Learning, Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential and only pseudonyms will be used. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the participation of parents in their children's academic work to improve the pass rate of learners. Before we begin the interview itself, I'd like to tell you that you must read and sign the informed consent form, understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In this study I will also use a tape recorder if you allow me to do so.

1. How do you participate in your academic work at school? (Probe).
2. How does your school involve learners in academic work (Probe).
3. What practical assistance are your teachers offering to support you in academic work? (Probe). How?
4. How do you assist each other as learners in academic work? (Probe).
5. What is your relationship with classmates concerning your academic work? (Probe).
6. How are your parents assisting you in your academic work? (Probe).
7. What connections do your teachers and parents have concerning your academic work? (Probe).
8. What challenges are your parents' encounters in supporting you in your academic work?
9. What are your views about your participation in your academic work? (Probe).
10. What strategies does your school use to promote your participation in your academic work? (Probe) How?
11. What strategies you think your school should imply to promote learner participation in academic work?

Thank you

APPENDIX H: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR PARENTS

ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

INSTRUMENT 4

PARENTS

PARENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

I am GCOBISA VICTORIA FIHLA a PhD student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on Participation of Parents in their Children's Academic Work in the three Rural High Schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for Teaching and Learning, Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential and only pseudonyms will be used. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the participation of parents in their children's academic work to improve the pass rate of learners. Before we begin the interview itself, I'd like to tell you that you must read and sign the informed consent form, understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In this study I will also use a tape recorder if you allow me to do so.

1. How do you participate in your child's academic work? (Probe) Why?
2. How does your school involve you in your child's academic work (Probe).
3. What practical assistance are you giving to support your child's academic work?
4. What is your relationship to the child you are living with?
5. Is your age (between 20-35) (between 36-45) (between 46-65) (older than 65) makes you able to assist your child in academic work? (Probe) How?
6. How is your marital status affecting you in assisting your child in his/her academic work?
7. Which level of education did you manage to attempt- (0-Grade7) (Grade 8-12) Tertiary?
8. How is your level of education assisting you to participate in your child's academic work?
9. What challenges do you encounter in supporting your child in his/her academic work?
10. What are your views about your participation in your child's academic work?
11. What strategies does your school use to promote your participation in your child academic work? (Probe) Why?
12. What strategies you think your school should imply to promote parental participation in their children's academic work?

Thank you

APPENDIX I: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA FROM THE SCHOOLS

University of Fort Hare
Private Bag X 1314
Alice
5700

26 May 2017

The District Manager
Fort Beaufort District
Fort Beaufort
5685

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Request to Collect Data from the Schools

I am Gcobisa Victoria Fihla my student number is 8927950 registered for Doctor of Philosophy: Education in Alice Campus from the above University. My topic “PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN’S ACADEMIC WORK IN THREE RURAL HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE FORT BEAUFORT EDUCATION DISTRICT: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING”. I am now at the level of collecting data. Would you please grant me a permission of collecting data in three rural high schools in your district?

I hope my application will be approved.

Yours faithfully

.....
Fihla, Gcobisa Victoria (Ms)

APPENDIX J: ETHICAL CLEARANCE REQUEST

P.O. BOX 1353 KING WILLIAM'S TOWN 5600

MEMORANDUM

To : GMRDC
From : Miss Gcobisa Victoria Fihla
Date : 26/05/2017

ETHICAL CLEARANCE REQUEST

I am a registered part-time student for Doctor of Philosophy: Education. I am in my third year of my studies and have been approved in the Higher Degrees Committee. Therefore, I request for an ethical clearance for my PhD studies in order for me to proceed with data collection.

I hope my application will be approved.

Yours faithfully

Fihla, Gcobisa Victoria (Ms)

APPENDIX K: REQUEST FOR PERMISSISON TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: FROM THE SUPERVISOR

University of Fort Hare

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Alice (main) Campus:

Private Bag X1314, King William's Town, Road Alice, 5700, RSA.
Tel: +27 (0) 40 602 - 2412 • Fax: +27 (0) 40 653 - 2445

East London Campus:

Private Bag X0053, 50 Church Street, East London, 5201, RSA.
Tel: +27 (0) 43 704 - 7227 / 7218 • Fax: +27 (0) 43 704 - 7113



31 May 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH- MISS G.V. FIHLA

The above matter refers.

Ms Fihla student number 8927950 is a registered Doctor of Philosophy in Education student in the faculty of education, University of Fort Hare. As part of the requirements for her study Ms Fihla is due to collect data in three secondary schools in your district. The title of her study is *'Participation of parents in their children's academic work in three rural high schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for teaching and learning in schools'*.

I trust that this request will be fairly considered.

Regards

M.P. Mavuso (PhD)

Supervisor

www.ufh.ac.za

APPENDIX L: ACCEPTANCE LETTER FROM THE DISTRICTDIRECTOR: AMATHOLE WEST DISTRICT



AMATHOLE WEST DISTRICT – OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

CAPE COLLEGE BUILDING * Healdtown Road * Fort Beaufort * Private Bag X2041 * FORT BEAUFORT * 5720 *
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA * Tel: +27 46 645 7802 Fax: +086 724 6373 * Website:
thembele.ndzandze@gmail.com *Date: 06 June 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir /Madam

This serves to inform you that the bearer of this letter **Miss G.V. Fihla (Student Number 8927950)** had been given permission to use our institutions of learning as sites for her research. The title of her study is, **"Participation of parents in their children's academic work in three rural high schools in Fort Beaufort Education District"**.

She is pursuing PhD degree at the University Of Fort Hare. It is hoped that she will favour us with her findings as soon as she had concluded her studies.

Your cooperation regarding the matter will at all times be highly appreciated.

Yours in Education

Mrs N.P. Futshane
District Director – Amathole West District

building blocks for growth



APPENDIX M: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: MAV081SFIH01

Project title: **Participation of parents in their children's academic work in three rural high schools in the Fort Beaufort education District: Implications for teaching and learning.**

Nature of Project: PhD in Education

Principal Researcher: Gcobisa Victoria Fihla

Supervisor: Dr M.P Mavuso

Co-supervisor: Dr J Shumba

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and the matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescriptions of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office.

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely


Professor Lindelwa Majova-Songca
Acting Dean of Research

27 July 2017
08/09/2017

APPENDIX O: ETHICS RESEARCH CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONCSENT FORM

NAME OF APPLICANT	Ethics Human 2011
<<Approved	>>
OFFICE USE ONLY	
Ref:	Date:



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) as well as by the interviewee before the commencement of the research. Copies of the signed form must be filed and kept on record

(To be adapted for individual circumstances/needs)

I Gcobisa Victoria Fihla, will be conducting a research from your community. I will be interviewing the principal, teachers and parents individually and be grouping the learners to answer some questions based on my topic, which I hope will benefit the school, the community and possibly other communities and schools in the future.

I am conducting this research regarding Participation of parents in their children's academic work. I am interested in finding out more about parent's participation in children's academic work, also carrying out this research to help learners of high schools achieve more in academic work.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not are yours alone. However, I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with me. If you choose not to take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the voice recorder and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around (15) minutes. I will be asking you questions and appealing to you that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive in nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. We know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions but I ask that

Document approved by UREC: 11 August 2011, V01

NAME OF APPLICANT

Ethics Human 2011

<<Approved

>>

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref.	Date:
-----------	------------

you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers. When I ask questions about the future I am not interested in what you think, the best thing would be to do, but what you think would actually happen.

If possible, I would like to come back to this area once we have completed our study to inform you and your school of what the results are and discuss our findings and proposals around the research and what this means for the schools in this area.

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding **Participation of parents in their children's academic work in three rural high schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District: Implications for Teaching and Learning**. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the interview guide, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:

APPENDIX P: EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE



CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

This document certifies that a copy of the thesis whose title appears below was edited for proper English language usage, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall style by Dr Nhlanhla L. and whose academic qualifications appear in the footer of this document. The research content and the author's intentions were not altered during the editing process.

**TITLE: ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC WORK:
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

AUTHORS: GCOBISA VICTORIA FIHLA (8927950)

DATE: 19 June 2018

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The author was advised to effect suggested corrections with regards to clarity of terms and expression.


Signature

PhD Applied Linguistics (UFH), MA Applied Linguistics (MSU), BA (Honours) English and Communication (MSU)

APPENDIX Q: SECOND EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

EDITOR'S DECLARATION LETTER

I, **BELLITA BANDA-CHITSAMATANGA** hereby confirm that I have proof read and edited the **Doctor of Philosophy in Education Thesis** for

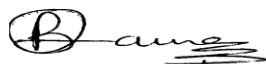
FIHLA, G.V.

titled

***Enhancing parental involvement in children's academic work:
Implications for Teaching and Learning***

The Windows 'Tracking' System was used to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author to action.

During the process of the proof reading and editing, the following changes were recommended: punctuation, grammatical and sentence construction. In addition consistency in use of abbreviation, referencing style (*intext and reference list*) and capitalization; and also to improve on recommendations given by the editor. Although the greatest care was taken in the editing of this document, the final responsibility for the final version of the product rests with the author.



18/08/2018

Editor's signature

Date

Dr. B. B. Chitsamatanga

Language and Writing and Editing Consultant (UFH)

Intermediate Certificate in Business English & Communication (Pitman Qualification, UK)

Further Education in Teacher's Certificate (FETC, Zimbabwe)

Bachelor of Arts in English and Communication (BAECS, Zimbabwe)

Bachelor of Education (Honours)

Master of Education

PhD (Education)

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Email : chitsamatangabellitabanda@yahoo.com