

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

Lack of parental involvement in primary schools is a cause for concern and can no longer be ignored. This point is demonstrated by the researcher's observations of the frustrations displayed by fellow educators when discussing the effect of parental involvement on learner performance. This problem has become a burning issue in Union meetings, amongst colleagues in staff rooms and even in educator's workshops. Parents too are complaining about their children's performance at school.

The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 stresses parental choices and responsibilities, and strategies have been developed to encourage parental participation at home and at school and to link home and school more effectively. However, little knowledge exist regarding the part that the children play in the process of parental involvement in education, although it is the duty of the educator to equip learners with the strategies to involve their parents. The researcher has realized that in the black communities many parents compartmentalize their lives and do not play any role in their

children's education. Therefore, the researcher intends to develop or propose strategies to be used.

Most parents cannot relate their children's poor performance to their lack of interest in their children's work (Lorgat, 2003:4). The display of disinterest in and the ignorance of parents regarding learner performance in Mankweng circuit schools is a problem that warrants investigation.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem of minimal parental involvement in the education of learners in Mankweng circuit, has reached alarming proportion to the extent that even the standard of education has dropped. As a result, the impact of parental involvement on learner performance has become a concern to educators, department officials, and school managers who are continually extending invitation to parents to be involved in the education of their children in order to improve learner performance. Hence the main research question: What is the impact of parental involvement on learner performance?

3. SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

The study's significance lies in the facts that:

- It will indicate that parental involvement can be used as a strategy to improve learner performance.
- It will indicate why parents are not involved in the education of their children.
- It will also show how stakeholders perceive parental involvement as an influence in learner performance.

In this regard, the study will contribute towards the production of knowledge in the field of Education Management.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As mentioned above, the main research question will focus on the impact of parental involvement on learner performance.

The following sub-questions arise:

- What is parental involvement?
- What are the perceptions of stakeholders regarding parental involvement?
- How can learner performance be improved?
- Who should be accountable for parental involvement?
- Which strategies can be used in improving learner performance?
- To what extent does parental involvement influence learner performance?

5. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

These flow from the above questions.

- To investigate causes which hinder learner performance.
- To investigate why parents are not always involved in the education of their children.
- To investigate perceptions of stakeholders regarding parental involvement as a strategy in schools.
- To identify strategies which can be used to improve learner performance.
- To find out who should be accountable for parental involvement.

6. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out on six schools in the Mankweng circuit of education situated in the Mankweng area, in the East of Polokwane city, located in Limpopo Province. This lies in the far North of South Africa.

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the theory of parental involvement advocated by researchers such as Epstein (1991) and Long (1986). Parental involvement implies that parents participate in one or more of the school's

activities such as attending parent- teacher conferences, Parent- teacher association meetings, volunteering for school activities, assisting their children with homework and encouraging the child to greater achievement.

The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) supports the researcher's topic by stating that parents must take an active interest in their children's school work and make it possible for the children to complete their school work. National Education Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996) likewise addresses parental involvement in the monitoring of home education. It states that; "Parents must keep evidence of continuous assessment of the learner's work, which reflects the learner's progress towards achieving the outcomes of the learning programme".

An example of how parental involvement theory works in education is seen at Toronto primary school in Mankweng circuit in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The school was established in 1992 in a form of a shack. Parents were concerned about this situation. They made proposals to build school by applying to private companies for donations.. The Independent Development Trust (IDT) offered the parents R1,5 million, provided that all the parents together would pay 10 percent of the amount. The parents did so and the school was erected. The school is now like one of the former "Model C

schools”. Parents also initiated the concept that the school should use English as a medium of instruction and that Science should be implemented as from grade one. The school was a pioneer in the circuit as regard to parental involvement and is a well-known academic institution in Limpopo because of parent support. The standard of education is high because consultation with parents is seen as a priority. The school seems to have reached this high standard owing to the influence of Parental Involvement Theory.

8. DEFINITION OF BASIC CONCEPTS

8.1. Impact

According to Gornby (1995) impact denotes “The action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another - A marked effect or influence”. The effect, acceptable unacceptable or of an incident or a system, operation, schedule, or cost. An unacceptable impact is an impact deemed by the system owner to degrade an essential mission, capability, function or system causing unacceptable results.

In the present study, impact signifies the effect or the influence of one thing on another, for example where parents can be influenced by some factor to be involved or not to be involved in their children’s education.

8.2. Parental involvement

Parental involvement has been defined in many different ways. Such factors as economics, education, time constraints, culture and socio-economic status will determine the level of parental involvement. According to Epstein (1991:63) parental involvement has been defined as parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. In the current study, parental involvement implies that parents participate in one or more schoolteacher activities such as those mentioned in chapter 7 above. The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No.84 of 1996), supports the researcher's study, as does the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No.27 of 1996) when it says; "Parents must keep evidence of continuous assessment of their children's work.

In these Acts term "parent" refers to parents, guardians, stepparents, siblings, members of the extended family, and any other adult who might carry the primary responsibilities for a child's health, development and education. Therefore all references to parents, family and their involvement are applicable to all adults who play an important role in a child's home life.

8.3. Learner performance

In this study “learner performance” relates to learner’s achievements in their learning process. Tests are employed to assess the learner programme in order to determine how many schools are meeting instructional standards. These tests are administered and scored individually.

Learners can be described and classified according to their level of performance in their learning process. The five levels identified by Pacific Crest are as follows:

- Increasing level of performance, trained individuals - who have developed a specific knowledge base, with specific skills for a specific context.
- Learner individuals - who have acquired a broad base of general knowledge and can apply it to related contexts.
- Lifelong learners - who has developed motivation to self-facilitate their ongoing learning and can apply it to a variety of context.
- Enhanced learners- those who have developed a high level of performance skills and actively seek knowledge and contexts for applying it in a constantly changing environment.
- Self-growers - who continually grow by using strong self-assessment skills to improve future performance. The following features characterize this highest level of learner performance: creating their own challenges,

serving as leaders and mentors to others, taking control of their destiny.

7. RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Chapter one comprises an outline of the background to the problem, the problem statement, the significance of the study, aims and objectives, delimitation, theoretical framework, definition of concepts and the research programme

Chapter two offers a literature review.

Chapter three focuses on research methodology.

Chapter four concentrates on data analysis and interpretation of data.

Chapter five comprises findings and recommendations and concludes the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

When schools collaborate with families to support learning, children are inclined to succeed not just in school, but also through life. Three decades of research performed by Hanafin and Lynch (2002:37) have shown that parental participation in schooling improves learner learning. Such participation of parents and families is critical not only in the very beginning of the educational process, but also throughout the child's entire academic career.

Therefore, it is important to review the debates about the meaning of parental involvement, types of parental involvement, parental involvement in South African schools, what other scholars have said on parental involvement in the past and at present, the basic models of parental involvement and the different roles played by the government in schools.

Parents are the child's first teacher. They are an invaluable resource. However, when children enter school many parents begin to ask themselves how they can be positively involved in their children's education. They question the value of their

involvement. Those who research school-community partnerships report that when the school welcomes parents and shows them how to improve their child's learning at home, they are far more likely not only to increase their student numbers but also to (Epstein, 1991:102)

In the present context the word re-views means to look at the "literature" (the reports of what others have done) in a related area. According to Leedy (1980:64), the function of literature review derives from a fundamental position among researchers that the more one knows about other investigations germane to one's own study, the more knowledgeably one can approach the problem inherent in one's own area of investigation. The purpose of reviewing is to assist the researcher in tackling his or her topic for research. In most research, the research problem is almost central. Whatever one does, assists to tackle the problem. If one knows what others have done, one can prepare to tackle, with deeper insight and more complete knowledge, the problem one has chosen to investigate.

Leedy (1980:65) has described the benefits of reviewing the literature as follows:

1. It can provide one with new ideas and approaches, which may not have occurred before to one.
2. It can assist one to see his or her own study in historical and associational perspective.
3. It can reveal sources of data, which one may not have

known to exist

4. It can suggest another method or technique of dealing with a problematic situation, which may also suggest avenues of approach to solution of similar difficulties, which one may be facing.
5. It can assist in evaluating one's research efforts by comparing them with related efforts done by others.
6. It can introduce one to significant research personalities of whose research efforts and collateral writings one may have had no knowledge.

A researcher who conducts a complete literature review will examine all research outlets (Newman 1997:91). Different types of reports require different research strategies. When reviewing, one should begin with scholarly journals because they are the place in which most reports appear and represent the most crucial outlet. These journals differ by field and by type. Most contain articles that report on research in an academic field.

Lastly, the literature review allows different disciplines access to the information in research reports. It shows the reviewer's familiarity with a body of knowledge, indicating the path prior research has taken and how a current project is linked to it.

2.2 What is parental involvement?

Parental involvement has been defined in many ways. As pointed out earlier, according to Epstein (1991:15), parental involvement has been defined as parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. Such factors as economics, education, time constraints, culture, and socioeconomic status will determine the level of parental involvement.

Moreover, parental involvement implies that parents participate in one or more school teacher activities such as attending parent – teacher conferences, parent – teacher associations meetings, volunteering at school, assisting children with homework, encouraging the child to better attainment.

Parental involvement has been shown to exert a positive influence on the child's school success. The web site <http://www.gwu.edu> (2004:1of 7) indicates that, in order to achieve maximum effectiveness, parents and teachers together must take centre stage in the child's educational process. According to the African proverb, "It takes a whole village to raise a child." When parents are actively involved in their children's education, children tend to model their parent's attitudes and actions. Additionally, since parents serve as

advocates for within the school, they duly affect their children's development and school-wide reform.

According to Mkwanaasi (1993:2), active parental involvement, parents are directly or actively involved in schooling, for example, in developing vision and mission statements, planning and implementation of these and so forth. Most of these activities consist of the academic development of learners, school decision-making, physical resource development, management, sustainable development and the like.

Even though the terms “family”, “school”, “parents”, “parental involvement” and “school and family partnership” have been used for a very long time, parental involvement did not exist as a field of study before the 1960s. According to Blanchard (1998:56), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) emphasized that parents should become more engaged in their children's education. Since then, much research has been carried out parental involvement in South Africa.

2.3 Parental Involvement in South African schools

Historically, according to Mkwanaazi (1993:2), the apartheid government used and abused the term “parental involvement”

in education in South Africa. The meaning of the term changed according to the social factors of that time. For the apartheid state, parental involvement largely concerned legitimating that government by means of decentralization and devolution of financial responsibility. During those days, the chief attempt made by the state to incorporate parents in the administration and control of education was by means of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The then minister of Native Affairs, Dr Verwoerd, argued that “Black parents in particular should be made co-responsible for their children’s education and that co-responsibility is two-fold, it is co-responsibility for the control but associated with that is co-responsibility in respect of finances” (Mkwanazi 1993:2). In other words the government was using parents to legitimate its discriminatory schooling policies.

The government expected parents to be passive participants. However, the role of the parents should be to address the real situation, not simply implementing someone’s views, without first investigating as to what kinds of results will be expected by their children. During the period of the struggle against apartheid, which peaked with the school uprisings in Soweto during 1976, the government was still attempting to use parents to protect the apartheid education system. But this strategy was no longer effective as parents mobilized and acted as one community to defend and protect their young ones, and

the future of their education. The community, civic and church leaders combined forces to struggle for a better education for their children.

As far as parental involvement in their children's schooling is concerned, in North American society, it is common that the children of families of teachers, nurses and other above averagely educated people do as well as, if not better than, others at school. Their home environment encourages these children's efforts in learning.

Christie and Collins (1984:22) argues that: "moral degeneration at school must be addressed" She investigates impoverished South African schools, which managed to operate reasonably well, while those around them collapsed. These schools strategize and make the best of the situations they find themselves in so as to succeed against the odds. In her discussion of the factors contributing to these schools' success, she includes school governance and parental involvement as factors that can be deployed to assist schools to develop despite the odds.

3. Types of parental involvement

Although there are many classifications of parental involvement types, Epstein's classification appears to be the

most influential in parental involvement literature, and therefore it is worthwhile to explore her classification in more details. According to Epstein (1991:81) and her colleagues from Johns Hopkins University, six types of involvement exist.

3.1. Parenting – This category includes the basic responsibilities of families such as providing housing, health care, nutrition, clothing, and safety, and creating home conditions that support children’s learning, for example, purchasing the necessary books and being responsive to their children, communicating with them and supporting their development.

3.2. Communicating – This type of involvement concerns the basic responsibilities of schools, including establishing two-way communication between the family and the school. These kinds of involvement assume that schools keep parents informed about school matters by sending them newsletters or progress reports, visiting parents and employing other means to communication.

3.3. Volunteering – Brent (2000:33) points out that the term “volunteer” usually refers to persons who devote their spare time to work on a routine basis without monetary compensation, usually under the direction of a school employee, in support of educational activities and school

operations. He clarifies however that parental engagement in Parent Teacher Association, Parent Teacher Organization or other types of decision-making body involving parents, teachers and perhaps learners and other community members, is not volunteering.

3.4. Learning at home – this type of involvement suggests that parents are involved in curriculum-related activities occurring at home. For example, assisting with homework, discussing books with their children, brainstorming ideas for school projects.

3.5. Decision making – Parents who are involved at this level, advocate children’s interests. These parents often participate in parent-teacher associations, advisory councils and committees.

3.6. Collaborating with the community – this type of involvement relies on the understanding that helping these organizations contributes to schools, students and families (Epstein italics, 1995:4,1997:111).

4. Basic models of parental involvement

Groenewald (1996:56) as cited in Volk (1994:66) argue that five basic models characterize the parent’s role. These models

include parents as audience, parents as learners, parents as paraprofessionals, parents as teachers of their own children and parents as decision-makers. No matter which model a family might follow, they will continue to influence their learners school experiences. With this in mind, parents need to play as more active role in their children's school life.

Epstein (1991:177) makes a similar point to that of Volk. Her research identifies and clarifies many different kinds of partnerships that contribute to the success of students. In her model, firstly, she discusses the basic obligations of parents: parents help their children to learn at all ages by keeping them healthy and safe; they assist children to feel good about themselves and confident with others; and they teach them about learning and school. Secondly, she considers communication between home and school, where the school provides information to parents about learners' progress. Thirdly, parent involvement in a school where they assist teachers, administrators, and children in the classroom and school buildings by volunteering. Lastly, parent involvement in learning activities at home.

Family, school and the community constitute factors that can work in concert to impact either negatively or positively on the child. The school and parents should work together as partners in order to achieve overall success for the child.

Home-school collaboration is an essential component of an effective two-way bilingual programme. Crawford's research demonstrates that "For low achievers or learners, parental involvement is essential to reinforce children's performance and to communicate high expectations about academic achievement" (cf. Crawford 1989:102; Navarette 1996:167).

Collaboration is a key to fostering a school success. Parents play a crucial role in helping to lay the groundwork for academics and in establishing cognitive skills prior to their children entering formal education. Although most parents understand the value of homework, they may not know the importance of reading to their child, talking about their day and checking on their schoolwork periodically (Navette, 1996:45). These various tasks can be categorized into two support frameworks: Both indirect and direct support. Direct support includes attending school-sponsored functions and participation in the child's educational plans and progress. Indirect support manifests itself through positive attitudes towards schooling, home-base support of the child, and valuing education. The parent-child-school link should recognize both support angles (Young and Helvie, 1996:88).

There is a myth from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) that says "The influence of parent involvement on school achievement depends on the parents'

income, level of education, and employment status”. A large body of research confirms that family involvement in children’s attitudes towards achievement in school, regardless of how much money parents have or how many years of school they completed. More importantly is the parents’ attitude towards learning. Working parents may not have enough time to be involved at their children’s school, but they can show how much they value education and take an active interest in what their children are learning.

5. Different roles played by South African government

The education policy makers, which includes (minister of education, member of executive committee) they determine the provision of education at nationally and provincially through school governing bodies, principal educators and the school management by facilitating the provision of learning material through management of the curriculum, monitoring and evaluation of teachers so that they must adhere curriculum and communicating the education national policy to principals, head of departments and teachers.

The government also establishes two-way communication between family, school and itself. In the case where a learner is abused a social worker can be appointed to assist parenting responsibilities such as housing, health care, nutrition, clothing and safety that support that particular learner.

Volunteering activities, which are in support of educational activities and the government also approves school operations. In crucial decision making process which affects the management, administration or learning process of the school. The government has executed the responsibilities through South African School Act 84 of 1996, section 4.15 has listed the managerial duties to be carried out by the governing body (governing body is defined in section 4.3 as elected members which includes parents, educators, members of the school who are not educators and learners of the school who are in specified grades). The responsibilities takes part in the form of participation of the members in administering and controlling the school property and buildings, volunteering their help to the principal, educators and other staff to perform their professional functions and promoting the best interest of the school and ensure its development as listed in section 20 of the Act.

Although the South African School Act no.84 of 1996, emphasizes parental involvement in education, therefore, rural parents cannot always take advantage of the Act, as their lack of formal education excludes them, but programme run by Ntataise Trust where rural parents are offered training courses to empower them to play a meaningful role in the education of their children tried to change this. The programme discovered that parents are able to stimulate their children to develop a

positive attitude to what they are learning. After the programme was implemented in rural areas in the Free State and Northern Province (Limpopo) the directors discovered that: Although children who have lived in townships fared better in terms of performance than those who lived in rural areas, under the Ntataise programme, these differences were evened out. (The Teacher, November 1996).

However, Taunyana (1998:2) states that, most parents in rural communities are ravaged by poverty and spend most of their time away from their children. Some spend time selling vegetables and fruits to support their children. These factors may well have a negative impact on learner performance. Leepile Taunyane the former president of National Professional Teacher's Organization of South Africa, (NOPTOSA), sum up the important role of parent in education thus:

Effective two-way communication between the school and the entire community, especially the parents, is certainly one of the key management functions of the school.

The complete and optimum development of the child rest with the teaching Partnership between parents and the teacher, because the former are the primary educators.

Regular and effective two-way communication between the school and home is needed to bind the various components of this partnership into a closely-knit unit for the mutual exchange of information on the child. (TUATA News letter Vol.9 issue 1 March 1998: 1-2).

Ideally, therefore schools should not work in isolation rather they should involve parents as often as possible. Up to now, not all parents understand their powers and responsibilities as detailed in the South African School Act, No.84 of 1996 or as explained and simplified in Understanding the South African School Act of 1997. The rationale of Act no.84 of 1996 is that, children do better at school when their parents are involved in their education (The Teacher, June, 1996: Garbers, op. cit).

6. STRATEGIES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

6.1 Different strategies for parental involvement

Parents who are concerned with the learning of their children, initiate contacts with the school and this makes it easy for the school to reach those parents. But, less concerned parents they don't interact with the school unless the school works hard to promote engagement parents in their children's schooling. The schools to communicate with families use different communication strategies. This may be in a form of progress reports, student report cards, school newsletters or community updates, or organizing parents meetings. Parents interacted with schools using high technology for means of communication, such as websites or cable television. These findings were done in countries like Chicago. This describes types of phone based technologies which enhance communication between schools and homes. This includes

hotlines and help lines. With these means of communication, children and parents can call these lines to be consulted about specific assignments. With these systems a prerecorded messages, connected with volunteer trained to answer a particular spectrum of questions. The other system is called automated calling system. This system is used to call all parents or particular group of parents between hours, if parents cannot be reached, they need to call back. The other system is called voice mail and voice messaging system. This system combines the functions of hotlines and automated calling system. Each teacher receives an answer machine or electronic mail box, which they can use in the classroom and at home.

6.2 The key to successful strategies for parental involvement

Epstein (1997:102) identifies key strategies for parental involvement. The model is as follows: The basic obligations of parents, this include supervising and guiding the children by teaching them a positive attitude about learning and school. Communication between home and school is through providing ways for parents to share with school staff information, which is important to their children's learning. Parents should assist teachers, administrators and children in

the classroom and school building by volunteering. Parents should be involved in the learning activities at home.

6.3 Barriers for implementation of strategies for parental Involvement

Ignorance or disregard of correspondence they receive from schools, for instant failure by the parents to attend meetings organized by the School Governing Bodies, this may include failure to demand school report or lack of interest in analyzing the progress report.

Teachers fail to interact with the parents during the daytime because parents may be out of their homes during that time. Parental involvement relies heavily on parent's ability to visit their children's school. Most workshops and other events are held at school, during that time, parents cannot attend the session at the particular time and date, there are little parents and school that can do. Due to family commitments, there is no time to schedule a meeting with their children's teachers or to attend school events. Face to face communication become rare.

Telecommunication strategies sometimes cannot be implemented because of lack of training for parents and teachers. Lack of commitment by teachers to plan in advance, become a concern to parents. Limited languages render a teacher to be unable to provide messages in all languages.

6.4 How parents can influence strategies for parental Involvement

Family involvement in children school experience has a positive influence on children's attitudes towards achievement in school, regardless of how much money parents have or how many years of school they completed, what is important is the parent's attitude towards learning. Parents who are working may not have much time to be involved at their children's schoolwork, but they can show how much they value education, and take an active interest in what their children are learning. A good relationship between a teacher and a parent is based on mutual respect and trust and it benefits learners. Parent may contact their children's teacher or other school staff when they have questions about their children's education. Staff members of the school begin to see parents as partners because they know they will ask questions when the information is unclear. Parents may also be involved in the child's education by joining the local parents organization. This may be aimed at supporting achievement. In this instance parents may influence school governing body members and public officials in participating in meetings, engaging in discussions of education matters and children's advocacy issues.

Epstein (1995) in her research " Model of Parental Involvement" outlined the basic obligation of parents. She said

“parents should help their children at all ages by keeping them healthy, safe and supervising and guiding them”. Schools should provide information to parents about student’s progress and school programs and provide ways for parents to share with school staff information. Parents should also be involved in learning activities at home. Researchers like (Mulhern, Rodriguez and Shanahan 1994:1) indicated that parental involvement has shown positive effect on the child’s school success, but in order to reach maximum effectiveness, parents and teachers together must take centre stage in child’s educational process. Parents can be regarded as the child’s first teacher, but when the child enters school parents begin to ask themselves how they can be positively involved in their children’s education. Sometimes parents can question the value of their involvement.

7. CONCLUSION

Different meanings of parental involvement in this study amounts to the active role played by the parents in the learning process of learners that is sustaining the development of the school. Mkhwenazi (1993:15) referred this involvement as development of vision and mission statement, but most of them include academic development. Epstein (1991:15) used examples such as parenting, communicating and volunteering. This development entails improvement of learning

environment or advancing the school capacity by increasing the participation of parents. Several acts were enacted to override illegitimate discriminatory policies. Section 2.1.1 of the school Act of 1996 recognizes the values of the new constitution. The rights entrenched in this constitution include the right to basic education for everyone, transformation and democratization of education which includes that the ideas of stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners and other members of the community near the school should participate in the activities of the school.

This forms of parental involvement (Epstein 1991:8) described them as parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home and decision-making. Section 2.2.6.1 of the school Act defines this concept as partnership, which means a number of people who have a common goal or co-operating with one another by contributing something of value such skills. Volunteering activity defined by Epstein (1991:8) relates to contribution of skills by parents. The Act further state Epstein's ideas of shared decision making and open communication as a form of partnership. Partnership can be referred as involvement or participation in an organization or between people.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The concept of research methodology refers to the range of approaches used in research to gather data, which is used as a foundation for interpretation, for explanation and prediction (Cohen & Manion 1994:38). Hereunder follow an exposition of the research methodology applicable to the present study.

3.2. Research Design

Viewing this study from the perspective of its aim, two main types of approaches are used, namely qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach is referred to as an enquiry process with the purpose of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting (Cresswell, 1994:02). This approach presents facts in narrative or verbal form (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1993:14 and Herbert, 1990:70). It refers to an investigation into the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996:442).

According to Schumacher and Macmillan (1993:32) & Groenewald (1986:75), the quantitative approach on the other hand analyses data in statistical terms, that is, using statistical arguments or numbers. Such an approach is described as an inquiry into social or human phenomena, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyses using statistical procedures in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true (Cresswell, 1994:2). Quantitative approaches are experimental, descriptive, correctional and ex-post facto methods of data collection (Schumacher, & Macmillan 1993:4).

3.3. Population of the study

Schumacher (1993:956) describes the population as a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn. He further defines the population of a study as the respondents, and describes respondents as the people who are interviewed or who gave responses to the measuring instrument.

In the present study, the population includes 6 parents, 6 principals, 6 heads of departments and 6 educators from six primary schools in Mankweng circuit in Limpopo Province.

3.4. Sample and sampling procedures

Schumacher and MacMillan (1993:598) define the word “sample” as comprising a number of individuals selected from a population for study. A sample represents the larger group from which it is drawn.

Fraenkel and Wallen (1996:111) similarly define sampling as a process of selecting individuals who will participate in a research study. Two methods of sampling exist, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Probability samples constitute samples in which the probability of selection of each respondent is known, while in non-probability samples the converse is true. For this study, from a selected circuit six primary schools will be selected randomly.

Data for this study was gathered through purposeful sampling from a total of six principals, that is three females and three males, six educators and six heads of departments from the above-mentioned schools. All the above participants were chosen purposefully as they were employed in those schools in which the researcher was engaged in the study. In selecting the sample of parents, the researcher will consider the level of literacy, of the parents whose children are attending the given schools.

3.5. Instrument used in the study

According to Denzil and Loncoln (1994:19) the term research instrument refers to any plan of action that helps the researcher in gathering the relevant data. To supplement the literature review, an empirical investigation will be conducted. The following instruments will be used to collect data:

3.5.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires consist of questions that have been printed and given to the responded for completion (Babbie, 1991: 147) Similarly Schumacher (1993:597) defines questionnaires as a written set of questions or statements that assess attitudes, opinions, beliefs and biographical information.

Bearing in mind that both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used, questionnaires that combine both the close-ended and open-ended formats were designed. The researcher secured the necessary permission from the authorities concerned.

Questionnaires were employed because they offer some measure of objectivity, validity and reliability. Thereafter, the researcher rectified problems where necessary and completes the final questionnaires. Questionnaires will be distributed physically to participating schools. The close-ended part of the

questionnaire has its disadvantages and advantages such as time saving, completion of questionnaires at the respondent's leisure time. Greater assurance of anonymity and non-interference by the interviewer outweigh the disadvantage. (Bailey, 1987:145)

3.5.2. Interviews

Labovitz and Hagedorn (1991:106) refer interviews to situation in which answers are directly drawn out from the respondents by an interviewer and usually record respondents. For the purpose of this study, an interview implies face-to-face talk between the researcher and the respondent concerning the problem of the study. In this study, parents are the only ones to be interviewed because of their level of literacy. Semi-structured questionnaires will be used. According to (Turney & Rob, 1991; 134) structured interview implies that each respondent will be asked the same questions in the same manner and order, this will secure the validity and reliability of the study.

Firstly, the researcher will motivate all the respondents by informing them how valuable the information would be and explain why the respondent's assistance was needed. The researcher also ensures that all information given will be protected by the confidentiality rule. The researcher will also

explained the objectives and background of the study in simple terms, so that everybody understood these.

3.5.3. Observations

The researcher applied the direct observation method. According to Wagner and Turney (1998:15) this method entails observing the respondent in his or her actual work practice or in the production process. In this study, the researcher employed the participant-observer approach, where the researcher makes her presence and objectives known to the group being studied (Frankfort-Nachmias, and Nachmias (1992:275). This technique enables the researcher to gain a deeper appreciation of the group and its way of life and may also allow for different levels of insight by means of actual participation rather than mere observation (Frankfort-Nachmias, et al. 1992:267).

3.5.4. Documents

The researcher visited different schools to request for the following documents: progress reports of learners, Assessment records regarding learners, registers, and roll calls for parents' meetings, parents' consultations and mark sheets.

3.6. Data analysis

Data for this study was be analysed using the Statistical Product for Services Solution (SPSS) computer software. Both qualitative and

Quantitative methods will be followed with respect to the analysis of all the data gathered by means of questionnaires, observation, interviews and documentation.

3.7. Data collection procedure

The researcher first sought permission from to conduct the research from circuit manager of Mankweng circuit, principals of the six selected primary schools, their heads of departments and educators. Parents too were consulted before conducting interviews with them. The researcher personally administered the pre-test and the post-test interviews.

Participants were given a covering letter containing a relevant explanation of the purpose of the study, the importance of the respondent's contributions and participation as well as of the significance of the study. Confidentiality of the information to be supplied by the respondent was ensured.

3.8 Reliability and validity of the document

Van den Aardweg (1993:201) defines reliability as a statistical concept that relates to consistency and dependability. According to Descombe (1998:22) the criterion of reliability is whether the research instruments are neutral in their effect and would measure the same results when used with the same people. In this study reliability refers to whether or not a measuring instrument would yield the same results if anybody else used it. Validity refers to the extent that an instrument measures what it claims to measure (Best and Khahn 1993:193). However, Schumacher and MacMillan (1993:601) more specifically relates validity to the degree to which the scientific explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world. According to Babbie (1990:35), validity concerns the problem of whether the data collected is a true picture of what is being studied. For this study, validity denotes the question of whether or not a measuring instrument measures what it claims to measure.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Tuckman (1992: 15) states that the issue of ethics is an important factor for educational researchers, since their subject of study concern the learning of human beings. Hence, the nature of such research may disturb or embarrass those who are participating in the research.

3.10. The right to privacy

Participants' confidentiality will therefore not at any time be compromised, as their names will not be used when collecting data. The researcher will make sure that no private or secret information will be exposed because the privacy of the respondents is to be considered or respected. The respondents will be assured of confidentiality and will be requested not to give their names when responding to the questionnaires.

3.11. Conclusion

In this chapter the research design, the population of the study, sampling procedures, and instruments used, data collection procedures, data analysis, the reliability and validity of the research, the right to privacy and ethical considerations were dealt with.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analysis of data and the findings. The data was obtained from questionnaires filled out by six principals, six heads of departments, 36 educators and interviews scheduled for 30 parents. All the above schools were selected from Mankweng circuit. Parents stemmed from all six-school communities.

The researcher designed three types of questionnaires, and one interview format. The questionnaires were delivered to the respondents personally. They were requested to place a tick next to the answer they thought was most appropriate, and elaborate where possible. The researcher also completed an observation schedule related to individuals' school meetings or parents' consultations in order to consolidate the information collected by means of questionnaires and interviews.

4.2. METHOD OF PRESENTATION

The interpretation of the data collected will be presented in only 4 sections below, and will be descriptive, based on the distribution of frequencies and percentages.

Section A: Questionnaire for principals

Section B: Questionnaire for heads of departments.

Section C: Questionnaire for educators.

Section D: Interview schedule for parents.

4.3. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

SECTION A

4.3.1. Personal details of principals

Table 1: Respondents were requested to indicate their gender.

FD = Frequency Distribution.

a) Gender	FD	Percentage
Male	3	50%
Female	3	50%
TOTAL	6	100%

Table one indicates that 50% of respondents are female principals and 50% of the respondents are male. This shows that primary principals in this circuit are balanced.

Table 2: Respondents were requested to indicate their age group

b) Age group	FD	Percentage
25-30 years	-	-
31-35 years	-	-
36-40 years	1	17%
41 and above	5	83%
TOTAL	6	100%

Table two shows that the majority (83%) of the respondents are above 40 years of age. One respondent is in the late 30s.

Table 3: Respondents were requested to indicate the length of their service in the education sector.

c) Service in education	FD	Percentage
1-5 years	-	-
5-10 years	-	-
10-15 years	2	33%
16 and above	4	67%
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 3, the researcher found that the majority of the respondents (67%) had more than 16 years of teaching experience, whereas (33%) of respondents reported between

ten and 15 years' teaching experience. This suggests that most respondents possess a thorough knowledge of teaching in schools.

Table 4: Respondents were requested to indicate their highest academic qualification.

d) Academic qualifications	FD	Percentage
Grade 12	2	33%
B.A.	-	-
Bed Honours	4	67%
M. Ed	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 4, the researcher found that the majority of the respondents (67%) had obtained a senior degree, while 33% respondents possess only grade 12, which is very unsatisfactory.

Table 5: Respondents were requested to indicate their professional qualifications.

e) Professional qualification	FD	Percentage
PTC		
JPTD	1	17%
SPTD	1	17%

STD	1	17
HED	3	49%
FDE		
JSTC		
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 5, it is evident that 49% of the respondents' possess a HED, 17% a SPTD and 17% a JPTD. This means that there is an improvement in terms of the professional qualifications of the principals.

4.3.1.2. Contextual questions

Table 6: Respondents were requested to assess the performance of their school governing bodies: excellent, very good, good, poor.

1) Items	ex	vg	g	p	FD	%
Promoting the good name of the school		6			6	100
Encouraging the community to perform voluntary services for the school		3	3		6	100
Maintaining good discipline at school			4	2	6	100

Assisting educators in their professional work			3	3	6	100
Bringing about and developing a partnership based on trust between parents, educators and learners		3	2	1	6	100
Encouraging parents to attend meetings	2		3	1	6	100
Accompanying learners on educational tours	2	3	1		6	100
Creation of awareness regarding parental involvement		4		2	6	100
Restoring the culture of teaching and learning		3	2	1	6	100
TOTAL					54	

In relation to promoting the good name of the school, SGB's have shown a positive attitude the child's school success. Parents and teachers together take centre stage in the child's educational process. Their joint participation in promoting the name of the school is indicated as very satisfactory.

Volunteering refers to parents who devote their spare time to work on a routine basis without monetary compensation, usually under the direction school employees, in support of educational activities and school operations. Their performance is satisfactory.

Four principals consider that the maintenance of discipline in most schools is good, while in some is poor. Some parents assist educators in their professional work by assisting in school activities such as homework and supervising children in the classroom and school buildings by volunteering. Few of the parents support their children by attending sports activities and events at school. In other schools assistance of parents is very unsatisfactory.

Parents help ready their children to learn at all ages by keeping them healthy and safe, and by supervising through guiding them during educational tours. They help children feel good about themselves and confident with others.

Table 7: Respondents were requested to indicate how often they call parents meeting or parent’s consultation.

2) Items	FD	Percentage
Once a month	-	-
Once a quarter	4	67%
Once a year	2	33%
Not at all	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 7 67% of respondents call a meeting once a quarter, while 33% of them are call a meeting once a year.

Table 8: Respondents were asked on whether parents with special skills are allowed to assist in extra curricular activities.

3) Responses	FD	Percentage
Yes	4	67%
No	2	33%
TOTAL	6	100%

According to table 8, some respondents indicated that parents are allowed to assist in extra-curricular activities. 67% of respondents do so whereas 33% are not doing that. Parents are allowed to take part in the school decision-making process. This was observed during some of the school governing body meetings in some other schools. Volunteering and networking between parents and the schools is active.

Table 9: Respondents were requested to respond regarding what they think might constitute obstacles that hinder parental involvement in the learning of their children.

4) Problems	FD	Percentage
Weak leadership which does not encourage parents to participate in parental involvement	1	17%
Single parenting and working mothers	4	67%

who are having limited time to attend workshops and training.		
Lack of familiarity with the culture of parental involvement, which contributes to resistance to change by parents based on low morale on the part of the parents.	1	17%
TOTAL	6	100%

Most of the respondents indicated that the worst obstacle is related to single parenting and working mothers who have limited time to attend workshops and training. Some leaders do not encourage parents to participate in parental involvement. Familiarity with the culture of parental involvement, which contributes to resistance to change by parents, is also less.

Table 10: Respondents were to respond regarding how they facilitate parental involvement in the day-to-day operations of the school.

5) Aspects	FD	Percentage
With limited powers under the direction of SGB and parents	1	17%
Serves as an independent person from the SGB and parents	-	
Work jointly with SMT	3	50%
The school Act, gives us direction	2	33%

as principals		
TOTAL	6	100%

The principal reported that: the school management team works jointly with the respondents and its performance is satisfactory (50%), while 17% of principals work with limited powers under the direction of the school governing body and parents and 33% are guided by the Schools Act.

Table 11: The respondents were requested to give their own opinion on what should be done to improve parental involvement in their schools.

6) Recommendations	FD	Percentage
Provide training on parental involvement	2	50%
Workshops should be conducted with the parents to explain the voluntary serves.	-	-
Parents, learners and educators should do decision making together.	2	50%
TOTAL	4	100%

In table 11, 50% of principals recommend that training should be provided on parental involvement. 50% again encourage

parents, learners and educators to make decisions together. Others did not respond to any of the aspects given.

Table 12: The respondents were asked to respond regarding the effectiveness of their organization’s structure amongst parents, community, learners and principals, using the criteria of excellent, good, fair, poor.

7) Items	ex	G	f	p	FD	%
There is representation of parents within the structure.		5	1		6	
The structure serves as a dispute resolution forum in the learning situation.		-	2	4	6	
Participants are granted equally powerful rules with the forum.			1	5	6	
There is a healthy relationship amongst the stakeholders.		3	2	1	6	
TOTAL		8	6	10		

According to most of the respondents, there is a good representation of parents within the organizational structures and a healthy relationship amongst the stakeholders. There is poor participation within a forum that operates with powerful rules; also the structure serves as a dispute resolution forum in the learning situation.

Table 13: Respondents were requested to comment whether the questionnaire benefited them in encouraging parental involvement in practical situations in their schools.

8) Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Questions assisted us as future inputs during school meetings which require parental involvement	4	67%
The questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand	2	33%
Questions in the research were irrelevant and they did not fit in the school situation	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 13, 67% of the respondents indicated that the questionnaires would assist them in terms of future inputs during school meetings that require parental involvement, thus enabling them in encouraging parental involvement in practical situations in their schools, while 33% indicated that the questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand.

SECTION B:

4.3. 2. Personal details of heads of departments

**Table 14: Respondents were requested to indicate their gender.
FD = Frequency Distribution.**

a) Gender	FD	Percentage
Male	4	67%
Female	2	33%
TOTAL	6	100%

Table 14 indicates that 67% of respondents are male HODs, whereas 33% are females. This demonstrates that in most primary schools studied, heads of departments are males.

Table 15: Respondents were requested to indicate their age group.

b) Age group	FD	Percentage
25-30 years	-	-
31-35 years	-	-
36-40 years	2	33%

41 and above	4	67%
TOTAL	6	100%

Table 15 indicates that the majority (67%) of the respondents are above 40 years of age. Only 33% of the respondents are in their late 30s.

Table 16: Respondents were requested to indicate the length of their service in the education sector.

c) Service in education	FD	Percentage
1-5 years	-	-
5-10 years	-	-
10-15 years	3	50%
16 and above	3	50%
TOTAL	6	100%

From table 16, the researcher deduces that the teaching experience of heads of department is balanced. 50% have taught for between 10-15 years and 50% for more than 16 years. This suggests that most respondents have a thorough knowledge of teaching in primary schools.

Table 17: Respondents were requested to indicate their highest academic qualification.

d) Academic qualifications	FD	Percentage
Grade 12	1	17%
B.A.	3	50%
Bed Honours	2	33%
M. Ed	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 17, it is evident that half of the respondents (50%) had obtained a degree, while 33% possessed a BEd Honours. Only 17% had achieved merely grade 12, which shows that these educators are upgrading themselves.

Table 18: Respondents were requested to indicate their professional qualifications.

e) Professional qualification	FD	Percentage
PTC		
JPTD		
SPTD	2	33%
STD	1	17%
HED	3	50%
FDE		

JSTC		
TOTAL	6	100%

Table 18 shows that 50% of the respondents hold an HED, while 33% possess an SPTD and 17% a STD. This means that there is an improvement in terms of the professional qualifications of the heads of departments.

4.3.2.1 Contextual questions

Table 19: Respondents were requested to respond on whether they involve parents during occasion like farewell or fun days.

1) Respond	FD	Percentage
Yes	5	83%
No	1	17%
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 19, the majority of the respondents (83%) indicated that they do invite parents to such activities as farewell functions. However, one of the respondents did not do so. The researcher observed that this was because the school did not have sufficient funds to cater them for the day.

Table 20: Respondents were requested to relate on how they differentiate between parental involvement in the past and at present.

Most respondents praised the present of parents' involvement. They argued that it was successful because their children were no longer able to take the chance that their teacher did not know their parents, hence could not tell the latter about any negative actions. Others said it gives them chance to visit the school reading their children's schoolwork. Parents also have the opportunity to complain about a particular educator who does not do his or her work.

They pointed out that in the past there was no parental involvement at all. Schools decided for parents in any school matters and parents were not happy about that. They said parental involvement evident only in white schools and only white children made progress. Only a few parents are not clear about this parental involvement. They are still saying it is the duty of the educators to see that their children are taught because the latter are paid for doing so.

Table 21: Respondents were requested to respond as to how they relate parenting to parental involvement at school for the learners.

2) Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Assistance by parents at school with school work	3	50%
Providing leadership during parents meetings	2	33%
Implementation of parental involvement programmes	1	17%
TOTAL	6	100%

Table 21 indicate that half of the respondents (50%) relate parenting to parental involvement as meaning assistance by parents at school with schoolwork, while (33%) regard it as providing leadership during parents' meetings and only 17% consider it as the implementation of parental involvement. This shows clearly that the majority of the respondents understand what parental involvement is, which is very pleasing.

Table 22: Respondents were requested to assess the performance of their school governing bodies: excellent, very good, good, poor.

1) Items	ex	Vg	g	p	FD	%
Promoting the good name of the school		5	1		6	100
Encouraging the community to perform voluntary services for the school		3	3		6	100
Maintaining good discipline at school	1	2	2	1	6	100
Assisting educators in their professional work			4	2	6	100
Bringing about and developing a partnership based on trust between parents, educators and learners		3	2	1	6	100
Encouraging parents to attend meetings	2	3	1		6	100
Accompanying learners on educational tours		4	2		6	100
Creation of awareness in parental involvement		3	2	1	6	100
Restoring the culture of teaching and learning		2	3	1	6	100

TOTAL					54	
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Maintenance of discipline at school is very good, while in other schools it is poor. Corporal punishment has been abolished, and parents are encouraged both formally and informally to comment on learners' behavior.

In relation to promoting the good name of the school, most respondents felt that parents have had a positive effect on the child's school success. Some respondents indicated that parents again assist educators in their professional work by assisting in the school administration and children in the classrooms for respondents said good, to said poor, tough.

In this table, parents initiate their contacts with the school themselves and thus schools never found it difficult to reach out these parents. Most parents interact with the school because schools work hard to promote parental engagement in their child's schooling.

Collaboration is the key to fostering parental success. Parents play a crucial role in helping to lay the groundwork for fostering the culture of learning and teaching. These include school fun day occasions and participating in the child's educational plans and progress. Their performance is of much excellent.

Table 23: Respondents were requested to indicate how often they call parents' meetings or parents' consultations.

2) Items	FD	Percentage
Once a month	-	-
Once a quarter	4	67%
Once a year	2	33%
Not at all	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

Table 23 records that (67%) of the respondents call such gatherings once in a quarter, while (33%) of the respondents call these meetings once in a year.

Table 24: Respondents were requested to respond on what do they think might constitute obstacles that hinder parental involvement in the learning of their children.

4) Problems	FD	Percentage
Weak leadership which does not encourage parents to participate in parental involvement	2	33%
Single parenting and working mothers who have limited time to attend workshops and training.	3	50%

Lack of familiarity with the culture of parental involvement, which contributes to resistance to change by parents based on low moral on the part of the parents.	1	17%
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 24, most of the respondents indicated that the limited time for single parenting and working mothers to attend workshops and training is the worst problem. Some leaders do not encourage parents to be involved. Lack of familiarity with a culture of parental involvement, which contributes to resistance to change by parents, was reported by one respondent.

Table 25: The respondents were requested to give their own opinion regarding what should be done to improve parental involvement in their schools.

6) Recommendations	FD	Percentage
Provide training on parental involvement	3	50%
Workshops should be conducted with the parents to explain the voluntary service.	1	17%
Parents, learners and educators should do decision-making together.	2	33%

TOTAL	6	100%
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The researcher found that half the respondents (50%) consider that providing training on parental involvement might improve the latter, while 33% believe that if parents, learners and educators can collaborate regarding decision making, this might improve parental involvement. Only one respondent 17% that workshops should be held with parents to explain voluntary services.

Table 26: Respondents were requested to comment on whether the questionnaire benefited them in encouraging parental involvement in practical situations in their schools.

8) Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Questions assisted us as future inputs during school meetings which require parental involvement	4	67%
The questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand	2	33%
Questions in the research were irrelevant and they did not fit in the school situation	-	-
TOTAL	6	100%

In table 26, 67% of the respondents indicated that the questionnaires would assist them as future inputs during school meetings which require parental involvement, thus enabling them in encouraging parental involvement in practical situations in their schools, while 33% indicated that the questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand.

SECTION C:

4.3. 3. Personal details of educators

Table 27: Respondents were requested to indicate their gender.

FD = Frequency Distribution.

a) Gender	FD	Percentage
Male	14	39%
Female	22	61%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 27 indicates that 61% of respondents are female educators, whereas 39% are males. This suggests that in most primary schools, there are more female than male educators.

Table 28: Respondents were requested to indicate their age group

b) Age group	FD	Percentage
25-30 years	5	14%
31-35 years	9	25%
36-40 years	15	41.6%
41 and above	7	19.4%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 28 shows that the largest group (41.6%) of the respondents are between 36-40 years of age, 25% of the respondents are in their late 30s, 19.4% are above 41 years and 14% are between 25-30 years of age.

Table 29: Respondents were requested to indicate the length of their service in the education sector.

c) Service in education	FD	Percentage
1-5 years	3	8%
5-10 years	13	36%
10-15 years	10	28%
16 and above	10	28%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 29 leads, the researcher to believe that the teaching experience of educators is balanced. 36% have between 5-10 years and 28% possess from 10-15 or lower than 16 years, while 8% have been teaching for between 1-5 years. This suggests that most respondents have a thorough knowledge of teaching in schools.

Table 30: Respondents were requested to indicate their highest academic qualification.

d) Academic qualifications	FD	Percentage
Grade 12	1	3%
B.A.	21	58%
Bed Honours	12	33%
M. Ed	2	6%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 30, indicates that the majority of the respondents (58%) had obtained a bachelor's degree, while (33%) had gained a Bed Honours, 3% only possessed a grade 12, while 6% held an M. Ed, which shows that educators are upgrading themselves.

Table 31: Respondents were requested to indicate their professional qualifications

e) Professional qualification	FD	Percentage
PTC	3	8%
JPTD	11	30.5%
SPTD	18	50%
STD	2	6%
HED	2	6%
FDE	-	-
JSTC	-	-
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 31 it is evident that 50% of the respondents possess a SPTD, 30.5% a JPTD and 8% a PTC, whereas 5.6 hold an STD. This means that there is improvement in terms of the professional qualifications of the educators.

4.3.3.1 Contextual questions

Table 32. Respondents were requested to respond regarding the definition of parental involvement.

a) Definitions	FD	Percentage
Effective communication between the school and parents	10	28%

Participation in decision making process at the school	10	28%
Volunteering by parents during parental involvement activities	20	44%
TOTAL	36	100

Most educators (44%) understand parental involvement as volunteering by parents during parental involvement activities. (28%) of them define it as effective communication between the school and the parents, and the same percentage as participation in decision-making.

Table 33. Respondents were requested to indicate regarding the area in which educator are trained in parental involvement.

b) Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Parental responsibilities	14	39%
School administration	18	50%
Guidelines on educational activities and school operations which support parental involvement	4	11%
TOTAL	36	100%

The researcher found that (50%) of educators stated that they had been trained in school administration while (39%) of them said they were trained regarding parental responsibility, but

only (11%) were trained as regards guidelines for educational activities and school operations which support parental involvement.

Table 34: The respondents were requested to give their own opinion on what should be done to improve parental involvement in their schools.

6) Recommendations	FD	Percentage
Provide training on parental involvement	13	36%
Workshops should be conducted with the parents to explain the voluntary serves.	15	42%
Parents, learners and educators should do decision-making together.	8	22%
TOTAL	36	100%

The researcher found that (42%) of respondents think that workshops should be held with parents to explain voluntary service, while (36%) believe that providing training on parental involvement might improve the latter, and only (22%) consider that if parents, learners and educators come together for decision-making, parental involvement would be improved.

Table 35: Respondents were requested to comment whether the questionnaire benefited them in aligning parental involvement in practical situations in their schools.

8) Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Questions assisted us as future inputs during school meetings which require parental involvement	31	86%
The questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand	5	14%
Questions in the research were irrelevant and they did not fit in the school situation	-	-
TOTAL	36	100%

In table 35, (86%) of the respondents indicated that the questionnaires would assist them as future inputs during school meetings which require parental involvement, thus enabling them in aligning parental involvement in practical situations in their schools, while (14%) indicated that the questionnaire was not clear and difficult to understand. None of them said the questionnaire was irrelevant to their situation.

SECTION D:

4.3. 4. Interviews with parents

Respondents were asked to respond to the following questions:

Table 36: Do you live in this community?

	FD	Percentage
Yes	28	93%
No	2	7%
Total	30	100%

From table 36 it is clear that most parents live in their respective communities. Only 7% of parents do not reside full-time in their community owing to work elsewhere.

1. How long have you been there?

Options	FD	Percentage
1-5 yrs	5	17%
5-10 yrs	7	23%
10-20 yrs	8	27%
More than 20 yrs	10	33%
Total	30	100%

Table 37: Can you read or write?

Read:

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	26	87%
No	4	13%
Total	30	100%

Write:

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	26	87%
No	4	13%
Total	30	100%

Most parents are literate.

Table 38: Have you attended school in this community?

Option	FD	Percentage
Yes	19	63%
No	11	37%
Total	30	100%

Table 38 illustrates that (63%) of parents have attended school in their community, while 37% have not done so.

Table 39: How are you related to your community school?

Options	FD	Percentage
My child is being schooled there	24	80%
I'm just a community member	4	13%
I'm related to the principal	1	3%
I'm an opted member in the SGB	1	3%
Total	30	99%

The above table indicates that, most parents' children are being schooled in that particular school. 13% are just community members. 3% have a relative there, and 13% again are co-opted members of the school governing body.

Table 40: How is the relationship between you and your children’s teachers?

Options	FD	Percentage
Excellent	20	67%
Good	6	20%
Fair	4	13,3%
Poor	-	-
Total	30	100%

In table 40, (67%) of parents claim they have excellent relations with the teachers of their children, 20% enjoy good relations with teachers and only 13% described these relationships as fair. Generally, this shows that the relationship between parents and teachers is very satisfactory.

Table 41: Are you allowed to visit your children’s their school even if you were not requested to do so.

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	25	83%
No	5	17%
Total	30	100%

Most parents are free to visit their children’s school even if they are not asked to do so; only 17% are not allowed to do so.

Table 42: Are you satisfied with the education of your children?

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	17	57%
No	13	43%
Total	30	100%

From table 42, it seems that almost half of all parents are not satisfied with their children’s education.

Table 43: Do you think it is important to have a say in the education of your children?

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	28	93%
No	2	7%
Total	30	100%

From table 43 it is evident that almost all (93%) of parents think that it is important to have a say in the education of

their children, while only about 7% state that this is the duty of teachers.

Table 44: If the government were to propose to train you regarding parental involvement how would you feel?

Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Good	28	93%
Bad	-	-
Tedious	2	7%
Total	30	100%

In table 44, it seems most parents would enjoy the parental involvement training, while a minimal number would find this tedious. Hence, most parents are willing to learn about the issue.

Table 45: Do teachers call you to school in connection with your children’s behavior or performance?

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	25	83%
No	5	17%

Total	30	100%
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In table 45, 83% of parents are called to the school regarding the child's behavior and or performance. Only (17%) of them are not called this purpose.

Table 46: What would you like the relationship between you and teachers to be like? Give reasons.

Suggestions	FD	Percentage
Friendly	28	93%
Fair	2	7%
Bad	-	-
Total	30	100%

In table 46, 93% of parents would like the relationship to be friendly, the reason being that they want their children to be happy at school and they too want to be able to be open to teachers when problems occur. Only (7%) want the relationship to be fair. No reasons were given.

Table 47: Do you sometimes assist your children with schoolwork at home?

Options	FD	Percentage
Yes	28	93%
No	2	7%
Total	30	100%

Almost all parents assist their children with schoolwork, while only two do not do so because they are elderly. This shows that most parents are helpful with regard to schoolwork.

Table 48: How is the relationship between you and the principal?

Options	FD	Percentage
Excellent	8	26.7%
Good	11	37%
Fair	11	37%
Any other	-	
Total	30	100%

Parents reported that on the whole the relationship between them and the principal is fair to good. Only (26.7%) have an excellent relationship.

Table 49: How is the relationship between you and the SGB of your children’s school? Give reasons.

Options	FD	Percentage
Excellent	-	-
Good	15	50%
Fair	8	26.7%
Any other	-	-
Total	23	76.7%

In table 49, it seems as if most parents do not enjoy a good relationship with parents, the reason being that they do not always attend SGB meetings. Other parents did not respond at all. The reason is that they do not know who the SGB members are.

Table 50: Do the SGB call parents’ meetings?

Option	FD	Percentage
Yes	10	67%
No	4	33%
Total	14	100%

Table 50 indicates that parents exhibit a very poor relationship to the SGB. They do not know when parents meetings are held and most parents did not respond to this question.

How many times do they call you?

Options	FD	Percentage
Once in a month	10	33%
Once in a quarter	6	20%
Once in a year	6	20%
Not at all	8	27%
Total	30	100%

One third of the parents said that they are called once in a month, 27% said they are not called at all, while 20 % are called once in a quarter or once a year. In the researcher’s view, it seems as if parents were just guessing.

Table 51: How can you differentiate the old parental involvement and the present one?

Most respondents stated that parental involvement had not been present in the past: it was only evident in white schools.

They believed that parental involvement is beneficial and should be practiced.

CHAPTER 5

5.1. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1. Findings pertaining to principals

After the researcher had collected the questionnaires from principals, she came up with the following findings:

- The majority of principals indicated that collaboration with the parents is effective. Parents are permitted to school decision-making. Collaboration includes attending school governing body meetings, volunteering and networking between parents and school activities. (See table 8)
- Some principals contribute to ineffective parental involvement, where they do not encourage parents to participate in parental involvement. Lack of familiarity with the culture of parental involvement, which contributes to resistance to change by parents. (See table 9)
- Principals cannot effectively implement parental involvement because they have got limited powers in which they must act under the direction of SGB and parents. The school Act too, direct how parental involvement should be monitored. The school

management team works jointly with the principal in facilitating parental involvement. (See table 10)

- There is good presentation of principals in organizational structure that deals with parental involvement. The majority of principals confirmed that they involve parents, learners, and educators in formulating a school policy. If other stakeholders are excluded it makes it extremely difficult for them to make meaningful contributions to the school (See table 12)

5.1.2 Recommendations

In order for effective parental involvement to take place, the researcher recommends the following to the principals:

- The researcher recommends to the school principals that there should be parents with specific skills for guiding parental involvement in the schools. Some of the obstacles that hinder parental involvement would be minimized.
- The researcher recommends a participatory approach. The bottom up approach which includes learners in the decision making process is of vital importance; the resolutions adopted would be binding to both parties. Principals should include learners in the decision making process at their schools.

- The researcher further recommends that parents who don't take part in parental involvement should be warned of the consequences and disadvantages. The reason being they may influence others not to participate.
- The researcher recommends that parents who are discouraging parental involvement must be reported to the SGB and community structures. This will serve as a lesson to other parents to refrain from resistance to change, which is based on low moral on part of the parents.
- It is also recommended that, principals should devise in all around accessible reward system to parents who took part in parental involvement, which recognizes different participation to reinforce examples of good volunteering, including notable improvement of parental involvement.
- The researcher further recommends that, principals should have an effective code of parental involvement. This code will include such as day-to-day facilitation, parental meetings or consultations and the set procedure for dealing with them.

5.1.3 Findings pertaining to Heads of Departments

After compiling all the questionnaires, the researcher came up with the following findings:

- The majority of HODs, indicated parental involvement as assistance to school. Assistance may be in a form of volunteering or decision making process. (See table 22)
- The minority relates parental involvement as providing leadership during parents meetings and implementation of parental involvement. From their analysis it shows that majority of respondents understand what parenting entails.
- The respondents were also requested to assess the performance of the school governing body. Their respond indicate the performance in parental involvement is of much excellent.
- The majority of respondents indicated that single parenting and working mothers, are having limited time to attend workshops and training on parental involvement, this hinders parental involvement in the learning of their children.
- The majority of the HODs are in support of training that should be provided on parental involvement. (See table 26)

5.1.4. Recommendations

- The researcher recommends an investigation into teamwork
- Of all stakeholders towards improving parental involvement. The effect of workshops to explain voluntary serves in empowering parents, principals and educators in promoting parental involvement.
- Factors, which can benefit all stakeholders in aligning parental involvement in practical situation in their schools.
- Parents should be encouraged to supervise their children's schoolwork, because children waste valuable time at home instead of doing their homework and assignments.
- Educators should be encouraged to display exemplary behavior at all times, because they are the role models to their learners.

5.1.5 Findings pertaining to educators

The majority of educators understand the meaning of parental involvement, most of them regard it as participation in the school activities like volunteering, participation in the decision making process at school, and communication between the school and parents. The researcher found that the majority of

educators were trained on parental involvement and on school administration. Few are of the opinion that guidelines on educational activities and school operations, which support parental involvement, should be provided and thus including parental responsibilities.

On the question of own opinion on what should be done to improve parental involvement in their schools, majority of educators are of the opinion that workshops should be conducted with the parents to explain the voluntary services and that training should be provided on parental involvement. Only a few support the one of including learners, parents and educators when doing decision-making. See table 33.

Most educators said that the questionnaire assisted them as future inputs during school meetings, which require parental involvement. The minority said that the questionnaire was not clear and it was difficult to understand.

Recommendations for educators

The South African School Act of 1996 promotes parental involvement in schools and educators found it difficult to provide quality education schools. The researcher recommends the following:

- All educators should plan and prepare their parental involvement activities very well. If this is well planned

- and well prepared,, learners will not have obstacles in understanding the benefits of parental involvement.
- That, educators should use parental involvement as a promotion of the quality of education at schools.
 - That parents should be given extra work to do as activities of parental involvement.
 - Learners should be educated about parental involvement, and should be motivated to do work given by educators.

Finding pertaining to parents

The majority of parents indicated that their children are schooling in the particular school where the research was conducted. Most of them indicated that the relationship between the parents and the children's educators is excellent, only few felt to be fairly treated. Majority of parents are satisfied with the education offered to their children.

Majority of parents agreed that it is important to have a say in the education of their children. They also support that training should be provided to parents on parental involvement. Most of them again indicated that they some times take part in parental activities.

Recommendations for parents

In order for learners to have good morals, parents must be involved in parental activities at home. The researcher recommends the following to parents:

- Parents should work in collaboration with principals in maintaining parental involvement activities. When principals call parents to school, they should promptly do so.
- Parents should be involved in the education of their children.
- Parents should reprimand their children at home for their responsibilities, as parents in relation to school parental activities.
- Parents should use parental involvement activities as school capacity building structure rather than gossiping about educators in the presence of their children, as this will make their children despise their own educators.
- Parents should always enquire about the progress of their children.
- They should also attend function held at school at all time when invited, to reinforce the relationship with the school.

5.1.9. CONCLUSION

It has been clear that parental involvement in most schools around Mankweng is not of good standard, because parents do not understand the purpose of parental involvement. This is caused by lack of believe and practice in shared decision making, sense of community in schools, lack of school authority in trusting their educators. Schools should value their school development, high quality teaching and learning in schools by encouraging parental involvement which includes teachers, parents and learners. The school environment should encourage parental involvement.

Teachers ought to be involved in planning, designing and implementing parental involvement programs. Furthermore schools should not be organized around meeting instructions and the thinking while teachers are reduced to do the implementation.

Schools should involve families in programs that do not always require new or additional money. People and organizations will stretch to meet the needs of the programs in creative and innovative ways. Schools ensure active parenting by providing information pertaining various parenting issues, their level of environment in their children's education, skills and strengthening self esteem.

There should be communication between the school and home to benefit the child. Methods should be used to identify ways in which families can assist learners at home with various related activities. Collaboration with community that includes ways for parents and schools to actively network with community leaders and organization to improve education. Parents should be made aware of their basic obligations which includes helping their children to learn, keep themselves healthy, and safe by supervising, disciplining and guiding them. Parents should also teach their children about positive attitude towards learning at school. Teachers, administrators should work jointly in the classroom and school buildings by volunteering.

There are leaders amongst parents who are recognized as special and aspects. Schools should continue to nature their continued involvement at schools. Parents and communities are encouraged to participate in volunteering at school activities. The researcher proved that most school governing bodies, principals and learners around Mankweng, has forged a partnership with most families in the schools. Communications with parents about school policies, school curriculum, learner performance and learner's behavior is frequent and clear. Most principals and their colleagues are actively expressing and promoting the philosophy of partnership with all families of their learners.

Parents are encouraged both formally to commend on school policies, and to share in the decision-making. Some parents assist educators and learners in the classroom voluntarily. They support their children by attending school meetings, consultation, sports and function held at school. School also supports parents by providing information to parents about learner's progress and school programs.

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