MANAGING COMMUNITY AND PARENT PARTNERSHIP IN THE ILEMBE DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation *Managing Community and Parent Partnership in the Illembe District of KwaZulu-Natal Province* is my own work and that all the sources I used or quoted, have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of references.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his protection, wisdom, grace and mercy that He showed me throughout this study.

Secondly, I dedicate this work to my wife, Mrs. Patricia Asare Owusu, who gave me unfailing support throughout my studies.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate and examine the management and leadership skills that are needed for managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu-Natal province. The study sought to determine how ineffective management and leadership of parent partnership in rural schools can be detrimental to school, learners, parents and the community at large. The literature study investigated existing theories, programmes, management and leadership of parental participation and partnership. The theoretical frameworks that informed this study were Epstein's theories of overlapping sphere and her typology of parental involvement. These frameworks emerging from the review of literature provided an expressive perspective for the interpretation of data and recommendations in the final chapter of the study. The study used a qualitative methodology approach with a case study research design. This was deemed appropriate as data was collected through the medium of semi-structured individual interviews and field notes with 15 participants, and data were analysed using content analysis. The findings revealed that in most schools, ineffective management and leadership of parental participation exist through relationship limitation between the schools and the parents and the community. The study established that ineffective leadership and management of parental, family and community participation revolve around issues like indifferent attitudes of parents, poor communication and a lack of cordial relationship between parents and the schools. The study recommended that comprehensive knowledge concerning the phenomenon of parent, family and community partnership should be compiled into a national policy on parent, family and community partnership, which is considered vital for rural schools in South Africa.

KEYWORDS: parental involvement, partnership, communication, rural schools, parent-educator partnership

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ECD	Early Childhood Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLE	Home Learning Enablers
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
UK	United Kingdom
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

No topic surrounding school improvement and the achievement of educational goals has generated more debate among school managers and leaders than that of parental involvement (Epstein, 2011). The involvement of parents in their children's education is now widely accepted as advantageous and crucial to successful schooling. By extension, the meaningful management of parental involvement in their children's schooling can enhance the educational process.

Parents can contribute insights and knowledge that complement the professional skills of school staff, thereby strengthening academic and social programmes. By the same token, the ineffective management of parental involvement at school level may pose severe challenges, potentially even hampering learner performance and school successful functioning. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that parental participation is critical to good education, as is the successful management thereof to make the most of its associated benefits. In support of this, Froyen (1988) provides the following reasons for parental involvement in school management. He contends that educators and schools must understand parents' attitudes and learners' home conditions. In addition, schools should provide information to parents about learners' schooling requirements. This is of particular importance, as parents have the right to know about their children's behaviour and performance. It is now widely accepted that parents can be valuable resources in supporting learner achievement. Research has consistently shown that educators, parents, administrators and learners agree that effective parental involvement improves schools, assists educators and strengthens families (Epstein, 2011).

Unfortunately, parental involvement remains limited in most schools, particularly in rural areas, where parents lack adequate understanding of the crucial role that they play in the education of their children. A number of challenges and some confusion exist over the best approach for school management to adopt in order to effectively extract optimum community and family participation (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

According to Olsen and Fuller (2012), many parents do not know how to become involved in their children's education. Thus, it is often the parent's lack of knowledge or skill, and not a lack of interest in supporting their children education, which prevents them from participating (Anderson & Minke, 2007).

Epstein (2011) argues that some educators expect parents to become involved in their children's education on their own, without support. If they do so, they are regarded as 'good' parents. If not, they are labelled as irresponsible, unconcerned or 'bad' parents. Meanwhile, other educators and parents expect the school to simply tell parents what to do and believe that parents will automatically follow such instructions. Neither of the leadership approaches is effective enough for involving parents or families.

Research shows that partnership is the ideal approach. Cox-Peterson (2011) asserts that when educators and parents bond positively, fruitful relationships, which improve learner performance, are born. Epstein (2011) explains that in partnerships, families and community members work together to share information, guide learners, solve problems and celebrate success. Epstein adds that such partnerships recognise the shared responsibilities that rest at home, at school and in the community.

Since the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, concerted governmental efforts have been made to involve stakeholders in decisions that affect them across a wide array of fields, including education (Van Wyk, 2010). Parents are expected and allowed to take co-ownership of the formal education of their children: by law, "the number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights" (Republic of South Africa, 1996: s23 (9)). This high premium placed on parental involvement seems to be indispensable, as evidenced in countries like the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA), where an intensified government spotlight on the matter has been directly linked to increased parental partnership (Van Wyk, 2010).

Another challenge is that educators tend only to learn how to teach in their particular subject areas (that is, languages, mathematics, sciences and so on) during their formal studies. Administrators, meanwhile, learn only how to manage the school as an organisation, create schedules and supervise many other tasks. Most educators

and managers are presently not equipped by their studies to work positively and efficiently with the families and communities connected with their schools (Epstein, 2011). In other words, as explained by Bryk and Schneider (2002), many educators enter schools without adequate comprehension of the backgrounds, languages, religions, cultures, histories, structures, races, social classes and other characteristics of learners' families and communities. Without such information, it is impossible for educators to communicate effectively with the people who matter most to the children they teach.

Largely as a result of this, the education process is collapsing in many South African schools. Inadequate and inefficient parental involvement in schools leads to the undermining of authority and resultant breakdown of discipline, negative attitudes among educators and learners, financial and provisioning problems, and a failure of communities to regard schools as part of the community. In many cases, particularly in rural areas, South African schools are failing in their purpose of educating the country's children, often becoming negative influences instead. Such schools have become unpleasant places where learners are sometimes treated disrespectfully, and do not feel at home, and which, as a result, they seek to avoid (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2010).

It is this unsustainable situation that has formed the basis of this research. It was important to point out that most of the existing literature on the subject concentrates on parental involvement programmes that detract from the effectiveness of school management. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) explain that the efficacy of parental involvement programmes hinges on their openness to integration into a school's management approach and vice versa. Whilst parents are their children's primary educators, the school management team must institute sound management processes that revolve around its partnership with and involvement of the parents in the formal education of their children.

There is extensive evidence that when schools and parents work together to continuously support and encourage children's learning and development, such family involvement can have an immensely positive impact (Henderson & Mapp, 2002:160). If school management teams provide the sound synergistic structure required for parental involvement and leadership, the benefits for all parties would be

extensive.

In such a scenario, parents would be better equipped to create home environments that encourage learning, develop realistic perceptions of their children's scholastic ability and career prospects, and become more involved in their children's education at school and in the community. These parents would also increase their interaction and discussion with their children, becoming more responsive and sensitive to their social, emotional, and intellectual development needs. Educators and principals, meanwhile, often earn greater respect for their professions from the parents and communities that are actively involved in their schools (Olsen & Fuller, 2012:132-133). Moreover, in schools with effective management-parent partnerships, children tend to achieve better results, regardless of ethnic or racial background, socio-economic status or parental educational level, thereby surmounting a common challenge in rural South African schools (Olsen & Fuller, 2012). In order to realise these intrinsic and extrinsic synergistic benefits, the management bodies of South African schools must provide sound structures within which to partner with learners' families and communities.

1.2   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The rationale for the study initially arose from my experiences while teaching in a rural secondary school for over seven years. During this time, I observed the lack of effective leadership and poor management of the school-parent partnership to better involve parents in their children's education. My interactions with parents revealed that they generally lacked adequate comprehension of what they could do to support their children's formal education. School management also could not provide the requisite management structure and programmes to effectively partner with and involve parents and the community in enhancing the achievement of educational goals. To make matters worse, the Department of Education seemed to provide little or no training for educators, principals and parents about how best to go about this, especially in rural settings.

Eager to better understand this problem, I set out to consult existing literature on parental involvement in schools, only to discover a paucity of literature especially pertaining to rural environments in developing countries thereof. This inspired me to

venture into my own study of the topic. My aim was to help to develop baseline information needed by all stakeholders (including school managers, principals, administrators, parents, communities, and the government) to provide effective management and impactful teaching and learning for achieving educational goals.

The study should assist parents, communities, up-and-coming school managers, administrators and educators avoid the pitfalls of their predecessors in the provision of effective management and leadership in rural secondary schools in partnership with parents and communities. The research should also contribute to the world of academia – a shift from the wealth of literature on parental involvement and move to the partnerships that schools can foster with parents in the provision of education.

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem in schools is that, more often than not, management and leadership in terms of the involvement of parents in schools are ineffective and parental association is inadequate if not entirely absent. According to Hill and Taylor (2004), cross-sectional and longitudinal studies have consistently shown that parental involvement in their children's formal education is associated with improved academic performance. Moreover, Henderson and Berla (1994) conclude that, "when schools work together with parents to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school but throughout life". Conversely, it stands to reason that ineffective management of parental involvement can result in poor learner performance, the development of social vices (such as truancy and drug abuse) among learners, and a general lack of interest in schooling and school activities.

Empirical research has shown that, in rural areas, parents do not really understand their roles in the functioning of their children's schools. Moreover, during my years as an educator in a rural school, I observed that most rural parents lacked the desire to be informed about how their children are being educated. The source of this disinterest was multifaceted, as it stemmed both from the parents' lack of education and their apathy. This was exacerbated by South Africa's long history of inequality, which has all but eliminated any impetus they might otherwise have had of being involved in school matters, as all time and energy is consumed by day-to-day survival.

1.3.1 Research Questions

In light of the need for effective leadership and management of parental, family and community partnerships in rural schools, the study is guided by the subsequent main research question: *What management and leadership skills are needed for managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal province?*

This main research question can be further unpacked into several sub-questions:

- What is the concept parental involvement and what constitutes ineffective management and leadership of parental, family or community involvement and partnerships in rural schools?

- What are the causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation in rural schools?

- How are challenges encountered in the effort to provide effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas?

- What benefits may arise from effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas?

- Why are the consequences of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in rural schools necessary?

1.3.2 Research Objectives

The main aim of this research was to determine how ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement in rural schools can be detrimental to schools, learners, parents and the community at large in the Ilembe District, KwaZulu-Natal Province. The following objectives are proposed for this research proposal:

- Specifically, the research seeks to establish the concept parental involvement and the constituents of ineffective management and leadership of parents' involvement, family or community partnership in rural schools;

- To identify the causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and corporation in rural schools.

- To identify the challenges that are associated with the effort to providing effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas and the concomitant benefits that may arise

- To establish benefits that may arise from effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in rural schools.

- To determine the necessity of the consequences of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in rural schools.

1.4   LITERATURE REVIEW

There are varieties of interpretations of the term 'parental involvement'. As Georgiou (1997:190) explains, "we do not really know what parent involvement is since it constitutes so many varying activities". Additionally, Fan and Chen (2001:2) rightly state that the idea of parental involvement is problematic since it is defined in most literature in terms of various parental controls. As such, to provide greater clarity, one of the primary activities of this research project is to find and consult existing literature and theories on this subject. I seek to understand these existing theories and filter them into clear principles, definitions and other information surrounding the chosen topic.

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996:6) defines the concept 'parent' as: "The parent or guardian of a learner, the person legally entitled to custody of a learner, the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligation of a person referred in the above towards the learner's education at school". It is encouraging to note that most definitions of parental involvement present some similarities. The term 'parent involvement' refers to parents' support of an active participation in their children's formal education (Vandergrift & Green, 1992). According to Epstein (2002), parental involvement comprises the basic obligations of parents at home, the basic

obligation of schools to communicate with parents, parents' active involvement at school level, parents' involvement in learning activities at home, as well as decisions made by parents at forums that influence the formal education of their children.

Similarly, the UNISA-Metropolitan Life Project (UNISA, 1994) defines parental involvement as the active and supportive participation of parents as partners and allies of the educator. The Project contends that it is the primary aspects of formal and informal education of their own child and/or school and/or broad education of their community in an individual and/or collective way in a structured/orderly manner in order to achieve the other objectives of education as fully as possible (UNISA, 1994)

Squelch and Lemmer (1994:93) meanwhile define parental involvement concisely as the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities and it ranges from supporting and upholding the school ethos, to supervising children's homework at home. Parental involvement implies mutual cooperation, sharing and support. Finally, Vandergrift and Green (1992) contend that ideal parental involvement occurs when parents are supportive and actively participate in their children's formal education by means of observable educational actions (for example, by providing guidance with homework and attending parents' meeting).

It goes without saying that numerous benefits are associated with such effective parental involvement. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998) state the following advantages of the partnership between educators, schools and parents:

Table 1.1   Advantages of the partnership between educators, schools and parents

Group	Advantages
Learners	Improvement in learners' academic performance
	Increased self-esteem
	Decreased behavioural problems
	Improved attitude towards school
	Increased commitment to schoolwork
Parents	More positive feelings about their ability to help their children

Group	Advantages
	Greater understanding of educators and their problems
Educators and Schools	Decreased educator workloads
	Heightened educator understanding of learners
	More positive feelings from educators about their work
	Greater resource availability

(Adapted from: Vandergrift &Greene, 1992:59)

In light of these advantages, it is apparent that schools cannot afford to exclude parents from their management plans. This is particularly true in rural schools, where the management of this kind of plan is more complicated. In such contexts, there may be a need for parents to join other stakeholders in scrutinising the school's management function in order to derive maximum value from the aforementioned advantages of parental involvement. This is because in rural schools, parents are perceived to be relatively ignorant concerning parental involvement.

Returning to the definitions of parental involvement cited previously, I have identified one common denominator that cuts across all understandings of parental involvement: the effective participation of parents in the formal education of their children. Dekker (1993) explains that relations between parents and schools take place on three levels: cooperation, participation and partnership:

Cooperation is the basic level of parental involvement. Parents support the school at home, whilst the school communicates with parents concerning various pertinent issues (for example, under achievement, possible learning barriers, and failure to complete homework).

Participation refers to a level of involvement where parents serve on certain school committees, such as classroom committees dealing with the procurement of scarce learning material and educational excursions.

Partnership constitutes the highest level of parental involvement, according to any taxonomical approach. At this level, parents serve on school governing bodies, where they actively participate in decision making.

As failure in any one of these areas may lead to problems in the successful management of parents in rural schools, it is not surprising that parental involvement

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in rural schools is ineffectively managed. A major contributing factor to ineffective parental involvement in rural schools is the fact that parents do not adequately comprehend their roles and responsibilities at all of these levels. School management could assist in this respect by instructing parents in how to participate effectively at any of the levels mentioned above.

The parent's role or sphere rests within the community and should thus overlap with the educational aspirations and efforts of the community. The ideal that three spheres (the parent, the school and society) should work together constitutes the essence of Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres. According to Epstein (2008), there are six typologies of parental involvement: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. It is imperative that these typologies are considered on merit to obtain the potent of helping manage rural schools' parental involvement to eliminate some parental involvement bottlenecks in order to benefit from the advantages of parent involvement, particularly in rural schools, where stakeholders should understand that these typologies are interwoven, if they are to be enjoyed.

For example, when it comes to parenting, the ideal is for the school to help families provide an appropriate and supportive learning environment for learners at home, and parents to help schools understand the family background, culture and educational goals. Thus, two-way communication is critical to effective parental involvement in schools and must be established by the school. The school must disseminate relevant information as well as particular curriculum-related learning activities for parents to use at home. If the communication is not effectively managed, schools may not be able to inform parents regarding school and educational matters and parents will be unable to assist learners at home with schoolwork and other forms of support. According to Hill and Taylor (2004), the greatest obstacle to effective parental involvement lies at the level of collaboration. The school, together with the community, must find common ground to cooperate with each other to achieve the ultimate aim of education.

Unfortunately, ineffective communication between school management/educators and parents is a common problem in rural schools. Often, people in rural communities shy away from participating in community-based programmes, such as

fund-raisers for new learning materials, with schools. Despite overwhelming evidence in the relevant literature of the fact that parental involvement impacts positively on learner achievement at school, the concept and its practice are either absent or inadequately managed in most rural schools.

The severity of the lack of parental involvement in most rural schools in South Africa remains a major concern. Interestingly, research does not point to any characteristics that are more common in rural areas than elsewhere and that may affect educators' efforts to solicit parental involvement. In fact, rural communities are not necessarily any more or less likely than urban or suburban ones to involve parents in the educational process. Indeed, researchers offer conflicting findings on the subject. For example, in 1994, a study of 296 schools in Missouri, USA (Sun, Hobbs & Elder, 1994) found that parental involvement management was found to be higher in rural than urban communities. In contrast, a national survey in the USA (National Centre for Education Statistics, 1994) of Grade 8 students in the same year suggested that parental involvement management tends to be more effective in urban and suburban communities than in their rural counterparts. Johnson (1990:45), meanwhile, has found that parents from middle- and upper-middle-class suburban communities in the USA were most involved.

Nevertheless, even if parental involvement in management turns out to be more widespread in rural than urban and suburb schools, rural educators may still face special problems associated with rural life. These challenges include isolation, poverty and lack of job opportunities, among others. Isolation restricts rural schools and communities from making use of urban-based resources, such as museums, research libraries, colleges, and universities, which might enhance educational programmes (Capper, 1993). Moreover, the poverty of many rural communities tends to limit parents' capability to provide for their children and to augment their children's education with resources in the home. Ultimately, the dearth of job opportunities makes it harder for rural students to see any financial benefit to be had from attendance or success at school (Bickel & Lange, 1995).

Unappreciative of these circumstances, some schools simply conclude that rural families place a low value on the education of their children. This assumption is supported by the fact that rural parents have generally attained lower levels of

education than their urban and suburban counterparts. With this frame of mind, school management becomes incompetent at opening doors for parents to become involved in their children's schools and education. The theory goes that parents without personal experience of education beyond basic skills often fail to see its importance for their children. Additionally, they may feel intimidated by school procedures and expectations (Capper, 1993). Perhaps the onus is on the school to take practical initiatives to make such parents feel less intimidated. Once again, it is clear that parental involvement programmes must be properly coordinated, planned, organised and implemented in order to serve their intended purposes.

Contrary to this perspective of apathy, there is evidence that rural residents often place a high value on their children's education and schools. Beyond viewing the school as a central point of community life (Herzog & Pittman, 1995), residents in many rural areas support their schools with higher tax rates than those imposed in urban and suburb districts, where property values are higher (Stern, 1994). Schools can draw upon this community support to expand parental involvement programmes in rural schools. Indeed, in some rural communities, such programmes have mobilised residents to work toward the combined revitalisation of schools and rural economies (Miller, 1995).

Taking into account both the opportunities and challenges posed by conditions of rural life, schools can work to involve parents by setting up programmes that include features with well-documented, positive results (Bauch, 1994; Davies, 1991; Hinson, 1990; Swick, 1991). *Inter alia*, the features most often recommended are as follows:

1. Parent enrolment in adult education and parenting education programmes;

2. Cooperative strategies for extending the school curriculum beyond the school walls;

3. Efforts to help parents provide learning experiences at home;

4. Home visits by personnel trained to facilitate home-school communication;

5. Enrichment programmes for parents and children during school holidays;

6. In-classroom involvement of parents, business leaders, and citizens;

7. Community-based learning;

8. Use of school facilities for community activities; and

9. University participation in an advisory and supportive role.

Programmes that combine these features are indeed extensive, recognising both strengths and weaknesses that parents may bring to partnerships with their children's schools. Such programmes recognise that parenting improves when parents feel effective in a variety of adult roles. However, they also consider the fact that schooling improves when a variety of adults share their talents and model successful strategies of lifeline management. Moreover, when community and business organisations have a visible presence in classroom life, students are more likely to see a meaningful connection between their studies and their eventual success in the workplace.

A number of ongoing efforts in the USA demonstrate ways that parent-school partnerships can work to improve education in rural areas. These approaches include *Even Start, the Total Village Project*, and the *Educator-Parent Partnership for the Enhancement of School Success* (Olsen & Fuller 2012:197). Noting the effectiveness of projects such as these, some governments have incorporated parent and community involvement activities into system-wide efforts (such as the Kentucky Education Reform Act) to improve school outcomes (Olsen & Fuller 2012:199).

Even Start, which was piloted in rural Montana (USA), was conceived "to improve the educational opportunities for children and their parents [...] through cooperative projects using existing education resources" (Centre for Community Education, 1989). Building on the key roles that parents play, the pilot project emphasised parental' participation as communicators, supporters, learners, educators, advisors, and advocates. The project relied on a team of dedicated educators and administrators who provided direct and indirect support, including focused training, to parents. The pilot demonstrated that the activities and materials developed by the Research and Development team at Montana State University were useful in getting parents more fully involved in their children's education.

Meanwhile, the *Total Village Project*, which is being implemented in rural West Virginia (USA), advocates a community effort to educate children. Through a family centre, coordinated family services, home visits, parent-school action teams,

mentoring, tutoring, and assistance to schools, the project seeks to achieve its integrated objectives. These objectives comprise increases in parent attendance at meetings and activities, improved quality and quantity of parental involvement at home and school, improved student self-esteem, and regular attendance. Other objectives relate to improvement in standardised test results and parent, community, and school communication (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Similarly, the primary purpose of the *Educator-Parent Partnership for the Enhancement of Quality Parent Involvement Management for the Enrichment of School and Success* in rural South Carolina (USA) was to "implement a school and home-based programme for young children [that] raises student achievement and increases educational opportunity" (Swick, 1991:145). To accomplish its principal aim, the project also worked to improve parents' self-confidence, increase parent-child interactions, improve home support for education, and strengthen the relationship between school personnel and families. The project was a collaborative effort between the University of South Carolina and 18 rural school districts. It included training activities for educators, parents, and children, intensive parent involvement activities, home-school workers and a summer enrichment programme (Swick, 1991).

The promising approaches discussed here all follow advice offered by Herzog and Pittman (1995) in that, for rural schools to be successful and avoid ineffective management of parental involvement and to also battle their problems, they will have to capitalise on their community and family ties. In other words, rural schools must learn to view parents and businesses as part of the solution and not as part of the problem. Such a standpoint need not overlook the fact that some parents may need special types of assistance, nor does it assume that every community business will contribute positively to local schools. It does, however, favour positive action rather than unproductive blaming. Too often, rural schools have been at the receiving end of ineffective parent association management; worse still, they have been blamed for most community problems. Stereotyping has replaced thoughtful consideration of these places, their residents, and the problems they face. Projects that unite communities have the potential to support school improvement, economic revitalisation, and renewed investment by community members in the vigorous

traditions of rural life.

According to Epstein (2011), in order for parental involvement management programmes to be successful, homes and schools and the community should be viewed as interacting partners. It is necessary to consider the reasons given by most South African schools for parental non-involvement in their children's formal education in order to approach the improvement of parental involvement within its larger societal framework. This task may also be aided by careful consultation of the many existing theories about parental involvement management. One such hypothesis is Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence, which holds that functional and efficient families share educational aims with schools and communities to support and enhance the learning process (Epstein, Coates, Salinas, Sanders & Simon, 1997; Epstein & Sanders, 2006: 287).

1.5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods are considered ways or approaches to designing studies and collecting information for analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:16). McMillan and Schumacher further expound that the research methodology refers to a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific problem (2014). I used qualitative methodology, which comprised research approach and design, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, interpretation, and presentation.

1.5.1   Research Approach and Design

According to Fouché, De Vos and Delport (2002:81), "Many authors concur that in reality or real life, human sciences research or educational research uses both quantitative and qualitative methodology – sometimes consciously or unconsciously". Nevertheless, I elected to utilise only qualitative research methods for this study. By these means, I intended to explore and describe the impact of the effective management and leadership of parental, family, and community partnerships in a rural secondary school. In particular, I sought to understand the benefits of such effective approaches and their contribution to the attainment of educational goals.

According to Creswell (2007), a qualitative research design begins with assumptions, a worldview, and the possible use of a theoretical lens. Bell (2005) believes it entails an inquiry into the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Creswell (2007) further explains that a qualitative approach to inquiry involves the collection of data in a natural setting and manner that is sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns and themes. The final written report or presentation of a qualitative study includes the voices of participants, the reflectivity of the researcher and complex description and interpretation of the problem (Creswell, 2007).

With this in mind, I used the case study design as a qualitative means to collect data that would address the various research questions to enable a better understanding of the phenomenon or research problem under consideration. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), the term 'case study' refers to an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon and not the number of people sampled. This analysis is of a single entity (*ibid:* 370); maintaining that whether a system, event, or case study, the emphasis is always on a single instance of something or a single entity and not on methodology (*ibid*: 371).

Similarly, Creswell (2008) defines a case study as an in-depth exploration of a bounded system – an activity, event, process, or individuals based on extensive data collection. Being bounded means being unique according to place, time and participant characteristics.

1.5.2   Population and Sampling

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and from which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). My participants were the school management team (SMT), experienced educators and inexperienced educators from five rural South African secondary schools. The total sample size was 15 participants, comprised of one SMT member, one experienced educator, and one inexperienced educator per school from each of the five schools.

Considering the nature of the study, I adopted both the convenience and snowball sampling techniques. With a convenience sampling technique, the researcher

selects a group of subjects on the basis of their accessibility or expediency (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Meanwhile, snowball sampling is a strategy whereby each successive participant or group is identified by a preceding group or individual (*ibid.*). This strategy may be used in situations in which the individuals do not form to a naturally bounded group but are scattered throughout populations (*ibid.*).

According to Botha (2011), a school management team may comprise the principal, deputy principal, and departmental heads. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the SMT member interviewed would be either the principal, the deputy principal or the departmental head of the schools under investigation. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2012), experienced educators are educators who have five or more years of professional teaching experience, whereas non-experienced educators possess less than five years of experience. I therefore selected some participants with more than five years of professional teaching experience and some with less than five years' experience.

These educators formed the core sample that provided the requisite data to answer the research questions and to satisfy the research objectives. Since the study employed a convenience sampling technique, the sample choice was based on convenience in terms of geographic location and accessibility.

The research site was five rural secondary schools within the Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre, under the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu-Natal province. I chose this research site based on reported evidence of parental partnership problems within this circuit. Notably, this circuit was one of the most deeply rural areas of the district and thus should provide the needed information to answer the research problems and questions.

1.5.3   Data Collection

I made use of interviews to collect data for the study. According to Maree (2007), an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant. Maree (*ibid.*) argues that the aim of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participant, as they can be a valuable source of information, provided they are used correctly.

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For this study, I adopted the semi-structured interview technique. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate when topics are selected in advance, but the researcher would like the freedom to decide the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:381). Maree (2007:87) explains that semi-structured interviews are seldom very long and usually require participants to answer a set of predetermined questions. This allows for probing and the clarification of answers; semi-structured interviews basically define the line of enquiry (*ibid.*).

The interview guide or instrument, with a predetermined line of questions, was developed prior to the interview. During the interviews, I was very attentive to the responses of the participants in order to identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the research question and objectives. For the purpose of clarity, I audio-taped these interviews, after obtaining the consent of participants. These interviews spanned between 40 and 50 minutes.

1.5.4   Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

Maree (2007) contends that qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analysing and reporting are intertwined, and not merely a number of successive steps.

With this in mind, I adopted content analysis to scrutinise the data collected. Maree (2007) defines content analysis as a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content. Content analysis is an inductive and iterative process by which the researcher considers similarities and differences in a text that may corroborate or refute a particular theory (*ibid*). Neuendorf (2002) argues that content analysis is sometimes used for work with narratives such as diaries or journals, or qualitative responses to interviews or focus groups.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) explain that qualitative data analysis is a relatively systematic process of coding, categorising and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest. Qualitative researchers develop analytical styles, but rarely make all of their data analysis strategies explicit (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). In light of this, I collected, organised, transcribed the audiotaped recordings (into segments), coded, described and categorised the data in order to identify relevant patterns. The coding of the data consisted of context

and participant perspectives. Themes that emerged were placed in tables with emergent sub-themes forming the background. Participants' responses were grouped according to the emerging themes and patterns in their respective tables for easy categorisation. In the presentation of the data, verbatim quotes of participants supported the interpretation.

1.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Since the study was qualitative, it required the norms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility in qualitative research refers to the degree of assurance of the researcher's conclusions which stem from the data collected (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). I aimed to establish credibility by applying negative or discrepant data collection and analysis, in order to determine if there were any discrepancies.

Dependability, meanwhile, refers to "the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did occur as the researcher says" (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002:6). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), qualitative credibility should also involve applicability, dependability and confirmability as key criteria of trustworthiness and these are constructed parallel to internal and external reliability. Maree (2007) contends that trustworthiness in qualitative research is achieved through engaging multiple methods of data collection such as interviews and document analysis.

I aimed to accomplish this by employing member checking and obtaining literal statements, participant language or verbatim accounts. Moreover, I aimed to actively search for, record, analyse, and report negative or discrepant data that indicate exceptions to patterns or themes. I endeavoured to eliminate bias by repeatedly checking and reflecting on the research process. Upon completion of the interviews or data gathering, the transcripts of the interview schedule were repeatedly scrutinised to correct factual errors.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Discussing Babbie's work, *The Practice of Social Research* (2007), Strydom (2003: 63) explains that "anyone involved in research needs to be aware of the general agreements about what is proper and improper in scientific research". This necessitates the adoption of ethical procedures and principles of scientific research at the start of the study and the adaptation thereof as the study progresses.

For this study, the various relevant ethical considerations were attended to in the following ways:

Informed consent: Every potential participant received formal written correspondence, discussing the intention and purpose of the study. Potential participants were made aware that their participation would be voluntary, with consent or refusal to participate submitted to me in writing. I also informed them of their option to withdraw from the study at any point. During the recorded interviews of the data-collection stage, I asked participants to confirm that they had been informed of and understood the potential risks involved. It was made explicitly clear to them that their participation must be of their own free will (Malone 2003:797)

Voluntary involvement or participation: Participants' involvement in the study was based purely on personal decision, volition, choice and judgement. I obtained a signed free-will consent form from each participant but it also stated that they may withdraw at any time without penalty (Maree 2007:301).

Confidentiality and anonymity: Confidentiality supports an individual's right to privacy. I ensured that the identities of the research participants were concealed or kept anonymous by assigning them code numbers known only to myself. By the assigning of code names to participants, I protected their anonymity, as those studying or reading the research results will not be able to establish these participants' identities. According to Burns (2000), both the researcher and participants must have clear understandings regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of a study. Thus, all participant information and responses given during the study were kept private and the results were presented incognito in order further to protect the identity of respondents.

1.8 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary potential limitation of the proposed study concerns the sample size, which was small, since I considered the case of only five rural secondary school educators and how they provide the effective management and leadership of parental, family and community involvement in achieving educational goals. The second limitation relates to the difficulty of obtaining accurate data regarding learners' parents as well as their candid perspective of their involvement or partnership with the school in the attainment of educational goals. I chose to continue with this study despite the above limitation to help find solutions to the problem discussed in this chapter.

The delimitation or scope of the study covered households and five secondary schools within the Ndwedwe and Montebello community, and did not extend beyond the Montebello area. Montebello is a rural area within the iLembe district of the KwaZulu-Natal province. The village lies between Pietermaritzburg and Tongaat, amid the sugarcane plantations. It has a population of approximately 1 000 people, including about 300 school learners. The Montebello community has experienced ongoing problems with parental involvement in education since the local school was established in 1991. The school has around 15 staff members and falls under the management of the Ndwedwe Circuit, within the Ubaqa Ward.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The findings of the proposed study are discussed in terms of the following conceptual frameworks: effective management and leadership, family partnership, parent partnership, community partnership and the achievement of educational goals. The following key concepts apply:

Effective management:

Management is "the process concerned with directing and controlling according to

established principles to achieve certain targets" (Ingvarson, Anderson, Gronn & Jackson, 2006:25).

Effective leadership:

Leadership "is frequently seen as an aspect of management, with born leaders being characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and ability to motivate and inspire others – even if they lack management skills to plan, organise effectively or control resources" (Marishane & Botha, 2011).

Family partnership:

Family: "Two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption who reside in the same household (United States Census Bureau, 2010:5).

Partnership: "The recognition of shared responsibilities of home, school and community for children's learning and development" (Epstein, 2011: 4).

Parent partnership:

Parent: "A person responsible for a child's welfare, upbringing and education; it may also 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" (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004:262).

Community:

Community: "Is a social unit or a group of living things with commonality such as norms, religion, values, customs, or identity." (Barzilai, 2003).

1.10   CHAPTER OUTLINE

Just like other empirical or social sciences research, the proposed study is organised into chapters and sections for suitable taxonomy of concepts and ideas. This research is consequently structured into five distinct chapters:

Chapter 1 consisted of an introduction and background, the rationale, the statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions, and definitions of key concepts for the study.

Chapter 2 presents existing literature on the topic under investigation, as well as related concepts, and research done on the topic or similar phenomena.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and the techniques adopted and the accompanying problems encountered. It also explained the limitations as well as the ethical considerations relevant to the study.

Chapter 4 focuses on the analysis of the relevant data collected as well as the techniques used to analyse them.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings of the results of the study, followed by recommendations and a conclusion.

1.11   CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 presented the overview of the study comprising the introduction and background of the study, the rationale of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives and brief literature review. It also included research methodology comprising the research approach and design, population and sampling, instrumentation and data collection, data analysis and presentation. Crucial to the research, trustworthiness of the study was discussed in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Ethical considerations were also highlighted taking into account informed consent, voluntary participation and anonymity and confidentiality. Limitations and delimitation of the study were highlight, definition of key concepts was given and finally, the various chapters of the study were outlined.

There is clearly a need to develop more effective management and leadership of parent, family and community partnerships in the attainment of educational goals in rural South African secondary schools. The first step toward achieving this objective is to investigate the situation in order to draw valid conclusions and turn useful recommendations into real change. As such, I look forward to making a valuable

contribution to the growing body of knowledge surrounding educational leadership and management in the context of rural South African education.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the scholarly writings on the topic of parent and educator partnership management in rural schools, which should establish critical links between existing knowledge and the research problem under study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The involvement of parents in their children's education is now widely accepted as advantageous and even indispensable to successful schooling. Thus, the meaningful management and involvement of parents in their children's schooling can enhance the educational process. Parents can contribute insights and knowledge that complement the professional skills of schools' staffs, in ways that strengthen academic and social programmes. Consequently, the ineffective management of involvement of parents at school level may as well pose dire problems for schools, which may even hamper learner performance and school successful functioning.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) argued strongly that parent participation was critical to good education hence a successful management of it to consummate the benefits associated with it. Nonetheless, that has not been the situation in most schools particularly rural schools, where parents rarely understand the crucial role they play in the education of their children. Additionally, Froyen (1988:202) provides the reasons why parents should be involved in school management. This involves ensuring that educators and schools understand parents' attitudes and home conditions. Schools could provide information on demands of learners and schooling and in addition, parents have the right to know about their children's behaviour and performance and parents can be a valuable resource.

No topic about school improvement has created more rhetoric in school management and leadership in the achievement of educational goals than parental involvement (Epstein, 2011:3). Consistent research shows that effective provision of parental involvement in the view of educators, parents, administrators and students, improves schools, assists educators and strengthens families (Epstein, 2011:3).

However, there remains some confusion in schools about the best approach that school management and leadership should adopt to effectively extract the best form of participation from communities and families (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). More often, the dilemma exists with suspicion of expectations. Epstein (2011:4) argues that some

educators expect parents to become involved in their children's education on their own. If they do, they are deemed 'good' parents. If not, they are irresponsible, unconcerned, or 'bad' parents. Some educators and parents expect the school to tell parents what to do and that parents will simply respond. Neither of the leadership approaches will be effective enough for involving parents.

2.2 DEFINING FAMILY OR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There are many different views about the term parental involvement. Definition uncertainty regarding the concept of parental involvement is confirmed by Georgiou (1997:190), who states that "we do not really know what parent involvement is since it constitutes so many varying activities." Additionally, Fan and Chen (2001: 2) rightly state that the idea of parental involvement is problematic since it is defined in most literature in terms of various parental controls. The problem of clear understanding of parental involvement poses many problems hence one of the prime motives of this research is to find and look into other literature that exist as well as theories developed.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996:6) defines the concept 'parent' as the parent or guardian of a learner, in other words, parent is the person legally entitled to custody of a learner, the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligation of a person referred in the above towards the learner's education at school. Parental involvement on the other hand means both parent support and active participation in their children's formal education (Vandergrift & Green, 1992). According to Epstein (2002:527), parental involvement comprises the basic obligations of parents at home, the basic obligation of schools to communicate with parents, parents' active involvement at school level, parents' involvement in learning activities at home, as well as decisions made by parents at forums that influence the formal education of their children. It is more refreshing to note that most of the definitions of parental involvement present some common similarities.

Thus, according to the Unisa-Metropolitan Life Project (Unisa, 1994), parental involvement is the active and supportive participation of parents as partners and allies of the educator. Similarly, it is the primary aspects of formal and informal education of their own child and/or school and/or broad education of their community

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in an individual and/or collective way in a structured orderly manner in order to achieve the other objectives of education as fully as possible (Unisa, 1994). In addition, Squelch and Lemmer (1994:93) concisely define parental involvement as the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities and extends from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home. Parental involvement implies mutual cooperation, sharing and support.

Additionally, Vandergrift and Green (1992), contend that parental involvement can take on the form of various degrees based on the premise that ideal parental involvement implies parents who are supportive and parents who actively participate in their children's formal education by means of observable educational actions (for example, providing guidance with homework and attending parents' meetings). Similarly, Moles (1992:44), expresses that parental involvement may take a variety of forms and levels of involvement, both in and out of school. His contention stems from the fact that it may include any activities that are provided and encouraged by the school and that empowers parents working on behalf of their children's learning and development.

Epstein *et al.* (2009) extended the term from family involvement to school, family, and community partnerships to describe how children learn and develop in these three main contexts: family, school and community. In a similar vein, Botha (2011:229) describes parental involvement as mutually beneficial support and/or active participation between parents and school in terms of their children's formal education, as well as the school's endeavour to improve basic caring and nurturing by parents at home, preferably with the help of the community.

2.3   LEVELS OF PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

There is always an argument with regards to the level of involvement of parents in the education of their children (Epstein, 2011:11). This poses the question to education managers to find the right balance between parents and their level of partnership. In as much as parents have their own desire to be involved, there is the need to clearly demarcate their involvement levels. Dekker (1993:4) identifies the following three levels of parental involvement or partnership: Cooperation with the

school (supporting with home), Participation with the school (example: helping at school with recreational activities) and Partnership with the school (serving on classroom committees and the school governing bodies).

2.3.1   Cooperation with the School

Cooperation with the school could be considered as the basic level of parental involvement. Parents support the school at home by, for instance, demonstrating their loyalty to the school and supervising homework (Botha, 2013:229). The school cooperates by communicating with parents concerning various issues, for example underachievement, possible learning barriers and failure to complete homework. Dekker (1993:5) concludes that cooperation with parents mostly comes in the form of support that parents render to their children at home. Moreover, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:13) are of the view that besides homework help that parents could offer, many parents would also appreciate innovative efforts by the classroom educator to foster their involvement their children's homework.

2.3.2   Participation with the School

According to Botha (2013) participation with the school mostly occurs when parents have the desire to help at school with recreational activities. This level also, would *inter alia,* find parents serving on certain school committees, such as class committees dealing with the procurement of scarce learning material and educational excursions (Dekker 1993). Similarly, Wolfendale (1992:15) agrees that in the participation model, parents are recognised as active and central to decision making and its implementations. In relation to the above, Redding (2005:485-486) advises that successful parent participation should include the following characteristics: Schools must provide parents with clear, consistent expectation, information and guidance to help them practise specific family behaviours (curriculum of the home) that enhance children's learning; schools should maintain convenient channels of two-way communication between parents and educators; schools should bring parents together on occasion to encourage their sharing of norms, standards and child-rearing experiences; schools should also provide parents with educational programmes to build their capacity to maintain a strong curriculum of the home and schools must provide educators with professional development and consistent

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policies to build their capacity to work with parents and reinforce the school's clear expectations of parents.

According to Olsen and Fuller (2012:134), there is no single formula or blueprint that creates a successful home-school-community partnership; this means that concerted efforts need to be applied by key stakeholders in education in order to develop effective partnerships. This, however, may attest to the fact that effective management and leadership should be put in place to delve deep into the theories of parents' partnership. Olsen and Fuller (2012:134) contend that there are basic guidelines for schools, districts and departments to create meaningful, positive, and permanent programmes that actively involve families in their children's education. This leads the discussion into the six theories and typologies of parental involvement.

2.3.3   Partnership with the School

Dekker (1993) believes that serving on classroom committees and the school governing bodies is one major aspect of partnership that parents bring to the school. Botha (2013) is of the opinion that partnership constitutes the highest level of parental involvement, according to this classification. At this level, parents serve on school governing bodies (SGBs) where they actively participate in decision-making processes and become part and parcel of school of management. More importantly, Decker and Decker (2003) believe that there is no single model for educational partnership. This means that the extent of cooperation, coordination or collaboration depends on each partner's willingness to share resources, human, physical and financial.

Similarly, Van Schalkwyk (1990:91-96) identified the following three levels of parent involvement or partnership with schools: individual level, class level and school level.

2.3.3.1   Individual level

Parents liaise directly with educators or the school principal by means of interviews, discussions, telephone conversations or informal conversations that take place as part of school activities (Van Schalkwyk, 1990:95). Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:122)

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are of the belief that parents are expected to comply with statutory requirements for sending their children to school at the appropriate age and ensure that their children attend school regularly and are punctual. They further argue that parents are to ensure that their children are adequately fed and clothed, and therefore attend school in a state fit to learn. In most countries, children have the right to be educated (Lemmer & van Wyk: 2010:208). In South Africa, section 29 (1) of the Constitution of 1996 (RSA 1996b) acknowledges the right of every person to a basic education which means that parents are obliged to educate their children.

2.3.3.2 Class level

At class level, parents cooperate with the educator and the school when serving on a parent class committee, for example the register class committee. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:80) contend that class-level partnership brings the advantage of class educators being able to partner parents to organise useful class committees to involve parents in the decision-making process of the school. Moreover, parents can come together to plan curriculum-related activities for school and home, develop a homework policy, plan holiday activities to strengthen the learning that has taken place during the school term, plan field trips, assist in supervising such trips, plan special events and celebrations and address learners' needs and experiences as well as parents cooperating with educators and the school when serving on a parent class committee, for example the register class committee (Van Schalkwyk, 1990:95).

2.3.3.3 School level

At school-level, parents can cooperate on statutory or non-statutory bodies. The statutory body is the central body of control, namely the School Governing Body (SGB). The SGB can appoint non-statutory bodies, functioning as committees to help with curricular, non-curricular and school management matters (Van Schalkwyk, 1990). Leithwood, Janzi and Steinbach (1999) encapsulate the ensuing non-statutory bodies that could aid the partnership venture between the school and the community: advocacy group, parent input on school policies and procedures, extracurricular-committees, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and advisory committees.

2.4   THEORIES OF PARENT PARTNERSHIP

There are many theories of parents' partnership and involvement. However, for the purpose of this study, the major discussions of theories are dominated by Epstein's theories of overlapping spheres and her typology of parental involvement. Lemmer and van Wyk (1999) assert that of all the theories that exist on parental involvement, Epstein's theory demonstrate the most comprehensive aspects of parental involvement.

Epstein's typology of parent involvement comprises parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community (Epstein 1995:704; Epstein 2008:11-12; Epstein & Sanders, 2006:527). It is worthy of recognition that each of the above listed typologies presents a unique challenge to education managers and leaders. The typology of Epstein as a whole would be employed to place the research objectives and research problems in perspectives as this would assist me to carry out the research.

2.4.1   Parenting

Parenting is understood to be the responsibility of the family in helping children and adolescents develop and establish home environments that support them as learners (Epstein *et al.,* 2009). In this regard, the school should be in a position to help families provide a suitable supportive learning milieu for learners at home. In the same vein, parents help schools to understand the family background, culture and educational goals. Botha (2013:230) is of the opinion that schools could present a programme for parents focusing on relevant issues, like the developmental phases of the child, which would assist parents in supporting their children at home during each stage. Dianda and McLaren (1996) believe that if parenting activities are well designed and well implemented, specific results can be expected such as student attendance and promptness at school and improvement of parents' understanding of school policies.

It could be inferred from the above therefore, that the most important involvement of parents is their continuous responsibility in raising their children and providing them with food, clothing, shelter health, and safety (Olsen & Fuller, 2012:134). Moreover, parents are encouraged to partner schools as key stakeholders as part of their

constitutional mandate as a result of changes that took place in South Africa following the first democratic elections in 19194 (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996b). In partnering the school, the most effective way the school could succour parents is by comprehending their plight and conditions, especially in rural settings. Educators and school leaders should be able to sympathise with parents in the best possible way to help. Froyen (1998:202) contends that educators could offer or provide information on the demands of learners and schooling to aid parents in fully comprehending their roles.

As stipulated in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring school attendance of their children. Thus, every parent must ensure that when their child turns seven and until the learner reaches the age of 15 or the ninth grade, whichever comes first, it is compulsory to attend school. In this regard parents' responsibility should not only focus on activities such as provision of school uniforms, books and other educational materials, but also on ensuring that their children attend school. Schulman (2000:60) asserts that parents should go beyond the responsibility of providing health and safety for their children; rather parents should form the foundation or basis for their children's success in school by providing and maintaining a positive home environment that is conducive to learning and the development of physical, intellectual, social, emotional skills and values. There should be a continuous process on the part of parents to building their own capacity to better lead and manage the affairs of their own children from the home. This may intend translate into developing a positive school climate.

2.4.1.1 Activities that support parenting

Olsen and Fuller (2012:135) offer some supportive and assisting activities that parents could adopt in raising their children. These activities include providing ongoing information to all parents in a variety of ways, establishing a parent resource room, a family-friendly centre where parents can come together, discuss parenting issues, and explore resources and materials. Gestiwicki (2009) concurs that organising a family support programme, encourages parents to organise a parent-led support group where families can connect and share their experiences and their knowledge with each other. It also provides home-visit opportunities for educators to learn and become more aware of their families, as well as for the families to

understand school expectations. It is crucial to provide information on community services, such as free immunisations and clinics, workforce development and financial services, health insurance, services offered by social services, community parent education, parent-child community activities and religious services (Chang 2010; Epstein *et al.,* 2009; National PTA, 2007). Olsen and Fuller (2012:35) state that such activities may provide ongoing information to all parents in a variety of ways such as workshops, parent education, and grade-level meetings, newsletters and pamphlets, videos and audiotapes, school websites and e-mail. According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:25), a programme that explains the different developmental stages of the child and teaches parents how to support the child during each phase, as well as workshops and talks on parenting and child rearing at each age and grade level, is of paramount importance in parent and school management. Van Wyk and Lemmer further explain the essentials of family support programmes such as parent education and courses or training for parents on various aspects of parenting, programmes to assist families with good nutrition, health and hygiene, the emotional and psychological development of the child and special needs, such as information about substance abuse, family counselling and HIV and Aids (2009).

2.4.2   Communicating

Olsen and Fuller (2012:136) are of the opinion that effective communication is essential for building a successful partnership between school and home. This assertion is accentuated by the fact that it requires the school to build two-way sharing of information, with conscious efforts from the school to engage in give-and-take conversations, establish common goals and follow up with consistent interactions between school and home (National PTA, 2007). It is critical to recognise that without the two-way communication between the school and home, information sharing would be hampered. Moreover, other levels of parent partnership are made much more difficult to achieve. Children could be utilised as they may play the important role of couriers in taking messages from school to home and bringing them back to school from home.

Epstein (2011:425) is of the opinion that communicating activities help educators and families share information about school programmes and student progress in varied,

clear and productive ways. Schools send information home via notes, letters newsletters, report cards, folders and email, and they share information in conferences, phone calls and other ways. Olsen and Fuller (2012:137) maintain that the school's basic obligation is to consistently and effectively provide information about school programmes and children's progress through school-to-home and home-to-school communication. In this regard, the school must position itself through effective management and leadership to reduce the potential for conflict. All barriers to effective communication must be removed.

A common practice used by many schools is to share information about their programmes and children's progress through school and class newsletters, report cards or narrative progress reports, parent-educator conferences, and phone calls. With the advancement of technology, schools are increasingly using emails to communicate with families, voice mail, WhatsApp messaging and the school's website to relay messages to parents (Mitchell, Foulger & Wetzel, 2010).

2.4.2.1   Communication-supported activities

Olsen and Fuller (2012:137) suggest that the following effective activities that schools could implement have the potential to establish two-way communication. Schools could create newsletters and bulletin boards that are interactive, through which parents are able to respond to educators, administrators and other parents. An example could be to include a question for parents to respond to, then provide the responses or answers in the next newsletter, and to provide a venue for interaction between parents regarding carpooling, exchange of outgrown clothing, weekend childcare, recipes, a source of 'take-away' coupons, and parenting articles. In addition, sending home weekly or monthly folders of children's work for parents to review and comment on their child's progress could develop a relationship based on knowing what is happening with learners and their learning. Placing a suggestion box or creating an online suggestion forum could encourage parents to ask questions and offer ideas. Mitchell *et al.* (2010) believe that encouraging conversation and open communication that will help their children's learning may include email addresses of school staff in the school handbook as well as on the school's website, sending positive messages about their children's activities. Similarly, Epstein (2007:25) shares that providing clear information about school

policies, roles and curriculum, as well as responsibilities of the school, family, and community in the school or parental handbooks is one activity that supports communication. Swick, Head-Reeves and Barbarin (2006) suggest that there is the need to provide easy two-way communication for parents to make comments and ask further questions after reviewing the handbook. This means establishing a regular schedule of distributing notices such as school and classroom newsletters, calendars and other activities that notify parents about important school dates, school events, parent-educator conferences, parent meetings and other important information.

2.4.3   Volunteering

According to Botha (2011:230) volunteering seems to be closely related to type two of Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of parent involvement since it involves communication. The school recruits and organises parental help, that is, parent volunteers to assist educators, administrators and learners at school, as well as to help with school events such as sport matches and cultural evenings. From the school's side, volunteering would include the design of school programmes aimed at parent recruitment and training. Olsen and Fuller (2012:138) maintain that the main activities that take place include parental assistance to educators and administrators in supporting the school programme and helping with children's schoolwork and activities, including field trips, class parties, and class performances. Volunteering ranges from low to high levels of participation.

Epstein (2007) reported that approximately 70% of parents have never helped the educator in the classroom, and only 4% of the parents (about one or two parents per classroom) were highly active at school. Similarly, Swick *et al.* (2006:63) contends that middle-income parents are more likely to participate and be informed on how to help their children at home. Consequently, educators need to be conscious and go the extra mile in engaging all families of different demographic backgrounds, as well educational.

According to the Children's Defence Fund report (2010), schools need to provide flexibility in time and place to enable parents to volunteer their talents and interest. Parents can volunteer in schools, at home, or in other community locations and at

convenient times such as evenings, weekends and during school closing or vacation days. Epstein (2011:437) avers that many schools have at least a few volunteers but this is often the same group of active parents. The challenge, in the opinion of the researcher, is for families to be recruiting more active parents through a well-structured programme, particularly as parents are perceived as valuable resources.

2.4.3.1 Volunteering support activities

Epstein (2011:437) believes that activities could be used to solicit volunteering in the schools or classrooms and include assisting administrators, educators, students or parents as aides, tutors, coaches, lecturers, chaperons, and other leaders, and as volunteers for schools or classrooms. Parents could assist with school programmes and children's progress in any location and at any time and volunteer as members of audiences, attending assemblies, performances, sports events, recognition and award ceremonies, celebrations and other events. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:26) see parents as classroom volunteers assisting educators with routine tasks. Zimmerman, Salem and Notaro (2000) assume that an effective volunteering programme means that learners gain a novel perspective of their parents when they perceive their contribution to the school. Consequently, parents obtain an improved understanding of the job of educators and feel more at ease in the school surroundings.

2.4.4 Learning at Home

According to Botha (2011:230), the school assists parents in developing their ability to support their children with their schoolwork, which aims at disseminating relevant information as well as particular curriculum-related learning activities which parents could use at home. Olsen and Fuller (2012:142) explain that in the field of early childhood education (ECD), a basic belief is that parents are their children's first and most influential educators. They further contend that parents have influence over what children do at home, particularly the amount of time and type of programmes children watch on television, the amount of time spent playing video games, types of music they listen to and the amount of time spent studying and doing homework. Trahan and Lawler-Prince (1999:65) contend that home-based learning not only enhances children's learning experiences, but also serves many purposes. It should reinforce support and strengthen learning that has been introduced and shared at

school. The involvement of families should be encouraged where curriculum activities and homework could be supported by parents.

Epstein (2011:442) explains that learning at home involves activities that families do such as homework, goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities and decisions. Information on homework policies, courses, prerequisites, goal setting and other academic decisions can help parents influence learners' choices and learning in many ways.

2.4.4.1 Support activities for home learning

Olsen and Fuller (2012:143) contend that parents could be involved in children's home learning through the use of a number of activities. These activities could include backpack reading where children bring home a book each night for parents to read or listen to as their child reads. Materials include a book, directions on how to make the reading interactive, and an inventory list for parents to complete. A further activity could be a mobile learning centre which comprise a bag with two or three hands-on activities to either promote several developmental areas or a specific skill. Each bag consists of a letter to the parents, directions for each activity, a parent's feedback journal and materials needed for the activities. The activity bags are sent home for a week or two then returned to school for review, before being replenished by the educator for the onward take of the next child.

Epstein (2007:16) suggested that theme-based activities, which may include a book with follow-up hands-on activities, could also support learning at home. The home kits come with letters to the parents. Directions are given as well in the kits for each activity, feedback journal, materials needed for the activity. More importantly, the kits are checked out by the child for a week. Home Learning Enablers (HLE) are where children are taught by parents through the use of household materials without spending much on materials. This takes place on a weekly basis when the child takes home activities with an activity card specifying the activity purpose, materials needed, directions, adaptation ideas, and completion and evaluation forms for parents to complete (Shoemaker, 1996).

According to Trahan and Lawler (1999), a family lending library is one sample activity that parents could do to support learning at home. Parents have the opportunity to

check out books, materials, and audio- and videotapes in which educators demonstrate or model a certain skill or activity. Moreover, children are also given the opportunity to check out books, magazines, toys and home-learning activity kits. Trahan and Lawler postulate that interactive homework as an additional activity at home, helps learning, allowing older children in elementary, middle and high school to communicate with family members or interact with community members through interactive homework. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) add that regular homework activities make both learners and parents aware of homework assignments and the learner's responsibility to complete homework on time.

2.4.5 Decision Making

Botha (2011:230) is of the opinion that parents become involved in decision making at various levels at schools, for example in school committees and school governing bodies. Similarly, Epstein (2011:454) explains that decision-making activities may include families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy activities on school councils or school improvement teams. Before delving deeper into the activities of decision making, there is the need to comprehend the decision-making philosophy.

According to Olsen and Fuller, parent involvement in decision making takes a variety of forms, such as choice of school, review and evaluation of school program, review of fiscal budget, hiring of personnel, advisory role for school committees, and advocate for school, families and children. The types of practices decision-making practices each school has depend on the school's philosophy and family involvement goals and policies (2012:144).

Decision making involves a partnership process in which parents and educators collaborate and contribute ideas and views. The main task in this regard is to solve problems. Actions are taken toward the shared vision that may contribute to school goals and policies.

In a similar dimension, Olsen and Fuller (2012:145) contend that parents act as leaders for other parents by representing their opinions, ideas and concerns on behalf of their children's learning and development. Equally, parent leaders take vital school information about decisions and policies to families. What is more, for parents

to act as true leaders, educators and school managers need to provide the necessary background information and training for parents to effectively carry out their necessary responsibilities and make sound decisions (National PTA, 2007:24).

Parents can also participate as advocates for the school, families and children (Bradley & Kibera, 2006:34). According to Olsen and Fuller (2012:145), most parents, individually, have acted as advocates for their children. In this sense, parents can voice their views and ideas to improve their children's experiences in school. Another level of advocacy is to have parents come together as a group to represent group objectives on issues that affect the quality of school and improve their children's education and family lives. Parents can be seen as advocates at the local, regional, state and national levels.

2.4.5.1   Support activities for decision making

Olsen and Fuller (2012:145) suggest that parents can become involved in decision making through participating in parent organisations and advisory committees. Advisory committees can be long or short-term projects. Short-term committees are parents and educators coming together to work on short-term projects, such as selecting a math curriculum, reviewing and developing school evaluation forms and processes, forming a student club, selecting materials for a parent room, or organising a specific school event such as an open house, a school dance or an awards and recognition ceremony for students. A further activity is becoming involved in volunteer advocacy groups which target specific activities that educators and parents work on together to lobby for school, children and family improvement on a local, regional, state or national level. Issues include educator-child ratio in the classroom, safety and health regulations, services offered to children with or without disabilities, educators' salaries and need for new building expansion (Gonzalez-Mena, 2010).

Epstein and Sanders (1998:392) described activities that could succour decision-making such as town meetings which are set up in the community inviting other parents and community members to discuss issues on goals, children's education, and family needs. A further activity could be training sessions for parents and educators, after identifying training needs. Based on the research, training sessions to help parents and educators to effectively implement their various responsibilities in

decision making and advocacy, workshops are developed. Classroom committees for parents and educators assist in getting together to discuss and plan curriculum-related activities for school and home, plan summer learning packets or activities, plan special events and celebrations and address children's needs and experiences.

2.4.6   Collaborating with the Community

According to Hill and Taylor (2004:161-162), specialists in certain fields of knowledge at universities, business enterprises and civic organisations in the community could be invited to work with parents and/or schools in terms of, for example, raising the academic standard of school programmes, acquiring learning material and sharing facilities. Epstein (2011:459) explains that collaborating with the community maximises human, fiscal and physical resources, programmes and services available in the community. She further argues that it is vital to develop connections with small and large businesses, government agencies, cultural, religious, civic, and fraternal organisations, colleges and universities, and other community groups and individuals, as this should benefit students, families or the school. Such activities also enable students, staff and families to contribute their services to the community.

According to the United States (US) Census Bureau (2008:50), families are facing several difficulties such as financial concerns, an increase in single parenting, the absence of extended families for assistance and support and an increase in families that are in the 'sandwich generation', providing care for their own children as well as their elderly parents, which results in children's learning being affected. The interconnectedness between quality of family life and children's development cannot be swept under the carpet. When families are struggling and in crisis, schools will need to step in by networking and collaborating with the community to gain access to services and resources to strengthen families and children's success in learning (Olsen & Fuller, 2012:147).

Epstein *et al.* (2009:392) contend that, in line with the African proverb, it takes a village to raise a child, schools and educators need to perceive the community in a much broader way by including the members of the community in improving the quality of education. Olsen and Fuller (2012:147) believe that community members can provide the schools with materials, people and natural resources; therefore,

schools need to make connections with various community members such as large and small businesses, faith-based communities, cultural groups, government agencies and other organisations.

2.4.6.1   Support activities for collaborating with the community

Epstein (2011:459) suggests that activities could be carried out in collaboration with the community. She suggests that the community could contribute to schools, students, and families, business partners, agencies, cultural groups, health services, recreation and many other groups to strengthen programmes and classroom curricula. Schools, students and families could in turn contribute to the community through student in-service learning programmes to share talents and to solve community problems. Similarly, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) believe support activities could also involve feasible community collaboration in the areas such as giving parents information about community health, cultural, recreational and social programmes and services.

2.5   THE IMPLICATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement has wide range significance, which could be tapped in by stakeholders in education provision, particularly in rural communities.

2.5.1   Improved Learner Academic Achievement

Hill and Taylor (2004:162) assert that cross-sectional and longitudinal studies have consistently shown that parental involvement in their children's formal education is associated with academic performance. Similarly, Van Wyk (2008:7), after an extensive scrutiny of studies on the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement and school effectiveness, concludes that the evidence is now beyond dispute. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school but throughout life.

Olsen and Fuller (2012:132) maintain that studies show that family involvement in activities that are effectively planned and well implemented, result in substantial benefits to children, parents, educators and the school. Henderson and Bella

(1994:5), Henderson and Mapp (2002:33), Houtenville and Conway (2008:24); the National PTA (2007:25) argue that decades of research studies have documented comprehensive benefits of family involvement in children's education, which include the subsequent:

- Children tend to achieve more, regardless of ethnic or racial background, socio-economic status, or parents' educational level;

- Children generally achieve better grades, test scores, and attendance;

- Children have consistently completed their homework;

- Children have better self-esteem, are more self-disciplined, and show higher aspirations and motivation toward school;

- Children's positive attitude about school often results in improved behaviour in school and less suspension for disciplinary reasons;

- Fewer children are being placed in special education and remedial classes;

- Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals work together to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the culture at school; and

- Junior High and High School students, whose parents remain involved, usually make better transitions and are less likely to drop out of school.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming acceptance of the fact that parental involvement positively influences learner achievement at school, it seems that certain parental activities may have varying degrees of influence on learner achievement, depending on the place of studies and parents' perceptions of parent involvement (Botha 2011:231). According to Georgiou (1997:189, 203-205), research conducted with 852 sixth-grade Cypriot learners and their parents found that parents focusing on academic achievement and developing their children's interests showed a positive and statistically significant correlation with academic achievement. Fascinatingly, the study demonstrated an inverse relationship between academic achievement at school and parents helping their children with homework. The possible reason could be the pressure parents exert on their children. Most of the time, parents get confused as what exactly is required of them. Parents do not precisely know how they are expected to help and when.

2.5.2   Building Communal Resources

Coleman (1988:100-101) explains that social or communal capital deals with dissimilar relations of people who share strengths and knowledge for productive benefits. In this regard, parent partnership and effective management could tap into the pool of such resources in the community to the benefit of the school. Van Wyk (2010:204) shares a similar sentiment that the social system, norms and trusts could facilitate educational achievements, particularly those established between parents, learners and schools. McNeal (1999:119-120) describes communal resources as containing three components which researchers have to include: form, norms of obligation and reciprocity and, finally, resources. Form relates to social ties and relations, including ties with and within a system. Norms of obligation and reciprocity refers to the acknowledgement of both parties' need to invest in order to have their expectations fulfilled and finally, resources refer to those beneficial attributes that would help in bringing forth productive benefits.

Parents who become partners with the school establish social capital as they become co-responsible for improved academic achievements (Hill & Taylor, 2004:161-162; Perna & Marvin, 2005:487-488). Similarly, Botha (2011:131-232) argues that parents' communal capital, once it has found expression in parent involvement, could be extended into other areas as a result of their knowledge of self-worth and increased confidence. The crust of his argument stems from the fact that parents, who have established their communal resources in terms of parent involvement, may serve as exemplars to other parents and may influence them so that they too may subsequently become partners with schools and engage in helping other adults in discovering their worth and potential.

Botha (2011:232) further argues that parents who engage in the learning of their children may become enthused to improve their own academic skills and may embark on a path of lifelong learning, thereby enlarging their potential communal resources. From Botha's point of view, there are benefits that may accrue from effective management of communal capital to the school, the parents and the educator as well. His argument touches on the fact that by experiencing intentional parental involvement, learners are influenced, as future adults, also to become involved in the formal education of their children, and hence a snowballing effect of

passing on social capital in terms of parental involvement to many future potential parents. This ultimately leads the argument to the discussion of the benefits of communal resources to parents, educators and the school.

2.5.2.1   Benefits for parents

Olsen and Fuller (2012:133) maintain that parents become beneficiaries from an effectively managed involvement structure. This involvement structure indicates that when parents increase their interaction and discussion with their children, they are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional and intellectual developmental needs. As a result, parents become more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills. Similarly, Henderson and Mapp (2002:133) indicate that as parents gain more knowledge of child development, there is more use of affection and positive reinforcement and less punishment on their children, thus benefitting both parents and the family. In addition, parents tend have a better understanding of the educator's job and school curriculum and when parents are aware of what their children are learning, they are more likely to help when they are requested by educators to become more involved in their children's learning activities at home.

Houtenville and Conway (2008:437) report on similar benefits such as parents' perceptions of the school are improved and there are stronger ties and commitment to the school. In addition, parents are more aware of, and become more active when they are requested by school to be part of the decision-making team regarding policies that affect their children's education. In the view of Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:47), parents are provided with knowledge about the developmental stages of the child at different ages and grade levels. Thus, parents develop confidence in their task as primary educators of their children and are provided with skills to assist their children at all stages of schooling.

2.5.2.2   Benefits for educators

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:32) asserted that parent and educator partnerships come with certain advantages to the educators such as "decreasing educator's workloads, educators' understanding of the learners increase, educators' feel more positive about their work and more resources become available to the educators in

terms of gaining greater knowledge about how learners are coping at home". Olsen and Fuller (2012:133) explained that certain benefits also accrue to educators when there is an effective parent partnership with the school. Educators and principals are more likely to experience higher morale with the development of a strong relationship. In addition, educators and principals often earn greater respect for their profession from the parents and there tends to be improved communication and relations between parents, educators and managers. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:45) complement the thoughts above as they conclude that the teaching task of the educator is strengthened when they can rely on the parents' support within the home. Epstein (1996) believes that educators also gain an understanding of families' diverse backgrounds, cultures, concerns, aims and aspirations and their views on parenting.

2.5.2.3   Benefits for the school

Olsen and Fuller (2012:133) similarly, highlight that certain benefits may accumulate for the school when parent and community partnership has been effectively managed. Schools that actively involve parents and the community, tend to establish better reputations in the community. School programme that encourage and involve parents usually do better and have higher quality programmes than those that do not involve parents. Schools also experience better community support. Yeung (2004) explains that schools benefit from the involvement of parents as it enriches the resources the school can draw on as well as a reduction in the level of misconduct by learners. In other words, the level of discipline is enhanced through parent support and partnership.

2.5.3   Promoting a Model of Conduct

Parental involvement relates to the unity that could be achieved with the school to promote acceptable learner behaviour. This is confirmed by Hill and Taylor (2004:162) who assert that there is the need to significantly promote effective parent partnership in an attempt to guide learner conduct both at school and in the home. More importantly, Van Wyk (2008:7) mentions that the standout advantage is that such a move leads to a sharp decline in truancy, improved attitude of learners, an improved learner behaviour pattern and a decrease in dropout rate. The challenge arises in finding ways in which the school and family partnership are able to marshal

all the forces and resources available to them to achieve such a goal.

There is no doubt that parental involvement has been found to promote learner inspiration. A study conducted by Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems and Doan Holbein (2005:99, 101, 115-119) on the relationship between the motivation of USA public students in Grades K- 12 (Kindergarten through Grade 12) and parental involvement in terms of parental behaviours directed at children's formal education, has demonstrated encouraging results.

The argument stems from that fact that, parents and schools need to be in agreement when it comes to their children's education. In as much as understanding the benefits that parental involvement can bring to both parties, there is the need to pay attention to a motivational foundation of such involvement. That is what parents expect of both educators and their children as well as what the educators expect of their learners and parents. In a nutshell, there is the need to acquire skills and control in dealing with both parties to optimally regulate the behaviour patterns of learners to the benefit of society in general.

2.5.4   Elevating Communities and Promoting a more Content Society

According to Anglin (2011:174), increasing parental involvement helps schools become more central to community life. The essence of parental involvement should not centre only on learners and the school; the community forms an integral part of this network. There is no doubt that the role of the school should become much more effective in the areas of teaching and learning. The school could also become a one-stop centre for community services (Anglin 2011:168). Botha (2011:232) is of the view that schools could cooperate with relevant community partners, becoming the venue for a variety of community functions geared towards community development and economic transformation of the community. Such functions may include healthcare, job training, improving parents' and community members' skills pertaining to parenting, family wellbeing, computer technology and literacy.

Anglin (2011:167-182) explained that schools could also work in groups with community development institutions in developing communities. The onus then lies on the school and the community to draw up and design relevant and competent programmes to uplift communities. The argument from the perspective of Botha

(2011:233) should be given careful consideration where parental involvement is viewed in terms of long-range benefits to society. Society should be content and established on discipline which capitalises on its ability to make it a better place for all its members.

2.6 THE RANGE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

According Botha (2011: 233), one could infer from Epstein's typology of parental involvement and the levels at which parental involvement could take place. It could be said that parental involvement varies from a point where parents have decision-making power in the administration of the school by means of school governing bodies, whilst also cooperating with the community. Vandergrift and Greene (1992:57-59) explain that parental involvement can be diverse forms based on the foundation or the principle that parental involvement implies, that parents are supportive. In this context, 'supportive' means encouraging, reassuring and understanding in relation to their children's formal education and parents who actively participate in their children's formal education by means of observable educational actions (Vandergrift & Greene, 1992).

The table below distinguishes four types of parent, according to Vandergrift and Greene's philosophy (1992:59). The table has been modified to suit the distinctive nature of parent partnership as an indispensable role player in attaining educational goals.

Table 2.1:   Four types of parent

+Parents support children (for example, are understanding and encouraging) **+**Parents are active participants (for example, provide guidance with homework)	**-**Parents do not support children (for example, do not show interest in the children's formal education) **+**Parents are active participants (for example, attend parents' evenings if food is provided)
+Parents are supportive (for example, care for children's wellbeing by seeing that appropriate breaks are built into children's study programmed)	**-**Parents do not support children (for example, ignore everything that has to do with children's formal education at home)

-Parents are inactive as far as participation is concerned (for example, rarely attend parents' evenings at school or school activities).	-Parents are inactive as far as participation is concerned (for example, ignore all communication from school).

(Adapted from: Vandergrift & Greene 1992:59)

Bauer and Shea (2003:65) explain that parental involvement programmes that have been successful, share a number of common characteristics. Coetzee *et al.,* (2012:134) believe that such programmes tend to focus on prevention rather than treatment. They recognise the need to work with the whole family, as well as the community. The commitment of the family as an active participant in their children's education also relates to the commitment of cultural diversity. One could assert that successful programmes focus on strength-based needs, effective programming and continuous evaluation.

Bauer and Shea (2003:68) pay tribute to the emergence of certain factors that could arise when working with parents. The issue of equity must be addressed; that is, making sure that experiences are open to both parents with limited resources and those who are more affluent. Participation could be changed dependent on whether it is voluntary or involuntary. The programmes should be of high quality and should be specific in terms of their objectives. The educators working with other professionals should be culturally sensitive or at least competent (Coetzee *et al.,* 2012:134)

Bauer and Shea (2003:67) describe four basic models of parental involvement. The models are described below:

Model 1: the protective model. The goal of this model is to reduce tension between parents and educators, primarily by separating their functions, thereby protecting the school from parental interference. The model assumes that parents delegate the education of their children to the school and that the school is then accountable. There is little parental involvement and no structure exists for preventative problems-solving.

Model 2: the school-to-home transition model. In this model the school enlists parents in supporting the objectives of the school. Although parents are not equal

partners, they are supposed to endorse the school's expectations.

Model 3: the curriculum enrichment model. The goal is to extend the school's curriculum by incorporating the contributions of the families. The assumption is that educators and parents should work together to enrich curriculum objectives and content. Relationships are based on trust.

Model 4: the parent-educator partnership model. This model has parents and educators working together to accomplish success for all learners. The assumption is that a common mission requires collaboration between parents and educators. This is a true partnership based on authority shared among colleagues (so-called 'collegiality').

2.7 MANAGEMENT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Improving parental involvement through effective management thereof is one of the most challenging tasks facing educators today (Vandergrift & Greene, 1992:57). The unique circumstances of each school determine how parental involvement should be planned and managed. One cannot consequently single out the ideal parental involvement programme to serve as a model for all schools to follow. Many studies offer various parental involvement plans and leadership styles. Williams and Chavkin (1989:19) have suggested a seven-point plan to parental involvement management.

The choice of a particular parental involvement management plan is contingent on the school's stakeholders. The school's stakeholders such as educators, parents and relevant people from the community, could interrogate possible ways to improve parental involvement management (Botha, 2011:239). Squelch and Lemmer (1994:31) also accentuated the adoption of the seven-minimum plan as the most useful in effectively managing parental involvement. The plans in other studies are considered the basic elements of parental involvement management. They include the following steps: devising a strategic plan for parental involvement, creating an inviting school climate, parent and educator instruction in elements of parental involvement, communication between school and home, class parents' committees, drawing up an annual programme and opportunities for contact, all of which are discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.7.1 Devising a Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement

The school management team, heads of department, parents and educators should embark on setting goals for parent involvement (Botha 2011:2390). These could assist in identifying areas relevant to promoting parental involvement that could need to be investigated and clarified (Van Schalkwyk: 1990:96). Botha (2013:43) posits that "at a planning meeting, departmental documents including regulations and circulars, can be used to identify areas in the school in which parents can become involved". The most critical question is which areas of the school require the partnership of parents. Once the areas are identified, then planning can commence. Botha (2013:240) advises that a coordinating committee could be constituted, comprising staff representatives and parents.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2004:42) admonish that in drawing up a parental involvement programme, parents have to be involved right from the initial stages so that a sense of ownership of the school can be developed. Botha (2011:240) argues that the school management team, heads of department, parents and educators should embark on setting goals for parental involvement. He further explains that possible areas of parental involvement could include drawing up a policy for parental involvement, an awareness campaign to conscientise parents on their significance in their children's formal education, involving the community in the project, financial management of the project and compiling an annual programme for parental involvement.

2.7.2 Creating an Inviting School Climate

Mentz and Barth (2002:163; 2006:11) contend that the school climate should be friendly and parents should feel welcome and comfortable whenever they visit the school. Botha (2011:240) asserts, "it is essential that the administrative staff also play a role in planning the improvement of the school's climate, since their conduct and their office spaces create the first impressions of visiting parents. Similarly, Van Schalkwyk (1990:121) lists the following aspects, which would contribute to an inviting school climate: professional conduct, displaying a positive attitude, a neat and inviting waiting area for parents and a well-arranged principal's office.

2.7.3 Parent and Educator Instruction in Elements of Parental Involvement

Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004:259) believe that knowledgeable educators and parents should conduct parent and educator training. They outline goals such as enhancing the quality of support that parents give their children at home, establishing groups and incorporating and organising parents as partners in the school. Van Schalkwyk (1990:125) avers that the topics covered during parent-educator training depends on the needs of particular schools such as parenting styles, responsibilities of parenthood, communication between parent and child, teaching independent decision making, study methods and subject choices as well as conflict management. Botha (2011:240) is of the view that parent-educator instruction is considered important since it could emphasise many salient aspects such as the significance of parental involvement, the importance of motivating, listening and showing interest in children's formal education at home without necessarily being able to help children with homework, which may require an advanced comprehension of and insight into specialised topics.

Meanwhile, the necessity of parents to form mainstay groups in accordance with their children's grades and subjects, could motivate parents in becoming involved in the formal education of their children. Botha (2011:240) conceives that members or representatives of these groups could periodically meet with educators to address critical issues which could negatively influence parental involvement.

2.7.4 Communication between School and Home

According to Brown and Beckett (2007:62), communication and shared norms are essential in establishing common ownership of the school in communities so that parents share the responsibility of their children's formal education and supplement the educator's work. Keyser (2006) asserts that "it is very important to have effective communication between the school and the home if there is to be any real partnership between parents and educators". Successful communication is an important part of any parental involvement plan (Shalaway, 2005:165). Parents and educators can communicate with each other through informal discussions, formal consultations, telephone conversations, exchange of correspondence, circulars,

parents' evenings, home visits and a school newspaper.

Botha (2011:241) contends that personal discussions with many students have revealed that communicating with parents via telephone and hard copy documents is not successful. He further suggests that since many parents own mobile phones, as opposed to personal computers, it is better to use SMS or WhatsApp as mode of communication. Meanwhile, Brown and Beckett (2007:62) explain that "parents can undertake certain facets of communication between the school and the home themselves by means of a communication committee". For example, they can help draw up reports on various school committees on which they serve and equally communicate the content of the meetings to the parents for the purpose of keeping the parents informed (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2010:216)

2.7.5   Class Parents' Committees

Dekker (1993:187) is of the opinion that parental cooperation is often easier to accomplish in smaller and more congenial class parent's committees. Similarly, Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:47) conjecture that if parents are involved in school activities initially in smaller groups at class level, they will be able to make more significant contributions and they will be more prepared to support general school activities at a later stage. Botha (2011:241) says that parents interested in the content of subjects taught in specific grades could form the basis of class parents' committees. Class parents' committees could assist in dealing with issues as the identification of valuable websites for relevant information, specialists in particular fields who could be approached to give talks at the school and excursions relevant to subject topics (Botha, 2011:242).

2.7.6   Drawing up an Annual Programme

Botha (2011:241) is of the opinion that it is important that an annual parental involvement programme be drawn up for the following year towards the end of a current academic year. Once an annual programme has run for a year, it would be relatively easy to compile a subsequent annual programme, which indicates projects, activities, meetings, contact opportunities, location, date, time allocation and educators involved, as well as other relevant information scheduled for the academic year (Van Schalkwyk, 1993:121).

2.7.7   Opportunities for Contact

Botha (2013:241) asserts that opportunities for contact, such as parents' evenings, open days and scheduled appointments, should be taken seriously. Botha (2011:241) explains that personal contacts during for example, parents' evenings and open days, remains ideal for improving collaboration between school and the home. In some instances, where parents are located far away from the school, it is important to find a more convenient venue; for example, a community hall. It has been observed by Botha (2011:242) that parents will consider attending school functions when the impact on their finances is minimal.

2.8   CONCLUSION

The discussion above was dominated by various theories of parental involvement as well as community and family partnership. Particular emphasis was laid on Epstein's theories of overlapping spheres and her typology of parental involvement which included parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. More importantly, management of parental involvement, it was discovered, involved steps such as devising a strategic plan for parental involvement, creating an inviting school climate, parent and educator instruction in elements of parents involved, communication between school and home, class parent's committees, drawing up an annual programme and opportunities for contact. It came to the fore from the literature review that certain benefits accrue to all stakeholders of education if parental involvement management and leadership effectively achieve educational goals.

The above discourse tried to discuss the views and opinions of many scholars, concerning parental involvement, which comprise the positive impacts of partnership, advantages, orientation underlying the various concepts of parent and community partnership in attaining educational goals. The conclusion one could arrive at is that in South Africa, parental involvement still remains a relatively new concept to parents. Nonetheless, there are many accompanying benefits if the idea of community, family and parental partnership could be given the most effective management and leadership it deserves. This should be done taking the cultural backgrounds of parents into account. Consequently, school leaders and managers

should no longer view parental involvement as consisting of only two role players, namely, parents and schools, but should take the community into serious consideration.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, literature on family, parent and community involvement was reviewed and various aspects of parent and community partnership management and leadership were discussed. In the ensuing chapter, the design of the study and the methodology that was employed is presented and described to answer the research question *What management and leadership skills are needed for managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal province?*

3.2   A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

I adopted the qualitative research approach with the aim of collecting a wealth of information about the various aspects of the topic under study. This methodology, which focuses on words instead of numbers (Wiseman, 1999:257), supported me in obtaining insightful and in-depth views from the participants concerning the complex nature of the issues under study (Chiromo, 2006:27). This, furthermore, afforded participants ample space to voice and articulates their sentiments, judgements and insight. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) explain that qualitative research assists researchers in unpacking issues and developing a body of facts to build theory rather than testing it.

Qualitative research is referred by a variety of terms, reflecting several research approaches (Rubin & Babie, 1993). A qualitative research approach accentuates the gathering of data on a naturally occurring phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:334) and seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individual who inhabits these settings (Berg, 2009:4). Historically, qualitative researchers have two main purposes: to describe and explore and to describe and explain (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:348).

Qualitative research is a type of scientific research which has its roots in philosophy and human sciences (Smith & Glass, 1987:222). According to Creswell (2007:24),

qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, and the possible use of a theoretical lens. It entails an inquiry into the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem and they make sense of their settings. Consequently, a qualitative approach permits researchers to share in the understanding and perceptions of others and to discover how people organise and give meaning to their everyday lives. Myers (2011) and Suter (2012:55) explain qualitative research as a study aimed at understanding and explaining social phenomena in their natural context attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Smith & Glass 1987:259). This is done through verbal description and analysis of complex data such as interviews, documents, participant observations, field notes or images. Thus, a qualitative approach to inquiry involves the collection of data from a participant's perspective in a natural setting and manner that is sensitive to the people and places under study over an extended period of time (Creswell, 2007:25; McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:201). Qualitative research thus focuses on an in-depth probing of phenomena such as people's beliefs, assumptions, understandings, opinions, actions, interactions or other potential sources of evidence of the processes of learning or teaching (Wilson, 2009:113).

Berg and Lune (2011:8) assert that qualitative research most appropriately looks for responses to questions by perusing various social settings and the individuals who occupy these settings. Moreover, qualitative researchers are most interested in how humans orchestrate their natural habitats and make sense of their ambience through symbols, social structures, social roles and social responsibilities (Berg & Lune, 2011). Patton (2002:558) believes that qualitative research is largely inductive reasoning moving from descriptions of specific descriptions, detailed observations to more general principles. According to Anderson (2012:192), qualitative research offers multiple interpretations of human events and aims to understand the observable fact of what is experienced by research subjects such as attitudes, perceptions, motivations and actions holistically, and by way of description in the form of words and language, in a specific natural circumstance through various methods (Wilson, 2009:113).

Hamilton (2011:120) distinguishes between qualitative and quantitative research by

defining quantitative research as research that involves the analysis of numerical data, while qualitative research involves the analysis and interpretation of observational data. Lichtman (2013:6) explains that qualitative research is a way of becoming aware of how researchers gather, organise, and interpret information obtained from humans using their eyes and ears as filters. It often involves in-depth interviews and/or observations of humans in natural and social settings. It is a contrast of quantitative research, which relies heavily on hypothesis testing, cause and effect, and statistical analyses. It is research providing specific accounts and explanations of phenomena investigated, with lesser emphasis given to numerical methods. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:104) agree that a qualitative research approach deals with subjective data that are produced by minds of the respondents attached to the environment. There are no manipulations or control of behaviour or setting, nor any external imposed constraints. Bouma and Ling (2006:89 similarly, state qualitative research sets out to provide an impression of the phenomenon.

In this study, I adopted a qualitative approach of research as I felt that as it is concerned with understanding the process and the social and cultural contexts which underline various behaviour patterns and are mostly concerned with exploring the "why" questions of research (Maree, 2007:50). In addition to interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment and focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996), it was deemed appropriate.

I used qualitative research because unlike quantitative research methods, qualitative research methodology places little importance on developing statistically valid samples, or on searching for statistical support or hypotheses, or measuring the size or scope of phenomenon. On the contrary, qualitative research focuses on describing and understanding phenomenon within their naturally occurring context (called naturalistic context) with the intention of developing an understanding of the meanings imparted by respondents, seeing through the eyes of the participant. This means that the phenomena can be described in terms of the meaning that they have for the participants. I intended to perceive the description of the observable facts of the study through the lens of the participants in the natural context to be able to eliminate the degree of subjectivity to the minimal level.

Qualitative researchers depend, to a great extent, on the interpersonal skills of the inquirer, such as constructing conviction, maintaining positive relations, being non-judgmental, and respecting the norms the circumstance (Pillow, 2003). Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:344-348) outline the key characteristics of qualitative research design.

A distinguishing characteristic of qualitative research is the study of behaviour in a *natural setting* as it occurs or occurred naturally. In this respect, I ensured that the setting for data collection was participants' schools to ensure the respondents were comfortable in their natural setting in order to avert the imposition of any external constraints.

Corbin and Strauss (2007:347) believe that qualitative researchers need to have *context sensitivity* which takes into consideration situational factors. The situational context is important in comprehending behaviour particularly based on the belief that human actions are inclined strongly to be influenced by the settings in which they occur (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:346).

A further characteristic is *direct data collection* where the researcher collects data directly from the source. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:346) argue that in qualitative studies the investigator conventionally acts as an observer in the setting that is being studied, either as the interviewer, the observer, or the person who studies artefacts and documents. Moreover, qualitative researchers want to have information directly from the source by spending a considerable amount of time in direct interaction with the settings, participants and documents they are studying. I ensured that data was collected directly from participants through the act of interviewing and the painstaking time interacting with respondents and the documents collected.

Rich narrative description comprises detailed narratives that provide in-depth understanding of behaviour. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:346) explain that qualitative researchers approach a situation with the assumption that nothing is trivial or unimportant; details are recorded to contribute to better comprehension of behaviour, as the intent is to provide "rich" depiction.

Process orientation focuses on why and how behaviour occurs. Qualitative studies look for process by which behaviour occurs as well as explanations, not just outcomes or products. Thus, process permits for conclusions that explain the reasons results (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:347).

Inductive analysis means that generalisations are induced from synthesising gathered data. Qualitative researchers do not formulate hypotheses and gather data to prove or disprove them (assumption) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:347). Rather, data are collected first and then synthesised inductively to generate generalisations. The onus is on inductive reasoning which links to the development of theory from the ground up from detailed particulars, rather than from top to bottom. In other words, the qualitative researcher wants to be open to new ways of understanding (Patton, 2001:53).

Participant perspectives focus on participants' understanding, descriptions, labels and meanings. Qualitative researchers try to restructure reality from the standpoint of participant perspectives, as the participants they are studying see it (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:345). In other words, they do not apply predetermined definitions or ideas about how people will think or react. I ensured that participants' voices were articulated in the study by recording the interviews and using verbatim quotations in the presentation of the findings.

Emergent design means that the design evolves and changes as the study takes place. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:347) explain that like quantitative researchers, qualitative researchers have a plan or design for conducting the research. Moreover, they explain that the difference is that qualitative researchers enter investigation "as if they know very little about the people and places they will visit, and they mentally cleanse their preconceptions". Similarly, I began the study with some idea about what was needed to be collected, and the procedures to be employed, but a full account of the methods was done retrospectively, after all the data had been collected. Thus, the design is emergent in that it evolves during the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Complexity of understanding and explanation relates to understandings and explanations that are complex, with multiple perspectives. Patton (2001:54) believes

that central to qualitative research is the belief that the world is multifaceted and that there are few simple explanations for human behaviour. Behaviour results from the interaction of multiple factors; it follows then, that the methods that investigate behaviour as well as the explanations need to be adequately complex to capture the true meaning of what occurred.

I decided to utilise qualitative research methods for this study because I intended to explore the meaning participants attached to the research problem. By this means, I intended to explore and describe the impact of effective management and leadership of parental, family, and community partnerships in a rural secondary school. In particular, I sought to understand the benefits of such effective approaches and their contribution to the attainment of educational goals. This meant that I was able to investigate that human activities, in terms of meanings, why people say this, do this or act in this way in order to interpret by linking them to other human events to enable greater understanding (Pring, 2000:33). In a nutshell, qualitative research approach therefore acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and participants as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have constructed reality based on those experiences. In this regard, I ensured that participants were selected and interviewed in their natural setting and were asked questions that enabled them to share their experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences. These personal experiences, beliefs and value-laden narratives could be biased and subjective but I had to accept them as true for those who had lived through the experiences.

3.3   RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

The research design indicates the general plan or the procedure for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and the methods of data collections and under what conditions the data is obtained (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:28). In practice, the choice of research design is based on the researcher's assumptions, research skills and research practices, and influences that may affect the way data would be collected (Chen & Manion, 2004). In this study, a case study was used as the research design.

The history of case-study research has been marked by periods of activity and

inertia. Flyvbjerg (2006:219) attributed the early use of case study in the United States to the Chicago School of Sociology and Education. Yin (2012), Merriam (2002), and Stake (1995) explain that in a move to make research more scientific, sociologists began to discredit case study methodology. However, a resurgence of interest in case study research emerged as qualitative methods began to be accepted in the field of education. Lamnek (2005:204) defines case study as a research approach situated between concrete data-taking techniques and methodology paradigms. Bromley (1991:302) describes a case study as a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest, while Wilson (2009:204) sees a case study as a traditional systematic approach to looking at events, collecting data, analysing information and reporting the results, with the end ambition of describing the case under investigation as fully and accurately as possible.

Thomas (2011:511) contends that despite the fact that case study research is so popular, there is little in the way of organisational structure to guide the intending case inquirer. The question on the minds of many is what is a case? What do we mean when we talk about a case? According to Lichtman (2014:120), a case can be limited to a characteristic, trait or behaviour. She further explains that one might study a child or children with a particular type of learning disability (characteristic); or you might study an educator who is outgoing (trait). Or you might study an administrator who exhibits particular behaviours, such as cooperative or collegial interactions (behaviours). Lichtman (2014:120) explains that the key to this kind of case study is that you identify the characteristic, trait, or behaviour in advance and then identify individuals who have or are thought to have the characteristic. Significantly, Lichtman (2014:120) distinguishes the following features: objective is to increase knowledge and bring about change in what is being studied, empirical inquiry, contemporary phenomenon and real-life context. However, Suter (2012; 366) defines case study as an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the study of a single person or entity using a widespread diversity of data while Wiseman (1999:259) describes case study as an approach in which individuals or institutions are selected because they fit a set of commonly recognised criteria.

There is no formula, but the choice of research design depends to a large extent on

the research question. The more the research question seeks to explain (for example, "how" or "why" some social phenomenon works), the more the case study method becomes relevant in application - the method also becomes more appropriate as the research questions require an extensive and "in-depth" description of the social phenomenon (Yin, 2009:4). With this in mind, I used the case study design as a qualitative means to collect data that addressed the various research questions to enable a better understanding of the phenomenon or research problem under consideration.

Creswell (2008) defines a case study as follows: "An in-depth exploration of a bounded system – an activity, event, process, or individuals based on extensive data collection. Being bounded means being unique according to place, time and participant characteristics". According to Maree (2007:75) the "term case study" has multiple meanings. It can be used to describe a unit of analysis – that is a case study of a particular organisation or to describe a research method.

Case study research is seldom used in the caring sciences, but Stake believes it is very valuable in the fields such as education and psychology (Stake, 2008:479). Stake (2008:435) describes two kinds of case studies as research design in qualitative studies and draws a distinction between intrinsic and instrumental cases. An intrinsic case is one in which the focus is on the case itself, such as an investigation into unusual or unique individuals, groups or events. An instrumental case provides insight into specific theme or issue. Here the focus is on in-depth understanding of the entity, issue or theme (Stake, 2008:436). I opted to utilise instrumental case study because it was an ideal method that enabled me to position my participants' experiences, perceptions, and leadership and management demands presented by their schools in dealing with the problem of ineffective parent participation. In addition, Stake (1995:156) contends that employing an instrumental case study enables the researcher to provide detailed, specific accounts of particular circumstances rather than offering broad, generalisation of findings.

I employed a case study design because my interest was to understand parental leadership and management as in rural settings holistically, thus a flexible form of inquiry best suited for studying a particular phenomenon within its natural context (Maldondo, Rhoads & Buenavista, 2005). Such studies are conducted through the

use of interviews and observations and seek to develop thick descriptions of the setting or phenomenon in question. To examine what management and leadership skills are effective for the promotion of community and parent partnerships in rural secondary schools to achieve educational goals, I engaged in qualitative case study research as observed by Yin (1994:381) and because of the strength it offers in conducting qualitative study (Yin, 1994). Thus, this method enabled me to position myself to draw from the perceptions of the participants regarding management and leadership skills for the promotion of community and parent partnership. In addition, the case studies are intended to provide detailed, specific accounts of particular circumstances rather than offering broad, generalisable findings (Stake, 1995) by employing multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process to answer the research question.

3.4   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According McMillan and Schumacher (2014:16), research methodology is the way in which one collects and analyses data. It is a systematic and purposeful procedure, not haphazardly planned, to yield data on a particular research problem. In a broader context, the term methodology refers to a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific research problem (McMillan & Schumacher 2014:16). Wilson (2009:58) describes methodology as the plan of action which informs and links the methods used to collect and analyse data to answer the original research question and includes sampling, site selection, data collection and data analysis, all of which are discussed below.

3.4.1   Sampling and Site Selection

McMillan and Schumacher (2014:143) define sampling as the process whereby a researcher selects a group of individuals or entities from whom data are collected for research analysis. Similarly, Maree (2007:79) defines sampling in qualitative research as the process used to select a portion of the population for the study and it usually involves smaller sample sizes than quantitative research. Qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches. Qualitative sampling strategies may take the form of sources of information which include individuals, groups, documents,

reports and sites. Regardless of the form of data, purposive sampling is used. Qualitative sampling, in contrast to probabilistic sampling, is "selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth" (Patton, 2002:242). Maree (2007:79) is of the opinion that qualitative sampling decisions are made for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions.

3.4.1.1   Purposive sampling

McMillan and Schumacher (2014:152) describe purposive sampling as the selection of particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest. On the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population, a judgement is made about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. I purposively selected particular schools to obtain information that would best deal with the aim of the study.

Considering the nature of the study, I adopted both the convenience and snowball sampling techniques. With a convenience sampling technique, the researcher selects a group of subjects on the basis of their accessibility or expediency (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:351). I used convenience sampling because of the constraint of inaccessibility of most of the schools within the research site due to lack of accessible roads to some of the schools. In this regard, schools that were accessible in terms of reach were given a priority. Meanwhile, snowball sampling, a strategy whereby each successive participant or group is identified by a preceding group or individual (*ibid.*) was also used to identify participants. This strategy may be used in situations in which the individuals do not form a naturally bounded group but are scattered throughout populations (*ibid.*).

Sampling in qualitative research is flexible and often continues until no new themes emerge from the data collection process; this is called data saturation. In this regard I chose five schools out of the possible 60 schools from the Ndwedwe Circuit of the Ilembe district in the KwaZulu-Natal province. The five rural secondary schools were selected because I perceived them to be information-rich schools that could provide the requisite data in fulfilling and answering the research questions. In each of the five schools, three participants were chosen and included one school management team (SMT) member, one experienced educator and one inexperienced educator. The total sample size was 15 participants.

According to Botha (2013:191), a school management team may comprise the principal, deputy principal and departmental heads. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the SMT member interviewed was either the principal, the deputy principal or the departmental head of the school under investigation. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2012:16), experienced educators are educators who have five or more years of professional teaching experience, whereas non-experienced educators possess less than five years of experience. I therefore selected some participants with more than five years of professional teaching experience and some with less than five years' experience. These educators formed the core sample that provided the requisite data to answer the research questions and to satisfy the research objective. Since the study employed a convenience sampling technique, the sample was based on convenience in terms of geographic location and accessibility.

In terms of site selection, I selected the Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre in the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu-Natal Province. This is because the researcher was quite familiar with the common problems of inadequate parental involvement and community participation in the education of their children. Moreover, the site was chosen mainly due to its rurality. As explained by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:350), site selection is the determination of the best sites to gather data or the site is selected to locate people involved in a particular event, is preferred when the research focuses on complex micro processes. The research site was five rural secondary schools within the Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre, in the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu-Natal province, and as indicated (see Section 3.4.1), I chose this research site based on empirical evidence of parental partnership problems. Notably, this circuit is one of the most deeply rural areas of the district and provided the needed information to answer the research problems and questions.

3.4.2   Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative research is based on a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomenon in context (in real-world settings) and, in general the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Maree, 2007:78). In other words, the study is carried out in real-life situations and not an experimental (test-retest) circumstance. Consequently, data collection techniques, like interviews and observation, are pre-eminent in the naturalistic paradigm (Miller & Fredericks, 1999).

Wiersma and Jurs (2005:204) posit that data collection in qualitative research is interactive or not interactive, dependent on whether or not the researcher interacts with the subjects being studied. In that respect, I used interviews, conducted in English, to elicit data from the research participants.

3.4.2.1   Interviews

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant and were used collect data for the study (Maree, 2007: 87). The aim of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participants, as they can be a valuable source of information, provided they are used correctly (*ibid.*). An individual interview is a face-to-face method of data collection that involves an interviewer and respondent discussing topics in depth, used when seeking information on individual, personal experiences from people about a specific issue (Hennik, Hutter & Bailey, 2011).

In many cases, interviews are semi-structured which generally consist of open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to draw out views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2009). Similarly, Berg (2009) describes semi-structured interviews as interviews that are more or less structured, questions may be re-ordered during the interview, wording of questions is flexible, level of language may be adjustable and the interviewee may respond to questions and clarify issues, and the interviewer may add or delete probes to add further insight as the interview progresses.

I adopted the semi-structured interview technique as these interviews were deemed appropriate particularly when topics are selected in advance, but which give the freedom to decide the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:381). This allows for probing and the clarification of answers; semi-structured interviews define the line of enquiry (Maree, 2007). Semi-structured interviews were therefore used for this research because of suppleness with regard to presentation structure and allowing the respondents to freely respond without any form of constraint. Drever (2003:13) argues that the aim of the semi-structured interview is to expound interviewee's comprehension of the research topic, and consequently produce in-depth information hence, my strongest

choice to use it.

Semi-structured individual interviews were used as a data collection instrument with both SMT members and educators of the selected schools. As previously indicated, the participants were SMT members, experienced and inexperienced educators of the selected schools. The participants were interviewed because I deemed them suitable to be able to furnish me with the appropriate data to answer the research questions. The interview guide or instrument, with a predetermined line of questions, was developed prior to the interview (see Appendices E and F).

The individual face-to-face interviews were conducted by the researcher to permit the researcher total control of the process and the interviewee the freedom to express their thought without being limited by time, as it would have been if the interviews were done telephonically. This gave me the freedom to keep my focus, remain focused, and alert to the responses of the respondents. Telephone calls and emails were used to set up appointments with educational authorities and participants. The participants were requested to set aside about one hour of their times to respond to my questions. During the interviews, I was very attentive to the responses of the participants in order to identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the research questions and objectives. For the purpose of clarity, I audio-taped these interviews, after obtaining the consent of participants. These interviews, with a duration of between 40 and 50 minutes, were conducted at the five selected secondary schools in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal Province, and conducted during break times.

The rationale of the choice of interviews was to determine how effective management and leadership of parents, family and community partnerships could lead to the achievement of educational goals in their respective schools. The individual interview has many advantages and was chosen because it allows the researcher control over the process and the interviewee the liberty to express his or her thoughts. It can be done over the telephone, thus allowing the researcher convenience and unlimited geographical range (O'Leary, 2004). It is appropriate when one is predominantly interested in complex issues or controversial or personal subjects (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011).

Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin, and Lowden (2011:127) suggest that one obvious advantage of interviewing concerns the flexible nature the method affords and how any arising limitations can often be addressed with careful planning. They further outlined the following advantages:

- Interviews allow people to provide their views in their own terminology. This permits the interviewer to comprehend the meanings underpinning peoples' actions and illuminating their attitudes, motivation and rationale.

- The interactive nature of the interview allows the researcher to adapt the questions to suit responses and so bring forth relevant information and gain greater insights.

- Interviewees, through actively discussing the research topics, can shape the research and highlight unforeseen, yet relevant issues.

- Interviewees can provide detailed answers which are embodied in contextual information, again helping the researcher to understand more about factors and processes that influence actions and attitudes.

- Unlike self-completion questionnaires, interviewees can ask for clarification which helps you gather more accurate information or helps to realise which questions need refining.

In contrast, individual interviews also have limitations. They are inclined to be comparatively expensive and time consuming to conduct (Cozby & Bates, 2012) and in particular, to transcribe and then analyse the information (Drever, 2003:15). More often, responses could be misunderstood or even sometimes untruthful (de Vos *et al.,* 2011). Interviews conducted over the telephone may cause the inability of a researcher to read non-verbal cues and less control and attention throughout the interview process (O'Leary, 2004). In addition, the socially interactive nature of the interview also means that certain topics which are sensitive can be difficult to discuss face-to-face (Patton, 1990:59).

I addressed these issues by conducting face-to-face individual interviews with the participants to be able read all non-verbal cues during the interview process. This

approach also helped me in reducing the cost of telephonic interviews also obtaining adequate time to get deeper comprehension of what was being investigated.

3.4.2.2   Field Notes

Field notes refer to qualitative notes recorded by scientists or researchers in the cause of field research or qualitative study, during or after reflection of an exact phenomenon that they are studying (Yin 2011:163). Canfield (2011:23) concurs that field notes are documented during interviews or are research observations to guide the analysis process by clarifying perceptions and equally verifying repeatability for interpretation purposes of the study. Historically 'scratch' notes or field notes have been a central component of qualitative research since the early 1900s, originating the field of ethnographic anthropology (Emerson, Fretz & Show, 2011). Currently, it is understood that qualitative field notes are an essential component of qualitative research. Qualitative research methods encourage researchers to take field notes to enhance data and provide rich context analysis (Creswell, 2013; Loftland, Snow, Anderson & Loftland, 2005; Mulhall, 2003; Patton 2002).

Field notes are intended to read as evidence that gives meaning and aids the understanding of the phenomenon under study (Roger, 1990) and in this study, field notes allowed me record what I observed in an unobtrusive manner during and after the interviews and as Canfield (2011) asserts, the field notes aided in constructing thick, rich and descriptions of the study context, encounter with interviewees, and prompted me to closely observe the environment and interactions. After the interviews, I used field notes to encourage research reflection and identification of bias, and during analysis data, it facilitated preliminary coding and iterative study design which helped to increase rigour and trustworthiness as well as providing the essential context to inform data analysis.

3.4.4   Qualitative Content Data Analysis

Qualitative data content analysis refers to the analysis of such things as books, brochures, written documents, transcripts, new reports and visual media and work with narratives such as diaries or journals, or qualitative responses to interviews or focus groups (Neuendorf, 2002:42-43). Maree (2007:99) contends that qualitative

data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analysing and reporting are intertwined, and not merely a number of successive steps. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:395) explain that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories. With this in mind, I adopted content analysis to scrutinise the collected data. Maree (2007:101) defines content analysis as a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content.

Content analysis is an inductive and iterative process by which the researcher considers similarities and differences in a text that may corroborate or disconfirm a particular theory (*ibid*). Thus, analysis is a relatively systematic process of coding, categorising, and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). Qualitative researchers develop analytical styles, but rarely make all of their data analysis strategies explicit (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:396). In light of this, I collected the data through interviews, transcribed the interviews, organised the collected data into segments, and then began the process of coding, and categorising the data in order to identify relevant patterns. The coding of the data consisted of context and participant perspectives. Themes that emerged were placed in major categories of taxonomy with emergent sub-themes forming the background. Participant responses were grouped according to the emerging themes and patterns in their respective categories for easy arrangement. I also referred to the aforementioned audiotape recordings for confirmability of responses.

Since the qualitative research approach uses an inductive approach to data analysis, the result of induction is not always necessarily true, while the results of the deductive approach used in quantitative research is always true since the results are derived from existing facts (Goddard & Melville, 2001). Equally, since the researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon being studied, the researcher may be excessively emotional or personally involved; there may be possible manipulations by research participants of the research process to serve their own interest (Mouton, 2011). I made sure that this sort of constraint was eliminated by maintaining a calm posture during the data collection stage. Consequently, I ensured that objectivity was

achieved by adhering to the interview guide during the data collection stage.

3.4.5   Methodological Rigour: Trustworthiness

Maree (2007:80) asserts that in qualitative research, the researcher is the data gathering instrument. Thus, it seems that when qualitative researchers speak of validity and reliability, they are usually referring to research that is credible and trustworthy. Since the study was qualitative, it required the norms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Many qualitative researchers agree that data trustworthiness, whether collected from direct observations, focus groups or interviews, is evidenced by the following: transferability, dependability, confirmability and credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:70). Merriam (2009:49) concurs that researchers agree on strategies that promote trustworthiness in a study through triangulation, or multiple sources of data as evidence, member checking, or arranging for those who provided data to evaluate the conclusions and thick description, or providing rich detail of the context of the study.

3.4.5.1   Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research refers to the degree of assurance of the researcher's conclusions which stem from the data collected (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002:54). Suter (2012:363) defines credibility as the believability of the findings which is enhanced by evidence such as confirming evaluation of conclusions by research participants, convergence of multiple sources of evidence, control of unwanted influences and a theoretical fit. I established credibility by applying negative or discrepant data collection and analysis, in order to determine if there were any discrepancies. I ensured that participant verbatim accounts were transcribed with care and consciousness.

3.4.5.2   Transferability

According to Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002:54), transferability is the degree to which generalisations can be made from the data and context of the research study to the wider population and settings. Generalisability is regarded as the way in which the reader is able to take findings and transfer them to contexts. Dick (2005:170) explains transferability as evidence supporting the generalisation of findings to other contexts, across different participants, groups and situations. I used rich, thick

descriptions of the participants and contexts and in addition, a large amount of explicit and comprehensive information about the participants' views regarding the topic was provided. That is how effective leadership and management of parental, family and community participation could lead to obtaining education goals as well as the setting in which they live and function, to ensure transferability.

3.4.5.3   Dependability

Dependability, meanwhile, refers to "the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did occur as the researcher says" (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002:64). According to Lincoln and Guba (1987:43) qualitative credibility should also involve applicability, dependability and confirmability as key criteria of trustworthiness and these are constructed parallel to internal and external reliability. Maree (2007:80) contends that trustworthiness in qualitative research is achieved through engaging multiple methods of data collection such as interviews and document analysis. Suter (2012:363) is also of the view that dependability is enhanced by common qualitative strategies such as rich documentation, code-recode consistency and triangulation.

I accomplished this by employing member checking, obtaining literal statements and using participant language or verbatim accounts. Moreover, I actively searched for, recorded, analysed and reported negative or discrepant data that indicated exceptions to patterns or themes. I endeavoured to eliminate bias by repeatedly checking and reflecting on the research process. Upon completion of the interviews or data gathering, I also went over the transcripts of the interview schedule to correct factual errors. Finally, I sent the transcripts back to the participants to confirm conflicting statements and to avert controversies with regards to ambiguity both from the perspectives of the researcher and the participants.

3.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A credible research design involves not only selecting informants and effective research strategies but also adhering to ethics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:362). Thus, qualitative researchers need to plan how they will handle the ethical dilemmas in interactive data collection. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:362) further explain

that most qualitative researchers devise roles that elicit cooperation, trust, openness and acceptance. Suter (2012:97) defines research ethics as established guidelines that encourage responsible research practices and ensure the protection of human research participants.

Strydom (2002:63) explains that "anyone involved in research needs to be aware of the general agreements about what is proper and improper in scientific research". This necessitates the adoption of ethical procedures and principles of scientific research at the start of the study and the adaptation thereof as the study progresses. Magolda and Weems (2002:490) equally argue that harm is an inevitable outcome of much qualitative research, thus the probability of harm is high due to the intrusive nature of research, and feelings and perceptions of participants are always at stake. They further suggest many ways to reduce the risk of harming participants through confidentiality, anonymity and privacy.

As all researchers in education must adhere to ethical guidelines in conducting their research, consequently, I sought approval from UNISA to conduct research, which was thus granted. In addition, I equally sought permission from the Department of Basic Education, which was eventually granted me (See Appendices B & C)   I ensured consequently that in the study, the various relevant ethical considerations were attended to in the following ways:

3.5.1   Informed Consent

Strydom (in De Vos *et al.,* 2005:56) contends that informed consent implies that adequate information on the aims of the research, procedures that will be followed, with possible merits and demerits to participants. They further explain that credibility of the researcher and how the results will be used should be given to respondents so that they can make an informed decision on whether they want to participate in the research. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that participants are informed, to the greatest extent about the nature of the study (Lichtman, 2014). One could argue that it is not always possible to describe the direction the study might take; thus, the onus is on the researcher to do the best to provide complete information to participants (Quinnell, 2011). Teddlie and Yu (2007:77) contend that informed consent must address the purposes and the procedures of the research

and a description of any possible risks or negative consequences. In effect, the subjects must be informed of the likely duration of the research and the necessary commitment of the participants as well as whom to contact if any questions arise (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005:451).

As Malone (2003:797) demonstrates, a typical protocol is usually not accurate for most qualitative research because one cannot anticipate what may be intrusive for each participant. Thus, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:363) explain that many researchers view informed consent as a dialogue with each new participant.

Every potential participant in this study received formal written correspondence, discussing the intention and purpose of the study. Potential participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary, with consent or refusal to participate submitted to me in writing. I also informed them of their option to withdraw from the study at any point. During the recorded interviews of the data collection stage, I asked participants to confirm that they had been informed of and understood the potential risks involved. It was made explicitly clear to them that their participation must be of their own free will. The participants were asked to sign the consent form before commencement of the interviews.

3.5.2   Privacy

Privacy can be defined as "that which normally is not intended for others to observe or analyse" (De Vos 2002:339-359). With respect to the above, privacy of respondents should be protected at all costs, the use of concealed media such as video cameras, one-way mirrors or microphones without the permission of participants cannot be condoned

McMillan and Schumacher (2014:363) explained that deception violates informed consent and privacy. Lincoln (1997:145) postulates that informed persons who cooperate, may feel a sense of betrayal upon reading the research findings in print. Invasions of privacy are of great concern to all, especially at a time when information is easily obtained. The right to privacy, which is the freedom of individuals to pick and choose for themselves the time and circumstances under which, and most importantly, the extent to which their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and opinions are to be shared with or withheld from others, may easily be violated during the

investigation or after completion. (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987:58).

Privacy may be considered from three different perspectives: the sensitivity of the information being given, the setting being observed, and dissemination of the information with sensitivity of information referring to how personal or potentially threatening is the information being collected by the researcher (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987). Thus, certain kinds of information are more personal than others and may be potentially threatening to participants. These may include religious preferences, sexual practices, income, racial prejudices and other personal attributes such as intelligence, honesty, and courage which are more sensitive than name, rank and serial number. I avoided such sensitive issues by being very discrete in my data collection as well as with the presentation of the final report.

This means that researchers have a duty to protect the identity of research participants, especially their names being mentioned or linked to the research report. I ensured that this was duly complied with by not disclosing the responses of participants to third parties nor in print in any of the sections of the work. During the presentation of the final report, I ensured that no one would be able to match personal information with the identity of the research participants by completely averting the publication of the report with participant names.

3.5.3.   Anonymity

In gaining permission to conduct research, most researchers give participants assurances of confidentiality and anonymity (McMillan & Schumacher 2014:363). Wiersma and Jurs (2005:452) define anonymity as the means that names of the participants from whom the data have been obtained, are not known. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:363), "the settings and participants should not be identifiable in print". Thus, locations and features of settings are typically disguised to appear similar to several possible places, and researchers routinely use code names for people and places. Officials and participants should review a report before it is finally released. In this respect, Christians (2000:145) believes that researchers have a dual responsibility to protect the individuals' confidences from other persons in the setting and to protect the informants from the general reading public. Holly, Arthur and Kasten (2005:177) explain that anonymity is preserved through the customary

use of pseudonyms or the exclusion of participant names from any documents or examples used in the research report. Basically, truth and honesty were ensured especially during the final write up stage of the report and the findings were based on truth.

Nachmias and Nachmais (1987:78) explain that anonymity requires that the identity of individuals be separated from information they give. Additionally, they contend that a participant is considered anonymous when the researcher or other persons cannot identify particular information with a particular participant. In this regard, I ensured that I was the only one who had access to names and data by collecting data myself and assigning code names to participants. Codes were employed efficiently during the data analysis by separating identifying information from the research data and the prevention of the duplication of records. In addition, strict control of access to the research documents and audio-recordings was maintained throughout the study.

3.5.4 Confidentiality

Confidentiality supports an individual's right to privacy. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:334) state that information about subjects needs to be seen as confidential unless otherwise agreed on, through informed consent. According to Lichtman (2014) any individual, participating in a research study, has a reasonable expectation that information provided to the researcher will be treated in confidential manner. She equally believes that it is the responsibility of the researcher to keep the information learnt confidential. Holly *et al.* (2005:177) concur that participant trust is paramount in the sense that if what they say could be treated as private and remain private, particularly in their journals and diaries, their thoughts and feelings will not be used against them.

I ensured that the identities of the research participants were concealed or kept nameless by assigning them code numbers known only to myself. By the assigning of code names to participants, I protected their identity, so that those studying or reading the research results would not be able to establish the participants' identities. According to Burns (2000), both the researcher and participants must have clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of a study. Thus, all participant information and responses given during the study were kept

private and the results were presented incognito in order to further protect the identity of respondents.

3.5.5.   Voluntary Participation

Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) explain that adherence to the principle of informed consent will enhance the freedom of participants to choose whether or not to take part in a research project and will guarantee that exposure to know risks is undertaken voluntarily. They further expound that the person involved in the research should have legal capacity to give consent and should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion.

Participant involvement in the study was based purely on personal decision, volition, choice and judgement. I obtained a signed free-will consent form, stating that the participants might withdraw at any time, from each of the participants. School managers and educators of the sampled schools were contacted through the Circuit Manager of the Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre. The Circuit Manager then sent requests to principals of the participating schools. The participants were asked for their availability to participate in the study. Consent letters, briefly explaining the research process, were given to each participant to sign prior to the interview date. Participants were asked to read the consent letters and were given an opportunity to ask questions to gain clarity. Participants then signed the consent letters after much scrutiny and perusal. Once again, participants were reminded of their right to withdraw if they felt the need to do so.

3.6   CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the research design and methodology which consisted of a qualitative research approach, with the use of interviews to collect data. The research design employed was a case study of selected schools from Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre of Ilembe district in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. This chapter equally discussed the sampling and site selection. Meanwhile purposive sampling encapsulating convenience sampling and snowballing were used. The data collection tool was a semi-structured interview, conducted individually and face-to-

face with each of the participants. The interview guide with a set of predetermined questions based on the research questions, assisted in the development of the interview, but as the interviews were semi-structured, probing and further discussion occurred during the interviews. Data analysis was done through content analysis where coding and the development of categories was explained. Methodological rigour was also discussed which comprised credibility, transferability, dependability, and trustworthiness of the study. Ethical considerations were presented including informed consent, privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation. The next chapter will present the analysis of the data gathered.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings from the data collected from individual semi-structured audio-taped interviews conducted with 15 participants, are analysed, discussed and interpreted. Data were collected from five selected schools in the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu-Natal Province over a period of one month. The analysis and findings presented in this chapter are based on individual interviews with three SMT members, that is either the Principal or the Departmental Head, three experienced educators, that is educators who have taught more than five years and three less experienced educators, educators who have taught less than five years. The interviewer adopted English as the medium of communication. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, and ultimately analysis followed, which culminated in findings and interpretations.

In an attempt to answer the research question: *What management and leadership skills are needed for managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal province?* this chapter presents the themes and the subthemes that emerged from the analysis. It also shows the quotes from participants to affirm the themes and subthemes. The chapter presents a composite table that contains the biodata of the 15 participants of the study. Consequently, from School A, Participant 1, 2, and 3 were interviewed. From School B. Participants 4, 5 and 6 were also interviewed. From School C, Participants 7, 8 and 9 and from School D, Participants 10, 11 and 12 were equally interviewed. And lastly from School E, Participants 13, 14 and 15 were also interviewed.

4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

The table below shows the characteristics of the 15 participants to place the data in context and to also comprehend the perceptions or views of the participants.

Table 4.1:   Participant Biodata

School	Participant	Gender	Age Category	Educational Level	Teaching Experience
School A	1	Female	41-60 years	Master's Degree	Above five years
School A	2	Female	41-60 years	Bachelor Degree	Above five years
School A	3	Male	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Less than five years
School B	4	Female	20-40 years	PGCE	Less than five years
School B	5	Female	20-40 years	Honours Degree	Above five years
School B	6	Female	20-40 years	PGCE	Above five years
School C	7	Female	41-60 years	Bachelor Degree	Above five years
School C	8	Female	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Less than five years
School C	9	Female	41-60 years	Bachelor Degree	Above five years
School D	10	Female	61 years+	Diploma	Above five years
School D	11	Female	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Less than five years
School D	12	Female	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Above five years
School E	13	Female	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Above five years
School E	14	Female	41-60 years	Diploma	Above five years
School E	15	Male	20-40 years	Bachelor Degree	Less than five years.

4.3   ANALYSIS OF DATA

During examination of transcription of interviews, I identified themes which related to the research objectives and the research questions. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:395), qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships. In this regard, I analysed the data collected by first transcribing the audio-recorded interviews and the field notes and then organised the data into segments. As a result, the segmented data were coded into distinctive and related categories leading to the formation of patterns in the form of themes and sub-themes. The data were comprehensively interpreted based on the outcome of the analysis through verbatim

quote support from participants through the juxtaposition of relevant literature and theory. The following themes with complimentary categories, as well as subthemes that emerged relevant to the main research question, are discussed according to following table:

Table 4.1: Themes and sub-themes emerging from the data

	Theme	Sub-theme
1	The constituents of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement	1. Relationship between the school and the parents 2. Irregular meeting attendance 3. Attitude of parents 4. Poor communication between the school and the parents
2	The causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement	1. Long travelling distances by parents 2. Religious and cultural barriers 3. Poor organisation on the part of management and leadership 4. Lack of value for education 5. Communication problems 6. Political divisions in the SGB
3	Challenges encountered in providing effective management and leadership of parental involvement	1. SGB members who do not have interest in schools 2. Broken homes 3. Time constraint of the part of parents 4. Communication problems 5. Poor involvement
4	Functionality of the PTA and the SGB	1. No existence of the PTA 2. The SGB as substitute for the PTA 3. Functionality of the SGB 4. Dysfunctionality of the SGB
5	Management and leadership plans to partner parents	1. The call for parent meetings 2. School visits
6	Benefits of effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership	1. Improvement in learner academic results 2. Parents owning the school 3. Improvement in learner discipline 4. Improved teamwork 5. Reduction in the workload of educators
7	Leadership and management structures to achieve greater cooperation between parents and the school.	1. Parents orientation and training workshops 2. Election of suitable SGB members 3. Regular parents-centred meetings 4. Collaboration with local authorities 5. Parents motivational functions

	Theme	Sub-theme
8	Consequences of effective management leadership of parental, family and community participation	1. Protection of the school 2. Learners could perform to the optimum 3. Community upliftment 4. Parents motivate learners to study 5. Reduction in truancy and absenteeism 6. Parents who may overstep their boundaries

4.3.1 Theme 1: The constituents of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement

It was of critical importance to gain information on the opinions of what constitutes or establishes ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement in schools. Consequently, the researcher wanted to draw judgement from the participants on what creates ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement as this would aid in suggesting relevant recommendations to assist in solving such a problem. As a result, the following four sub-themes emerged from the data: relationship between the school and the parents, irregular meeting attendance by parents, attitude of parents and poor communication between the school and the parents

4.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Relationship between the school and the parents

Participants alluded to the fact that one major part of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement is when the necessary relationship between the school and the parents has not been created and developed. There were concurrent views from Participants 1 of School A and Participant 15 of School E. Participant 1 opined that developing a personal relationship is the commencement point of any relationship, hence if there is no such one in place, then one cannot talk about effectiveness or ineffectiveness of parental, community or family involvement:

> *I think it will be very hard to manage effective leadership of parental, family and community involvement of the school if the school has not created a relationship between itself and the community. In order for you to manage, then you have to develop relationship between you as a school and the parents. (P1, SA)*

Ineffective management, in the opinion above, means not having a well-developed

relationship between the school and the community which in turn has an effect on parental involvement.

Similarly, Participant 15 of School E shared a similar sentiment in that he was of the view that the personal relationship between the school and the entire community: encapsulates all that occurs in their schools.

> *Personal relations are the core of everything that happens around the school. The personal relationships are the main challenge. If the personal relations do not go well, everything will go bad. But if the community has a good relationship between the management, they can even perfect the school and take the school as their own. (P15, SE)*

The opinions suggest that ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community involvement and partnership may arise if there is no cordial relationship between the school's management and leadership and the community. Consequently, lack of healthy personal relationships between the school and management and the community or the family forms part of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement. In other words, effective management and leadership of parental partnership in schools starts from when parents begin a relationship when their children attend school for the first time. This moreover suggests that Participants 1 and 15 both feel that ineffective management means not having a healthy relationship between the school and the community or parents.

The above is confirmed by Olsen and Fuller (2012:103), who explain that building a true relationship between the school and the parents requires both educators and parents to create a shared meaning about education. Inability to develop a good relationship may be due to many differences that exist between educators and families, such as socio-economic status, education, cultural backgrounds, group affiliation and others (Shalaway, 2005). Colombo (2004:48) explains that as educators and the school learn about the context in which their learners live, educators can better comprehend the families with whom they are working. Ultimately, the educators and schools can begin to develop personal relationships that are based on the uniqueness of their own experiences in the communities where they are working. Some educators may use their own cultural lenses to interact with culturally and linguistically diverse parents as a more effective way to comprehend in

order to foster a functional bond between the school and the parents.

4.3.1.2   Sub-theme 2: Irregular meeting attendance

Analysis of the data revealed that irregular attendance of meetings by parents is part of ineffective management and leadership. During the interviews, participants further revealed that parents do not respond to calls for meetings in the schools. Participants 6 of School B, 7 of School C, 8 of School C, 10 of School D and 12 of School D shared corresponding opinions with regards to irregular or no attendance of meetings by parents of their respective schools.

Participant 6 offered his opinion:

> *… what makes it more ineffective in the involvement of parents and community in the school is that if the parents are being called to come to school, they do not respond, is like they do not care about the school. Even if a learner has done something wrong and the parent has been asked to come to school, parents do not come. Even if there is a parent meeting most of, they do not honour those meetings. (P6, SB)*

Parents' penchant for not responding to meetings or infrequently responding to calls to attend meetings is perceived as a constituent of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community partnership.

Similarly, Participant 7 asserted that:

> *When the parents have been called for any meeting in the school you have to know their days of commitment. Because there is a commitment on Tuesdays, and they are bead makers. You have to know when they are busy with their bead making. You have to also know which days they go for selling. Because if you clash with the community like one day I called for a meeting and there was a funeral in the community, no one turned up. Only few turned up just two or so. Attendance is usually very poor. (P7, SC)*

Due to factors such as time constraints and lack of education, meeting attendance tends to be poor because parents place their other commitments before the attendance of their children's school meeting. This notion is reiterated by Participant 8 who stated that:

Some parents in my school they don't cooperate with us even when you call them for school meetings, they don't come. (P8, SC)

Parents not attending meetings results in ineffectiveness of management and leadership of parental involvement, a perception reinforced by Participant 10:

According to my opinion I should think we face a serious problem when it comes to parental involvement of school. I should think the main problem is that most of our parents are illiterate, they do not take education seriously. When we call parents meeting, you find that only a few will be attending and, in that case, we do not get 100% support from parents. (P10, SD)

The problem of illiteracy amongst parents is seen as a factor for parents not being seriously involved in the education of their children and attending important meetings at school. Participant 12 also buttressed the above notion by declaring:

I can say there is no cooperation between the parents the school. Because if they are called for meetings, for example, yesterday, we called for prayer only 4 parents came out of over 50 parents, which means they don't care about what happens at the school; so, there is no involvement. (P12, SE)

From the above interview quotations, it could be deduced that lack of attendance at meetings or irregular meeting attendance by parents, forms part of the components of the ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community involvement and partnership. This means that parents' lack of attendance at meetings inhibits the proficient management of parental involvement as well as leadership. In other words, the hampering effect is that the school lacks the support it needs since parents do not frequently attend meetings to cooperate with the schools.

This affirms the standpoint of Brown and Beckett (2007:62) that parents should consider attending school meetings and functions more seriously in order to improve the levels of cooperation that exist between the schools and the parents. Similarly, Clarke (2007:183) expounds that the meetings educators or schools arrange with parents to discuss issues such as academic performance of their children, are part of the core academic and management function of the school. As a result, meetings should be carefully planned if they are to serve their true purpose, which is to align the efforts of the learners, the parents and the school to ensure that schools perform

up to their potential. The biggest challenge to the effectiveness and therefore the value of these meetings is the time needed by individual educators to meet with the large number of parents.

4.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Attitude of parents

A careful exploration of the interviews revealed that parents exhibit indifferent attitudes towards school management and leadership. This attitude constitutes a major part of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community involvement, as seen in the sentiments of Participant 3 of School A, Participant 5 of School B, Participant 11 of School D, Participant 12 of School D, Participant 13 of School E and Participant 14 of School E.

Participant 14 was of the view that parents' attitude show that they do not want to be part of the school. This assertion is supported by the following statement:

Since I came here; the people in this area they don't want to be part of the school. They don't want to help us if we can call the meetings, they don't come you only get a few who turn up for the meetings. I don't know what the reason is. (P14, SE)

Participant 3 was of the opinion that parents more often than not have shown their disinterest by the perceived 'dumping' of their children on the school and educators without actually offering any help in any way to assist the learners.

Participant 3 developed the above point by stating that educators are seen as having to take the responsibility:

I think the indifferent management and leadership of parental involvement is the fact that I think if parents bring their children here at school, they sometimes think, they have given all to us educators. So, there is that break up so we can't partner well. (P3, SA)

On the other hand, Participant 5 of School B alluded to the fact that parents lack knowledge due to rurality, particularly if they are old, are illiterate and do not understand the essence of partnership with the school:

At times they feel schools could do more and way more alone. Some also look down upon themselves and choose not to involve themselves in whatever goes on in the school. So, whereas in managing a school, you have to have the parents on board, so that's a problem because even those in that SGB, which is purely the management of the school, some of them are illiterate; not manageable. Some do not even have interest in the development of the school. Parent lose hope easily so once they have lost hope, they reject their kids and dump their kids on the school so once they have done that the school is only managing that. (P5, SB)

Participant 11 stated: *What I can say is that parents do not cooperate with educators in the school in most activities.* (P11, SD)

The dearth of cooperation is perceived as an element of apathetic attitude that results in ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement.

Similarly, Participant 12 affirmed that:

… there is no cooperation between the parents and the school. Because if they are called for meetings, for example, yesterday, we called parents for prayer; only 4 parents came out of over 50 parents which means they don't care about what happens at the school; so, there is no involvement. (P12, SD)

Apathy on the part of parents is comprehended by participants as not collaborating with the school such as failure to attend meetings.

Participant 13 explains that in some cases, parents are not present and rely on grandparents to take on the role of parenting and the grandparents in turn, find difficulty in becoming involved in school matters:

Most of our learners they do not have parents. They live with their grandmothers or sometimes with their siblings. So even if maybe a meeting is called you may find that for the grandmothers it is hard for them to reach the school. So you may find that there is no one who is representing the learner so that they can show their views on the education of the learner and instil some of their knowledge that they have of course the indigenous knowledge that they have that may contribute to the effective learning of their grandchildren. So that

is the problem. They usually don't come to meetings because they are too old. (P13, SE)

From the above statements, it could be decrypted that there are indifferent attitudes from parents towards educators and schools due to many factors such as illiteracy, low levels of education of parents, grandparents assuming parenthood, as well as many learners not having their parents alive. It is obvious that most parents think that the responsibility of their children's education should be placed on the shoulders of the school and the educators in question. Parents showing disinterest in the education of their children is beyond reason.

Bauer and Shea (2003:65) affirm most of the findings above as they explain that nowadays schools are under increasing pressure to develop strategies for securing greater parental involvement. They further assert that parents have reportedly become increasingly indifferent and disinterested in becoming involved in the teaching of their children due to factors such as a lack of time, feeling that they have nothing to contribute, not knowing how to become involved, lack of childcare, feeling intimidated, not being available during the time the school arranges functions and meetings, and not feeling welcome at the school. Similarly, Froyen (1988:208) reveals that fear of divulging conflicts at home, panic over the child's possible failure, guilt about lack of parenting skills, reluctance to interfere in the educator's work, belief that they would not know how to participate and belief that the educator is trying to shift responsibility, are a number of reasons why parents sometimes resist becoming involved in their children' schooling.

4.3.1.4   Sub-theme 4: Poor communication

Participants 4 of School B, Participant 2 of School A and Participant 9 of School C were concurrently of the opinion that poor communication constitutes ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community partnerships in their schools. It was established from the analysis of the interview data that parents' lack of involvement as well as communities', is due to an information dissemination problem from the school to parents. The analysis further revealed that parents could assist in the progress and development of learners if they were informed about the progress of their children. This assertion was confirmed by Participant 2 as follows:

I will say where there is lack of involvement of the mentioned stakeholders like parents and the community in the education of their children that makes the functioning and the management of the school ineffective. Parents must be involved. They may not be involved in the actual academic record of the learners like in the actual teaching of them. But parents must know and be informed time and again about the progress of their learners and about the progress of the school. Because they could also contribute in one way or the other in the development of the school. So, if you do not involve parents, the community, then it is likely that the school is not going to function to its full potential. (P2, SA)

Poor communication means that parents do not receive adequate information on the progress of their children's academic work and are therefore not in a position to assist.

Participant 4 also identified poor communication as a factor of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement:

From what I have observed so far, I think there is a poor communication or relationship and the school; not exactly the educators.

Participant 9 validated the above point of view:

I think as a school we have to do more. Sometimes I think we don't involve parents. Most of the times the parents feel like they are left out I think our communication is not effective. We don't involve them. I think most of the time we communicate with parents when their learners misbehave and then at the time, we want the parents to be involved. Other than that, we don't welcome parents with open arms in the school environment that's why parents feel that they have role to play in the education of their learners. (P9, SC)

Poor communication has been highlighted by the participants above and is a major part of ineffective management leadership of parental involvement. However, it could be construed that schools do not send the right messages to parents and as a result, parents are seen as neglecting their roles as they do not receive effective communiques from educators. Reports on the development and progress of the children is not carried out with the necessary efficacy to place parents in a position to

help or assist. Moreover, it could be equally induced that communication problem exists between the schools' leadership and management due to barriers of communication such as time, uncertain cultural barriers and lack of supportive environments which have negatively impacted educator-parent relationships. Conversely, school management also feels that parents do not want to be communicated with or reached when it comes to their children's education, as suggested by Participant 4:

It is like parents push their children to school and it is no more their business … they leave everything to the educators. And I have heard a lot of negative comments from learners saying what is being said by their parents based on the performance of the learners of the school. But they are not putting any effort in helping the educators. It is like it is only on the shoulders of the educators. (P4, SB)

According to Nistler and Angela (2000) (in MacNeil & Patin, 2005:4), ineffective communication, especially a lack of clear, straightforward and helpful information, is the major reason for a lack of parental involvement. Haack (2007:45) concurs by stating that if a school principal is not aware of the procedures to be put in place for communication to flow from school to family and from family to school, an inviting school climate may not prevail.

Coetzee *et al.* (2008:141) suggest some possibilities for addressing barriers to ineffective communication between parents and educators such as time and thus being flexible with schedules, times and days of the week, and moving meetings to venues that are more accessible. Coetzee *et al.* (2008) also suggest that parents need to feel valued, and should be personally welcomed to meetings. To develop a good relationship, it is vital to find ways for parents to use their talents to benefit the school. Schools should also take into account cultural differences by increasing their sensitivity to other cultures, and valuing attitudes and celebrations.

According to Brown and Beckett (2007:62), communication and shared norms are essential in establishing common ownership of the school in communities so that parent share the responsibility of their children's formal education and supplement the educator's work. Keyser (2006) asserts, "it is very important to have effective communication between the school and the home if there is to be any real

partnership between parents and educators". Successful communication is an important part of any parent involvement plan (Postma, 1990:165).

Parents and educators can communicate with each other through informal discussions, formal consultations, telephone conversations, exchange of correspondence, circulars, parent evenings, home visits and a school newspaper. Botha (2011:241) contends that personal discussions with many students have revealed that communicating with parents via telephone and hard copy documents is not successful. He further suggests that since many parents own mobile phones, as opposed to personal computers, it is better to use SMS or WhatsApp as a mode of communication. Meanwhile, Keyser (2006) explains that "home and school share the goal of helping children learn and feel successful therefore communication between school and home is critical in enhancing home-school relations as parents can undertake certain facets of communication between the school and the home themselves by means of a communication committee". For example, they can help draw up reports on various school committees on which they serve.

4.3.2 Theme 2: The causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation

The researcher wanted to establish the factors that cause unsuccessful management and leadership of parental, family and community participation in rural secondary schools in the Ilembe District of the KwaZulu Natal Province. The following sub-themes emerged from the data: long travelling distances by parents, religious and cultural barriers, poor organisation on the part of management and leadership, lack of value for education, problem of communication and political divisions in the SGB.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Long travelling distances by parents.

Participant 1 of School A cited that parents who are geographically removed from the area in which the school is situated, have to travel long distances and as a result, find it difficult to participate in school functions and meetings:

Like I said earlier it is only the distance more especially those parents who are not staying around the school. Otherwise, we don't have much problem of the

educators in terms of cooperation between parents and educators working together in the school. Just that people feel when they have brought the children here, they have enough space to do their own things and forget about their children in school. So is just the distance because for the day scholars we are able to get parents coming to the school. So only those who are fighting the school are this who have a bit of ignorance believing that once I have taken my child then is their duty to deal with the child. (P1, SA)

Participant 13 of School E confirms that distance and transport is an issue:

So, from the response, I have noticed that they don't usually come, and they usually send others maybe or know whether the learners don't give the letter to the parents or is just ignorance. And most of the learners that are schooling here they are from afar as they are from being transported by the bus each and every morning and afternoon (Distance). So, the parents have to take taxis and the thing is most of them they are not working. (P13, SE)

Most rural settlement are scattered which means that parents would find it difficult to travel to their children's schools to participate in any meeting or function. This is confirmed by Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:16) who states that a major barrier to parent and community involvement in South Africa is transportation and long travelling distances. They argue that parents may have time to attend school functions and meetings yet most of them may be hampered by transportation difficulties and costs.

4.3.2.2   Sub-theme 2: Religious and cultural barriers

Participant 2 of School A pointed out that religious and cultural differences tend to inhibit active participation of most parents in her school, which causes a problem. It seems that different religions that exist in the community could not agree to tolerate each other, which affected the active participation of parents:

The religious and cultural differences cause problems. At certain points, we had ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, which boils down to religious and cultural differences. At a certain point, we also appealed to allow children who were doing Matric to attend extra lessons as boarders but then some parents refused. They said the learners are from the neighbourhood

and that they could walk. At a certain point also we had asked if we could use the community hall to accommodate the Matric students who are non-boarders so that they could have time to get extra lessons, to be closer to the school as the hall is also close to the school and the priest was looking after the learners. But some parents did not cooperate. (P2, SA)

One can say that the inability of parents to cooperate due to religious and cultural differences is the major cause of unproductive parental, family and community involvement in the Ilembe District. The literature however does confirm this finding as Bauer and Shea (2003:93) suggest that cultural barriers can be in the form of difficulty in languages or communicating with schools because life experiences and perspectives are so different. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2010:217) explain that parental involvement may also vary because of differences in ethnic and cultural backgrounds of parents and educators. Educators are less likely to know the parents of children who are culturally different from their own background and are also more likely to believe that these parents are less interested in their children's schooling (Epstein & Dauber 1993:289).

4.3.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Poor organisation on the part of management and leadership

Participant 4 of School B opined that schools no longer have the power to manage learners commendably because of governmental laws barring punishment of learners. Participant 5 of School B also concurred by saying that poor management and leadership could lead to ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement. Participant 5 felt that the problem arises if management of the school lacks information on management and leadership issues to deal with parents who might not have the school's interest at heart. Participant 11 of School D felt that the problem was that: *Management not being active Sometimes they don't organise functions better. Poor organisation of parental involvement.* (P11, SD).

One could deduce that most schools are not equipped with managerial and leadership skills required to effectively bring parents on board. Botha (2013:239) argues that the school management team, departmental heads, and educators must lead and manage parents effectively through setting up of effective involvement programmes with set goals to ensure that parents are involved in the school.

4.3.2.4   Sub-theme 4: Lack of value for education

Participant 6 of School C brought to the fore that many parents have indifferent attitudes that undervalue education. The participant hinted that most parents do not care about what happens at school. The participant was of the opinion that if parents were to be involved in their children's education, greater cooperation could be achieved between parents and management of the school.

Participant 10 of School D also felt that the cause of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation is because communities do not value education and tend to follow traditional ways:

> *I should think it is because of community not valuing education. For example, when I came here there was this culture that if a learner falls in love with a boy the family should know to the extent that the girl learner's family should bring groceries to the boyfriend's family. I was against it when I came here. I could see that the parents were not happy with me. Because I told them that if a learner was in love she cannot perform well at school. Because at some stage you even find out that they even stay together in their boyfriend's house. If you show that you against it, they don't like it. There are no role models in the community they don't like it. There are no role models in the community they don't see the value of education. They value culture and tradition more than. (P10, SD)*

Meanwhile Participant 8 of School C attributed the lack of learning culture to the community. She explained that most learners were also parents themselves with responsibilities to their families and their children, consequently, when they get home, they do not have time to study as there are many chores to do:

> *There is no culture of learning in this area. Most our learners they have kids and most of them are parents themselves so they don't get time to study at home, they don't get time to do their homework when they get home, they have to get take care of the children when they get up in the morning, they have to prepare the child for crèche then they have to prepare to come to school. (P8, SC)*

The above points seem to indicate that in many rural communities not enough

attention is paid to education and thus there is a tendency to undervalue the education of their children. The literature, however, does not confirm this finding.

4.3.2.5   Sub-theme 5: Communication problems

Participant 8 of School C revealed that poor communication is one of the major causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation. The participant observed that for example, reports do not get to parents when they are issued so parents have little understanding of how their children are performing:

> *I will say poor communication is one of the causes of ineffective parental involvement and cooperation. Reports must be issued in time to the parents. Parents are not involved in terms of the report and the performance of the learners. (P8, SC)*

Participant 12 of School D shared a similar sentiment that perhaps the communication strategy of the school needs to be revised. She additionally attributed the communication problem to the management being unable to keep parents informed as to what is happening in the school:

> *Maybe our plan is not working. Maybe if we can call parents directly. Poor communication. Parents do not know what is happening, parents are in the dark not having the knowledge of what is happening in the school. (P12, SE)*

Participant 13 of School E shared a similar sentiment to substantiate responses from the two participants:

> *So usually we write letters and give them to learners to give it to their parents. So, from the response, I have noticed that they don't usually come, and they usually send others maybe, we don't know whether the learners don't give the letter to the parents or is just ignorance. (P13, SE)*

From the responses in terms of attendance where not many parents come to the school, this method of communication seems to be ineffective. It is obvious that most parents do not receive the messages that are sent by schools, thereby rendering the management and leadership of parental, family, community involvement and partnership ineffective.

This is confirmed in the literature (see Section 2.4.2). Coetzee *et al.,* (2008:82) explain that for communication to be effective, there is a need to pay attention to communication methods that are used by school management and leadership such as verbal communication, nonverbal communication and written communication.

4.3.2.6   Sub-theme 6: Political divisions in the SGB

Participant 9 of School C was of the opinion that there is lack of will from all the stakeholders and misunderstanding of roles that should be played, especially those in the SGB.

Participant 15 of School E pointed that the cause of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement is the division between the SGB members which has a crippling effect on the teaching staff. The participant, moreover, attributed the division to historical issues arising between the former SGB and the incumbent SGB and that such local political divisions cause factions amongst the teaching staff:

> *The cause of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement is the history of political SGB members. There are these members who are supporting the previous SGB and even educators end up subscribing to that. Local politics within the SGB. You see it ends up influencing the educators where other educators are with these members, and other educators with other members to the extent that when you organise something for the school, you end up seeing some educators who are in a certain faction of this politics. (P15, SE)*

These findings indicate that the SGB members in most rural schools misunderstand their role and engage in petty politics to the detriment of the school in question. This is confirmed in literature by Lemmer and Van Wyk (2010:210) who share that SGB members have a responsibility mandated by the Constitution and the South African Schools Act. Once put in place, the school governing body (SGB) acts on behalf of the school to uplift the school through the fulfilment of a gamut of responsibilities such as developing a vision and mission statement for the effective management and leadership of the school (RSA 1996).

4.3.3 Theme 3: Challenges encountered in providing effective management and leadership of parental involvement

After analysis of the data, the following sub-themes emerged with regards to challenges that participants encounter in an effort to providing effective management and leadership of parent associations: SGB members who do not have interest in schools, broken homes, time constraint on the part of parents, communication problems and poor involvement.

4.3.3.1 Sub-theme 1: SGB members who do not have interest in schools

Participant 2 of School A was of the view that parents elect SGB members to the governing body not on merit or because the elected member has education at heart but because of their local fame within the community and their political agenda. The participant further highlighted that more often than not the local community and parents call for strikes in which you find SGB members being an integral part, knowing that such strikes jeopardise the education of learners in the community:

> *… one of the things I have observed is that at times parents they elect people to be members of the School's Governing Body so called SGBs, at times parents they elect a person because he is a famous person in the community not actually looking at whether the parent forms part of the community really has an interest in the education of the learners. Why I say that is because it is very easy at times for the parents to call a strike in the community without considering that their children are going to lose out. When they do that, they are actually jeopardising the teaching and learning of their kids in school. So, we do at times have such problems and if the parents do not really elect people who have the interest in the learning of their kids; it actually has an effect. It is important that when people are elected to be members of the SGB it is people who really have interest in education not people who are leaders in the community and it shouldn't just be people who are known to be famous in the community for probably for political reasons, it must be people who really have interest in the education field. (P2, SA)*

It is the responsibility of the school to elect parents to the SGB who understand and acknowledge the value of education and have the wellbeing of learners at heart.

Thus, care must be taken during election time to choose appropriate members for the school governing body. The community in its entirety needs to be very discerning and perceptive in choosing who to serve on the school governing body to ensure that they work collaboratively with the school and the community towards the greater good.

The Constitution and the South African Schools Act accordingly acknowledge the involvement of parents in schools (Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009:122). The SGB does provide a legislative basis for parental involvement in the schools; however, this involvement alone will not ensure that all the benefits associated with a comprehensive parental involvement programmes are attained. Similarly, Parker and Leithwood (2000:37) explain that research shows that in schools where governing bodies (SGBs) have the greatest positive influence, the principal, educators and governors work as a cohesive unit, collaborate, are committed to sharing, and work as a team for the greater benefit of the school and the community at large.

4.3.3.2   Sub-theme 2: Broken homes

Participant 5 of School B was of the view that in many case family units are broken or made up of extended family members due to death, divorce and movement from the area. Many homes are broken to the extent that relatives, siblings and stepmothers and mothers have stepped in to provide parenting, and who as a result do not have connection with these learners. As a result, parents feel hopeless about the burden or raising not only their own children, but stepchildren and other family members and friends' children and as such, do not want to get involved in the school and this poses a greater challenge in an effort to providing effective management and leadership of parental partnership:

> *Most parents have lost hope. They have written off their kids so if you want them to be involved, they do not want to be involved. Some are looking after their kids, relatives' kids so there isn't much of connection between the learner and the parent because is a stepmother, stepfather so those are the challenges. When you say come and sit and let's try and work this out, the response you get from parents will be like even her mother died talking about this, so at the end of the day the school is on its own. So, they are a lot as much as you would like them to be part of. (P5, SB)*

Participant 8 of School C brought to the fore that when parents are invited to come to school, it is the grandparents and not the actual biological parents of the learners who respond. In other words, grandparents have assumed the parenthood responsibilities taking the place of the biological mothers and fathers:

> *The only challenge is that the parents they do not respond in time when they have been called. And the challenge is that even if they come it is grandmothers and not the actual parents of the learners. (P8, SC)*

Lack of parental involvement in their children's education is a major challenge that rural secondary schools face. In such settings, grandmothers and fathers have been shouldering parenthood responsibilities which does not really assist the schools due to many factors such as age, travel problems and illiteracy.

Participant 13 of School E explained that one challenge her school faces is child-headed families:

> *… if you call a parent for a certain learner discussing his or her learning abilities; you find that is just a sibling not a parent. So, parents usually do not show up. They usually send representatives. (P13, SE)*

In many rural schools, it is common to find that children themselves have become family heads due to the demise of their parents. The most basic involvement of parents is their continuous responsibility for raising their children and providing them with food, clothing, shelter, health and safety (Schulman, 2000:63); however, in many families there are no parents, or the parents have moved to the cities for work opportunities which means that involvement in school activities such as meetings, and parent workshops, child and adolescent development or other programmes has been devolved to grandparents.

Olsen and Fuller (2012: 22-35) describe contemporary and emerging family units as single-parent families, unmarried mothers, teen mothers and blended families. They further add that most of the families are dysfunctional which means they are often unpredictable, with little or no structure, leaving the children anxious and unsure of themselves; or they may be too structured resulting in lack of self.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:8) postulate that such challenges stem from the fact

that we need to have strong and stable homes that exhibit the following strengths to their optimum such as: strong families show all members mutual respect and affirmation, strong families spent time together, strong families communicate openly, strong families encourage each other with family love to one another, strong families work as a team to achieve goals which include quality education, and strong families comprehend fatherly roles, motherly roles and kinsmanship role and importance.

The core of parent partnership is strong families, which mean that if many learners come from broken homes where the family unit is disintegrated, schools would consequently find it difficult to create and develop any meaningful partnership.

4.3.3.3   Sub-theme 3: Time constraint on the part of parents

Participant 9 of School C and Participant 6 of School B opined that most parents do not have time for partnering with their children's schools. The majority of the parents do not come to school to see how their children are doing because they have time limitations, while some do not make time at all. Participant 9 was concerned about parents who did not make the time to discuss their children's progress or lack thereof:

> *I think majority of parents most of them don't come to school to see how their children are doing. They only come to school when they are being called. Some of them don't want to be involved. They don't have time. They say they have time constraints. They have other things to do. They feel like if the child no longer wants to be at school it is no longer their problem. They have provided the child the opportunity to come to school. If they mess-up they have nothing to do. Most of them don't want to appreciate anything. Another challenge I think the environment also plays a part. Because they don't value the importance of education. Because there no role models in the community so therefore what is the value of education to them. And another challenge is that some of the parents get angry when you tell them about their children. (P9, SC)*

Similarly, Participant 6 proclaimed that parents do not make time to come to school:

> *I don't know whether they do not make time to come to school. But we do have meetings with them but is like the minority will be there and the majority will not come. So that's the challenge we have in the school. So, it will look as if*

management does not have an effective plan to communicate between the school and the parents. (P6, SB)

Participant 1 of School A noted that the greatest challenge the leadership and management of her school has is long distances between most parents and the school, as it is a boarding school. She reiterated that her school children's parents stay far away from the school which makes it difficult to reach them, particularly in cases of emergency:

I think as a boarding school one challenge that we have is we have learners whose parents stay far from school. Is unlike in a school where a day school where people are sleeping in their houses every day. But now here if you want to engage a child and a parent who stays let's say in Johannesburg, then that creates a problem between the school and the parent. Because they're at times when you need parent like as in tomorrow then you say tomorrow please pop into school but because is a boarding school then we have challenge there. And unfortunately, we cannot separate the policy for the day scholars and boarders because we need to treat them equally. If for instance, a boarder has done something wrong and we need the parent tomorrow, it has to be the same response and attitude as a day scholar who has done something wrong. And another challenge is that parents are busy these days as they are engaged in their own things. (P1, SA)

The essence here is that parents' proximity to the school is seen as a challenge especially when they are geographically remote from the area. Although the school may be able to make contact with them, they are not immediately available to visit the school or attend a meeting.

Participants 8 and 10 of Schools C and D respectively, established that parents do not respond to calls for school meetings immediately and when they do so, it is far later than expected. Participants said that they were concerned as in many cases it seemed that the parents had not received the right messages, or alternatively, they simply opted to not respond to calls for meetings with the school or educators, as indicated by Participant 8:

The only challenge is that the parents they do not respond in time when they have been called. And the challenge is that even if they come it is grandmothers and not the actual parents of the learners. (P8, SC)

No response by parents to calls from the school seems to indicate that they are not actually prepared to be part of their children' education. Such apathy places a huge challenge on the shoulders of the school leadership and management in trying to provide effective leadership and management of parental involvement.

Time limitation is seen here as a major challenge to the provision of effective management and leadership of parental involvement in rural secondary schools. Parents simply prioritise other things at the expense of the involvement of their children's schools. This means that schools would find it problematic to partner parents who do not seem to want to make time for their children's schools.

According to Bauer and Shea (2003:65) parents have shown strong resistance to their children's school association or partnership. This puts schools under unnecessary pressures to involve parents by all means necessary by mounting dissimilar approaches to bring parents on board. Parents gave reasons such as a lack of time, a feeling that they have nothing to contribute and not being available during the time the school arranges functions as factors which prevent them from becoming actively involved.

4.3.3.4   Sub-theme 4: Communication problems

As discussed earlier, communication between school and parent is a major challenge which inhibits the development of good relations and plays a role in hindering parental involvement. Participant 6 of School B, Participant 10 of School D and Participant 11 of School D shared similar sentiments with regards to communication problems as a major challenge they face when it come to an attempt by their schools' management and leadership to provide effective parental involvement. In this respect Participant 6 explains that:

Parents are not involved much in the school. We do try to communicate with them. So is like they do not care. I don't know whether they do not make time to come to school. But we do have meetings with them but is like the minority will be there and the majority will not come. So that's the challenge we have in the

school. So, it will look like as if management does not have an effective plan to communicate between the school and the parents. (P6, SB)

In concurrence with the above, Participant 10 asserted that:

Some of the challenges I encounter is that there is no good communication between the school and the parents. For instance, when we call the meetings, we do not get hundred percent attendance. We have also thought maybe another way of communicating with them is by announcing it at the 'grant day'. So maybe if we can announce it. Because we have a feeling that some of the learners do not bring the letters to their parents. I should think that is also big problem. We can try another way of communicating with the parents. Even announcing it on the radio maybe can help us. Because you find that some will say we didn't get the letter we just heard from neighbour that there is a meeting at school. So, one can see that there is something wrong when it comes to communicating with the parents. (P10, SD)

Meanwhile Participant 11 feels that messages that are sent to parents for meetings do not reach them, resulting in a communication problem. Communication barriers do not come from one source since communication is between two or more people. However, the above participants have shed light on the issue by indicating that either parents do not receive messages from the schools, or the schools do not have an effective communication strategy in place.

This is confirmed by Hoover-Dempsey *et al.* (2005:105-130) who suggest that parents maybe prone to criticise educators for ineffective communication. Many parents believe that it is the educator's obligation to make the initial contact and report on the child's performance at school. Consequently, it is important that educators understand this expectation and begin to lay the foundation for a partnership with parents as soon as they receive the students' roster.

Hawes (2008:328) explains that parents critique educators in that they wait until issues become severe, failing to contact parents when the issue first arises. According to Montgomery (2005), many parents also argue that feedback should be provided on a continual basis for both positive and negative aspects and communication should be consistent through the school year. On the other hand,

educators also argue that many parents often place their careers and social events before involvement in their child's education (Sirvani, 2007:31)

Olsen and Fuller (2012:106) mention significant barriers that could obstruct effective communication between parents and the school such as language, body language, and medium of communication. Similarly, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:51) advocates that school have a two-way communication process which is repeated in both directions, comprising face-to-face conversations, telephone calls or an SMS, group meetings and written communications.

4.3.3.5   Sub-theme 5: Poor involvement

Through inductive analysis of the interview transcripts, it was established that there is poor parental involvement in the education of their children. Participant 15 stressed that most parents are not interested in becoming involved in their children's education and simply refuse to participate in the school programmes or functions:

> *Some parents don't come on board when they are asked to come to school, is only the school initiative that tries to get them in touch. But still they don't come on board we don't know whether an attitude that is coming from the older Management. But we are having the challenge of parents who are distancing themselves from the school in every programme that is being made by the school to their learners. So that is the challenge we are facing in the school. Parents more or less are not concerned about what happens in the school. (P15, SE)*

One other challenge that emerged during data analysis is the lack of funds which inhibits the effort by management to provide effective management and leadership of parental involvement. Participant 7 stated that resources were limited and that many functions needed self-funding:

> *Lack of funds in the school. So, you have to dip from your own pocket. (P7, SC)*

Since it costs money to convene parent meetings, conferences and workshops, schools found it a challenge to find the necessary funds. Such situations constrain the management and leadership of the school to organise effective parental involvement and partnership programmes for the school

Participant 14 of School E established that parents do not help their children at home by motivating them to learn:

The challenge is that the parents do not help us to motivate their learners or their children to learn. They only get the motivation here at school from their educators when they go home, they sleep and eat food. That is all. (P14, SE)

Parents should regard it a duty to be involved in the learning of their children. Parents need to motivate and inspire their children to keep their focus on learning and support their children as best as they can with for example, assisting learners with homework. The motivation process can be regarded an unsatisfied need which causes action (Robins & DeCenzo, 2007:217). A class distinction is made between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is when we do something in order to earn a grade, avoid punishment, please the educator, while intrinsic motivation involves doing something which is personally rewarding (Woolfolk, 2013:393).

Apart from not becoming involved in their children's learning, it seems that parents stay aloof from damages done to the school by their own children, a clear demonstration that they are not prepared to become involved in school matters. Participant 12 of School D, and Participant 15 of School E Participant 12 stated the following:

Poor involvement. I think they can do more for the school. For instance, we lose doors, furniture the chairs have the names of the school, yet parents say nothing when learners steal them home. Parents do not care about the school. They do not try to own the school. (P12, SE)

Poor parental involvement in the school means that the school is at a disadvantage from issues of vandalism, burglary and the stealing of school property. Such indifferent attitudes from parents and the community is difficult particularly when the school begins to look rundown and derelict and not owned by the people. As parents distance themselves from the school and relinquish ownership of the school in their own community, it poses huge challenges to the management and leadership of parental involvement.

According to Brown and Beckett (2007:62) parental involvement should include the

three levels of working together cooperation, coordination and collaboration. Cooperation means that stakeholders work towards a common goal; coordination also refers to a sharing of resources and joint responsibilities in planning, development and implementation of programmes and collaboration refers to a higher degree of sharing and a more intensive, concerted effort including joint allocation of resources to monitor of the school.

4.3.4 Theme 4: The Functionality of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the School Governing Body (SGB)

As the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the School Governing Body (SGB) provide the vital link between home and school, the researcher wanted to understand participant views on the functioning of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in their schools. This association is often misconstrued as the SGB and its functions in the school, but if in place, the PTA can play a valuable role in the school. Through an analysis of the interview data, the following sub themes or categories were established: no existence of the PTA, SGB as a substitute for the PTA, functionality of the SGB and dysfunctionality of the SGB.

4.3.4.1 Sub-theme 1: No existence of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Participant 1 of School A, Participant 2 of School A, Participant 4 of School B, Participant 7 of School C, Participant 10 of School D, Participant 11 of School D, Participant 12 of School and Participant 14 of School E agreed that Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in their schools does not exist. They pointed out that they only knew of the school governing bodies (SGBs):

> *The SGB, I will keep referring to the SGB because basically that's what is used here at school which creates this bond between the school and the parents. (P1, SA)*

> *There is no Parent Educator Associations. We as educators we only get to see parents when they come to view their learners work to assess the progress of their learners. (P2, SA)*

> *There is a governing body where there are meetings; there is no PTA; No there is no Parent Teacher Association. (P4:P7: P9, SB: SC: SC)*

There is no PTA. We only work with the SGB and the SGB is functional; No there is no PTA but there is an SGB but a bit functional; No PTA but there is SGB; there is no PTA but there is an SGB. (P10:P11: 12, SD: SD: SE)

Participants know about the existence and functionality of SGB but not the PTA. In all schools it seems that the SGB is perceived as the substitute for the PTA.

As indicated above, participants have clearly stated that there is no PTA in existence in their schools, but there are SGBs which seem to take on the role of PTAs.

Clarke (2009:60) explains that in most successful schools, there is a strong partnership between the schools, as represented by the staff, senior management team, and principal, and the school represented by the staff, senior management team, and principal, and the school governing body. He further distinguishes between the Parent Educator Association and the School Governing Body. The PTA is a committee consisting of elected parent and staff representatives, whose task it is to plan and organise activities, which involves parents. It is seen as involuntary body consisting of all parents whereas the SGB is perceived as a statutory government organ of the school with executive powers.

4.3.4.2   Sub-theme 2: The SGB as a substitute for the PTA

Participants 10 of School D, 12 of School D 14 of School E and 15 of School perceived the PTA as the same as the SGB. When asked about the functionality of the PTA, the participants responded by saying that instead of PTAs their schools have SGBs. The ensuing statements by Participants 10, 12 and 14 respectively confirm the above viewpoints:

We only work with the SGB, No PTA but there is SGB; No, we don't have PTA but we have SGB. (P10: P12: 14, SD: SE: SE)

The participant responses demonstrated that they perceive the SGB to be confused with the PTA, which is contrary to Clarke, who clarifies that there is a distinction between the two. Clarke (2009:61) explains that the PTA is perceived as a subsidiary group to the SGB in some schools as their co-existence in the framework of the school depends on the functionality and roles that are assigned to both organs. In some instances, a PTA committee would consist of either one or two parent

members elected from parent member of the school governing body. Although this makes the committee weighted in favour of parents, this is an advantage, because its purpose is to increase parental involvement in the activities of the school.

4.3.4.3　Sub-theme 3: Functionality of the SGB

Many participants, when asked for their views of the functionality of the PTA, alluded to the SGB and its functionality in many areas such as renovation, meeting attendance, various interventions and physical presence in the school. Participant 1 of School A was of the view that the SBG is functional in her school. As an example, she explains that when there is a problem in her school, the SGB is able to intervene as soon as possible. In addition, the SGB functions through meeting attendance in the form of annual general meetings (AGMs):

> *I believe this SGB helps a lot because even if we have a challenge with a parent once you inform the SGB then at least they are able to intervene. They are working if there is a code of conduct that needs to be instilled, if there is a policy that needs to be put across to the parents or to learners, they are there all the time. But now they use the time frame that is stipulated by the Department. That is, they meet four times a year. Then they plan for these AGMs that we have here at school then they always there. I believe those who are elected to be part of the SGB, they do their duties, they are faithful. (P1, SA)*

Participant 15 of School E explained that the SGB in his school is effectively functional by their physical presence in the school to ensure order:

> *Yes, the SGB is functional. For example, the SGB Chairperson is always at around the school before 11 o'clock or from the morning till after 11 o'clock, he will leave after the learners have eaten. (P15, SE)*

Participant 14 of School E drew attention to that fact that her school's SGB is very functional by aiding the school through projects such as renovations in her school:

> *The SGB is functional because most of the things happening in the school. The SGB is part of it such as renovation of the school. The SGB is part of it. (P14, SE)*

The functionality of the school governing bodies from the above findings means that in most schools, the SGBs are attending to the task set for them even though participants could not in detail describe the functionality of their SGBs.

In Section 20 and 21 of the Schools Act (RSA 1996) the functions and duties of the SGB are set out and include issues such as developing the vision and mission statement of the school, setting goals and objectives, issues relating to educators, issues relating to learners, issues relating to the school curriculum and issues specifically relating to parents. According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:129), the school governing body needs to fulfil its functions effectively if the commitment to collaborative governing of the school is to be successful. In other words, parents, educators, principals, learners and all other members of the SGB need to work together as a team to successfully fulfil all of its tasks.

4.3.4.4   Sub-theme 4: Dysfunctionality of SGB

Participant 6 of School B, Participant 9 of School C and Participant 13 of School E seemed to feel that most SGBs are not functional. Participant 6 was of the view that the SGB in her school is trying to be functional but some members were not committed and were not fulfilling their roles as SGB members.

Participant 9 of School C concurred felt that the SGB in here school is not functional: *It is the SGB. No is not functional.* (P9, SC)

Participant 13 of School E attributed the dysfunctionality of the SGB in her school to illiteracy on the part of the SGB members. The participant implied that they just rubber stamp the principal's initiatives:

> *Most of them are illiterate, in fact so you find that for them to function, they just maybe the principal's voice to say something. As for them they just agree to anything that is said by the principal maybe. Not something that is from them. Even them they did not go to school; they know nothing about the school procedures or whatever. (P13, SE)*

The views expressed above point to the fact that many SGBs are not performing to their best in their schools. It also heralds the fact that most members of SGBs in rural schools are there as rubber stamps to the principals because they do not know

management and leadership processes due to their high levels of illiteracy.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:130) suggest that factors such as poorly resourced schools, poverty and illiteracy within the school community and governors who are asked to 'rubber stamp' decisions, impinge negatively on the SGBs in the execution of their duties. They further argue that poor disadvantaged communities in South Africa have high levels of illiteracy, which impacts on the role that SGB members can play.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Management and leadership plans to partner parents

The data revealed management and leadership have plans in place to partner with parents and which include the call for regular parent meetings and school visits.

4.3.5.1 Sub-theme 1: The call for parent meetings

From the analysis of data gathered, Participants 1 of School A, Participant 2 of School A, Participant 3 of School A, Participant 4 of School B, Participant 7 of School C and Participant 11 of School D were of the belief that their school management and leadership teams had plans in place such as calling parent meetings more often in order to partner with them. The belief is that schools have general meetings with parents annually, biannually, as well as quarterly.

Participant 1 affirmed the above point of view:

> *… twice a year we have parent meetings; we have a biannual in June where we give them a report of what has transpired from January up to June. Then in December, another general meeting where we give them a report of what has happened from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. I think in that way we communicate with the parents and we have shown partnership with them. We partner with them because without meetings, without communicating with them, then there won't be proper engagements between the school and parents. (P1, SA)*

Similarly, Participant 2 substantiated the call for regular parent meetings:

> *Yes, because in my school, parents are very much involved in the school. In my school, there are different children from different denominations. So, for the*

children to cope in this Catholic denomination parents have to be involved. Parents have to know what is going on. My school's management they are making sure that the parents are very much involved in what is happening in the school. Even in terms of monitoring their children's work time again they get called in like quarterly, they get invited to come and view their children's progress report and the chance to interact with educators and the Principal, lay their concerns like in certain subjects where they feel like children are underperforming, at times, they do come in to ask for clarity from the principal of which she does answer them to the best of her ability. I think parents are much involved in my school. (P2, SA)

Moreover, Participant 3 believes that his school has adequate plans in place through consistent contact maintained with parents and the community through meetings. The statement below is inclined to endorse the claim of the respondent:

Yes, I think it is an adequate plan. Simply because I have seen the school calling for parent meetings. They have the best way of writing to the parents through their contact numbers given before time. The contact is one of the best ways. The contacts give the options to the parents in case they cannot make it to make alternative arrangements. (P3, SA)

In the opinion of Participant 4, her school works hand-in-hand with parents through meetings, more especially when children have misbehaved:

I have seen the school trying to partner with parents by calling for a lot of individual meetings with the children's parents if the children misbehave. It means they want to work hand-in-hand with the parents. But then some other parents do not even show-up; but the school is trying. (P4, SB)

Participant 7 claims that the best management and leadership plan in place to involve parents is to call for parent meetings. Such meetings open the doors for the parents to be involved in the school's affairs:

Yes, we call meetings to involve them. Because they don't just come and check the performance of their children. We do open the gate for them to come and check anytime but they don't just come. But you would get someone during the meeting and if you have an issue with that particular child and you happen

to remember the incidence, you send the message across to the parents. (P2, SC)

Though the majority of participants have revealed that the call for parent meetings is one of the plans in place to partner parents, one cannot conclude that such plans are effective. The convention of most participants is to arrange parent meetings, either biannually, quarterly or semi-annually to brief parents about the performance of their children or to resolve learner disputes in schools. School management and leadership need to work out a *modus operandi* in calling for successful parent meetings either individually or as a collective whole and one cannot discount the use of modern technologies which have revolutionised means of communication. However, one needs to enquire if parents actually receive the communique in time to attend meetings and whether they attend, taking into account the seriousness of ensuring that parents are partnered with schools and becoming involved.

However, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:59) explain that parent meetings or class meetings should be held at least once a year. It is thus of critical importance to follow a procedure when the school plans meetings, which could include written communication of the time, date, venue and the purpose of the meeting being given to parents at least two weeks in advance. The time and day of the meeting must be considered to accommodate as many parents as possible, the venues should be clean, neat and well lit, language support in the form of a translator should be provided if there are parents who are not proficient in the language of teaching and learning. At the end of the meeting, refreshments are always welcome as it gives the parents and educators time to chat informally with each other as well as parents with other parents, and in addition, this creates an opportunity for parents to give feedback after the meeting.

4.3.5.2 Sub-theme 2: School visits

Participant 1 of School A, Participant 5 of School B, Participant 6 of School B, Participant 12 of School D, and Participant 13 of School E, as well as Participant 14 of School E and Participant 15 of School E all concur that their schools have school visits as one of the plans to effectively lead and manage parent partnerships. It was further established that the regularity of the parents to visit depends on the urgency of the situation and what the school's year plan entails would determine the

frequency of these school visits by parents. Some parents visit schools because they are invited by the principal or the class educator due to misconduct, whereas other parents visit the schools to check on the progress of learners' academics, as scheduled in the year plan.

Participant 1 explained what happens in her school:

… we do have a way of communicating with parents even if it was not there initially but we do communicate with them through SMS, through writing letters to them, we do instruct them like in daily activities of the school they are aware. If the school is going to break early, we are able to write letters to them. If it is boarders, we send SMSs, to them. So, everything is managed that requires a parent in the class. And again, in the year plan it does show when we will be having like parent visits so they are aware that maybe four times in a year they would need to come to school for whatever it is that they come for whether in the case of learners' results. (P1, SA)

Participant 5 was of the view that when it comes to school visits, she needs to do more to invite the parents to regularly check on the progress of their children. She reiterated her standpoint as follows:

So that is one thing I have observed with my personal management of the school is that I have not done enough to invite them in. (P5, SB)

Participant 6 explained that parents are called to visit schools to check on the progress of their children. However, parents have demonstrated their disinterest in visiting the school to even ascertain the functionality of the school:

I think we do as a school … we do have something which is planned. Because we do call parents to come to the school to check their learners work and stuff and call parent meetings. Just that the parents do not show interest that they are indeed interested as to checking the whole environment of the school whether the school is functioning or not. So, I think as a school we do have something in place because we do call meetings where we have to sit and talk to parents and let them know what is happening in the school. (P6, SB)

In a similar vein, Participant 14 revealed that at the end of the term, parents are

invited to visit the school to either collect learner reports or otherwise:

We do call them at the end of the term to come and collect the learners' report. And we do invite them to come and see the learners' work. Some come and others do not come … we are trying. (P14, SE)

Participant 13 reported on parents being invited to help at the school by being present especially during Grade 12 camping in the school. Thus, parents are asked to monitor their learners during such camps. In her opinion, the following statement is an affirmative to the view expressed above:

Yes, we do have especially for Grade 12 learners we usually conduct camps in the school where we ask the Grade 12 parents to assist and be with us monitoring the learners while they are camping here in the school. Monitoring the study every time when we prepare for the exams, so we usually ask for parents' assistance. (P12, SD)

This corresponds with what Van Schalkwyk (1990:121) says about paving the way for parents to visit the school more often with the administrative staff playing an essential role in planning improvement of the school's climate, since their conduct and their office spaces are responsible for the visitors' first impressions. First impressions such as professional conduct, displaying a positive and courteous attitude to parents, a neat and waiting area for parents would synthesise to encourage frequent visits of parents to the school.

4.3.6 Theme 6: Benefits of Effective Management and Leadership of the Parent-Educator Partnership

The researcher sought to draw from participants their opinions on the perception of the benefits that could accrue from effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership. After analysing the responses of participants from the interview data, the following sub-themes emerged from the transcript analysis: improvement in learner academic results, parents owning the school, improvement in learner discipline, improvement in teamwork and reduction in the workload of educators.

4.3.6.1 Sub-theme 1: Improvement in learner academic results.

Participant 2 of School A, Participant 4 of School B, Participant 8 of School C,

Participant 9 of School C, Participant 11 of School D, Participant 13 of School E and Participant 15 of School E concurred that one major benefit of effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership is improvement in learner academic results. In this regard, Participant 2 felt that academic results will improve greatly. The resulting statement affirms the above viewpoint:

I believe the results will improve greatly. Because we really need the input of the parents. You know in teaching it is three-fold thing. There should be a educator, a parent and a child. An educator and the child alone without the support of the parents, it doesn't make this triangle function well. If we could have parents getting fully involved, ensuring that whatever is expected of their children even in terms of behaviour, if the parents are there to ensure that their children are behaving in the way is expected by the school, I believe it will also improve the performance of the school in general. (P2, SA)

Participant 4 felt that such a strong educator-parent partnership or association could lead to a better future for learners supporting them to the matric, and even applying for bursaries for further study in higher education.

Moreover, Participant 8 equally highlighted that the effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership would bring about improvement of better results. The participant asserted that parental support is invaluable in ensuring that learners take responsibility for their learning and facilitating aspects such as homework and assignments:

If we effectively manage the parent-educator association, if we work together, I am sure the results will be better. Because if the parents will check the homework of the learners check if they do the homework, then will for the best interest of the child. So, if they involved the results will improve. The performance of the learners from Grade 8 to 12. Because we have the same problem with all the learners in the school. They don't do homework, they don't do classwork, they submit assignments or project or they will come-up with excuse to tell you that they don't have to go to the library, they don't have access to the internet and when they say they don't have access to the internet and when they say they don't have to go to the library they don't have access to

the internet, they don't even bother to try even to do at least one or two, they just relax and say we don't have money to go to Ndwedwe library. (P8, SC)

Participant 9 shared a similar belief:

Better results for the whole school, performance will improve. More quality learners. It can motivate learners. (P9, SC)

General academic performance will witness improvement culminating in better motivation and better performance as learners take responsibility for their learning give of their best.

Participant 11 and 13 had similar views:

Results will improve and be better and also the behaviour of learners will improve or become better. Since educators and parent are working together. (P11, SD)

The school will benefit from that in building teamwork. So, it will improve teamwork. Learners' performance will improve. Because they learners will know that education is so much important even on parents you can see them contributing to the school. So, they will know that the school is an institution where education needs to be acquired. (P13, SE)

This means that similar benefits will accompany educator-parent partnership especially leaner motivation and motivation which could have an effect on the pass rate and achievement of learners.

It is an established fact that the findings point to academic improvement in learners' performance. This means that effective management and leadership of parental involvement benefits learners immensely as the most important aim of education is to impact academic knowledge. In Section 2.5.1, such benefits are confirmed by the literature.

4.3.6.2   Sub-theme 2: Parents owning the school

Participant 5 of School B, Participant 7 of School C and Participant 10 of School D pointed to the fact that parents take ownership of and responsibility for the school

when there is effective management and leadership of the SGB. Participant 5 indicated that schools will derive the benefit of parents opening up to schools, taking responsibility for their children's education by providing key information to the school about their learners. Participant 7 felt that the benefit that may arise from effective management and leadership of parents-educator partnership is that parents will personally become involved with the school. Participant 7 asserted that:

The parents will personalise the school. For example, if an SGB member sees someone loitering around the premise of the school, the parent can ask the person is doing. Or even to reprimand the child, when the child is late, the parents can be involved in the functioning of the school. (P7, SC)

Participant 10 also indicated that parents will assume ownership and take on a caretaking role in the school to avert negative situations like vandalism:

I think if we can get effective management and leadership a parent-educator association. We will benefit by people owning the school, will look after the school; we will not experience vandalism and the learners will also take education seriously, because they will be getting the support from the parents. Because some of the learners they stay alone without support from the parents because unfortunately some of the learners stay alone in their households. So, the community first should be conscientised and they should own the school, they should own the school, they should look after the school. From time to time you find that the school has been burgled. That shows less concern when it comes to the school. They even steal. We have lost a lot of things from the school. We have lost the stove, the TV through burglary. So, if the community can be made aware that they own the school, they will look after the school very well. Community awareness; support from parents and the community. (P10, SD)

Olsen and Fuller (2012:133) confirm the above findings that schools tend to benefit by getting adequate community support. Moreover, Simon (2000) elucidates that parents develop a sense of ownership in the school and begin to share experiences and make connections with other families.

Participant 15 explained that in his school, parents as members of the SGB are

involved in the running of a nutritional programme. As part of the programme, parents are a constant presence in the school as some of them cook for the school. In addition, the security guards visit the school as they are employed by the school. to keep a constant watch and maintain security:

> *The SGB is there as the component of parents that represents parents well as we are having the nutrition which is conducted by parents in most of the time. The members who are cooking her are coming from parents. The securities are also coming from the parents. All the securities re also coming from the parents because they are working at the gate here are from the parents because they only get their remunerations from the parents because they only get their remunerations from the governing body of the school. We are still looking at the school during holidays becoming available to the community to use it for church services, for community meetings so that whatever happens in the school they will know that the school belongs to them whatever happens. To go to the Chiefs and tell them to use the school premises when they have functions not to hire places during the weekends. But to use the school hall so that they become visible. So, you're around the school so that these that the school belongs to the chief. (P15, SE)*

During the weekends and holidays the participant revealed that the school was planning for parents and the community to use the school facilities for such use as church services and other community functions.

It could be induced from the study that participants deem school visits critical as a very effective management and leadership plan to partner parents. In other words, schools need to open their doors to parents to have access to the school premises and create the enabling environments to receive parents' visits. It equally behoves parents to cooperate and partner with schools to the advantage of their children.

4.3.6.3   Sub-theme 3: Improvement in learner discipline

Participant 1 of School A argued that the benefit that will arise from effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnerships is the reduction in discipline and behaviour issues such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and smoking:

I think we won't have a problem of learners ill-discipline like teenage pregnancy, like smoking, I won't say they are abusing substances but in some cases you do find that learners are found smoking but then if there is this good relationship of managing parents, and the school involvement, parent–learner, parent-educator as association, I think discipline-wise, the school will be disciplined 100 percent. Because apart from the percentage that you put in teaching, there is this percentage you put in disciplining a child. And I think that will be less for a school because they will engage in just teaching and learning more than trying cases all the time, more than trying to mould people all the time. So, if the parents are involved and they are working with the educators, I think the school will get a better percentage than what is getting now in terms of pass rate. (P1, SA)

The above response indicates that the school, the educators and learners will enjoy a reduction of poor learner discipline and other vices if there is a good partnership between home and school. This could have a positive effect on learning, culminating in improvement in the annual percentage mark of the final students that write the senior national examinations.

By the same token, Participant 11 of School D pointed to improved behaviour of learners or improvement as educators and parents work together. Moreover, Participant 13 of School E brought to the fore that it helps improve the awareness of learners with regards to learning discipline, taking ownership of their learning and the importance and value of education is then placed in its proper perspective:

I think even learners can know that education is so much is important seeing that their parents are involved and even the school, if it performs very good, the parents will recognise that because they will know they were part and parcel of the process that were occurring in the school. (P13, SE)

Participant 15 of School E referred to social ills, such as violence, between learners and educators, and further claimed the issue of drugs, smoking, the use of vulgar and foul language could reduce if there is effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership or parental involvement:

You see if we can have that relationship between the parents and educators. Hey, the school will perform even better. So many social ills that emanate in the school they can end. One, the violence, because no learner can misbehave in front of his or her mother or father. Through this thing learners who are not writing the work, no learner cannot write the work when he knows that the father or mother will be around the school because he or she will be reported to the father. And the issue of drugs they can come to end. Because these learners in most cases they do not smoke in their homes. They smoke in school and in streets. Therefore, if they see their parents around the school, then they will never smoke again around the school. And this issue of cursing around where they ask where they got this language. You may think that they got them from their parents. Only to find out that in their home they go to church every Sunday and they do not curse. But when they do not see their parents. The visibility of parents at school will change the entire behaviour of the learners and it will ease violence in school against educators and against leaners. (P15, SE)

It cannot be denied from the above responses that an effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership has certain behavioural benefits for learners. Apart from academic improvement, learner conduct and demeanour will see enhancement and advancement (See Section 2.5.2.3). According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:14-15), parental involvement in South African secondary schools, apart from the benefit of improved academic performance of learners, also brings improved attitudes to learning and improved behaviour and a better school attendance rate.

4.3.6.4 Sub-theme 4: Improved teamwork.

Participant 13 of School E established that the school can build teamwork among parents and the school if there is effective management and leadership of parental involvement:

I think even learners can know that education is important seeing that their parents are involved. The school will benefit from that in building teamwork. So, it will improve teamwork. Learners' performance will improve. Because they learners will know that education is so much important even on parents you can

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see them contributing to the school. So, they will know that the school is an institution where education needs to be acquired. (P13, SE)

The finding suggests that teamwork is needed as all stakeholders of education and the school come together towards achieving the mission of the school and ensure that the goals of education are achieved. This is confirmed by Botha (2013:239) who contends that the school management team and the relevant stakeholders like educators, parents and relevant people from the community must come together to interrogate possible ways to improve partnership and cooperation in consummation the aims of the school.

4.3.6.5   Sub-theme 5: Reduction in the workload of educators.

Participant 6 of School B revealed that if parents were involved in assisting learners at home, it would improve and help reduce the workload of educators and the school because homework ensures that learners are kept focused on reinforcing what they have learnt in the class and the completion of the curriculum. If parents showed interest in their children's homework, monitored the work and assisted them with it, then educators' task and workload would be lightened:

The school will benefit a lot. If the parents were very much involved in the basic functionality of the school. Because looking at if you gave a learner homework and the parents would not bother to check what is that you have learned at school today. Do you have any work and stuff? Then if there was that communication between parents and educators. Parents have shown interest as to what their children are doing at school. But they are not showing that interest. There is no interest. Because if you give a learner work to go and do at home, the learner will come back the following day and didn't do the work. But if the parent was more effective, the parent would have known that ok my child was given homework even signing of learner exercise book, like every day checking learners' work parents do not do that. But if they were to check learners work. I think we will not be having as much at school. If they were to more involved academically, the school will improve educators work will also become much easier if you have given learners homework and they come the following day, they didn't do the work you have to waste about 30 minutes to finish the work that will be done at home. (P6, SB)

The above finding shows that educators have an expectation from parents to be much more concerned about the children's education, monitoring and assisting at home with their homework and also showing interest in what should be completed before coming to school. If homework is not completed, that work needs to be completed in class as it is reinforcement of what was previously learnt. This is confirmed by Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009: 16) who state that parental involvement can lessen the educators' workload. Educators have multiple tasks to perform and parents can help in a variety of ways such as assisting with sporting activities, during field trips, in the classroom and with home assignments given to leaners.

4.3.7   Theme 7: Leadership and management structures to achieve greater cooperation between parents and the school.

The theme above sought to extract from participants their opinions on the best leadership and management structures that schools should put in place to attain greater support, teamwork and collaboration with families, parents and the communities. Through the analysis of the data, the following subthemes emerged: parent orientation and training workshops, election of suitable SGB members, regular parent meetings, collaboration with local authorities and parents' motivational functions.

4.3.7.1   Sub-theme 1: Parent orientation and training workshops

Participant 1 of School A was of the opinion that workshops for school governing body members and parents in general, would help parents understand the role they should play in their children's education. The participant further hinted that the training should be conducted at least once a year as a leadership and management organisation to get parents to engage with their children:

> *I think workshops that are organised for the SGB only should be extended to the whole group of parents. They need to be made aware of their role as parents because some forget their role as parents. So, I think maybe if we can work out something like at least once a year have a workshop forget their role as parents. So, I think maybe if we can work out something like at least once a year have a workshop for the parents on how the school needs them to engage with their learners in order to help the learners pass at school, I think that will*

help. Giving them knowledge; telling them what is it that they need to do. (P1, SA)

Correspondingly, Participant 7 of School C concurred with the above that there should frequently be training for parents as well as the SGB for them to recognise their roles and responsibilities:

I think the training of the parents. SGB training to know their role from time not once-off. They know their responsibility. (P7, SC)

Participant 11 of School D was of the view that workshops should be organised *for parents twice a year.* (P11, SD)

In the opinion of Participant 9 of School C, schools should hold an orientation workshop for Grade 8 parents:

First of all, I think there must be an orientation for parents when learners come to Grade 8. As a school we must have a programme where we orientate parents together with learners what is expected from them, what is their role. That will be our starting point. (P9, SC)

From the above responses, it is evident that parents and SGB members need frequent training and education to understand the roles that they need to play in order to accomplish greater cooperation between the parents. Parent workshops or orientation should be part of school leadership and management structures to succour the attainment of educational goals with community and family involvement. This is confirmed by Olsen and Fuller (20112:150) that school administrators, managers and leaders need to support parents especially through training programmes that will enhance their knowledge about their roles in their children's education. Sallis (2003) shares a similar sentiment that a parent governor is in every sense a full and equal member of the school governing body. With equal status, of course, goes shared responsibility for all aspects of governor's work. This means that parent governors need a certain amount of professional knowledge through training.

4.3.7.2   Sub-theme 2: Election of suitable SGB members.

Participant 2 of School A was of the opinion that election to the SGB in her school

should be purely on merit and candidates who have educational interests at heart should be elected to serve on the SGB and not just any community member who is outspoken. The participant felt that the SGB members should be those who are ready to commit to the school:

> *When the parents elect members, they should ensure that they elect people who have interest in education. They shouldn't just take anybody because the person is vocal. They should also look at the person's educational background. Because we do not have in the community people who are educators who have children in the school; who I believe do want their children to prosper so those are the people that should be part of the SGB. Those are the people who should be ready to commit themselves to the school as members of the SGB. Not as educators per their employment but as members of the SGB because they basically know what is happening at school and they basically know what is expected. If the school has to be effective. So those people who are elite in the community they be involved as members of SGB. It shouldn't be just like anybody because he is vocal, he is able to talk, he is not afraid to say whatever he wants to say in the community then they say is find we are electing this person to be part of the SGB because the person could be coming with wrong motives. He could be destroying the school rather than making positive contributions. (P2.SA)*

It is clear that the SGB membership election process is of major concern. Schools and communities as well as parents need to elect its SGB members with thoughtfulness that would bring on board suitable members who have educational motives and a strong interest in the prosperity of school and the learners in general. Thus, many with wrongful motives get elected and others also ride on the wings of 'popularity' and being vocal to get elected to serve as governors. This is a confirmation of what happens in South African schools. Numerous studies have pointed out that there are a number of issues impacting on the success of school governing bodies which include electioneering problems, wide-spread poverty and illiteracy, lack of time and lack of understanding by parents on their role on the governing bodies (DoE 2004: Van Wyk 2002; Karlsson, McPherson & Pampallis 2001).

4.3.7.3 Sub-theme 3: Regular parent-centred meetings

Participant 3 of School A suggested that when meetings are held, the school management and leadership need to ensure that parents understand the importance and realise that their voices will be heard.

Participant 6 of School B on the other hand, is of the opinion that there should be a persistent call for parents to come to school to observe the work of their children and become apprised of their performance:

> *I think calling them for parents meeting. Even if is not a meeting a parent can come and observe their children's work as to how are they doing. Is my child doing ok? Like we have been having new educators for a long time and some parents will not know, others are not even aware that their children are not taught Physical Sciences. Which means they're not much involved in the academic work of their children. (P3, SB)*

Likewise, Participant 8 of School C shared a similar feeling that if her school could have monthly meetings with parents to discuss the performance of learners that could bring about the achievement of greater cooperation between the school and the community:

> *Maybe if we could have monthly meetings with the parents to discuss the performance of the learners and if the parents could also cooperate with us. If there is a problem or we notice something wrong with the learners. If the parents could come at that moment to discuss, then we can achieve. If there is a greater cooperation and communication. (P8, SC)*

Participant 10 of School D concurred that meetings with parents should occur on a regular basis. Moreover, Participant 15 of School E was in agreement with Participant 10 that parent meetings should be regular to engage in building the school interest and resolve some issues:

> *However, we have different views, but we are having these continuous meetings to engage at the interest of building the school. If we are having the same interest to build the school, in as much of having the differences, but at the end we will have the common goals. The reason that we are divided is that*

in this fashion is the different goals that we are having for the school. If we are having a continuous meeting let say the SGB is meeting on every Friday to reflect on school every Friday even if they are having factions, these will come up to an end if they meet continuously because some angers they emanate from staying at corners in these shadows for a long time and then when they meet the fight starts. So continuous meetings they can resolve some issues. (15, SE)

It could be consequently established that one of the best leadership and management organisations or structures that should be put in place to achieve greater cooperation between schools in the Ilembe district, is having regular and continuous parent meetings. Clarke (2007:51) is of the view that school governing bodies are mandated by law to have a constitution which entails regularity of meetings, rules of engagement in those meetings to aid the functionality of the school. He further encourages that school meetings between parents and the school should aim to uplift the school.

4.3.7.4   Sub-theme 4: Collaboration with local authorities

Participant 10 of School D and Participant 5 of School B agree that to achieve greater cooperation between the school and the community or the family, there should be collaboration with local authorities in their schools such as the local chiefs and land custodians called the 'Induna', as well as the Ward Councillors for proper functioning of the school. Participant 5 asserted the following:

There is no collaboration which makes it hard for cooperation. Because each feels they will have to concentrate on theirs. So, there is not any link between all the structures they have. We look at the 'Nduna', if the 'Nduna' might have a child in the school, he will not use his powers of managing the area to influence the school towards development or upliftment of themselves. If you look at a Councillor and his or her committee, they are a structure which would be working or functioning in the community but even those who have kids in the school, there is no collaboration. Is each for himself; so, if that is the case it will be very hard to achieve any cooperation. Because all the structures that are there operate independently. (P5, SB)

This means that there is a need for interdependence and cooperation between local

stakeholders. The school needs to make the effort to reach out to community leaders and the local government authorities to ensure greater cooperation between them and the school.

From the above response, schools recognise the need to involve local authorities for the upliftment of their schools. Schools have seen the need to court the partnership of local opinion leaders which could be vital for growth and sustainability. According to the African proverb, it takes a village to raise a child, and as such, schools and educators need to perceive the community in a much broader way by including the members of the community in improving the quality of education (Epstein *et al.,* 2009:392) as the community forms an integral part of this network (Anglin, 2011).

4.3.7.5   Sub-theme 5: Parent motivational functions

Participant 12 of School D brought to the fore that schools could organise social functions in which parents participate such as festivals or celebrations of national days, which should motivate them to participate in school activities. Participant 13 of School E was of the opinion that parents need to be motivated through the provision of refreshments when for example they come to collect their children's report or attend parent meetings. The statement claims that the parents need to constantly be reminded of their role in their children's education:

> *I think workshops that are organised for the SGB only should be extended to the whole group of parents. They need to be made aware of their role as parents because some forget their role as parents. So, I think maybe if we can work out something like at least once a year have a workshop to remind them of their role as parents. So, I think maybe if we can work out something like at least once a year have a workshop for the parents on how the school needs them to engage with their learners in order to help the learners pass at school, I think that will help. Giving them knowledge; telling them what is it that they need to do. (P1, SA)*

It could be inferred from the above that parents are not motivated to partner with schools and support their children's education. It was suggested that workshops be put in place to assist parents with their vital role.

4.3.8 Theme 8: Consequences of effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation

In this theme, I wanted to establish the outcome or the significance of effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. The following subthemes emerged from the data: protection of the school, learners could perform to the optimum, community upliftment, parents will motivate learners to study, reduction in truancy and absenteeism and parents may overstep their boundaries.

4.3.8.1 Sub-theme 1: Protection of the school

Participant 1 of School A noted that the consequence of the effective management and leadership of family, community and parental participation is the protection it gives to the school against criminal issues experienced in the community such as attacks during local community protest actions. Participant 6 of School B concurred with the above view that burglary in the school could be reduced if the community were more involved in the day-to-day running of the school. Participant 10 of School D was of the view that if the school were 'owned' by the community, they would take better care of it:

> *I think we can benefit a lot from the effective management and leadership of parental involvement. Number one, I think the school will be owned by the community. They are going to look after the school well. (10, SD)*

This means that local protection is given to the school if there is effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. In addition, Participant 15 felt that if the community 'own' the school, as custodians, conflicts between learners and educators could be reduced.

Community involvement consequentially advantages the school in terms local protection that it receives from the community against criminal issues. It bonds the community and the school where the community indirectly assumes ownership of the school and becomes concerned about the school. This is confirmed by Epstein's typology (see Section 2.4.6.) that collaborating with the community maximises human, fiscal and physical resources, and programmes and services available to the community become available to the school.

4.3.8.2   Sub-theme 2: Learners could perform to the optimum

Participant 2 of School A was of the opinion that the effect of effective management of parental, family and community participation is that children would be motivated to perform at their peak, which could lead to a better result in examinations:

> *Children could more perform at their optimum best which could lead to good results. (P2, SA)*

Likewise, Participant 5 of School B Participant 7 of School C as well as Participant 12 of School E felt that parental involvement could lead to enhancement in the performance of learners.

Learner performance is at the centre of improvement as a consequence for effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. This is confirmed by Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:14), who explained that research has shown that children are more successful in their academic pursuit if there is parental participation at the school because it encourages learning at home regardless of the educational background or social class of parents.

4.3.8.3   Sub-theme 3: Community upliftment

Participant 2 of School A was of the view that in rural communities, the results of effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation is lifting the standard of the living of the people of the community as well as learners who could return to the community and give back through positive contributions such as agricultural sector development:

> *This is a rural area; I will say it is a school in poverty-stricken area and if we could have more children getting educated, it will uplift the standard of living of the community and in a way everybody else will benefit from that. So, with good functionality of the school, it will lead to good positive results. And as you know education is the key to you have to be educated in order to succeed. Education forms the basis of success I will say so. With one person being educated in a family, it could change the whole family structure. It could have a very positive impact in the whole family. So, if we the community could help in the effective management of the school, which will lead to good results in the school, and more children getting educated that will uplift the community. They will plough in*

the school and they will get return of the community being uplifted. We understand that not all parents can afford to send their children to universities, but the school curriculum that is being offered in my school for example, we are offering Agricultural Sciences. If we have children who have passed Agricultural Sciences, those children will be able to contribute to the community development in one way or the other because this is a rural area. So, with the information they have gained from school, about Agricultural Sciences they could use that to uplift their community. (P2, SA)

Through the effective management and leadership of parental, family, and community partnership, learners are motivated to do well in school and thereafter return to their local rural communities to apply knowledge and skills acquired after the success of post-secondary education.

Similarly, Participant 14 of School E was in concurrence with the view of Participant 2 that the effective management and leadership of community participation could result in learners coming back to the local community to contribute to the community.

Community upliftment in a poverty-stricken area is vital and could be a result of graduates returning to the community and applying their knowledge and skills to develop the social capital of the community. In other words, it is established that as parents, community and families show greater endeavours to participate in the education of their children, they receive in return. This is confirmed in sections (2.5, 2.5.2, 2.5.3 and 2.5.4).

4.3.8.4   Sub-theme 4: Parents motivate learners to study

Participant 4 of School B was of the opinion that when there is effective management and leadership of parental involvement, parents develop the penchant to help their children study and complete their homework. In the view of Participant 10 of School D, parents will motivate learners to do their homework as expected:

They are going to motivate the learners also to do their homework as it is expected. Because sometimes you find out that you give a learner a home-work he comes the following day not doing the home-work saying that maybe he didn't have a candle at home, so the parent should also support the child in everything that is expected from them in order to help a child. The child cannot

get full results if he or she is not supported by the by the parents. The parents should work together with the school. (P10, SD)

Similarly, Participant 12 of School E was of the predisposition that once parents are motivated to support their children, the resultant effect is the enthusiasm and stimulus they can give their learners to learn at home.

From the above, it is established that learners need inspiration from parents to study at home. This means that the effective management and leadership of parental participation would benefit both parents to receive adequate inspiration to learn. This is confirmed by Epstein's typology as well as Olsen and Fuller in sections 2.4, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.4, 2.4.5 and 2.4.6. Olsen and Fuller (2012:134) concur that there is no single effort, formula, or design that creates a successful home-school-community partnership: this means that concerted effort is needed especially from the home by all key stakeholders in education in order to develop inspirational partnership that will motivate learners to learn at home.

4.3.8.5   Sub-theme 5: Reduction in truancy and absenteeism

Participant 6 of School B perceived that effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation could lead to a reduction in learner truancy and absent conduct: *I think, it would reduce learner's truancy and absenteeism.* (P6, SB)

Participant 13 of School E concurred with the above perception that it will improve learner behaviour:

I think on learner behaviour I think it will have a positive impact on learner behaviour knowing that you are able to contact the parent anytime the learner has done wrong or every time when the learner has done well. I think the learners' behaviour can change to be good. (P13, SE)

It can be established that truancy and learner absenteeism as well as improvement of learners towards academic pursuit and endeavours, occurs when there is an effective parental, family and community participation. This is confirmed by Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:15) that improved attitude to learning is as a result of greater cooperation between the parents and the school. They further explain that when

parents demonstrate an interest in their children's education and cherish high expectations for their performance, it inspires positive attitudes and behaviour.

4.3.8.6   Sub-theme 6: Parents who may overstep their boundaries

Participant 9 of School C had a differing view that the resultant effect of management and leadership of parental, family and community participation could lead to some parents overstepping their boundaries. The participant further argued that some of the parents sometimes go as far as choosing who should manage and lead the school. Meanwhile, Participant 15 of School E perceived that it could create anarchy as most of the parents have their differences which in effect will adversely affect the running of the school:

> *The consequences of effective management and leadership at parental, family and community in school will create a lot of chaos as we know that these parents are having differences about the school. Others are coming from this side; others are coming from this side it will have a negative impact in the running of the school. Because they will create faction that will push even learners of the school. The learners of the school will see themselves as different. (P15, SE)*

Negative results could emanate from the management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. Thus, background differences, political, economic cultural and religious differences could cause challenges between parents and the school. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2010:212) explicate that large numbers of people in South Africa still live below the poverty line. As a result, many illiterates are unable to find employment. Parent partnership on the SGBs in such communities are often difficult as many parents and caregivers are struggling to survive and have little or no energy for social, cultural or political obligations, such as serving on an SGB.

4.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter presented biographical data concerning research participants and discussed views emerging from the analysis of the transcripts of interviews concerning the topic of the study *Managing Community and Parent Partnership in the Ilembe District of Kwazulu-Natal Province.* The sampled interviews after careful

examination of analysis brought to the fore many of the findings which are confirmed in the literature.

However, a problem that emerged was that some parents have the proclivity to overstep their boundaries if care is not taken when trying to court their participation in the education of their children. Moreover, since parents were not involved in the study because I wanted to concentrate the study on the effective management and leadership aspect of parent, family and community partnership in the rural secondary schools, some of the findings point accusing fingers at parents. The next chapter will present the final conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents conclusions drawn from the analysis of data presented in Chapter four and seeks to answer the following research questions:

What management and leadership skills are needed for managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal province?

- What is the concept of parental involvement and what constitutes ineffective management and leadership of parental, family or community involvement and partnerships in rural schools?

- What are the causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation in rural schools?

- How challenges are encountered in the effort to provide effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas?

- What benefits may arise from effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas?

- Why are the consequences of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in rural schools necessary?

This chapter provides the major findings as well as offering recommendations aimed at managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal Province as well as recommendations for policy and practice, discussing limitations and delimitations of the study and finally, drawing the study to a conclusion.

5.2   MAJOR FINDINGS

The findings of the study in Chapter four were presented in eight main themes and consequential sub-themes emerging under each main theme. The various findings under each main theme are discussed in this section to place the realistic conclusions and recommendations into perspectives.

5.2.1   The Constituents of Ineffective Management and Leadership of Parental Involvement

The study concludes that participants have array of opinions about the components of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement such as relationship between the school and the parents, irregular meetings, disinterested attitudes from parents and poor communication (see Sections 4.3.1.1, 4.3.1.2, 4.3.1.3 and 4.3.1.4). It was established through the study that if there is no cordial relationship between the school and the parents, then parental connections, management and leadership is unproductive. Moreover, the attendances at regular meetings by parents was established as a constituent of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement.

The study established that despite all efforts by the schools to get parents to honour meetings most of them blatantly refuse to be part of meetings organised by schools. What is more, the study established that most parents demonstrated indifference towards school management and leadership of parental involvement, which culminates in ineffectiveness of parental leadership and management in the province. Thus, parents' apathetic demeanour is owed to the fact that most of them are illiterate and uneducated about the need for their involvement in their children's education. Meanwhile the study equally established that communication was a major problem that contributes to ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement in the district's secondary schools (see Section 2.7.4).

It was obvious that information dissemination was very poor as parents do not seem to receive the messages, whereas schools also felt that parents do not want to be reached. This is accentuated by Epstein's typology of parental involvement both type 2 (communication) and 6 (collaborating with the community) (see Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.6). According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:26), good communication means

that the message reaches the intended recipient, it is readable, clear and regular. They further posit that school-to-home communication should consider parents who are not proficient in the language of learning and teaching (which is English) and do not read well. Moreover, Kostelnik, Sonderman, Whiren (1999:246) describe ways in which educators can establish a relationship with parents by making personal contact with families, treating parents and other significant family members as individuals, showing genuine interest in family members by listening carefully and responding appropriately, providing openings for family members to share their concerns or inquire about their children's performance. In addition, it is important to listen attentively when family members speak, respond to family members honestly and directly, and are courteous to family members. Treating family members with consideration and respect and providing positive feedback to families about their children's progress and their own parenting success, creates a good relationship between home and school.

5.2.2 The Cause of Ineffective Management and Leadership of Parental, Family and Community Participation

It was my aim to determine the cause of unproductive management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. The study established that factors such as long travelling distances by parents, religious and cultural barriers, poor organisation on the part of management and leadership, lack of value for education, problems of communication and political divisions in the SGB are the main causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation (see Section 4.3.6). The findings above confirmed type 3 parent involvement (Volunteering) as well as type 2 (Communication) (see Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.6). In terms of long travelling distances, it was learned that most parents find it difficult to participate in school functions and meetings especially parents who do not stay in close proximity to the school. As a result, most parents do not usually respond to invitations to go to school due to transportation problems and vast travelling distances. In Epstein's typology, the preceding findings are confirmed in type 5 (Decision making) and type 6 (Collaborating with the community) (see Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6)

Additionally, diverse religions hinder and cause ineffective management and

leadership of parental involvement in most schools in the Ilembe District. It was also induced that most schools are not equipped with managerial and leadership skills required to effectively bring parents on board. What is more, it was established that parents' demonstration of indifferent conduct towards education contributed to ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, as well as the under-valuing of education in most communities. The problem of communication once again came to the fore as a major finding to the above discussed causes, which is accentuated also in Epstein's type 2 (Communication) (see Section 2.4.2).

According to Locke (2003), South Africa is habitually described as a diverse nation with varied cultures and religions. This means that differences in culture occur and will need to be well addressed in the school context to court the engagement of parents with dissimilar religions and cultures. Similarly, Moles (1999) elucidates that all parents want their children to succeed academically, want to understand what children do at school and want to support their education. Nonetheless, differences in socio-economic status and class between families and educators make it more difficult for them to form effective partnerships.

5.2.3 Challenges Encountered in Providing Effective Management and Leadership of Parent-Educator Partnership

It is of vital importance for management and leadership of schools to be aware of the challenges that are encountered in the endeavour to provide effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnerships.

It was demonstrated that SGB members, who do not have interest in schools, get elected to the governing body, not on merit but because of their fame and popularity in the local community. This is highlighted by Epstein's type 1 parent involvement (parenting) (see Sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.1.1.). The study showed further that many learners come from broken homes due to death, divorce and movement from the area. Most homes are broken to the extent that relatives, siblings and stepmothers and fathers have stepped in to provide parenting. One major finding was that when parents respond to calls to go to schools, you often only find grandmothers and grandfathers and not the actual parents of learners. Consequently, grandparents have assumed greater parenthood responsibilities than biological mothers and

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fathers. Similarly, children also have become heads of family due to the demise of their parents. Moreover, it was evident that time constraints on the part of parents poses as one of the challenges that schools encounter as most parents do not have time to attend meetings. The type 6 parent involvement (collaborating with community) and 5 (decision making) of Epstein's typology is manifested in this regard (see Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6).

Communication problems once again showed up as a challenge that school management and leadership need to address. Thus, messages sent to parents do not reach them. Here again it is evident that type 2 (communication) of Epstein's typology is heightened (see Section 2.4.2). Poor involvement was another difficulty that schools face that the study unearthed. In that respect, parents have demonstrated apparent disregard to acts of vandalism and damages done to school properties by their own children. Also, it was clear that school management and leadership have the desire to hold parent conferences and meetings, but have financial limitations. See type 5 (decision making) of Epstein's typology (Section 2.4.5).

According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:28), all parents should be given information so that they can connect and communicate with the parent leaders and governors. It also includes giving parents information about national associations of parent leaders and governors, encouraging a greater involvement as well as setting in motion awareness programmes to enhance parental involvement.

5.2.4   Views on the Functionality of Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

One cannot discount the contribution of the PTA if is fully established and functional. The analysis of data revealed that there are no PTAs established in most schools; rather the school governing body (SGB) is perceived as a substitute for the PTA. This was stressed by Epstein's typology 5 (Decision-making) (see Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.5.1). Most participants revealed that they are only conversant with the existence of the SGB. Furthermore, it was established that the SGB is comprehended as the substitute for the SGB as the PTA is seen as the SGB and the vice versa. When it came to the functionality of the said SGBs, it was evident that most are functional through their participation in renovation projects of their schools, meeting

attendances, as well as their physical presence in the school most often to ensure law and order. Conversely, it was also discovered that many SGBs are perceived as being non-functional due to illiteracy with many playing the role of 'rubber stamp' for the decisions and initiatives of the principals.

Sallis (2003) explains certain advantages of the functionality of the SGB, which could bring to bear members such as principals, educators and parents who best appreciate the contexts and cultures of the school environment and become involved in its governance. The involvement of stakeholders in school governance supports the principles of democracy of the country as stakeholders are given the opportunity to ensure the smooth running of the school. Meanwhile Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:122) share similar sentiments that school efficiency is increased as resources can be used more effectively, thereby increasing equity. It reduces hostility to national policies as parents and educators can discuss these policies and implement them in their schools according to the unique contexts of their schools.

5.2.5   Management and Leadership Plans to Partner Parents

It is of critical importance that the management and leadership of the school have plans or strategies to partner parents to reap the full benefits of such partnerships. It was established by the study that most of the schools employ the strategy of meeting calls and school visits as an approach to partner parents. The findings are expressed in Epstein's type 2 (communication) and type 3 (Volunteering) (see Sections 2.4.2, 2.4.2.1., 2.4.3 and 2.4.3.1). It was manifested that most of the schools call for periodic parent meetings *inter alia,* annually, biannually, and quarterly in an endeavour to involve parents in the education of their children. This was emphasised by type 6 (collaborating with the community) of Epstein's typology of parent involvement (see Section 2.4.6) Most schools keep in contact with parents through such meetings though sometimes parents are unable to heed the call, particularly the very urgent meetings, due to restraints mentioned earlier. Likewise, it was established that schools realise the benefits of parent school visitation to develop a good educator-parent partnership. It was found that many parents visit schools to check on the progress of their learners; but conversely it was discovered that a large majority of parent are not interested in visiting their children's schools, though others may do so during the day of report collection. It was equally established that most

schools make their schools available to communities to use for such social programmes like church services and other cultural events.

5.2.6 Benefits of Effective Management and Leadership of Parent-Educator Partnership

The study revealed that the benefits emanate from effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership such as improvement in learner academic results, parents assuming of ownership of the school which leads to improvement in learner discipline, improvement in teamwork and reduction in the workload of educators (see Section 2.5.1). Most participants agreed that academic performance of learners sees improvement when there is effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnership. Better motivation culminates in improvement in general academic performance on the part of the learners. Moreover, it was established that parents assume ownership of the school when there is effective management and leadership of parent-educator partnerships to avert vandalism as highlighted by Epstein's type 6 (collaborating with the community) of parental involvement (see Section 2.4.6). Such improvement in learner discipline also results in the reduction of poor discipline in learners such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, smoking, and reduction in learner-to-learner violence, learner-to-educator violence. Teamwork amongst parents and the school was revealed as another benefit which eventually reduces the workload. Parental involvement in their children's education supports educators and could help to reduce workload of educators and the school (see Section 2.5.2.3).

5.2.7 Leadership and Management to achieve greater cooperation between Parents and the School

The study sought to establish management and leadership structures that schools should put in place to accomplish greater cooperation between parents and the school. Emerging from the study, various elements such as parent orientation and training, election of suitable SGB members, regular parent meetings, collaboration with local authorities and parents' motivational functions were suggestions all emphasised in Epstein's type 3 parent involvement (Volunteering), type 4 parent involvement (Learning at home), type 5 parent involvement (decision making) and

type 6 parent involvement (collaborating with the community) (see Sections 2.4.3., 2.4.4, 2.4.5 and 2.4.6)

The study established that the parents and SGB members of schools in the district need orientation and training workshops to help parents in particular know and understand their roles in the education of their children. Most participants emphasised that SGB members require pragmatic training to prepare them for their role in the management and leadership of the school. It was also suggested that Grade 8 parents from the outset should attend an orientation workshop to prepare them to support their children in high school. With regards to SGB election, it was established that election should be purely based on merit and candidates who have interest in education should be elected, which is stressed in Epstein's type 3 parent involvement (Volunteering) (see Section 2.4.3). The SGB election process was seen as a major concern for leadership and management of schools and it was suggested that SGB members who display strong educational motives and understanding of the need and value of education, should be elected. It was equally established that parent meetings should be more parent-focused and allow the voices of parents to be heard in order to attain greater cooperation and take place regularly throughout the year. It was thought not to overlook providing motivational functions for parents, since it was discovered that most parents lack the motivation to attend meetings which found its premise in the type 6 parent involvement (Collaborating with the community) (see Section 2.4.6.). On the other hand, it was established that there was the need to collaborate with local authorities for the upliftment of schools.

5.2.8 Consequences of Effective Management and Leadership of Parental, Family and Community Participation

The study sought to establish outcomes for effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation. This was seen with aspects such as protection of the school, learners could perform to the optimum, community upliftment, parents motivating learners to study, reduction in truancy and absenteeism and parents overstepping their boundaries, were all confirmed in type 5 parent involvement (Decision making) and type 6 parent involvement (Collaborating with the community) (see Sections 2.4.6. and 2.5.2). Likewise, Houtenville and Conway (2008:24) concur with the above findings (see Section 2.5.1)

It was established that the resultant effect of effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation is the protection of the school by the local community. It was thought that the parental involvement would motivate the learners and boost their academic performance as well as be a greater motivation for learners to pursue their studies as accentuated by type 4 of parent involvement (Volunteering) (see Section (2.4.4 and 2.5.2.3). It was equally implied that there would be a reduction in truancy and absenteeism with greater parental involvement. The above findings were confirmed by Yeung (2004) (see Section 2.5.2.3).

Conversely, it was established also that parents may overstep their boundaries. However, the protection of the school by the community means that it is shielded from issues such as burglary and attacks during community protest actions and chaos which was also confirmed by Type 6 parent involvement (Collaborating with the community) and Olsen and Fuller (2012 133). The improvement in the performance of learner results in community upliftment as most communities enjoy the fruits of their labour in collaboration with graduates which they plough back into the social capital stream in the community. In other words, it is established that if parents, communities and families show greater endeavours to participate in the education of their children, they receive in return. Parents can motivate or inspire their children to study at home. It was also established that truancy and absenteeism rates would drop which eventually results in the better academic pursuit, such findings were validated by type 4 parent involvement (Learning at home), type 5 (Decision making) and type 6 parent involvement (see Sections 2.4.4, 2.4.5 and 2.4.6). In contrast, negative results could emanate from the effective management and leadership of participation of families and communities because of different backgrounds which may lead to negativity between parents and the school.

5.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As indicated in Chapter two, the study was guided by Epstein's theories of overlapping spheres and typology of parent involvement (see Section 2.4). Consequently, the findings of this study are hinged on the National Standard for parent/family involvement built upon Epstein's framework of levels/typology. According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (1999:22), the effectiveness of any parental

involvement programme is dependent on the strength of parental involvement principles that are adhered to and promulgated. Epstein's model (1995:712) provides a framework for six types of parent involvement namely: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community.

5.3.1   Type 1: Parenting

The school helps all families establish home environments that support children as learners. Some examples of parenting support are: a programme that explains the different developmental stages of the child and teaches parents how to support the child during each phase; workshops and talks on parenting and child rearing at each age and grade level; parent education and courses or training for parents on various aspects of parenting; family support programmes to assist families with good nutrition, health and hygiene; the emotional and psychological development of the child and special needs such as information about substance abuse and family counselling (Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009:25). From the findings, it was established that parents exhibited indifferent attitudes when it comes to parenting as many parents used schools as dumping sites and do not practically offer any helping hands to schools in supporting their children through the phases of education. (See Section 4.3.1.3). Moreover, the study established that many homes are broken which makes parenting extremely difficult as many homes are also headed by children and in many cases by grandparents (see Section 4.3.3.2). However, it could be confirmed that some parents, in conjunction with the school, provided solid parenting for their children.

5.3.2   Type 2: Communicating

Olsen and Fuller (2012:136) are of the opinion that effective communication is essential for building a successful partnership between school and home. This assertion is accentuated by the fact that it requires the school to build a two-way sharing of information, with conscious efforts from the school to engage in give-and-take conversations, establishing common goals, and following up with consistent interactions between school and home (PTA, 2007). It is critical to recognise that without the two-way communication between the school and home, information

sharing would be hampered. Moreover, other levels of parent partnership are made much more difficult to achieve. Children could be utilised as they may play the important role of couriers in taking messages from school to home and back to school from home (see Section 2.4.2.). The above could be linked to the findings that many schools and parents have or experienced communication problems which have led to poor involvement in the Ilembe district (see Section 4.3.3.6). Parents have often complained that they did not receive any communique from their school managers or administrators. Equally it was established that due to poor communication problems or lack or effective management and leadership of communication, parents do not even receive the reports of their learners (see Section 4.3.6.5).

5.3.3   Type 3: Volunteering

Epstein (2011:437) explains that volunteering activities help educators and families work together to support the school programme which includes children's work and activities. Such activities, according to Epstein, include recruiting and training volunteers; arranging schedules, locations and activities for volunteers (see Section 2.4.3). This theory could be connected to the findings that the benefit of effective management and leadership of parent-teacher association (PTA) is improvement in teamwork where parents could come on board to partner the school through their services to participate in school activities and their election to the school governing bodies (see Section 4.3.5.4)

5.3.4   Type 4: Learning at home

Van Wyk and Lemmer believe that the school should provide parents with information and ideas about how to help children at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning. This is no different from the findings in section (4.3.7), where it was established that educators and schools should be able to put in place leadership and management structures that would aid parents to help their children at home, especially in doing their homework. It was equally established that for the SGB members to be able to play their roles effectively both at home and at school, orientation should be given to all parents especially the Grade 8 parents when their children enter high school. Moreover, it

was established that most parents have to motivate their children to learn at home. Thus, learners need inspiration at home from parents in order to be able to study (see Section 4.3.8.4).

5.3.5   Type 5: Decision making

The school recruits and trains parent leaders and includes all parents in decisions regarding the running of the school. This type of involvement includes the participation of parent representatives on the school governing body, as well as the involvement of all parents in decisions that involve parents or children (Van Wyk & Lemmer 2009:28) (see Section 2.4.5). This confirms the finding that though type 5 of parent involvement advocates getting parents to participate on committees, many parents tend to overstep their boundaries and have the tendency to usurp the smooth running of the school (see Section 4.3.8.6). Additionally, it was established that the SGB elections are not done on merit, in other words people who deserve to be elected do not get elected. Moreover, the typology above could also be linked to the finding that many schools in the Ilembe district do not have PTA in place or do not have an idea of the role of the PTA and other committees that could support the effective running of the schools.

5.3.6   Type 6: Collaborating with the community

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:28) explain that the school identifies and integrates resources and services from the community to strengthen the school programme, family practices, and learner development. This may include making use of community expertise in matters such as health, culture, business and recreation. The type of parental involvement above could be linked to the finding that for the secondary schools in Ilembe to achieve greater cooperation and collaboration, there should be partnership with the local authorities such the local Chiefs and the Ward Counsellors (see Section 4.3.7.4). The study however, showed that there is the need for interdependence and corporation within the community.

5.4 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The summary of the previous chapters of the study are presented in the ensuing sections. Significant aspects pertaining to the chapters (Chapter 1-4) which respectively dealt with an introduction to research, a literature review which included the theoretical frameworks employed for this study, methodological issues and major findings of empirical research are provided below.

5.4.1 Chapter One

In Chapter one, the broad overview of the study was furnished. The scene of the study was encapsulated in the introduction and background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, brief literature review, research methodology and design, sampling and site selection, instrumentation and data collection, data analysis and interpretation, credibility and trustworthiness, ethical consideration, limitations and delimitations of the study, definition of key concepts, chapter outline and conclusion were discussed. The study aimed at answering the main research question in conjunction with the sub questions and study objectives: *What management and leadership skills are effective for the promotion of community and parent partnerships in rural secondary schools to achieve educational goals?*

In addition to the above, the research set out to satisfy the subsequent objectives:

- Specifically, the research sought to establish the concept parental involvement and the constituents of ineffective management and leadership of parents' involvement, family or community partnership in rural schools;

- To identify the causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and corporation in rural schools.

- To identify the challenges that are associated with the effort to providing effective management and leadership of parents' association with schools in rural areas and the concomitant benefits that may arise

- To establish benefits that may arise from effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in

rural schools.

- To determine the necessity of the consequences of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation and partnership in rural schools.

It was established in Chapter one that in the perspective of Epstein (2011:26), for parental involvement management programmes to be successful, homes, schools and communities should be viewed as interacting partners. Moreover, empirical research has shown that, in rural areas, parents do not really comprehend their roles in the functioning of their children's schools (see Section1.3). It was further established that school managers, leaders, and administrators only learn how to manage and lead the school as an organisation, create schedules, and supervise many other tasks. Most educators and managers are presently not equipped by their studies to work positively and efficiently with the families and communities connected with their schools (see Section 1 and 1.4). The sternness of the privation of parental involvement in most rural schools in South Africa remains a major concern. Interestingly, research does not point any characteristics that are more common in most rural areas than elsewhere and that may affect educators.

5.4.2   Chapter Two

Chapter two presented significant aspects of the literature review conducted on the topic under study. In this respect, critical aspects which relate to managing parental, family and community partnership were discussed. Thus, many scholastic views and theoretical frameworks were consulted and consequently, the researcher made a choice of Epstein's theoretical framework concerning the overlapping spheres of influence on parent involvement and her typology of parent of parent participation. The chapter also delineated the review of other schools of thought concerning parental involvement management and leadership and its effectiveness in achieving educational goals. The chapter presented crucial aspects such as defining family or parent partnership (see Section 2.2), levels of parent partnership (see Section 2.3), theories of parent partnership (see section2.5), the implication of parental involvement (see Section 2.5), range of parental involvement (see Section (2.6) and

management of parental involvement (see Section 2.7).

5.4.3   Chapter Three

Chapter three described the methodology used in the study. This chapter described the type of approach used in collecting data from the participants. It also justified the choice of the methodology in an endeavour to determine the management and leadership of community, family and parent partnership. This chapter looked at the adoption of the qualitative research approach, as explained by Maree (see Section 3.2)., its characteristics and why it was chosen for this study.

Equally, the research design was a case study. As explained by Schumacher and McMillan (2014:351), a case study refers to an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon and not the number of people sampled.

As seen in Section 3.4.1, the study adopted a purposive sampling technique, which led to the selection of five schools from the research site, out of which three SMT members were selected from each school as well as three experienced educators and three less experienced educators.

In this chapter, data collection was described through the conduit of semi-structured interviews. The study likewise utilised content analysis to analyse the collected data. Methodological rigour was used through the media of credibility (see Section 3.4.4. and 3.4.4.1), transferability (see Section 3.4.4.2.), and dependability (see Section 3.4.4.3). Similarly, the chapter described ethical issues such as informed consent (see Section 3.5.1), privacy (see Section 3.5.2), anonymity (see Section 3.5.3), confidentiality (see Section 3.5.4) and voluntary participation (see Section 3.5.5).

5.4.4   Chapter Four

In Chapter four, the findings were presented in terms of participant views on significant aspects that relate to bringing about expressive and effective parental, family and community management and leadership of parent partnerships in the Ilembe District. The study presented the interpretation of data collected from individual semi-structured interviews and analysis conducted with all the participants of the five selected schools. This was executed through the strategic themes namely:

the constituents of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement (see Section 4.3.1), the causes of ineffective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation (see Section 4.3.2), challenges encountered in providing effective management and leadership plans to partner parents (see Section 4.3.3), views on the functionality of the PTA (see Section 4.3.4), management and leadership plans to partner parents (see Section 4.3.5), benefits of effective management and leadership of parent association (see Section 4.3.6), leadership and management structures to achieve greater cooperation between parents and the school (see Section 4.3.7.) and the consequences of effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation (see Section 4.3.8).

The empirical investigation established that most schools do not have PTA in place with the SGB being seen as a replacement for the PTA. Thus, irrespective of efforts by the SGBs, they found it difficult to play the role of the PTAs as perfect substitutes. The functionality of the SGB was questioned as most participants alluded that in some respect, the SGB is functional whereas in other ways it was perceived dysfunctional.

It was further established that many schools are faced with challenges of broken homes that make it difficult for school leadership and management to develop effective partnerships with parents as grandparents have assumed parenthood responsibilities. Moreover, time constraint posed a threat to effective management and leadership of parent, family and community partnership. Most parents do not make time to partner with the schools and become fully involved in the education of their children.

5.5   LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to five schools in the Ilembe District of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, which means that the study sample was only representative of the that particular population and not entirely representative of the entire populace. Moreover, the interviews did not include parents as the aim was to elicit the perspective of educators and SMT members and their leadership skills and management astuteness in addressing parental, family and communal partnership.

The study was specific in the above context, but further study could be pursued to augment the gains accomplished by this study's findings, recommendations and conclusions. The findings based on the qualitative results had a high degree of trustworthiness (see Sections 3.4.4, 3.4.4.1, 3.4.4.2, 3.4.4.3 and 3.4.4.4) and consequently, offer an appropriate starting point for designing a parental, family and community partnership programme.

However, the current study was limited in a number of ways. This study included the experiences of SMT members, experienced and inexperienced educators with regard to rural secondary schools in the Ilembe district. Hence township and urban secondary schools in the province and other provinces in the country may not have the same experience.

Generalisations of the findings should therefore be done with caution. The findings depicted the effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation in rural secondary schools. Dissimilar practices may be found in private secondary schools at diverse levels of education. Moreover, the study perceptions in this investigation were sought from SMTs, experienced and less experienced educators thus caution must be applied when presuming that these results are valid for all schools.

The findings of the study should also be applied with greater degree of thoughtfulness since the study covered the Ndwedwe community and Montebello community within the Ilembe district, other communities and areas within other provinces and districts may give dissimilar results.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

After examination of findings, the subsequent recommendations are made for policy makers and education practitioners, principals, parents and for further research:

5.6.1 Recommendations for Policy Makers and Practitioners

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996:6) defines the concept "parent" as:

The parent or guardian of a learner, the person legally entitled to custody of a learner, the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligation of a person referred in the above towards the learner's education at school (see Section 1.4).

In terms of policy, the only policy that legally mandates parents' participation in their children's education is the above-mentioned legal document. Hence it was discovered through the study that almost all the five schools identified for the study do not have a well-documented school policy on the effective management and leadership of parent, family, and community partnership. None of the schools had developed a pragmatic written policy on parental partnership, which would have specified the effective management and leadership of community participation.

It is therefore recommended that each school should develop its own policy shaped by the SMTs, educators, parents and the SGB working collectively regarding the effective management and leadership of parental, family and community partnership.

The following recommendations are also suggested for better practice with cognisance to all the findings in this study especially for policy makers: comprehensive knowledge concerning the phenomenon of parent, family and community partnership should be compiled in a national policy on parent, family and community partnership which is very necessary in South African rural schools. Community awareness programmes should be instituted to educate both school managers and leaders, educators and the community at large on the essence of their involvement in the education of their children. The SGB should be periodically reminded by the Department of Education on their mandate and the need to rally on a common cause. Schools and educators of schools in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal province specifically should be educated on the differences between the SGB and the PTA. The Department of Education should encourage the formation of PTAs as the PTAs are not political organs but rather voluntary organisations comprising parents who willingly want to be involved in the school and would thus be granted a platform to contribute to their school's development.

5.6.2 Recommendation for Principals

School principals, management and leadership should treat parents with great respect. Parent meetings organised by school management and leadership should

be flexible to attract more parents through the provision of some sort of entertainment and refreshments. Schools should be open to parents and the communities to bring them on board since it has far reaching consequences. Parents should be encouraged as well as the local communities to increase their interaction with the school. Parents should collaborate more efficiently as it reduces the characteristics of isolation by reassuring parents that educators share their concerns about their children. Consistent orientation for parents commencing at the earliest time with Grade 8 parents should be continually practised, easing the burden on both parents and school managers and leaders as time goes by. Schools should change meeting venues to suit parents to avert the problem of long travelling distances which hinder parents wishing to attend school functions. In terms of communication, schools should review their forms of communication and adapt it using modern technology such as cell phone calls, SMS and WhatsApp group formation of parents to share important communiques such as meetings. The school management and leadership should create a very welcoming atmosphere for parents as well as a positive ambiance. The school's management and leadership should develop a successful strategy to avoid keeping or delaying parents unnecessarily during visitation. School principals should organise open-days and speech and prize giving days to get the parents, families and communities involved. The schools' management and leadership should be proactive in their dealings with parents to build a cordial relationship between the school and the communities to be able to court their involvement. The schools, management and leadership should be equipped through better capacity building, training and empowerment programmes in handling human relations. The management of schools and leadership should be innovative during meetings to court the interest of parents in attending but ensuring that meetings are to the point, yet informative and interesting.

5.6.3   Recommendations for Parents and the SGB in general

Educators should be encouraged to partner with parents more closely to give those guidelines about learning activities which children can complete at home specifically homework and assignments. Workshops for parents and educators should be arranged where subjects such as homework, career direction and improving the literacy environment can be dealt with. Educators should be encouraged to open

their doors more to parents and possibly educators should try home visits to aid parents with individualised instruction. The SGB should be workshopped to know that they are equally mandated by the South African Schools Act to form a PTA as an ancillary committee to help undertake certain functions for the betterment of the schools. The SGB election process should be preceded by intensive awareness campaign to instruct parents on their role and the calibre of people they should elect to the SGB. Parents should be educated about the election process and enlightened about the role of the SGB member and the qualities that are suitable for the governing body member. SGB members that are elected should be those who have education and the interest of the school at heart.

5.6.4   Recommendation for Further Research.

So far as this study is concerned, it is recommended that further studies be conducted to elicit the perspective of parents in the effectiveness of managing family, community and parental involvement in rural secondary schools. Moreover, an area that requires more attention is further study conducted into effective management and leadership of communication media between parents and the school. It is further recommended that a study should be conducted into an all-inclusive training and workshop programme for parents on how to choose suitable and competent members of the SGB.

5.7   CONCLUSIONS

It is hereby concluded that the study has fulfilled its objectives and answered the main research question and the sub-questions. The recommendations suggested are in line with the established empirical findings and theoretical implications that were juxtaposed with the new findings per this study.

It
takes a
whole village
to raise a child

- African proverb

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Proof of Registration

UNISA
university
of south africa

1358

OWUSU N Y XR
242 CLIFF VIEW ROAD
BELLAIR
4034

STUDENT NUMBER : 5000-116-3

ENQUIRIES TEL : 0861670411
        FAX : (012)429-4150
eMAIL : randd@unisa.ac.za

2019-01-30

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

Proposed Qualification: MED (EDUC MANAGEMENT)   (98120)

CODE	PAPER	S NAME OF STUDY UNIT	NQF crdts	LANG.	PROVISIONAL EXAMINATION EXAM.DATE	CENTRE(PLACE)

Study units registered without formal exams:
DLEDM95   MED - Education Management (Option 2)   60   E

You are referred to the 'MyRegistration' brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations (www.unisa.ac.za/register).
Please note the new requirements for reregistration and the number of credits per year which state that
students registered for the first time from 2013, must complete 36 NQF credits in the first year of study,
and thereafter must complete 48 NQF credits per year.
Students registered for the MBA, MBL and DBL degrees must visit the SBL's SBLOnline for study material and other
important information.
Readmission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be
demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement
in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating
academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express
approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must
be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be
allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same
College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any
such qualification.
Readmission rules for M&D: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's
qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a
candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate
must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the
Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: 0.00

Yours faithfully,

Dr P Coolan
Registrar

C108 C 00 C

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

Appendix B: Research Ethics Clearance Certificate

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2019/07/24

Dear Mr Owusu

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2019/07/24to 2022/07/24

Ref: **2019/07/24/50801163/24/MC**
Name: Mr M Owusu
Student No.: 50801163

Researcher(s): Name: Mr M Owusu
E-mail address: Machomike20@yahoo.com
Telephone: +27 79 370 6875

Supervisor(s): Name: Mr SJ Rapeta
E-mail address: rapetsj@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 12 429 6848

Title of research:
Managing community and parent partnership in the Ilembe District of Kwazulu-Natal Province

Qualification: M. Ed in Educational Leadership and Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/07/24to 2022/07/24.

The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/07/24 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee,

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
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www.unisa.ac.za

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2022/07/24**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2019/07/24/50801163/24/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

Appendix C: Letter of Permission to Conduct Research

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma   Tel: 033 392 1033   Ref: 9/4/8/1813
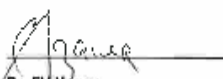
Mr MY Owusu.
242 Cliffview Road
Bellair
4094

Dear Mr Owusu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"MANAGING COMMUNITY AND PARENT PARTNERSHIP IN THE ILEMBE DISTRICT OF KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 03 June 2019 to 04 January 2022
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137 Pietermaritzburg. 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu Natal Department of Education.

Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 06 June 2019

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Appendix D: Participant Information Sheet

Title: ***Managing Community and Parent Partnership in the Ilembe District of Kwazulu-Natal Province***

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Michael Yaw Owusu and am doing research under the supervision of Dr Seshoka Joseph Rapeta, a lecturer in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Master of Education at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled *Managing Community and Parent Partnership in the Ilembe District of KwaZulu-Natal Province*

This study is expected to collect information that could help management and leadership of parent involvement in rural schools and to reduce the high levels of ineffective parental involvement in rural schools that can be detrimental to schools, learners, parents and the community at large.

You are invited because of your accessibility and valuable experience to give relevant information concerning the research topic, you also possess the necessary suitability that is required to elicit the required information to fulfil the research aim and objectives.

I obtained your contact details from the Ndwedwe Circuit Management Centre (CMC). There are approximately 15 participants from 5 different schools that are participating in this study.

The study involves an audio tape semi-structured interview. You will be asked to respond to semi-structured open-ended questions on the above title. The intended interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any

time and without giving any reason. There are no known or anticipated risks or financial reward to you as a participant in this study.

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one, apart from the researcher will know about your involvement in this research (confidentiality). Or your name will not be recorded anywhere, and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give (anonymity). Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. However, your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and or/ conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in locked cupboard for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Hard copies will be shredded and or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Michael Yaw Owusu on 079370675 or machomike20@yahoo.com. The findings are available from November to December 2019.Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact 079370675 or machomike20@yahoo.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact 012 429 648 or rapetsj@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

--   --

(Insert signature)   (Michael Yaw Owusu)

Appendix E: Consent/Assent to Participate in the Study

(Return Slip)

I.. , confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and /or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the audio tape of the semi- structured interview

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

-----------------------   ----------------------------   ------------------------
Name and Surname of participant   Signature   Date

--------------------------   ---------------------------   -------------------------
Name and Surname of Researcher   Signature   Date

Appendix F: Interview Guide for SMT

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SMT

1. In your opinion what constitutes ineffective management and leadership of parental, family or community involvement and partnerships in your school?

2. In your opinion what management and leadership plans are in place to partner parents?

3. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in an effort to provide effective management and leadership of Parent Educator Association in your school?

4. What is your view on the functionality of the Parent Educator Association in your school?

5. What is your opinion on the benefits that may arise from effective management and leadership of Parent Educator Association in your school?

6. What do you think is the cause of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation in your school?

7. What best leadership and management structures should be put in place to achieve greater cooperation between parents and the school?

8. In your view, how do you perceive any consequences for effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation in your school?

Appendix G:Interview Guide for Educators

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS

1. In your opinion what constitutes ineffective management and leadership of parental, family or community involvement and partnerships in your school?

2. In your opinion what management and leadership plans are in place to partner parents?

3. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in an effort to provide effective management and leadership of parents' association in your school?

4. What is your view on the functionality of the Parent Educator Association in your school?

5. What is your opinion on the benefits that may arise from effective management and leadership of Parent Educator Association in your school?

6. What do you think is the cause of ineffective management and leadership of parental involvement, partnership and cooperation in your school?

7. What best leadership and management structures should be put in place to achieve greater cooperation between parents and the school?

8. In your view, how do you perceive any consequences for effective management and leadership of parental, family and community participation in your school?

Appendix H: Proof of Editing

EDITING SERVICES

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that editing and proofreading was done for:

Michael Yaw Owusu

Managing Community and Parent Partnership in The Ilembe District of Kwazulu-Natal Province

Magister Educationis

in Education Management and Leadership

at the

University of South Africa

Supervisor: Dr S.J. Rapeta

Cilla Dowse
07.04.2020

Cilla Dowse	Rosedale Farm
PhD in Assessment and Quality Assurance Education and Training	P.O. Box 48
University of Pretoria 2014	Van Reenen
Programme on Editing Principles and Practices: University of Pretoria	Free State
2009	cilla.dowse@gmail.com
	Cell: 084 900 7837

Appendix I: Turnitin report