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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN A PRIVILEGED AND UNDERPRIVILEGED SCHOOL

By

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This dissertation is submitted in fulfilment of the
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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools in Phoenix, KwaZulu-Natal. The objectives of the study were to determine what are the similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools and why they do exist. The theory guiding the study was Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres. The study followed a qualitative research approach and operated within an interpretivist paradigm. A multiple case design was used. The studied schools were drawn from two contexts, privileged and underprivileged, both located in Phoenix. The methodology employed to generate data was a semi-structured interview, followed by an open-ended questionnaire that was given to participants. The sample of participants comprised of three parents and three teachers from each of the two schools. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings show that there are parents from both privileged and underprivileged communities who are concerned and employ a variety of strategies to get involved in their children's education, both academically and socially. Although parents from both schools participate in school events the levels of their participation differs, with the parents from the privileged schools being more involved than parents from the underprivileged school. Parental involvement is influenced by many ecological factors which may enable or constrain parental involvement in schools. The factors that enable parental involvement are: parents' roles and responsibilities, parents' aspirations and expectations, the nature and adequacy of communication and school leadership and support. The results show that there are a diversity of factors that hamper parental involvement in education such as the working conditions of parents, being a single parent, the absence of parents, socio-economic factors and the school leadership. This study shows that despite it being low, parents in both privileged and underprivileged schools do display involvement and the factors which enable and constrain their involvement must be taken into account. Parental involvement thus cannot be considered a universal context, as each context varies.



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DECLARATION

I, Rubaina Manilal, declare that this dissertation is my own work. All sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a reference.

Student's signature

Date

Supervisor's signature

Date

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ST OF ACRONYMS

DBE - Department of Basic Education

EWP6 - Education White Paper 6

RSA - Republic of South Africa

SASA - South African Schools Act

SGB - School Governing Body

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African classroom today is filled with a diversity of learners, and teachers are thus presented with various challenges and demands that arise from this (Vandeyar & Jansen, 2008). However, the teacher alone cannot provide learners with personal and cultural knowledge to become successful, parents need to get involved in their children's education (van Wyk, 2010). Thus, the role of the parents in the child's life is of massive importance and their involvement, especially in education, can lead to the success of their children. As ideal as this may sound, involving parents in education, is not so easily achieved.

This chapter introduces the study of parental involvement in education, particularly in privileged and underprivileged schools. A background of parental involvement in education is set. The chapter also outlines the statement of the problem, rationale and significance of the study. The focus, objectives and critical questions guiding this study are also presented in this chapter. The research design and methodology, ethics, and outline of the chapters conclude this chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The involvement of parents in education has been a topic of interest for at least the last three decades (Ngwenya, 1996; Shezi, 2012). The impact that parents have on children's development and the learning process is documented in education and psychology (Fan & Williams, 2010). The first educator of a learner is the parent, whose role facilitates the development of values and identity of the child (Narain, 2005). In addition, the child needs the guidance, support and encouragement of the parents (Narain, 2005). Parental involvement sends the message to children that their parents are interested in their development (Hango, 2007). Thus, it seems that the parent is necessary in the child's emotional and mental development.

Mncube, Harber and Du Plessis (2011) stated that in developed countries, there is widespread interest in parental involvement in education. The different heads of countries emphasise the importance of parental involvement in education thus making it a phenomenon not restricted

). Furthermore, parents and educators have also realised the importance of parental involvement in children's education. A study has shown that learners feel that it is important for parents to be involved in the education process (Naicker, 2013). Teachers also acknowledge that parental involvement is necessary for the academic achievement of children (Brown & Medway, 2007). Therefore, if all partners in the education process work together with this positive attitude, it should benefit the child. Maphanga (2006) agrees that in order for the child to learn and develop successfully, the schools must work together with all partners, particularly parents.

The important role that the parent plays in a child's life however, is not a new discovery or occurrence. Some parents have always been involved in their children's development and education in some form or the other (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Nevertheless, the role of the parent has become emphasised by the South African government. Previously, parents were not expected to get involved in their children's education like the way they are now (Mbokodi, 2008). After the elections in 1994, South African parents were mandated in the education process through the provisions made in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. The South African Schools Act (SASA) promotes the role of parents in education, by providing them with a democratic right to serve on the School Governing Body (SGB) (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) (thereafter RSA). Parents are further supported by this regulation that states that there must be one more parent than the total of other members on the SGB who have voting rights (RSA, 1996b). Thus parents constitute 60% of the SGB, in which the chairperson is also a parent (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). This places parents on a more than equal footing. The role of the SGB includes the formulation of school policies, drawing up a code of conduct, developing a language and admission policy, maintaining infrastructure, decision on appointment of school staff, handling discipline issues, administering the schools funds and budget and the levy of school fees (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2004). These rights place parents in an advantageous position at school and emphasise their involvement.

Education policies have been put in place to reinforce the involvement of parents in education. The Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) legislation suggests that the non-involvement and non-recognition of parents is a barrier to learning and quality education (Department of Education, 2001). One of the aims of the EWP6 legislation is to promote the rights and responsibilities of parents since they are a significant form of support (Department

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) also states that parents play in the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011) (thereafter DBE). The above mentioned legislative documents all point out that it is imperative for parents to be involved in the education of their children. Naicker (2013) indicates that these legislative documents make it the law and provide parents with the right to be involved in education.

However, one needs to consider whether the present day reality and practice of parental involvement in schools is in accordance with legislation and policies. Many parents are still not involving themselves in the education process (Okeke, 2014). Mestry and Grobler (2007) pointed out that this can be seen from parents' poor attendance of meetings, failure to keep control of learning support materials that are given to learners, poor matric results, and lack of interest in learners' schoolwork and homework. There are many schools in South Africa in which the problem of parental non-involvement exists. Studies have shown that parents are reluctant to get involved in the education process (Maphanga, 2006; Shezi, 2012). The lack of parental involvement in education is acknowledged by parents, teachers and learners (Naicker, 2013). The Minister of Basic Education, Motshekga (2013) acknowledges that parental involvement is one aspect that is in need of intervention in South African schools.

Despite this acknowledgement of parental non-involvement, the problem still exists, more notably in underprivileged schools (Sedibe, 2012). Shezi (2012) claims that parental involvement, in some South African schools, is very minimal if at all in existence. According to the Bill of Rights everyone is equal, and legislation has not differentiated parental involvement amongst schools (RSA, 1996a). It however appears that parental involvement is not uniform amongst South African schools. Studies have shown that in most underprivileged schools there is minimal parental involvement (Bhengu, 2003; Ngubane, 2006; Sedibe, 2012; Smit & Liebenberg, 2003). In privileged schools, the majority of the parents participate in their children's education (Mncube, 2009). In some underprivileged schools, principals try to promote parental involvement; however they are not very successful because of all the inhibiting factors (Shezi, 2012). Parental involvement is thus still a problem, especially in underprivileged schools (Maphanga, 2006). It is not clear why some parents are involved in their children's education whereas others are not. This is what this study seeks to illuminate by comparing parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools.

privileged and underprivileged schools, I find that there is differing levels of parental involvement. In privileged schools, parents were actively involved in their children's education. They attended meetings regularly, they always communicated with the educators and there were signs of involvement at home in the homework books. If there was any problem with a learner, the parents and educators worked together and this benefitted the learner. However, in underprivileged schools, the parents showed very little involvement. A few parents attended meetings, it is difficult to get in touch with the parents and there seems to be very little, if any, involvement at home evident from the lack of completion of homework by the learners.

Thus, there seems to be a discrepancy in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools. Several studies have been done on the lack of parental involvement in education (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Naicker, 2013) with some focusing on poor schools (Cooper, 2006; Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004). None, to my knowledge, have focused solely on comparing parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa, more specifically in Phoenix. The lack of knowledge in this area is what this study seeks to unravel.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As mentioned earlier, according to SASA, parental involvement is a constitutional right (RSA, 1996b). Despite this, it has been noted by the DBE that parents in most schools are not involving themselves (Maphanga, 2006). For example, parents are supposed to serve on the SGB in order to make decisions regarding the school, but the parents are unwilling to serve on the SGB (Mncube, 2009). Only a few parents attend meetings (Naicker, 2013) while most parents are unable to and do not participate in SGB decisions (Duma, Kapueja & Khanyile, 2011). There is thus a disjuncture between policy and practice. What is outlined in the policy and what is happening in reality, are different. Communities in South Africa are different based mostly on affluence (Spaull, 2013) and hence the implementation of SASA may not be uniform throughout the various types of schools in South Africa.

Studies have shown that most of the schools with minimal parental involvement are underprivileged (Ngubane, 2006; Sedibe, 2012; Smit & Liebenberg, 2003). Research however, including some of these studies, have focussed on parental non-involvement from a

from teachers (Bayat, Louw & Rena, 2014) and learnerø limiting the voices of parents themselves. These parents could have many reasons for their lack of involvement. While some parents may have already been involved in their childrenø education (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003), others might find this a new notion (Lemmer, 2009). Some may not understand their role and responsibility as suggested in the study by Mbokodi and Singh (2011). There could be many factors, contributing to the non-involvement of parents, which need to be voiced by the parents themselves. This study allows parents that voice.

In addition, research regarding parental involvement is mostly focussed either on rural (Trueger, 2008) or urban (Anderson & Minke, 2007) schools, but there is no research that has been done where both are included. This research incorporates both the privileged and underprivileged contexts in South African schools, focusing on schools in Phoenix.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute significantly to professional development, policy and in practice. With regards to professional development, there will be communication between parents and teachers. Teachers will get to know parents and their backgrounds better. Parents will share their personal knowledge and experiences and give their insight as to why they are unable to participate. The teachers will learn about the parents from that context and can use this knowledge to design activities that will accommodate parents. The schools in this study can also exchange ideas, strategies and resources on ways to include parents in the education process. Schools in a similar context can also benefit from the strategies employed by the schools under study to involve parents.

Policies that govern parental involvement are drawn from the constitution which regards everyone as equal (RSA, 1996a). This study will encourage consideration of underprivileged schools when policies regarding parental involvement are drawn. Instead of using a universal policy, different contexts will be taken into account. Policies are drawn from a top down approach (Muller, Maassen & Cloete, 2006). The voices of parents are left out and this study could lead to changing policies when looked at from the parentø point of view thus creating a bottom up approach to policy design. The study will also encourage policy makers to consider parents when drawing up other policies. For example a policy on labour should take



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their children and afford them time off from work to deal

In practice, this study will contribute to schools regulating their activities to include parents, such as having parent meetings at times that are convenient to the parent. Parents can also exchange ideas and practices with other parents and the same can happen with teachers and the schools.

1.6 FOCUS

This study focused on comparing the similarities and differences of parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

- i) Determine the similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.
- ii) Investigate why there are similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.

1.8 CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i) What are the similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools?
- ii) Why are there similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools?

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

In order to ensure a clear understanding, I operationalise the key concepts within the context of my study.

Underprivileged school

An underprivileged school can be seen as a school whose conditions are unfavourable and have factors such as income, unemployment, health and housing issues that are detrimental and indicators of poverty (Nojaja, 2009). In this study the term underprivileged school will be

attended by learners whose parents exhibit the above
Furthermore, in underprivileged schools, learners are exempt
from paying school fees and also have access to the National School Nutrition Programme
(Education and Training Unit, 2014). In this study, the definition of an underprivileged
school also includes a school where learners are exempt from paying school fees because
they cannot afford to, and they also participate in the National School Nutrition Programme.

Privileged school

A privileged school is attended by children of middle-class and wealthy parents who are able
to offer sponsorships and get involved in fundraising (Education Labour Relations Council &
Chris Brunton and Associates, 2003). In this study, a privileged school will be seen as those
schools that are attended by middle-class children whose parents are able to pay school fees
and run fundraising initiatives.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Research Design

A case study design was used. A case study is the manner in which social data is organized in
order to view a social reality (Best & Kahn, 2003). Within a case study, the researcher can do
a single case study, a multiple case study, or a collective case study (Gay, Mills & Airasian,
2009). This study uses a multiple case study, which involves more than one case study that is
connected in some way (Day Ashley, 2012).

1.10.2 Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was employed to select the schools. In purposive sampling, the sample is
purposely pre-specified from a group that the researcher is concerned with thus giving the
researcher information of interest (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010). Purposive sampling was thus
used because the schools are pre-specified based on their socio-economic backgrounds.
Convenience sampling was used to select the participants from each school. Convenience
sampling consists of choosing participants that are the nearest or are accessible and available
(Given, 2008) and has knowledge of the setting (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). People that are
willing and able to participate are selected to participate (Given, 2008). The parents and
teachers from Riverside and Silver Oak Primary School participated in the study. The
participants were chosen based on their willingness to participate and their availability.

semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Parents and teachers were each interviewed individually and then given questionnaires relating to why they are involved, or not, in the education process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide (Wilson, 2013). A semi-structured interview was used in this study because this gave the researcher flexibility when questioning during the interview (Miles & Gilbert, 2005). This enabled the researcher to probe the participants' responses further, covering aspects that may be important to the participant. Open-ended questions encourage participants to recount their experiences and offer an understanding of how they see the world around them (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Johnson and Christensen (2013) stated that questionnaires that contain open-ended questions are called qualitative questionnaires, which the researcher can use to find out how participants experience a phenomenon or why participants believe something happens.

1.10.4 Data Analysis

The data were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is used to identify, group and summarise findings (Pope, Mays & Popay, 2007). The data were transcribed, coded and then themes were looked for in the coded data (King & Horrocks, 2010).

1.11 ETHICS

Ethical clearance was first sought from the ethical clearance committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Permission was also sought from the schools involved and from the DBE before conducting the study. Consent forms were given to all participants. They were made aware of the purpose of the study and of their right to withdraw at any time. The participants' right to privacy was respected and confidentiality was ensured. The real names of the schools and participants involved are not disclosed, pseudonyms are used.

1.12 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study, on a comparison between parental involvement in a privileged and underprivileged schools, comprises of five chapters. Chapter one provided an introduction and background to the study. The chapter also provided the statement of the problem, the rationale, significance, focus, objective and critical questions guiding the study. The clarification of terminology, research design and methodology, ethics and outline of the chapters are provided.

related to parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools. Chapter one provides the definition and a rationale for parental involvement. Parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools is looked from different contexts: an intercontinental, African and South African. Chapter two also provides detailed information on the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The theoretical framework guiding this research is Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence (Epstein, 1996). This theory provides six types of parental involvement that can be used to compare schools and in this case, the privileged and underprivileged schools. These factors are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community (Erlendsdóttir, 2010).

Chapter three outlines the research design and methodology of this study. The major components of this chapter will include research approach, paradigm, the sampling procedures used to select participating teachers and parents for interviewing and the procedure for data generation and analysis. Ethical considerations and a model for ensuring trustworthiness will also be outlined.

Chapter four focuses on the data analysis and discussion of findings from the data generated from the interviews. Literature is also infused in the discussion of the findings.

Chapter five outlines the summary of findings, recommendations made to the schools and recommendations for further research.

1.12 CONCLUSION

Chapter one provided an introduction and background to the study. This chapter also provided the statement of the problem, the rationale, significance, focus, objective and critical questions guiding the study. I then provided a brief overview of the research design and methodology, data generation methods and analysis. Thereafter, I highlighted how I ensured the quality of this study and considered the ethics of doing research in social sciences. The literature to contextualise and frame the study will be presented in chapter two.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the literature review and theoretical framework of the study. I begin reviewing literature related to the study by defining parental involvement, explaining why it is important and discussing barriers thereof. I then review literature on parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools. Parental involvement was looked at from different contexts: international, continental and South African. The section ends with a theoretical framework guiding this study.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The various authors define parental involvement differently. Before looking at the definition of parental involvement, the characterisation of a parent will first be addressed. This study followed the definition provided by SASA which defines parent as (a) the parent or guardian of a learner; (b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at school (RSA, 1996b, p.2). Using this definition, a parent can be seen as any person who legally undertakes the responsibility of the child. The person that cares for and assumes responsibility for that child can be either biological or non-biological, guardians or caretakers (Onwughalu, 2011).

The various authors have many definitions of parental involvement. Parental involvement can be seen as parent visits to school in order to attend meetings or volunteer (Bojuwoye & Narain, 2008), communication with school personnel (Jeynes, 2012; Mncube, 2010), attending school meetings of parent-teacher associations, helping children in academic activities at home (Hill & Taylor, 2004), attending school initiated functions (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013), having high aspirations, attitudes and beliefs with regard to their children's education (Hong & Ho, 2005) and forming support groups in which parents can offer their expertise (Cheng, 2005).

The aspect of parental involvement in education can take two forms, termed as parental involvement at home and at school (Kim, 2009). Parental involvement at school consists of the above mentioned school activities of attending meetings, participating in volunteer

field trips (Lee & Bowen, 2006) and attending school (2007). Home involvement includes creating a conducive learning environment at the house (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009), participating in learning activities (Fantuzzo, Tighe & Childs, 2000), encouraging, guiding, monitoring and discussing school subjects (Hoell, 2006); discussing school experiences, helping with homework and structuring home learning activities (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Mestry and Grobler (2007, p.176) succinctly defined parental involvement as:

parents' commitment to the education of their children, and their role in school management; participation in parent-teacher conferences and/or interactions, participation in school activities or functions, engagement in activities at home, including but not limited to homework, engagement in learners' extra-curricular activities, assisting in the selection of learners' courses, keeping abreast of learners' academic progress, reaction to academic grades, imparting parental values, and the level of parental control and autonomy of support in the home environment.

These definitions provide a comprehensive aspect of what parental involvement entails. Thus, for the purpose of this study, parental involvement is defined as the participation of the parent, who can be defined as the biological parent or legal custodian, in the education of the child. The education of the child does not mean simply sending the child to school, but also entails involvement of the parent in every facet related to the child's education to ensure academic success. This involvement can be school based or home based and can range from helping with homework, to volunteering at school or being a part of the parent organisations and SGB.

Much of parental involvement can come through homework (Felix, Dornbrack & Scheckle, 2008). Singh et al. (2004, p.306) used the term 'Masifunde' which according to Felix et al. (2008, p.100) means 'let us educate together'. The 'us' refers to parents and teachers (Felix et al., 2008). Homework is one way of getting parents involved with education at home and is a mechanism of connecting home to school (Felix et al., 2008). Parents' role in supporting homework is seen as a collaboration between the parent and school (Felix et al., 2008). A study by Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) found that teachers feel that parents must not do the homework for the learners but rather should guide them and assist them when they get

that parents must find extra work for learners that are (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Singh et al. (2004) found

that parental involvement in homework is very important and parents who play no role in their children's homework contribute to their children's poor performance. Parental involvement is thus important for the learner and the importance will be discussed in the next section.

2.3 RATIONALE FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

From the time children are born up until the age of sixteen, 85% of their waking life is spent at home and is thus strongly influenced by the family, making the parent the child's primary educator (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). This implies that a foundation has been laid by the parents in the child's early age and continues to be constructed on as the child gets older. Teachers can only build upon the foundation laid by the parent, thus both teacher and parents need to work together for the benefit of the child (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). When parents become involved in education, there are positive effects on the learner's education (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems & Holbein, 2005). The studies that have been done in many countries highlight the benefits of parental involvement in education.

2.3.1 Learners' Academic Achievement and Performance

Parental involvement is important in ensuring that learners are successful (Singh et al., 2004). There is a beneficial relationship between parental involvement and learner academic achievement (James, 2008; Jeynes, 2007; Trueger, 2008; van Wyk 2010). The learner's performance also improves when parents get involved in their children's education (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) found that parental involvement makes a positive contribution to learner performance and achievement regardless of their economic or educational backgrounds. Academic achievement and learner performance can be attributed to completion of homework and classwork, doing well on projects and assignments and studying for tests and exams. When parents are involved, they ensure that the learner spends more time on homework (James, 2008). There is also a decrease in the learner failing to complete homework (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). When parents assist children with homework and have study programmes for their children (Mestry & Grobler, 2007) and discuss schoolwork with them (DePlanty, Coulter-Kern & Duchane, 2007), it contributes to their achievement. Trueger (2008) also concurs that when parents are included in interactive

es family discussions and ensures completion of work,
ademic achievement.

If parents ensure that children practice routine skills regularly such as spelling, reading and mathematics the child's learning is enhanced (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). This leads to the learners marks being higher and an increased achievement in reading, writing and mathematics (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Studies suggest that when parents monitor their children's schoolwork, their performance lasts until later years (Park, Byun & Kim, 2011). The positive effect on academic achievement is over and above the child's intelligence (Topor, Keane, Shelton & Calkins, 2010). This suggests that parental involvement enhances the existing cognitive ability of the child. This however is not the case for everyone. European American parental participation at school and home improved learner's mathematics performance however, for African American learners, only involvement at home enhanced mathematics scores (Graves & Wright, 2011). This suggests that academic achievement is only enhanced in certain types of involvement by different groups of people.

The benefit of increased academic achievement implies that the lack of parental involvement may have the opposite effect for certain learners. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) agree that a lack of parental involvement leads to a low academic achievement by learners. Bayat et al. (2014) also found that a lack of parental involvement leads to learner's underperformance. Thus the learner's performance is not at its optimum and the learner does not work to her or his full potential. In essence, children whose parents are involved in their education perform better than children whose parents are not involved (Rivera, 2010).

2.3.2 Learners' Aspiration

Parental involvement and expectations are also connected because children tend to assume their parents beliefs regarding achievement (Singh et al., 2004). This implies that if parents have high academic expectations and are involved, children will most likely work towards those expectations and do better. Learners have higher expectations of their future if their parents do (James, 2008) and will most probably be interested in school (Fan & Williams, 2010). They put in more effort, attention and concentration and are more interested in learning (Gonzalez-DeHass et al, 2005). Parent attitude toward education, their involvement and expectations are positively related to learners educational aspirations (Garg, Kauppi, Lewko, & Urajnik, 2002; Nichols, Kotchick, McNamara & Haskins, 2010). In poor families,

ersø aspirations (Hill et al., 2004) and reduces the effects (7). Likewise, if parents are uninvolved and do not have any expectations, learners will most probably not work towards a high expectation. Lee and Bowen (2006) concur that parents low educational expectations for their children are related to low achievement levels.

2.3.3 Self-esteem

Parents set limits, encourage the learner, make children aware that they are important and remind them of the significance of education (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005). When parents are involved they give the message to their children that they care about their well-being which directly and indirectly signals to the child that they are valued (Hango, 2007). The learner's self-esteem is positively influenced (Trueger, 2008); their sense of security is increased and so is their emotional stability (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). They are able to adjust to school and to overcome obstacles (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). Singh et al. (2004) found that children, who received attention from their parents when they were young, were able to later work independently compared to those that did not. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) found that if parents do not take on their role and responsibility of finding out what is happening and do not give children attention, the learner will most probably feel neglected and find no point in making an effort to study. Parents who get involved in their children's education convey the importance of education and that their child's endeavours matter (Rivera, 2010).

2.3.4 Motivation

When parents show an interest in school, the learner's motivation increases (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005; James, 2008). Fan and Williams (2010) agree that parent contact with school was positively related to motivation. When parents undertake activities such as reading, learners show more self-efficacy as readers and are motivated to read (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005). Tan and Goldberg (2009) also found that children also enjoy school and were motivated to learn when their parents performed educational activities such as reading with them.

ent level can also be attributed to learners' attitudes towards school. Positive attitudes by learners are the keys to achievement (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). The learners' attitudes are positively influenced when parents are involved (James, 2008; Mestry & Grobler, 2007). The learners' attitude towards learning improves when parents show an interest in their children's education and when they encourage their children (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009).

2.3.6 Self-Discipline and Behaviour

The learners' self-discipline and behaviour also improve (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Erlendsdóttir, 2010; James, 2008; Sacker, Schoon & Bartley, 2002; Trueger, 2008; van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009; van Wyk, 2010). Discussions about school can help reduce misbehaviour (DePlanty et al., 2007). Domina (2005) found that behavioural problems can also be prevented when parents volunteer at school and assist and monitor their children with homework. Parental involvement can inspire positive behaviour of children because when learners know that their parents are regularly at school, they are inclined to think positively and become more serious about their work (Kgaffe, 2001). Marais and Meier (2010) agree that parental involvement is one way of managing disruptive behaviour. There is a positive effect on school effectiveness such as reduced absenteeism and truancy (James, 2008; van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009; van Wyk, 2010). Learners attend school more regularly when their parents monitor them (Bhengu, 2003). There is also a reduction in dropout and retention rates (Mestry & Grobler, 2007; James, 2008; Van Wyk 2010) and higher rates of high school completion, and more years of school completed (Barnard, 2004).

2.3.7 Benefit to Parents and Teachers

Parental involvement is also important for parents and teachers. There is an increase in the confidence of parents, a better understanding of what is happening in school and a feeling of empowerment (van Wyk, 2010). Educators also, benefit because they receive support and appreciation from parents (van Wyk, 2010).

The idea of the school working together with parents can be seen as a benefit. According to Huntsinger and Jose (2009) such benefits compel the government and schools to involve parents in education. This appears to be the case globally as well as in South Africa as

ever, despite governmental attempts, there still seems to
becoming fully involved.

2.4 CONDITIONS CONSTRAINING PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Teachers often think that parents are not interested in their children's education (Hornby, 2011). However, there are many reasons that contribute to the lack of parental involvement. So, in trying to involve parents in their child's education, one needs to understand what prevents them from becoming involved.

The parent's socio-economic status influences parental involvement in education (Singh et al., 2004). Parents with a low income are usually less involved in their children's education (Cooper, 2006) whereas parents with higher socio-economic status are more involved (Holloway, Yamamoto, Suzuki, & Mindnich, 2008). Poverty is most probably the common reason in South Africa as to why parents are not involved. Mbokodi (2008) contends that amongst other factors, poverty accounts for a lack of parental involvement in some South African schools. Some parents struggle to survive, are paid a very low income, live in poor, inadequate housing conditions, work unsocial hours or are unemployed (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). There are some poor parents that avoid the school because they feel that if they become too involved they will be asked for a financial contribution (Michael, Wolhunter & van Wyk, 2012). Some poor parent's mental health is also affected by poverty and increased stress of making ends meet, which reduces parental involvement in school (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Poverty also reduces the educational resources parents can provide and reduce the effects of home involvement (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Single parents are another factor to be considered because these factors prevent optimal parental involvement in education (Hornby, 2011). Single parent households usually have a lower income than two parent households and the focus is on finances, leaving less time available for children (Anderson, 2000; Singh et al., 2004) thus contributing to the lack of parental involvement (Naicker, 2013). Single parents sometimes cannot attend school functions and parent meetings because there is no one at home to look after the children (Trueger, 2008). Single parents also have less support than married parents, and less help in monitoring their children (Amoateng, Richter, Makiwane & Rama, 2004).

...bute to their lack of involvement in education (Lee & ...ath Africa do not have time to attend school meetings because of demanding work conditions (Michael et al., 2012; Naicker, 2013). Parents are also unable to attend trips and events or help their children with homework (Heymann, 2000). Heymann (2000) states that some parents return home late from work and spend the time cooking and cleaning up the house that there is little time left to help to do anything else. Some work schedules are not flexible and do not allow for time off (Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, Ryalls & Nero, 2010). There are some employers who do not give the parent permission to attend school meetings (Mncube, 2009). Some parents work in more than one job, resulting in the child being left alone for most of the time (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Some parents work long hours which inhibits their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In addition, Naicker (2013) found that in some 'poor' families, both the mother and father are forced to work and thus do not find time for their children's schooling needs. These 'poor' parents cannot afford to take time off from work (Mbokodi, 2008). Thus some 'poor' parents want to get involved in their children's education but financial and time constraints prevents this (Cooper, 2006).

In addition to working conditions, self-perception also plays a part in parents' lack of involvement at school (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Parents have negative feelings about themselves and this hinders their interactions with school (Hill & Taylor, 2004). In addition, some parents have negative experiences of when they were at school or even with their children's schools (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Anderson and Minke (2007) found that when parents had positive experiences of when they were at school, they were confident and competent when communicating with their children's teachers. Some parents however, are unconfident and feel inadequate because of their low educational level, thus hindering their involvement in school (Kohl, Lengua & McMahon, 2000). Parents feel that they do not have the ability or knowledge to contribute to the education process and are thus unable to get involved in school (Cooper, 2006). These parents feel unconfident and inferior when communicating with the school because of their lack of knowledge and educational jargon (Lee & Bowen, 2006). The parents are not confident in their intellectual skills (Hill & Taylor, 2004) and feel that they do not have the academic ability to help their children (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006) and should not interfere with school (Kohl et al., 2000). In addition to feeling intimidated and inferior, parents feel that it is a reflection on them if their children do not perform well in school thus

self-efficacy (Trueger, 2008). Studies have confirmed that to help their children thus presenting another challenge to involvement in education (James, 2008; Singh et al., 2004).

The goal of ensuring that learners perform well is one that belongs to both the teacher and parent and thus communication between the two is necessary for an effective partnership (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). The lack of communication can thus present a barrier to involvement. Teachers must inform parents about their children's progress and parents must also enquire about their children's performance (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Using a medium such as a messaging service can be a simple, cost effective and user-friendly way to communicate (Shambare, 2014). Communication between parents and teachers is important because challenges that the learner may face can be found and addressed and teachers can also tell parents what they must do to help their children (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Language creates communication issues. When the language of instruction is not the parent's first language, the communication between home and school is not effective which increases parent's lack of confidence and non-involvement (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Parents avoid school because they do not understand what the educator says and the teacher does not know what they say, which leaves the parent feeling embarrassed (Naicker, 2013). Some parents ironically who do not understand English well, insist on the school using this language when communicating at meetings (Mncube, 2009).

Hornby & Lafaele (2011) stated that when parents are welcomed by the school, parental involvement in those schools is effective. Some schools however pose a barrier for parental involvement (Felix et al., 2008). Many parents are intimidated by teachers or perceive teachers as hostile (James, 2008; Trueger, 2008). James (2008) states that, parents may not participate in school activities if they perceive the teacher to be hostile or insensitive. According to parents, educators do not have a welcoming attitude towards them (Naicker, 2013). Parents state that they wait for many hours before they were attended to by the school (Naicker, 2013). Some parents believe that educators are superficial and want to focus on problems rather than working towards solutions (Hornby, 2011). Some parents feel that the school makes them feel unwelcomed and excludes them (James, 2008; Singh et al., 2004). In SGB meetings, principals make decisions and parents are not given a voice (Mncube & Harber, 2013). The management however, of some schools state that they try to involve parents (Maphanga, 2006; Shezi, 2012). Some teachers however feel that most parents lack

, 1999). Van Wyk (2010) acknowledges that some parents presents a problem.

Many parents view the school and teacher as being competent enough to deal with their children (Singh et al., 2004; Wherry, 2009) and thus do not see the education of their child as their responsibility (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Parents feel that their responsibility is only to send the child to school and the school must take over from that point (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011) and are thus apathetic and not willing to be involved in education (Michael et al., 2012). Parents feel that teachers are the ones that are qualified and get paid to teach their children (Heystek, 1999). Parents of high school learners believe that the children are old enough and do not need their assistance in school (Naicker, 2013). Some parents do not feel up to involving themselves in schools (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003) while others do not even realise that they must involve themselves in education (Heystek, 1999).

Demographics are another factor linked to parent involvement. Some parents live a great distance away from the school and do not have transport easily available to them (Lee & Bowen, 2006; Michael et al., 2012). This is especially the case at night. When schools have meetings in the afternoon and at night, parents who travel by public transport are unable to attend (Naicker, 2013).

Polygamy is another issue, which is not uncommon in South Africa. The mother/step-mother focuses on issues in the home and does not consider involvement in school, whilst the fathers are uninformed of the child's progress or unable to give attention to each of the children from the different marriages or relationships (Trueger, 2008). This results in minimal parental involvement and also makes the learners feel rejected (Trueger, 2008).

These above mentioned factors all contribute to the barriers that prevent parents from becoming involved in their children's education.

- INTERCONTINENTALLY

are noted worldwide. Globally, it is becoming accepted that parents are necessary and important stakeholders in the education process of their children. According to DePlanty et al. (2007), the American Government had recognised the role of parents as children's first and most important teachers and their necessary involvement in education. The American Government declared, under The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, that by the year 2000 every school will encourage partnerships to increase parental involvement in the holistic development of the child (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009). This prompted certain schools to strategize on ways to involve parents in education. In New York, some schools have plans which require the involvement of family activities (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). Some of these activities included parent interactions with their high school children about their studies and post-schooling plans, which led to greater involvement by parents in education (Simon, 2004). Apart from school based initiatives, some parents willingly involve themselves in their children's education.

The level of involvement however differs amongst the various types of people in America. Some parents are more involved at school whilst others are more involved at home (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Parents of European descent in America (European American) are more involved in volunteering activities as compared to other groups, such as the Chinese Americans who display interest in their children's education at home (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009). These Chinese parents help with homework, monitor home activities and orientate their children's lives towards academic tasks (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009). Whether they are privileged or underprivileged, education is important to the Chinese and they view the child's performance as a reflection on the family (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009).

Lee and Bowen (2006) also found that European Americans, particularly the privileged, were more frequently involved in school when compared to Hispanic and African American parents. The privileged parents engaged their children in discussion about school unlike the disadvantaged, who were less optimistic about their children's education (Lee & Bowen, 2006). These results are consistent with the findings of Cooper, Crosnoe, Suizzo and Pituch (2010) where non-poor European American parents were more involved in school compared to poor European American, Hispanic and African American parents. In contrast, Graves and Wright (2011) found that European Americans are more involved in home activities such as reading with their children, telling stories and playing games, while African American

school tasks like volunteering and attending meetings, and school activities. Wong and Hughes (2006) found that both European American and African American parents showed more interest and responsibility in their children's education as compared to Hispanic parents. These studies point out that the differing levels of parental involvement is not only linked to different ethnic groups but sometimes also to economic backgrounds.

Whilst poor parents may be involved in home-learning activities, they are less likely to be involved in school activities (Cooper et al., 2010). Cooper (2006) found that there was a negative relationship between the level of parental income and their involvement in school. The parents that were poor and had a low income were not highly involved in school (Cooper, 2006). Heymann (2000) also states that parents from low socio-economic backgrounds in America are less involved in their children's education than parents from high socio-economic backgrounds. This was due to working hours and conditions. Park et al. (2011) also found parental involvement more prevalent amongst the higher socio-economic class as compared to the disadvantaged. These studies show that there is parental involvement from both the privileged and underprivileged, however, at different levels. The privileged are more involved in their children's education, while the underprivileged show very minimal participation.

In some upper class American schools, parents are highly involved, but this results in conflict amongst all stakeholders. The priorities that educators and principals have are different compared to the parents, which mostly leads to disagreements and conflict between the school and parents (Lareau & Muñoz, 2012). There were disagreements, such as, over the school atmosphere and authority between the principal and parents. In this case, there were very high levels of parental involvement, but this lead to conflict on many occasions.

The case for parental involvement in education, however, still remains an important issue globally. For many years countries such as England have encouraged parental involvement through policies (Conteh and Kawashima, 2008). England had strategised on how to involve parents in the education process through their 1997 White Paper 'Excellence in Schools' (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). This strategy included providing information to parents, allowing parents to be heard and encouraging parent-school partnerships (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Parents are also keen on getting involved in the education process. In the

Privileged and underprivileged backgrounds are involved. Park et al. (2011) found that despite economic disadvantages, parents were involved in education and actively engaged their children in learning activities. Parents from both economic backgrounds were highly involved with learning at home including learning the alphabets and learning how to write. This parental involvement is especially the case for younger children than compared to high school children (Hango, 2007).

Parental involvement in schools however is not highly supported by everyone in the United Kingdom. Some schools are not adequately welcoming to minority parents that are of a different race. Crozier and Davies (2007) found that some schools put minimal effort to inform ethnic parents, such as those of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origins, of the school's running. These schools also did nothing to monitor the attendance of the ethnic parents at school events or to inspire them to attend parent meetings (Crozier & Davies, 2007). The ethnic parents however also did not initiate contact with school and expected the school to contact them, which occurred only for negative issues such as the child's behaviour (Crozier & Davies, 2007). Some ethnic parents did initiate contact with the schools regarding school activities and their children's progress. However they received little communication from the teachers. Thus the study by Crozier and Davies (2007) provides a case to show that despite legislative strategies, schools in the United Kingdom are not effectively promoting parental involvement.

In some countries, involvement in schools is difficult. The education system in Korea is highly standardised leaving very little room for parental involvement and input at schools (Park et al., 2011). The parent's form of involvement entails spending a considerable amount of money on a high quality tutor for their children (Park et al., 2011). There is also a 'mothers network' which shares information on private tutors (Park et al., 2011). Some full time working mothers who were unable to be a part of this network had changed their jobs to part time to be able to involve themselves in this 'mothers network' (Park et al., 2011). The parents always keep up to date with the children's progress through these tutors (Park et al., 2011). Education is thus highly important to Korean parents and the process undergone to find a quality tutor for their children highlights their involvement in the education process.

Education is fast becoming a global phenomenon with some parents becoming more involved in the process. This task however is a challenging process in some countries like Brazil where teachers are continuously having problems in trying to get parents more involved (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006). In some countries, however, such as Quebec, parents become involved if the schools invite them to, otherwise they do not participate in the education process (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). Thus, the involvement of parents might be a challenge but it is not far from possible.

However, research shows that there still exists a high level of parental non-involvement in schools across the world. Thus, despite government efforts, there still seems to be a low level of parental involvement, most prominently in the underprivileged schools.

2.6 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

Parental involvement in some African countries seems to be increasing. Erlendsdóttir (2010) study on a Namibian school which catered for children from different socio-economic backgrounds shows that both privileged and underprivileged parents were highly involved in their children's education at school and at home. This could be due to parents having high expectations for their children (Erlendsdóttir, 2010). The parents monitor their children's time outside of school, they have a good relationship with the teachers, they assist their children with homework, discuss schoolwork with their children and follow the child's progress closely (Erlendsdóttir, 2010). The parents also expect their children to attend university after school and they express their high expectations to their children (Erlendsdóttir, 2010). This implies that despite economic backgrounds, some parents do have high hopes and expectations for their children.

In contrast, a study done in Nigeria showed that some parents were involved in their children's education whilst others were not (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009). Parents who sent their children to private schools were more involved than those whose children went to public schools (Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009). Olatoye and Agbatogun (2009) attribute this discrepancy in involvement to factors such as variations in the school fees, parental educational qualifications and social economic status. This suggests that affluent parents in Nigeria are more involved in their children's education compared to the parents of lower socio-economic status. It was also found that parents are more involved in their sons'

latoye & Agbatogun, 2009). Thus, apart from economic
rt in parental involvement in Nigeria.

Parental involvement in Ghana also seems to be fluctuating. Some parents are apathetic to schooling, lack interest in education (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003) and question the importance of schooling for their children and this in turn may influence their involvement in education (Chant & Jones, 2005). A study by Donkor, Issaka and Asante (2013) conducted in a school based in a community with a high illiteracy rate and low-income, showed that students received little support from parents. The parents are supposed to provide educational materials like exercise books, textbooks and school supplies, but do not, and then blame the teachers when the child performs poorly in school (Donkor et al., 2013). The parents do not supervise the learners at home and are unwilling to visit the school (Donkor et al., 2013). These parents work long hours and claim that they are unable to afford school supplies; however they often dress up in elegant clothing on special occasions like parties and funeral (Donkor et al., 2013).

Single parents are less likely to be involved in their children's education than married parents (Chowa, Ansong & Osei-Akoto, 2012b). Sottie (2011) found that single parents in Ghana are not involved in their children's education because of their economic status. These parents had little time to give to their children's education because they were busy earning an income and dealing with their personal problems (Sottie, 2011). These parents rarely attended Parent Teacher Association meetings; they did not ensure that their children attend school daily and they did not check on lessons, homework and their children's progress (Sottie, 2011). Parents only respond when the school calls them in when a problem occurs (Sottie, 2011).

Parental involvement in Ghana however is changing as parents are starting to involve themselves in education (Nyarko, 2011; Chowa et al., 2012a). Some Ghanaian parents are involved in education at home such as ensuring that their children complete their homework (Nyarko, 2011). A study by Chowa, Masa and Tucker (2013) found that parental home-involvement is positively associated with the learner's academic performance while involvement at school is negatively associated. Ghanaian parents are however becoming involved at school. According to the headteacher of one school, parents want to participate in school activities and show an interest in their children's learning (Malakolunthu, McBeath & Swaffield, 2014). According to the parents, they ensure that their children attend school

(Malakolunthu et al., 2014). They also check their children's school work (Malakolunthu et al., 2014). Parents attend parent meetings and events (Chowa et al., 2012a; Malakolunthu et al., 2014) and discuss expectations with their children (Chowa et al., 2012b). However, parents are mandated to attend meetings and encounter a penalty if they don't attend (Chowa et al., 2012b). Furthermore, more than half the parents in the study stated that they do not assist their children directly with homework (Chowa et al., 2012b). Chowa et al. (2012b) also found that less educated parents were more involved in their children's education, possibly because they want their children to achieve higher education than compared to them. Educated parents were also involved more at home (Chowa et al., 2012b). Parental involvement at home and school in Ghana is thus becoming more prevalent (Chowa et al., 2012b; Nyarko, 2011).

2.7 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

In this race to education with the importance of parental involvement echoed through literature, parental involvement in South Africa is still a problem (Okeke, 2014). As Mestry and Grobler (2007) pointed out; this can be seen from parents' poor attendance of meetings, poor matric results, and lack of interest in learners' schoolwork and homework. This is not to imply that parents are deliberately distancing themselves from their children's education. The involvement of parents can be attributed to many factors.

Singh et al. (2004) found that parents' low involvement in the underprivileged schools was due to socio-economic status. Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) also found that some parents of lower socio-economic status were not involved in school-based activities. When parents are poor, education of their children is not a priority for some and thus poverty accounts for a lack of parental involvement in some South African schools (Mbokodi, 2008). Schools in underprivileged areas usually lack parental involvement (Mncube, 2007). Parents from low socio-economic backgrounds do not participate in fundraising for the school because they fear that they may have to also contribute financially (Bhengu, 2003). These parents also do not support their children's cultural and sports activities (Bhengu, 2003). Some parents do not visit school because they have to pay for transport to school which restricts them financially as well as some parents have not paid school fees and thus avoid school (Narain, 2005). The parents therefore do not attend parent meetings because they have not paid their children's school fees and are afraid that they will be scorned at (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011) or asked to pay it (Mbokodi, 2008). Some parents do not want to volunteer at school. Mbokodi (2008)

remuneration for their services, they do not contribute towards their services, towards the school. Parents, even those that were unemployed, did not want to help with the feeding scheme or to paint the school if they were not remunerated (Mbokodi, 2008).

Parents attribute their lack of participation to many factors, including time constraints (Nojaja, 2009). Naicker (2013) found that parents do not have time to check their children's school work because they are busy with running their lives and ensuring that there is food on the table. According to the educators of some schools, most parents say that they are too busy to come to school (Maphanga, 2006). Parents do not involve themselves in parent teacher organisations because they are working and do not have the time (Narain, 2005). Some parents also do not attend parent meetings because of work commitments (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). Some mothers sleep at their place of employment and thus cannot attend meetings (Mbokodi, 2008). These mothers may also work out of town and thus leave their children with neighbours or relatives (Mbokodi, 2008). The mothers have no choice because they need the money. Mmotlane, Winnar and wa Kivilu (2009) found that South African women are amongst the poor and usually depend on their spouses. Lemmer (2009) found that in impoverished settlements, children live in extended households headed usually by the grandparents. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) also found that parents are absent from home and thus also their children's education because they seek employment away from home. Employment thus inhibits parents from becoming involved and some studies have shown that unemployment has the same effect. Low parental participation occurs in some poor schools due to unemployment (Maphanga, 2006; Singh et al., 2004). Parents admit that they cannot work co-operatively with educators because they are always out looking for jobs (Maphanga, 2006).

In some poor schools, illiteracy (Singh et al., 2004) and parents' low educational attainments (Maphanga, 2006) contribute to parents' non-involvement in South Africa (Singh et al., 2004). In Limpopo and Mpumalanga, parents are not fully involved in education because they are illiterate and unable to help their children with studies (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & van Rooyen, 2010). Other studies done across South Africa concur on this (Bhengu, 2003; Naicker, 2013; Ngubane, 2006; Nojaja, 2009). Parents' illiteracy also makes them feel unconfident such that they do not communicate and participate in school (Ngubane, 2006). These parents do not attend parent meetings because they fear the teachers will undermine

Mbokodi and Singh (2011) also found that parents do not stay away from school because they are embarrassed about their lack of literacy skills. In contrast, a study by Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) found that parents had positive aspirations for their children, helped their children with homework assignments, and supervising and monitoring the out-of-school activities. Some parents claim to be interested in visiting school and assisting their children but do not know how to (Naicker, 2013). A study by Michael et al. (2012) found that poor parents did not understand what parental involvement entails. Parents also find school work more difficult for them to understand (Narain, 2005).

Most parents do not involve themselves meaningfully in their children's education. Bhengu (2003) found that parents in poor schools do not attend parent meetings concerning their children. When parents are called to school by the teacher to discuss the progress of the child, they never attend (Singh et al., 2004). Communication between home and the school is not effective. Educators stated that almost half the parents do not reply to notices from schools and do not communicate with the school regarding their children's academic progress or problems (Bhengu, 2003). Teachers want parents to be involved and to meet them to discuss school and learner performance and discipline (Naicker, 2013). Mbokodi (2008) found that teachers are frustrated that the parents that they want to see, stay away from school and do not know about their children's needs. It takes teachers several attempts to get parents to come to school (Mbokodi, 2008). Parents meetings are scheduled on different days and times to accommodate parents but the parents still do not attend (Mbokodi, 2008). This lack of attending meetings and visitation to school has led to the school concluding that parents are not interested in their children's education (Mbokodi, 2008; Michael et al., 2012). According to the teachers, parents did not care about the children's work, they do not even sign the report cards, or know the grade of the child or that the child was repeating a grade (Naicker, 2013). Mbokodi and Singh (2011) also found that communication was one-way from the school to home and never from home to school. Teachers sent home notices and letters but parents never respond (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) also found that parents were less involved in school-home communication. Parents do not even attend parent meetings or collect their children's report cards (Mbokodi, 2008; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). Some parents on the other hand do not understand English well and hence do not communicate with the school (Narain, 2005). A lack of communication thus exists between parents and teachers which prevents their involvement.

parents that want to get involved but feel that the educators are discouraged from doing so (Maphanga, 2006). The educators however felt that they always welcome parental involvement but parents do not come to school or involve themselves (Maphanga, 2006). This seems to be a gap between the parents and educators. Teachers also want parents to be involved in home activities but are giving up hope on this happening. In a study by Singh et al. (2004), it was found that some teachers stopped giving the learners homework because they knew that the learners will not be helped at home. Some teachers believe that historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa will not succeed due to parents' ignorance and non-involvement (Singh et al., 2004).

Parents feel that their children's education is the school's responsibility and they do not need to involve themselves (Maphanga, 2006). The parents feel that teachers are qualified and thus leave the education of the child to the competent educators (Maphanga, 2006; Singh et al., 2004). Some parents are of the view that once children reach high school, they can manage their own school work; the learners however, want their parents to be interested and involved in school activities (Naicker, 2013). Singh et al. (2004) also found that 90% of the sample population of parents felt that education of their children is solely the job of the school. Parents leave the education of the child, especially in high school, to the teachers (Naicker, 2013). Mbokodi and Singh (2011) found that parents do not attend meetings because they do not know why they should when their parents did not. This suggests that either parents do not understand their role and responsibility in education, or they are not interested in becoming involved. Bayat et al. (2014) found that there is a lack of interest from parents in children's well-being and education.

Whilst certain parents are not participating in the education process, some schools have no plans or make no efforts to involve them. Some schools do not have a policy on parental involvement (Nojaja, 2009). This is also true for some rural and disadvantaged schools where parents are hard to reach (Kgaffe, 2001). In black disadvantaged schools, parental involvement is limited because of parents feeling of inferiority and negative attitudes (Heystek, 1999). Certain schools do not consider parental involvement important. These schools do not make provision for parents from different economic and cultural backgrounds to be involved in the teaching and learning process (Heystek, 1999; Michael et al., 2012) and the principal feels that it is the government's job to get parents involved (Michael et al., 2012). Whether it is the government's job or school's initiative, there remain educators who

involvement (Nojaja, 2009). Mbokodi and Singh (2011) are of the opinion that the lack of training in parental involvement and that they are in need of intervention from the DBE in this regard. If educators are not trained and principals do not feel that involving parents is their responsibility, the issue of parental involvement will never find a solution. Some schools consider parental involvement from parents of higher socio-economic status more important than from parents with lower socio-economic status. Felix et al. (2008) found that the manner in which the schools referred to parents implies that they see parents with higher socio-economic status as a resource and ascribed them power in their children's education as compared to the lower socio-economic status who were seen as a lack resource and unable to help. Felix et al. (2008) also found that the affluent parents had to sign the homework book while the parents in the poor schools were not expected to sign the homework book/diary. The parents from low socio-economic status were not expected or welcomed to participate in education (Felix et al., 2008).

On the contrary, some schools make a conscious effort to involve parents. These schools promoted parental involvement despite the barriers that were present such as unemployment, poverty and sicknesses (Shezi, 2012). The school and parents communicated through letters, notices and announcements, collaborated in developing the school's infrastructure and parents attended meetings, viewed progress reports and communicated with teachers (Shezi, 2012). Lemmer and van Wyk (2004) found that some schools use a diary as a means to establish connection between the home and school. In some schools, home visits are done by teachers to find out more about the learner's background and thus strengthen relations with parents (Lemmer, 2009). Okeke (2014) concurs that home visits are a good way of forming home-school relationships because they allow teachers and parents to get closer and work together in dealing with needs or difficulties that the learner may experience. While in some schools parental involvement is welcomed to a degree, educators are concerned about parents getting overly involved and overstepping their limits (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004).

Lewis and Naidoo (2004) stated that parents need to participate in school governance. SASA stipulates that parents must serve on the SGB (RSA, 1996b). In some schools educators understand the importance of parental participation in the SGB (Duma et al., 2011). Parents however, do not involve themselves in the meetings and SGB. Parental involvement in some SGB is irregular with middle-class parents being more involved (Maharaj, 2005). Parents in rural, disadvantaged schools may attend SGB elections but are reluctant to get themselves

unwilling to serve on the SGB (Mncube, 2009). Only a few parents (Duma et al., 2013) while most parents are unable to and do not participate in SGB decisions (Duma et al., 2011; Mncube, 2009; Ngubane, 2006). There are various reasons that contribute to this lack of participation in decision making. Illiteracy is a challenge to parental involvement in the SGB (Duma, 2013; Duma et al., 2011). Some parents cannot communicate in English (Mncube, 2010). Parents also cannot become involved due to the hours they work (Mbokodi, 2008), their low educational attainment and power struggles in the SGB (Mncube, 2009). In some privileged schools, black parents do not participate in the SGB because they of their inability to speak and understand English well and difficulty in attending meetings (Mncube, 2009). When parents do participate in the SGB, they are undermined and the school takes decisions instead of them, such as on matters of suspending a learner (Mncube, 2009). In some schools however, the lack of participation is an obstacle to school governance because the principal is determined to govern the school cooperatively with parents but the parents do not attend meetings (Ngubane, 2006).

The literature indicates that parents in South Africa are not fully involved in their children's education at home or at school. Parental involvement, particularly in underprivileged schools, is still in need of attention.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical Framework: Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence

This study uses Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence as the theoretical framework (Epstein, 1996). This theoretical framework was developed by Dr Joyce Epstein in the 1980s using data generated from parents, teachers and learners (Epstein, 1996). In this theory, three perspectives are used to guide the researcher's thoughts about school and family relations (Epstein, 1996). These perspectives are the family, school and community. The child learns and grows in these three contexts. According to this theory, schools do not function in isolation and thus families, schools and communities must collaborate in educating the learner (Kgaffe, 2001). Collaborations can improve school climate, provide support to families, increase the skills of parents, and connect families in the school and community (Epstein, 1996). This theory recognises the need for families, the school and community to understand each other's views and to establish a common goal for learners (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). Epstein (2002) used a model to explain this theory. The three

f the model which overlap. At the center of the model is (Epstein, 1997, 2002).

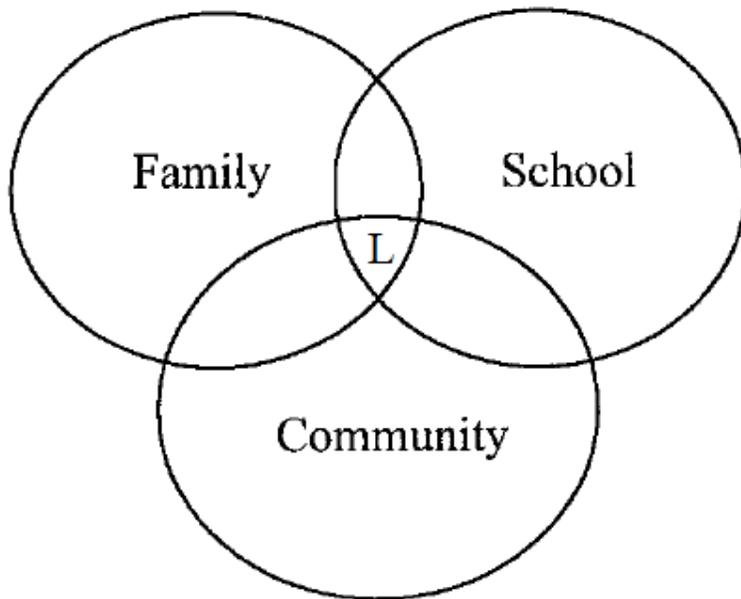


Figure 2.1 The overlapping spheres of influence related to parental involvement (Adapted from Epstein, 1997, p.72)

This model shows that there are some activities that schools, families and communities perform separately and some that they perform together to influence children's development and learning (Epstein, 1997). The overlapping spheres of influence bring the activities of stakeholders together (Kgaffe, 2001). The model takes into account internal and external structures (Epstein, 2002). The internal structure characterises the pattern of interaction between the family, community and school, and it is where communication occurs (Epstein, 1997). These interactions can be looked at from the institutional level (communication between the school and parents) and at the individual level (parent-teacher meetings or talk by phone) (Epstein, 1997). The external structure takes into account that the settings in which children learn may be drawn together or pushed apart by three main forces (Epstein, 2002). These forces are time (includes the historic period, age and grade level of learner), philosophies, policies and practices of the family and philosophies, policies and practices of the school (Kgaffe, 2001). These three factors decide how much of overlap occurs (Kgaffe, 2001) by creating space, conditions and opportunities for fewer or more shared activities

community (Nojaja, 2009). These forces affect the
ts (Nojaja, 2009).

The three contexts of family, school and the community can be drawn together or pushed apart (Michael et al., 2012). The theory of overlapping spheres recognises that schools and families have shared responsibilities towards the development of the learner (Kgaffe, 2001). Acknowledgement of the shared responsibilities between educators and parents pushes the spheres of family and school influence together and increases interaction between the school and parent (Epstein, 1996). However when the school views the responsibilities of families and the school as separate, there is a division of labour that pulls the spheres of school and family influences apart, thus decreasing interaction between the school and parents (Nojaja, 2009). Thus the theory posits that the most effective schools and families have overlapping, shared goals concerning their children (Michael et al., 2012). Mutual interests and influence of family and schools can be promoted by policies and programmes and attitudes of the individual in the organisation (Epstein, 2002). Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres also considers that the community plays an important part of learners' lives (Kgaffe, 2001). Schools can form relationships with the community and create opportunities for them to become involved in the education of learners (Kgaffe, 2001). Communities can also create educational centres for learners (Kgaffe, 2001).

Epstein (1997) has identified six types of involvement that schools can use as strategies to involve parents: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. Initially, five major typologies were identified and later the sixth, collaborating with the community was added on (Nojaja, 2009).

Type 1: Parenting

This is an activity that schools can do to help families with parenting skills, supporting the family and understanding learner development (Kgaffe, 2001). Schools can provide information to all parents that need it and create opportunity for the parent to share information about the child (Kgaffe, 2001). Schools can also help families to support children through workshops and meetings (Michael et al., 2012) and help create a supportive home environment (Erlendsdóttir, 2010).

parents about school activities and the progress of the learner (Kgaffe, 2001). Schools need to evaluate the types of communication sent to parents and consider those who do not speak the same language or cannot read properly (Kgaffe, 2001). Erlendsdóttir (2010) refers to communicating as how best the school designs and conducts effective two-way communication from school-to-home and home-to-school. Communication includes printed and non-printed communication, talking to parents including those who do not speak the language or are illiterate (Michael et al., 2012).

Type 3: Volunteering

Parents can be encouraged to volunteer at school (such as a teachers aid) and for activities and events (such as sports) (Shezi, 2012). The parents recruit and organise help and support for the school and student activities (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). Michael et al., (2012) stated that schedules should be flexible to accommodate parents that work.

Type 4: Learning at Home

The school should teach parents how to support learning at home such as helping with homework (Kgaffe, 2001). This interaction will link the school and home atmosphere (Kgaffe, 2001). It also involves the school providing information and ideas to families about how to help learners with school work and other activities and planning (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005).

Type 5: Decision Making

Parents from all backgrounds are included in committees and governance structures of the school (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). They are involved in the decision-making process and are developed into parent leaders (Erlendsdóttir, 2010).

Type 6: Collaborating with the Community

Schools can work together with the community by involving them in the activities that occur (Kgaffe, 2001). It also means identifying and combining resources from the community to strengthen schools, learners and their families (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). The community extends to all the people that are interested and affected by education (Kgaffe, 2001). Activities are also organised that will benefit the community and enhance childrens learning opportunities (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005).

It has its challenges for its implementation and leads to and teaching practices (Shezi, 2012). Thus schools need to choose the factors carefully that will be most helpful to them (Erlendsdóttir, 2010). In a collaborative setting, teachers make the school more family-like which takes into account that each child is an individual (Epstein, 1997). All families are welcome and not only those that are easy to reach (Epstein, 1997). When parents create school-like families, they take into account that each child is different and also reinforces the importance of homework and school (Epstein, 1997).

Nojaja (2009) demonstrated the effectiveness in the use of Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres in parental involvement. Taking into consideration the barriers to parental involvement, Nojaja (2009) developed a model using Epstein's theory. This model aims to create positive outcomes for parents, educators and the learners' academic achievement and can be used in the South African context. Thus, Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres provides a beneficial framework for research involving parental involvement and can also be modified to suit the specific context.

Epstein's theory reflects that it is necessary for the activities of the school, parents and community to be interlinked to achieve success with the learner's development (Kgaffe, 2001) because the development of the learner is a shared and overlapping responsibility of these three contexts (Nojaja, 2009). Epstein (1996) states that good programmes to improve parent involvement in school, need to recognise the overlapping sphere of influence on learner development. This theory encourages schools to develop a wider perspective of parent involvement and thus provide opportunities for parents and the community to get involved (Kgaffe, 2001). This framework was chosen because it forms a suitable explanation for the influences of interactions between parents and the school. More specifically, it provides six factors or types of parental involvement that can be used to compare schools, and in this case, the privileged and underprivileged schools. These factors are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community (Erlendsdóttir, 2010). Thus, the study used this framework as a base to investigate the interactions between the schools and parents. The six types of involvement that schools can use to include parents were considered when looking at both the privileged and underprivileged schools. This theory guides researchers and practitioners when thinking about school and family relationships (Nojaja, 2009). This framework is appropriate to this

, have also used Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres (Nojaja, 2009; Shezi, 2012). Researchers agree that studies involving parental involvement can be found in this framework (Kgaffe, 2001; Nojaja, 2009).

2.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a literature review and theoretical framework of the study was provided. Literature related to the study was reviewed by defining parental involvement, explaining why it is important and discussing constraints to parental involvement thereof. I then reviewed literature on parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools. Parental involvement was looked at from different contexts: international, continental and South African. The section concludes with a theoretical framework guiding this study.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology, which is the tool used to generate and analyse data, is considered to be the core of research design (Bean, 2005). Bean (2005) further states that an appropriate methodology results in good research. This chapter focuses on the design and methodology employed to conduct the study in order to answer the following key research questions generated in Chapter One:

- i) What are the similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools?
- ii) Why are there similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools?

This chapter begins with a detailed account of the research approach, paradigm and design employed in this study. Furthermore, the sampling procedure employed, the data generation process and method of data analysis are discussed. This chapter also discusses the measures of trustworthiness, ethics and limitations of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The nature of the study usually determines the choice of research methodology (Naicker, 2013). This study was conducted using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research refers to determining the natural flow of processes and events and how participants would interpret them by using data generation strategies that are non-interfering (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In addition, qualitative research focuses on gaining meaning (Toma, 2005) and increasing the readers understanding of the phenomenon under study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This study aimed to gain meaning of what is happening in these schools, and why this is happening by using non-interfering data generation strategies. Furthermore, Johnson and Christensen (2010) stated that qualitative research is used to gain an understanding of people's experiences and perspectives on a certain phenomenon. In this study, an understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives was looked at. A qualitative approach was thus suitable for this study.

nature and is not about proving or falsifying hypotheses (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). Other characteristics of qualitative research, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), include:

- Behaviour is studied as it happens naturally without any control, manipulation, and externally enforced constraints.
- Takes into account the immediate and larger context.
- The researcher generally is an observer in the setting under study as an interviewer, observer or document and artefact collector and obtains data directly from the source.
- The focus is on participants perspectives on the meaning of events and actions and involves multiple realities as different people construct meaning from the same event (p. 321).

Some of these mentioned characteristics apply to this study. There was no control, manipulation and externally enforced constraint on participants; the researcher observed the setting as an interviewer and the study focused on the participants perspectives on parental involvement in both the privileged and underprivileged school involving the multiple realities constructed by participants from the same event.

Qualitative researchers usually argue that reality is a social construct (Johnson & Christensen, 2010) and thus in order to understand the world we need to focus on the context of a phenomenon (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004).

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is a framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place (Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima & Haider, 2011, p. 2083). The paradigm that this study followed is an interpretivist one. Interpretivism aims to understand a social phenomenon and give meaning to the world in which the participant lives in (Grix, 2010). Since this study aims to understand the social phenomenon of what is happening in privileged and underprivileged schools and also give meaning as to why this is happening, interpretivism was an appropriate paradigm to base this study in.

interpretivism (O'Hara, Carter, Dewis, Kay & Wainwright, 2011) as they view the world in various ways, and so the interpretivist thus focuses on the perspectives of individuals and groups of individuals (O'Hara et al., 2011). In interpretivism society does not have a fixed structure (Bartlett & Burton, 2012). The interactions between individuals create the social world (Burton & Bartlett, 2005). Interpretivism attempts to display how participants make choices in social situations (Burton & Bartlett, 2005) by interpreting events and acting in response (Bartlett & Burton, 2012). There is no one objective reality in interpretivism, but different versions of events.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research was conducted using a case study design. A case study is "the study of a social phenomenon" (Swanborn, 2010, p. 13) and the manner in which social data is organized in order to view a social reality (Best & Kahn, 2003). Gay et al. (2009) suggest that the focus is on a unit of study referred to as a bounded system such as individuals, classrooms or a school. Swanborn (2010) proposes that the study can be done within the boundaries of either one social system or a few social systems such as organisations, groups and communities. This study was conducted between two social systems, namely the privileged and underprivileged schools.

In qualitative research, case studies are the most preferred design (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). Gay et al. (2009) find case studies to be an appropriate design "when the researcher wants to answer a descriptive question (e.g., what happened?) or an exploratory question (e.g., how or why did something happen?)" (p. 427). This study seeks to:

- i) Determine the similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.
- ii) Investigate why there are similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.

Usually, cases studies are associated with the interpretivist approach where the focus is on making sense or on the social construction of reality (Heck, 2005). Case studies attempt to offer explanations of human activity in the real world taking into account the context in which it occurs (O'Hara et al., 2011).



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can do a single case study, a multiple case study, or a (p. 100). This study used a multiple case study, which involves

more than one case study that is connected in some way (Day Ashley, 2012). The two cases in this study were the schools that are connected in terms of parental involvement. The manner in which these schools were sampled is discussed in the following section.

3.5 SAMPLING

A sampling procedure refers to the choice of where to conduct a study and who will form the sample of participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A sample is a subset of a larger population and is used in situations where an investigation of an entire population is not feasible (Thomas, 2005). Since this is a qualitative research design, qualitative sampling procedures will be used.

3.5.1 The Study Site

Purposive sampling was employed to select the schools. In purposive sampling, the sample is purposely pre-specified from a group that the researcher is concerned with thus giving the researcher information of interest (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010). In purposive sampling, the sample is made up of cases that are information rich and which the researcher can get important data from (Martella, Nelson, Morgan & Marchand-Martella, 2013). The researcher samples with goals in mind and sites that are relevant to the research questions are selected (Bryman, 2012). Purposive sampling has two aims, to ensure all relevant constituencies of the research are covered and that enough diversity is included (Ritchie, Lewis, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). Purposive sampling was thus used because the schools are pre-specified based on their socio-economic backgrounds.

3.5.1.1 Brief Description of the Sampled Schools

The schools are Silver Oak and Riverside Primary Schools, situated in Phoenix, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. These schools were chosen based on the economic background of the parents.

Silver Oak Primary School

Silver Oak Primary is a public school with an enrolment of 1045 learners. Decisions on school governance are made through the SGB and the school management team. The physical structure of the school is well maintained and conducive to learning. Each classroom is

Silver Oak Primary School caters mostly for learners who are wealthy. This is not to say that these learners are wealthy, but in comparison to Riverside, they have more. This can be seen from the suburban area that the learners live in, their dressing, homes and ability to pay school fees.

Riverside Primary School

Riverside Primary is a public school with an enrolment of 2186 learners. Decisions on school governance are made through the SGB as well as the school management team. The physical structure of the school is well maintained. Each classroom is furnished to cater for every learner. The school climate is one that is conducive to learning. The majority of the learners come from poor backgrounds because most of their parents are unemployed or do not have a stable job. Their poverty is also evident from the learners' dressing and dwellings which have been seen by the researcher. A majority of the learners come from the informal settlements and shacks that neighbour Phoenix. These learners are exempt from paying school fees. In addition, the learners in this school rely on the National School Nutrition Programme for their daily lunch.

3.5.2 The Participants

Convenience sampling was used to select the participants from each school. Convenience sampling consists of choosing participants that are the nearest or are accessible and available (Given, 2008) and has knowledge of the setting (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). People that are willing and able to participate are selected to participate (Given, 2008). The parents and teachers from Riverside and Silver Oak Primary School participated in the study. The participants were chosen based on their willingness to participate and their availability.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p. 144), "there is no clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size depends on the purpose of the study, the nature of the population under scrutiny, the level of accuracy required". In addition, the cost of using a high number of participants is restrictive in terms of time and privacy (Dattalo, 2008). The sample consisted of three teachers and three parents from each school giving a total of 12 participants in the study. In support of this, Wiersma and Jurs (2009) contend that in qualitative research, purposeful sample sizes are small because they are information-rich cases which will be studied in depth. The aim is to obtain detailed understanding rather than a statistical representation; hence interpretivist studies are usually small scale (Burton & Bartlett, 2005).

because the study was centred on their involvement and information that was needed. Teachers were chosen because they work with parents in schools. They were in a good position to explain parental involvement in their respective schools.

3.5.2.1 Brief Description of Silver Oak Primary School Participants

Teachers and parents were recruited for this study by convenience sampling. The profile of interviewees is presented in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Highest qualification	Length of service
Teacher 1	F	41	Bachelor of Education	23 years
Teacher 2	F	46	Bachelor of Pedagogics	20 years
Teacher 3	F	43	Bachelor of Education	10 years

Figure 3.1 Profile of Interviewees (Silver Oak teachers)

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Highest qualification	Nature of work
Parent 1	F	33	Matric Exemption	Employed at a call center
Parent 2	F	40	Honours B.Ed.	Teacher
Parent 3	F	44	Matric Exemption	Unemployed

Figure 3.2 Profile of Interviewees (Silver Oak parents)

3.5.2.2 Brief Description of Riverside Primary School Participants

Teachers and parents were recruited for this study by convenience sampling. The profile of interviewees is presented in Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Highest qualification	Length of service
Teacher 4	M	36	Bachelor of Pedagogics	13 years
Teacher 5	F	26	Honours B.Ed.	4 years
Teacher 6	F	39	Bachelor of Pedagogics	10 years

Figure 3.3 Profile of Interviewees (Riverside teachers)

			Highest qualification	Nature of work
			Certificate in Education	Nurse aid at baby home
Parent 5	F	46	Degree in Nursing	Nurse
Parent 6	F	44	Matric Exemption	Unemployed

Figure 3.4 Profile of Interviewees (Riverside parents)

The data were then generated from the participants as mentioned in the next section.

3.6 DATA GENERATION PROCESS

In a case study, usually more than one data generation technique is used (Heck, 2005). In this study, data were generated using semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Interviews and questionnaires enable researchers to receive information from people and convert them into data (Tuckman & Harper, 2012).

3.6.1 Interview: Semi-structured Interview

Interviews are a favoured method in interpretivist studies (Burton & Bartlett, 2009) and are a primary source (Heck, 2005) of in-depth information in case studies (O’Hara et al., 2011). Interviews are scheduled interactions between two or more individuals where one person asks questions relating to a topic of interest and the other responds to these questions (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). This use of verbal interaction to gather data provides the opportunity to discover and obtain an in-depth account of participant’s experiences and views on a phenomena and the meaning that they place on those experiences (Walliman, 2006). The information that is generated would not necessarily be possible to obtain through observation or artefact collection (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). A semi-structured interview was used in this study.

A semi-structured interview, which is an interview where questions can be reorganised and rephrased to allow further probing about a phenomenon, was conducted in this study (Cohen, Manion & Morison, 2000). In a semi-structured interview, a set of questions are used (Heck, 2005) but not followed rigidly (Walliman, 2006). This set of questions serve as a guide where the responses that are made by the participant can be further questioned and explored by the researcher (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). This guide is referred to as an interview guide,



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(Wilson, 2013). In an interview guide, the aspects to be
en et al., 2011).

Parents and teachers from both schools were interviewed individually. The interviews were taped and lasted between 20-40 minutes, varying with each participant. Most of the interviews took place at the respective schools, after school hours in order to prevent disruption to the school lessons. The participants that were unavailable at school asked for the interviews to be done at their home to which the researcher agreed. All interviews were done in English, and all participants had stated that they understood English. Each participant was asked a set of questions from an interview guide (see Appendix F and G). These questions were guiding questions which were further elaborated on during each interview. The guiding questions were aimed at eliciting information about parental involvement in school.

A semi-structured interview was used in this study because this gives the researcher flexibility when questioning, during the interview (Miles & Gilbert, 2005). This enabled the researcher to probe the participants' responses further, covering aspects that may be significant to the participant. Miles and Gilbert (2005) state that semi-structured interviews are flexible and thus allow the researcher to change the questions during the interview thereby covering aspects that are important to individual participants. Nieuwenhuis (2007) states that the aim is to generate rich descriptive data in order to understand how participants construct their reality. The participants may also mention an aspect of the study that the researcher may not have considered before (Naicker, 2013). The flexibility that a semi-structured interview provides in a qualitative research makes it a highly recommended tool in data generation (Henning, van Ransburg and Smit, 2004). Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to explain and expand on questions in order to ensure that participants understand the question (Walliman, 2006).

The advantage of using a semi-structured interview, according to Walliman (2006) is that it generates data of depth and richness. However the disadvantage, like with most interviews are that it is time consuming to prepare, schedule and transcribe. In addition, participants may not be willing to share information (Naicker, 2013).

Questionnaire

Questions that must be answered by research participants (Gay et al., 2009). This study was conducted using an open-ended questionnaire. In an open-ended questionnaire, there is no pre-set yes-no answers (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004) and the participants provide their own response to the question (Babbie, 2013). Open-ended questions encourage participants to recount their experiences and offer an understanding of how they see the world around them (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Johnson and Christensen (2013) stated that questionnaires that contain open-ended questions are called qualitative questionnaires, which the researcher can use to find out how participants experience a phenomenon or why participants believe something happens.

At the end of each interview, participants were given the questionnaires by the researcher. These questionnaires were then completed and returned to the researcher on the following day to allow the participants enough time to answer the questions. All the questionnaires were completed and returned.

In this study, an open-ended questionnaire was used to obtain the views and experiences that the participants may not necessarily provide during the interview. A questionnaire can be used as a tool when participants may not want to share their experiences in an interview (Curtis, Murphy & Shields, 2014) and may provide the participant with confidence and honesty when answering the questions (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). In addition, participants may find it easier to write than to talk (Walliman, 2006) and thus a questionnaire would be suitable in that context. Once all the data were generated, it was then analysed as discussed in the next section.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Kgaffe (2001) defines data analysis as a process of systematically searching and arranging the materials that the researcher generates. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is used to identify, group and summarise findings (Pope et al., 2007). The data were transcribed, coded and then themes were looked for in the coded data (King & Horrocks, 2010).

steps in thematic analysis:

- Familiarise yourself with the data: The researcher must become familiar with their data by reading and re-reading and noting down initial analytical observations.
- Generate codes: Labels are assigned to important features of the data of relevance. Every data item is coded and then collated.
- Search for themes: In this phase, themes are searched for and all the coded data is then collated into the relevant theme.
- Review themes: The themes are checked in relation to the coded extract and the full data-set. Themes may be collapsed together into one theme; split into two or more themes; or discarded.
- Define and name themes: The essence of each theme is identified and appropriate names are constructed for each theme thereof. The researcher then writes a detailed analysis of each theme.
- Produce the report: An analytic narrative and data extracts are integrated to tell a story about the data, placing it in context that is relative to literature.

The researcher familiarised herself with the data by transcription, followed by a careful read and re-read of the data and noted down ideas, as suggested by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Transcription is process of converting recorded material into text and is thus done before beginning the analysis of the interview data (King & Horrocks, 2010). This was followed by the second stage which involves coding. Coding requires observing patterns in the data, labelling them with a code (Joffe & Yardley, 2004) and collating data that is pertinent to each code (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, patterns were carefully looked for, codes were produced. Once the data had been coded and collated there was a long list of different codes which needed to be re-focussed as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The third stage involved searching for themes in which codes are collated and data for each relevant theme is put together (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme is a 'specific pattern of meaning found in the data' (Joffe, 2011, p. 209). Themes were then reviewed in the fourth stage by checking if the themes worked relative to the coded extract and data set because some themes may collapse into each other while others may not be an actual theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the fifth stage (refer to chapter 4), themes were named and defined by identifying the main idea of what the theme is about and then refined by determining what aspect each theme captured (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Stage six, which is the final report, can also be found in chapter 4.

is the reader being able to trust the findings and that the study is worth paying attention to (Sensing, 2011). In order for a study to be deemed trustworthy some researchers consider various aspects that need to be looked at. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) mentioned that to ensure trustworthiness, one must consider the aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility refers to the results being credible and believable and that the findings describe reality (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). One way to enhance credibility involves triangulation which is the use of different methods (Shenton, 2004) and sources in generating data (Heck, 2005). This study used two methods (interviews and questionnaires) as well as different sources (the teachers and parents) to obtain information. Credibility was also enhanced by giving participants the chance to refuse participation leaving only those that were willing to offer data (Shenton, 2004). The researcher also made it clear that she was there on her own capacity and not that of the schools and that no information from the individual interviews will be shared with the schools, as suggested by Shenton (2004) to enhance credibility.

Transferability refers to the findings being applicable to other similar situations or that have some similarity in another comparable context (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Gay et al. (2009) suggested that providing background data to establish the context and a detailed description of data can enhance transferability. The contexts of both schools were thus adequately described in section 3.5, to allow comparison to other similar studies.

Dependability refers to the research being trusted over time and requires the researcher to thoroughly document the context in which the research was conducted (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Confirmability refers to the researcher being neutral in data analysis and interpretation (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Triangulation, which reduces the effects of researcher bias, was undertaken, while a detailed methodological description which allows the study to be scrutinised was done (Shenton, 2004).

3.9 ETHICS

Ethics refers to beliefs about what is proper or improper, or right or wrong (Narain, 2005). Before data generation can occur, ethical considerations must be taken into account (Bean, 2005). Ethical clearance was first sought from the ethical clearance committee of the

Permission to obtain data was also sort from the schools conducting the study. Permission was also obtained from the participants in the study. Consent forms were given to all participants. They were made aware of the purpose of the study and of their right to withdraw at any time. According to Nojaja (2009), research participants should be given a choice of participating and be made aware of the nature of the study; and have the right to withdraw from the study. Participants volunteered in the study and were not forced to partake. In this study, the participant's right to privacy is respected and confidentiality ensured. The real names of the schools and participants involved will not be disclosed, pseudonyms will be used. Lichtman (2010) states that ethical consideration should include non-maleficence (the researcher must do no harm to the participants) and privacy and anonymity (the identity of the participants must not be revealed in anyway). No participants were harmed in this study and no identifying information about each participant was revealed.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Cohen et al. (2000), generalisabilty is a limitation that is applicable to this study. Since this case study used a small number of participants, the findings cannot be generalised to a larger population. However, in qualitative research, findings are context bound and do not draw conclusions that can be generalised to a larger population (Gay et al., 2009).

3.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter three provided an account of the research approach, paradigm and design used. I then described the sampling procedure employed, the data generation process and method of data analysis. Measures to ensure trustworthiness, ethics and limitations of the study were then discussed. The data analysis and findings of the study will be discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined and discussed the research design and methodology adopted in this study. This chapter focuses on the data analysis and discussion of findings from the data generated from the interviews and questionnaires. The data is presented using themes and categories generated from the semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Further, in presenting the data, the researcher used verbatim quotations to ensure that the voices of the participants remain intact in the presentation. Literature is also infused in the discussion of the findings.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were grouped into themes and subthemes. The main broad themes are shown in Figure 4.1 below:

THEMES	CATEGORIES
Theme One: Experiences of parental involvement in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and support of children by parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Involvement in children’s school work</i> ○ <i>Supporting children socially</i>
Theme Two: Ecological factors that enable and constrain parental involvement in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological factors that enable parental involvement in school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Roles and responsibility</i> ○ <i>Parents’ aspirations and expectations</i> ○ <i>The nature and adequacy of communication</i> ○ <i>School leadership and support</i> • Ecological factors that constrain parental involvement in school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Working conditions of parents</i> ○ <i>The single parent</i> ○ <i>Absence of parents</i> ○ <i>Socio-economic factors</i> ○ <i>School leadership</i>

Figure 4.1 Themes in relation to parental involvement in schools in Phoenix

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

relation to parental involvement in both privileged and underprivileged schools were grouped under the theme “care and support of children by parents” that emerged from the data.

4.2.1.1 Care and Support of Children by Parents

All the participants in this study indicated that parents in both privileged and underprivileged schools show interest in their children’s education and provide care and support in various and different ways as discussed in the following categories:

- *Involvement in children’s school work*
- *Supporting children socially*

4.2.1.1.1 Involvement in Children’s School Work

Evidence from data indicates that generally parents from both the privileged and underprivileged communities are involved in their children’s education. According to the parents’ responses in both Silver Oak and Riverside Primary, parents understand and speak to their children about the importance of education. Parents in both schools also check their children’s homework daily to ensure that it is completed and ensure that their children have completed their projects and study when it is exam time.

“I make sure that every day I check his books to see if his homework is completed.”
(Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

“I check the exercise books and I assist with the homework if he got the homework.”
(Parent 6, Riverside School)

Some participants indicated that another way of being involved in children’s education was by encouraging children to do independent study at home. In some instances the participants related efforts that parents make to ensure that their children do their studies by providing extra learning material and also visiting the local library. According to the parents from both schools, they sometimes get educational materials as stated:

“I got like educational DVDs and books.” (Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

Mandla to assist him with the English.” (Parent 6,

“...we visit the local library once a week.” (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

“...they got a card for the library. They used to go borrow some books or go to library.” (Parent 5, Riverside School)

The above responses thus indicate that participants from both the privileged and underprivileged communities are involved in their children’s school work. The parents are involved in academic activities such as checking homework and ensuring that their children are engaged in extra learning activities. The responses provided by teachers are in line with what the parent participants said. In both schools teachers mentioned that there are some parents that enquire about homework. This indicates that there are parents that are checking their children’s homework.

“There’s lots of parents that will ask what’s the homework. If there’s nothing given in writing, they will ask, if they here to fetch their child, they will ask is there any homework. And there’s some parents who will actually, you’ll see in their homework books, they give them work.”(Teacher 2, Silver Oak School)

“Yes all the time they [parents] enquiring...they get homework on a daily basis.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

The above quotations show that parents whether being from privileged or underprivileged communities are concerned, practical and employ a variety of strategies to get involved in their children’s education. These findings are consistent with some previous studies. In a study by Huntsinger and Jose (2009) that included Chinese parents, it was found that the parents help with homework, monitor home activities and orientate their children’s lives towards academic tasks. Erlendsdóttir (2010) also found that the parents assist their children with homework, discuss schoolwork with their children and follow the child’s progress closely. Similarly Bojuwoye and Narain (2008), who used parents with mostly low economic status in their study, found that parents helped their children with homework assignments.

ally

ow their social activities, that they are involved in, have a potential towards their children's well-being, such as the annual school sports. Besides taking active role in school sports, another involvement that the participants identified was that parents want to be or are involved in their children's behaviour while at school. They seek information about the type of behaviour their children portray in school, with the intention to assist teachers.

"Because I want to see how my child is performing, is he behaving or is he misbehaving. Is there any complaints from the teacher? All that I want to find out."
(Parent 3, Silver Oak School)

"Besides checking their homework daily, I also ask for updates on their behaviour from their teachers..." (Parent 5, Riverside School)

The participating teachers in this study stated that often when children show unacceptable behaviour they contact the responsible parent. More often parents have been responding positively towards their children's behaviour at school.

"They [parents] do respond in a good way because they come to school." (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

"...they [parents] do come through and they are very positive and they always want to make a change [regarding behaviour]." (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

Previous literature has also found that parents want to participate in school activities and show an immense interest in their children's learning (Crozier & Davies, 2007; Malakolunthu et al., 2014; Park et al., 2011). Sottie (2011) however found that single parents did not check their children's progress. This is inconsistent with the current research where all the participants of the underprivileged school are single parents who check on their children's progress. Whereas parents enquired about their children's progress, in the study by Crozier and Davies (2007), they did not enquire about the behaviour. This is also in contrast with this study which found that parents enquire about the learners' behaviour.

Parents participate in school events the levels of their involvement. Data from the participants of Silver Oak Primary indicate that parents have formulated a variety of social activities to be involved in and assisting at school. Some of the participants indicated that parents are involved in educational tours and children's sports. The parents have also formed feeding committees to ensure children have lunch at school events. In addition the parents are involved in classroom activities such as art-based activities; development of domestic skills such as baking; and reading. The parents also voluntarily assist in learner discipline before the assembly starts.

"...they have workshop in, it was a science centre at gateway, I did take him there."
(Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

"I often assisted with the mini cricket because I've done coaching before so I used to assist with the mini cricket and wherever else, with invitations, printing, any computer work that needs to be done." (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

"In my class I got a few parents who help with the reading programme that we have there...during our sports period we have, the parents will have training, sports training, sports time. Reading programme we have in school and in our class. At school level we have the group of parents who help on sports day with refreshments, feeding the children at our awards day, our deb's ball. Then also we have a group of parents who help with our sport activities on a Saturday if they [children] going out to play."
(Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

"They [parents] help when we doing painting, when we doing baking, when we doing reading...parentally assisting in the learners discipline before assembly, coming to school on the way, in the grounds if the parents are there, even after school they do assist on their own voluntary." (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

Parental involvement in schools is thus not only concerned with the cognitive development of their children. Rather, it should also focus on holistic approach to children's development (Khanare, 2012). Parental involvement according to the participants in this study encompasses supporting their children in different sports, training and supervising children.

nts offer training session and prepare children for sports

“I make sure my children are going to develop to their full potential in all aspects of their life. So we adequately equip them with all the different sporting activities. For example my son goes to karate on a Tuesday and a Thursday. My daughter on a Wednesday goes to dancing classes. Mondays it’s balvai class. So every day of the week there’s something. Even Saturdays they’ve got these swimming lessons... so in that way they are holistically developed.” (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

“...we do have mini cricket that parents attend and supervise and train the learners as well. Cricket, netball volleyball where parents voluntary coming on board to assist us on that.” (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

The above responses indicate that parents’ involvement in schools goes beyond academic activities of their children and encompasses being involved in social activities of the school as well. Erlendsdóttir (2010) in her study found that parental involvement in education was more than checking children’s homework. It is a passion of the soul as parents do more than signing the homework of their children. The involvement of parents from Riverside Primary however, differs greatly from the involvement displayed by the parents of Silver Oak Primary. In Riverside Primary, some parents participate in school activities such as debating and sports day. However parents’ responses indicate that not all parents can participate or assist with activities. Parent 5 of Riverside Primary indicates that she does not participate in any school activity with a simple “No”. At Riverside Primary, according to teacher 6 there are only a few parents who assist at sports day:

“The odd one or two that’s coming and assisting.”

Parents at Riverside Primary also stated that they are unable to take their children to visit places of educational interest or get them involved in any extramural activities. When the parents were asked if their children were involved in extramural activities or are taken on educational tours, parent 5 expresses:

“No it’s because they are still young and I don’t have time for that.”

at Silver Oak Primary volunteer their time and services
Riverside Primary are unable to. Parents at Silver Oak
Primary also take their children to places of educational interest and ensure that their children
are engaged in extramural activities whereas the parents at Riverside Primary are unable to do
this. Similarly, Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) found that parents of low socio-economic status
are not involved in school-based activities. Graves and Wright (2011) found that some
parents are more involved in home activities such as reading with their children while others
were more involved in school tasks like volunteering and attending meetings, irrespective of
economic background. This is consistent with the current study. In this study it was found
that parents from Silver Oak Primary were involved in both home and school activities whilst
parents from Riverside Primary show more involvement at home than compared to school.
Cooper et al. (2010) also found that whilst poor parents may be involved in home-learning
activities, they are less likely to be involved in school activities.

The findings in this study indicate that parental involvement in underprivileged and
privileged schools is diverse and complex. There is a general consensus from participants that
parental involvement in school is fundamental for children's academic development and as
well as for the holistic development of these children beyond. This implies that parents know
that they have to be involved in school matters and in their children's education as
mentioned in SASA (RSA, 1996b). However, it was also noticeable from the findings that the
degree of parental involvement differs from school to school. For example, in the privileged
school, parental involvement was active and high whereas it was minimal in the
underprivileged school. Literature shows that success of parental involvement depends on a
number of ecological factors within which parents find themselves in (Mbokodi, 2008;
Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Mncube, 2009) which needs to be explored, understood and
sometimes disrupted (De Lange, Oliver, Geldenhuys & Mitchell, 2012). In the following
theme, I discuss some of the factors that enable and constrain parental involvement in schools
participating in this study.

FACTORS THAT ENABLE AND CONSTRAIN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

In response to the second research question which explored why there are similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools, the findings revealed that parent involvement comprises a diverse grouping of individuals who are unique and have diverse ideas about why they are involved in schools. The themes that emerged from the data indicate that parental involvement is influenced by many ecological factors which may enable or constrain parental involvement in schools. These factors are both intra and interpersonal.

4.2.2.1 Ecological Factors that Enable Parental Involvement in School

The majority of the participants in this study indicated the different ways in which parents are or should be involved in school. The enabling factors include intra and interpersonal relationships within which parents find themselves in. The following categories emerged in relation to why parents are involved in the school as I turn to discuss in the following sub-sections:

- *Roles and responsibility*
- *Parents' aspirations and expectations*
- *The nature and adequacy of communication*
- *School leadership and support*

4.2.2.1.1 Roles and Responsibility

All participants from both schools felt that it is the parents' role and responsibility to be involved in the school or in their children's education. Parental involvement in education would also mean being *'concerned'*, *'be part of'*, and *'get involved'* in their children's life at school as shown in the following quotations:

"In getting involved in your child's education means that you're a concerned parent."
(Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

"I'm concerned with my child learning in school." (Parent 5, Riverside School)

*part of our children's education...we should take
ant for parents to get involved because we as parents we
must push our children for education.” (Parent 3, Silver Oak School)*

“Surely you'd want to know what they doing.” (Parent 4, Riverside School)

“You need to involved into your children's life at school.” (Parent 6, Riverside School)

Some parents see their roles as sharing responsibilities with teachers, thus as co-partners in children's education and making sure that children demonstrate acceptable behaviour academically and socially.

“Because I want to see how my child is performing, is he behaving or is he misbehaving...so if we parents don't take part in that, we cannot expect the teachers to do everything. We must also take responsibility. The teacher can do only a percentage but we the parents have the children at home so we must make sure that we accomplish this.” (Parent 3, Silver Oak School)

“Because if you not involved in children's education then they are actually going to take education for granted and education plays a big role in children's life because it's going to make them successful and to take them further into education studies.” (Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

“...they [parents] can know how the behaviour of the child or how's the how is the child lacking in school with his or her studies.” (Parent 5, Riverside School)

A parent from Riverside School expresses that working with the teachers is necessary:

“It's necessary because most of the time the children sometimes, they bunk at school and you didn't notice that. But if most of the time you come and be close at school with the teachers, it make the child to be sometimes not correct, but most of the time he comes right.” (Parent 6, Riverside School)

ological factors such as parents' notions on their role and children are factors that motivate and thus enable them to become involved in education. Literature however tells a contrasting tale. Some studies found that parents felt that the education of the child is the responsibility of the school and thus do not need to get involved (Maphanga, 2006; Naicker, 2013; Singh et al., 2004). Parents feel that their responsibility is only to send the child to school and the school must take over from that point (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Many parents view the school and teacher as being competent enough to deal with their children (Singh et al., 2004; Wherry, 2009) and thus do not see the education of their child as their responsibility (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) found that if parents do not take on their role and responsibility of finding out what is happening and do not give children attention, the learner will most probably feel neglected and find no point in making an effort to study.

In Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres, it is recognised that schools and families have shared responsibilities towards the development of the learner (Kgaffe, 2001). Acknowledgement of the shared responsibilities between educators and parents pushes the spheres of family and school influence together and increases interaction between the school and parent (Epstein, 1996). Thus the theory posits that the most effective schools and families have overlapping, shared goals concerning their children (Michael et al., 2012).

In this study, parents seemed to have value in their roles and understand that their roles offer them responsibility in shaping the well-being of their children. The acknowledgement of shared responsibilities will thus increase interaction between the parent and school. The parents also seem to understand that their roles mean empowering them as co-partners in education. Apart from their roles and responsibilities, other factors also influence their participation as discussed next.

Expectations

Aspiration and expectations for their children enhances their involvement in education. Most of the parents in both schools have high aspirations and expectations for their children and this makes them want to get involved in their children's education to ensure that the children meet those aspirations and expectations.

"Because I know in that way he's going to be successful in the future because I want him to become somebody...I know his capability and potential and I know that he can do it...you need to get good results you need to get 80% and over and otherwise you will not be able to go into varsity or college or university if you don't produce good results." (Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

"I want them to develop to the best of their potential...I push them to the limit where they do their best within their potential." (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

"I want the best for my son...very high expectation." (Parent 3, Silver Oak School)

"...to see them going further with their education." (Parent 5, Riverside School)

"But I just tell him education is too important my son because you just have only me you don't have a father, you need to learn to be educated because without education you are nothing...I want him to be a paediatrician." (Parent 6, Riverside School)

There were no contributions made by teachers of both schools with regard to parents' aspirations and expectations. Parents at both the privileged and underprivileged school exhibit high aspirations and expectations for their children and want their children to do well at school in order to fulfil this. This therefore enhances parents' involvement in education. Literature shows that some parents instinctively have high aspirations and expectations for their children, while others do not. Huntsinger and Jose (2009) found that the Chinese view education as important and thus have high aspirations and expectations for their children. James (2008) found that when parents have high aspirations and expectations for their children, their children adopt the same attitude. In contrast to this study, Lee and Bowen (2006) found that the underprivileged parents were less optimistic about their children's future.

of Communication

on is a factor that can enhance parental involvement greatly, if it is used effectively. Participants mentioned that the schools and parents interact to stay updated on the child's progress and behaviour. The parents mentioned that teachers contact and inform them:

"...all the time [the teachers contact to inform about progress and behaviour]."
(Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

"...they want us to know what's happening in school." (Parent 6, Riverside School)

*"...they contact me if there's something, maybe if they want me to come to school."
"Because when like my son has a problem with his learning they use to tell me he don't
finish the work he doesn't do this. They use to tell me."* (Parent 5, Riverside School)

The teachers of both schools also mentioned the need to inform parents of their children's progress and behaviour.

"Whenever I have a problem with the child's work, the child's behaviour, the child did not learn his words or did not do the homework, the parent is contacted...behaviour wise, if I find that if a child is not normal like how he use to behave then the parent is made aware." (Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

"We constantly provide feedback to parents about their children's progress...if they have behavioural problems or if you see certain changes in learners, it is a cause for concern, so you do communicate for that." (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

"Contact specific parents if there's a problem with the child's behaviour or the child's work. Then specific parents are called upon to address the issue." (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

Parents are thus contacted when necessary to discuss their children's progress and if their children are performing poorly or misbehaving. In this way, not only is the parent involved, but also both the parent and school work together to improve the learner's performance or

communicate with the parents in remediating the child. Epstein's views, the school and community to understand each other's views and to establish a common goal for learners (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005). The goal of ensuring that learners perform well is one that belongs to both the teacher and parent and thus communication between the two is necessary (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) mentioned that teachers must inform parents about their children's progress and parents must also enquire about their children's performance. Communication between the two is important because challenges that the learner may face can be found and addressed; and teachers can also tell parents what they must do to help their children (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). The schools in this study practice this view set on in literature by Makgopa and Mokhele (2013).

The nature in which the schools put this into practice was also highlighted in the participants' response. Participants mentioned that the schools employ various methods of communication, between parents and the school, which occur verbally as well as written communication. These two aspects will be mentioned in the following sections.

Verbal Communication

Both schools employed methods such as phone calls and meetings as a means to interact and liaise with parents, informing them about their child and giving parents the opportunity to be a part of their children's education. The teachers indicated the ways in which they interact and communicate with parents verbally.

“We have parents meeting, we call the parent to view the learners work and on that note we give parents hope and motivation to be part of the education, in their learners. So when they come here to school, the feedback they get from us teachers will motivate them to help their learners to be more involved in them at home.” (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

“...when we have a parents' meeting we liaise with them.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

is available on every communication/letter sent to the
him regarding queries/concerns...the teachers number
is also made available so that parents can phone the teacher if there are any
problems/concerns that the parents have.” (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

“...we have a portfolio with the children’s telephone numbers so we need to phone who
we can.” (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

The schools also used parents meetings as a means of verbal communication. Parents are invited to come and view the children’s work, talk to the teachers and are provided with feedback of their children’s behaviour and progress. Shezi (2012) also found that schools and parents communicated through meetings. Chowa et al., (2012b) explains that in some schools this occurs because parents are mandated to attend parent meetings. However parents cannot always attend meetings. Naicker (2013) found that when schools have meetings in the afternoon and at night, parents who travel by public transport are unable to attend. In this study, parent meetings at Riverside Primary are held on the weekend to accommodate parents who come home late from work during the week days.

“We also have parent meetings on the weekend. Parents work until late on the weekdays and some also have no transport to come at night on the weekday. So we have it at around 1pm on the weekend to accommodate the parents.” (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

This accommodation is to enhance parental involvement at school meetings. However although parents and teachers may interact through parent meetings, the number of parents at Riverside Primary that attend meetings is lower than that of Silver Oak Primary. Parents at Silver Oak Primary mentioned that they attend all meetings while some parents at Riverside Primary said that they are unable to do go for all meetings.

“Every meeting I must be there.” (Parent 3, Silver Oak School)

however said that she had only been to a parent meeting

“Once [been to a parent meeting]. Sometimes I ask my step son to go with them when I’m at work.” (Parent 5, Riverside School)

The teachers also indicated the number of parents that do attend parent meetings. According to teachers’ responses from both schools, the turnout rate at parent meetings is higher at Silver Oak Primary than at Riverside Primary.

“Sometimes out of a class of 40 you’d get plus minus 24.” (Teacher 2, Silver Oak School)

“We get, from a rating of 1 to 10, we get 8.” (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

The teachers of Riverside Primary also pointed out the number of parents that attend meetings and emphasised the poor attendance rate.

“Very very poor. In terms of, ok if you have a class of 46, you may just get about 10 parents that pitch up.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

“Very poor. About a handful, 5 or 6 parents in a class of 45...attendance at parents meetings is poor. A handful of parents only attend and when they do attend they just pick the child’s report up and go. Parental involvement was very bad at school so the principal strategically made teachers release reports on parent meeting day. This strategy hasn’t worked however as very few parents come to the parents meeting even though their child’s report is being issued on this day.” (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

A majority of the parents at Silver Oak Primary attend all parent meetings and there is thus a higher parent turnout rate compared to Riverside Primary where parents attend a few meetings and thus there is a low rate of parents at meetings. Similarly, previous studies point out that there is poor attendance of parents at meetings at underprivileged schools (Donkor et al., 2013; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mestry & Grobler, 2007; Michael et al., 2012). Singh et al. (2004) in their study conducted at an underprivileged school found that when parents are called to school by the teacher to discuss the progress of the child, they never attend.

the parents that participated in this study mentioned that in the school. The parents, like the teachers, have also employed the use verbal communication to enquire about their children's progress and behaviour. The parents mentioned that they phone the teachers when they need to find out about something.

"I normally phone the teachers to see how he's doing and once in a while I go visit and see the class teacher." (Parent 3, Silver Oak School)

"I just phone and talk to Mr Dlomo [teacher] like often about things that are happening in school because I want to know what's happening in school...if I got a problem I just go straight to the teacher and talk to the teacher I didn't understand that." (Parent 6, Riverside School)

The teachers also concurred that some parents do communicate with them verbally on issues pertaining to school and their children.

"Whenever the parent comes, when the parent sees me...they want to know how the child did in the test. Is there any homework, is there any extra reading, you know material that's required or available. It's mainly the work and behaviour of the child [they phone]." (Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

The above responses indicate that in both schools, some parents phone the school or visit the teacher when they need to clarify something or to find out how their children are doing. In contrast, Narain (2005) found that some parents do not communicate with the school. In this study, parents of Silver Oak Primary appear to be more enthusiastic about contacting the school than some parents of Riverside Primary. Whereas all parents in Silver Oak Primary indicated that they make the initiative and actively contact the school, some parents in Riverside Primary are passive and wait for the school to contact them.



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ated that she contacts the school “At least once a week”.

“Because often children, once they feel that there’s communication between the home and school they know then they cannot take chances so the child would know exactly, I know exactly what’s going on in the classroom.”

“Not often [contact school] unless I receive correspondence, because from my side I know what he is doing at home. I don’t know unless there’s something wrong, if I’m told about it.” (Parent 4, Riverside School)

This suggests that while communication may come to some parents as a natural process, others may find it difficult to initiate communication and thus remain passive. In Quebec, it was also found that some parents are passive and become involved if the schools invite them to (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). However, verbal communication is not the only way in which one can communicate as the schools in this study highlight that communication also occurs through writing as mentioned in the next section.

Written Communication

Both schools employed methods such as questionnaires, letters, messaging services and a homework/communication diary as a means to communicate with parents. In both schools, parents are given the freedom to express their views, concerns or objections through questionnaires and letters. Parents are also notified of their children’s behaviour through letters.

“...questionnaires are sent out asking for your opinions, or views, or suggestions as to how to improve or whether you are for an idea or against an idea.” (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

“We also have, in every letter that’s given out to parents has a feedback column at the bottom where parents are invited to write down what they feel about a certain aspect of the school.” (Teacher 5, Riverside School)



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...leaving then we send them letters home to get parent (Riverside School)

In his study, Shezi (2012) found that the school and parents communicated through letters, notices and announcements. The use of letters as a means of communication is also employed in the schools under study.

Both schools also display practicality by embracing technology through the use of instant messaging services as a means of communication. The participants spoke off some of the messaging services that they use to communicate. A parent from Silver Oak School finds the use of a Short Message Service (SMS) effective and explains:

“I ask for clarification by SMS...SMS’s work better because you not disturbing them and at their convenience they will respond.” (Parent 2, (Silver Oak School)

“Then I have a few parents on my phone right, I either phone them and I have a few parents on BBM also and on WhatsApp.” (Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

“...and also maybe sometimes SMS [through which communication occurs].” (Teacher 6, Riverside School).

Communication through these means appears to be convenient and effective. In his study on instant messaging services in the South African context, Shambare (2014) spoke off such services as being a simple, cost effective and a user-friendly way to communicate. Apart from technological advances, the schools in this study also utilise conventional methods such as a communication book/diary when they need to notify parents of something, or if they are having problems with the child and the parent needs to come to school to discuss any issue pertaining to the child.

“...we have diaries that interact with the parent and the teacher. So we write a message what we need to say the parent and we get a feedback from the parent. That’s one of our ways, that interaction with us, to help the parent get more involved in their parental skills as taking care of their child in education.” (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

book. If there's any problems that you see the learners
always send a message home so that their parents can get
involved." (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

"We do we have a communication book and we write messages to them if their child is doing badly or they need to come to school...yes we use the communication book, if it gets very bad then we send a letter home for compulsory parent interview or we call the parent." (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

The participants mentioned that most communication occurs through communication books/diaries. The teachers write messages to the parents in this book as a means to get parents involved with their children's goings-on in education. This does not only signify that parents should just be informed about their children but also indicates that they must collaborate with the teachers. Lemmer and van Wyk (2004) also found that some schools use diaries as a means to establish connection between the home and school, like the schools in this study.

Contradictory to this study, Crozier and Davies (2007) found that some schools do not readily communicate with parents about their children's goings-on. In this study the schools communicated with parents. Contacting and communicating with some parents however is not very easy. The teachers mentioned that they experience difficulties communicating with some parents.

"Then I send a letter home and if that doesn't work then sometimes I have to actually call the parent because it gets to such a state where the child is not making any progress." (Teacher 2, Silver Oak School)

The teachers at Silver Oak Primary mention that it is mostly with the weak learners' parents that they experience a lack of communication.

"...it's only the bright children's parents that come and it's only the interested, and the weakest of the weak children's parents will never attend. Maybe from about 15 parents, 5 will attend or 3 will attend. So now we have to still send letters to say we need you to

...work, because your child is not progressing.” (Teacher 1,

At Riverside Primary, there are just a few parents that contact and respond to the teachers.

“A few parents, maybe about 3 or 4 in a class of 45 contact me often to find out about the child’s progress and how the child is doing.” (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

“...very few do respond and sign the book most of them don’t write anything, don’t sign.” (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

The school employs various methods to communicate with parents and while there are some parents in both privileged and underprivileged settings that do communicate with the school, there are others that do not. This finding can relate to the study by Mbokodi and Singh (2011) who found that there was one way communication from the schools to the homes only. Bojuwoye and Narain (2008) also found that participants were less involved in school-home communication. Naicker (2013) found that teachers want to discuss learner performance and behaviour with parents. However, according to teachers, some parents did not care to know about their children’s progress (Naicker, 2013).

Narain (2005) found that some parents also do not understand English well and thus do not communicate with the school. This may attest as to why some parents at Silver Oak Primary do not respond to letters. However, communication at Riverside Primary is done in both English and isiZulu to enhance involvement, but parents still do not respond readily.

“...notices are done in isiZulu and English so that parents who don’t understand English are able to understand the notice in Zulu.” (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

Naicker (2013) found that parents avoid school because they do not understand English. Kgaffe (2001) pointed that schools need to evaluate the types of communication sent to parents and consider those who do not speak the same language or cannot read properly. This is the case at Riverside Primary where notices are also done in isiZulu to accommodate parents who speak and understand the language.

and that at Riverside Primary, there is a teacher that the visits to communicate with parents. When the need arises, the teacher assigned to do home visits is asked to do so.

“...we communicate with the teacher that’s in charge of going to do home visits.”
(Teacher 4, Riverside School)

The home visits can therefore be seen as a factor that builds communication between parents and the school and thus enhances parental involvement in education. Similarly in a study by Lemmer (2009) home visits were undertaken by teachers in all schools to strengthen communication with the parents. Drawn from her theory, Epstein (1997) has identified communication between school and home as a strategy to enhance parental involvement. According to Epstein’s theory of overlapping spheres, schools do not function in isolation and thus families, schools and communities must collaborate in educating the learner (Kgaffe, 2001). Collaborations can improve school climate, provide support to families, increase the skills of parents, and connect families in the school and community (Epstein, 1996). Such collaborations come not only from communication, but are also enhanced through school leadership and support.

4.2.2.1.4 School Leadership and Support

Both the privileged and underprivileged schools, despite barriers, employ strategies to enhance and support parental involvement. Communication with parents, as mentioned previously, was one of the strategies. Some other strategies include giving parents the opportunity to exhibit their ideas.

“If maybe there’s a meeting the principal just give the time for the parent to talk.”
(Parent 6, Riverside School)

Parents are offered support in terms of guiding them with their children’s educational needs as a parent from Silver Oak Primary mentions:

“...[the school] guide me with his extra lessons that he needs to attend.” (Parent 2, Silver Oak School)

an opportunity to engage parents with their children's learning. Earlier, parents mentioned that this was one way in which they are involved with their children's learning at home. Parents must then sign the homework to show that they have assisted with and checked the homework.

"...in my grade every week homework is given in English and maths. Parents have to sit, explain, give the child more examples and we make sure the homework is signed. If the parent signs the homework then we know the parent sat with the child and worked."

(Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

"Lots of homework activities given to the children that parents can help with, like projects about their culture, spelling and timetables and other activities, maths and English that parents could help their children with...we have a homework book that the parent supposed to sign to say they checked the homework." (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

The schools employed strategies to involve parents. Shezi (2012) also found that some schools promote parental involvement despite the barriers that are present. The schools in this study view homework as a means of involving parents with their children's education. The educators teach at school, and then expect the parent to reconcile the child's learning at home. In this way both the teacher and parent are working together to ensure that the child learns. Singh et al. (2004, p.306) used the term "Masifunde" which according to Felix et al. (2008, p.100) means "let us educate together". The "us" refers to parents and teachers (Felix et al., 2008). Homework is one way of getting parents involved with education at home and is a mechanism of connecting home to school (Felix et al., 2008). Based on Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres, she also ascertains that the school must provide support for learning at home as this interaction will link the school and home atmosphere (Kgaffe, 2001). Parents' role in supporting homework is thus seen as a collaboration between the parent and school (Felix et al., 2008). A study by Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) found that teachers feel that parents must not do the homework for the learners but rather should guide them and assist them when they get answers incorrect. The teachers feel that parents must find extra work for learners that are related to what was taught in school (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Singh et al. (2004) found that parental involvement in homework is very important and parents who play no role in their children's homework contribute to their children's poor performance. In

Schools were expected to read and sign the homework book. Parents have been involved by checking the homework. In contrast, Felix et al. (2008) found that in the affluent schools parents had to sign the homework book while in the poor schools parents did not have to sign the homework book/diary.

In addition to homework, it was mentioned that at Riverside Primary, reading booklets are also given to learners to supplement learning at home and call for parental involvement.

“We do give them reading booklets which has words and sentences and stories which they can look at and go over with the learner so they know what to teach them.”
(Teacher 6, Riverside School)

Parents in both schools are also afforded the opportunity to volunteer at school. As mentioned earlier, parents are able to volunteer in the reading programme and sports. They can also volunteer to help maintain the school infrastructure if they are able to. Derived from her theory, Epstein (1997) has also identified volunteering at school as a means to enhance parental involvement.

“Sports time, reading programme we have in school and in our class. At school level we have the group of parents who help on sports day with refreshments, feeding the children at our awards day, our deb’s ball. Then also we have a group of parents who help with our sport activities on a Saturday if they going out to play, if we have some parents that help there, mainly it is to go with the child and to be there.” (Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

“They can volunteer as parent aids, they are more than welcome to, or other infrastructure or gardening. They can also volunteer.”(Teacher 5, Riverside School)

Parents are invited to the learners’ social events in which they can participate or assist their children. The teachers mentioned some of the schools social activities that parents can get involved in.



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deb's ball we have market days, so we allow the parents to make and put towards their child's form." (Teacher 3, Silver Oak School)

"Walk against abuse, the AIDS awareness walk, sports at school, or concert and deb's ball, and grandparent's day in which parents can become involved." (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

Both schools have a functional SGB which parents can join and the SGB makes the decisions of the school.

"If the school needs to make any other decisions then the governing body is called in and they have a meeting and then they discuss. They take a decision with the principal, and the DP is present, the secretary is present and one is a staff rep that's present and the governing body."(Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

"We do have a governing body which is made up of parents and it's open to everyone to be a part of so when you do the elections you can be elected if you interested. And when it comes to decisions of the school or which teachers are taken into the school or what is been done, they are a part of the decisions made." (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

According to Epstein and Sheldon (2005), based on Epstein's theory, parents from all backgrounds should be in committees and governance structures of the school. SASA promotes the role of parents in education, by providing them with a democratic right to serve on the SGB (RSA, 1996b). In this study, both schools have a functional SGB through which parents are involved and able to make decisions for the school in accordance with SASA (RSA, 1996b). Mncube (2009) found that in some schools, when parents participate in the SGB, they are undermined and the school takes decisions instead of them. In some schools however, the lack of participation is an obstacle to school governance because the principal is determined to govern the school cooperatively with parents but the parents do not attend meetings (Ngubane, 2006).



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provides support to parents who need intervention with factors who do home visits, as well as social support is also provided to the poor parents.

“The school does provide support in terms of having designated educators to do home visits and assist parents.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

“They give the books and everything and even the food parcels they give the children. Is too good because most of the children don’t have parents at home, but that is help us a lot.” (Parent 6, Riverside School)

This social support can be beneficial because in most cases parents are more worried about survival and making sure that there is food, rather than their children’s education. Naicker (2013) concurs in her study that parents do not have time to check their children’s school work because they are busy with running their lives and ensuring that there is food on the table. This implies that providing such social support can ease parents worry and allow them to concentrate on their children’s schoolwork. Hill and Taylor (2004) found that some poor parent’s mental health is also affected by poverty and increased stress of making ends meet, which reduces parental involvement in school.

The above mentioned show that there are factors which enable parents to become involved in education in a privileged as well as an underprivileged school. The findings suggest that while there were many factors that enable parental involvement in these schools, there existed several factors that constrained parental involvement in schools under this study, as I discuss in the next section.

Strain Parental Involvement in School

Parental involvement in education, as emerged from participants' responses are discussed under the following categories:

- *Working conditions of parents*
- *The single parent*
- *Absence of parents*
- *Socio-economic factors*
- *School leadership*

4.2.2.2.1 Working Conditions of Parents

In both schools most parents indicated that time on the week days was a constraining factor to their involvement in their children's education. This is due to their employment. Parents from both schools work and thus do not find time to visit school often and become involved.

"I think as a working parent we don't actually have the time because we finish at 5 and school actually close at 3 and on weekends there's no one there so school is closed." (Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

"No. because I don't have time [to volunteer at school...in my working days I work 6 to 6 and it's far." (Parent 3, Riverside School)

The teachers in both schools also confirmed that due to work, time was a constraining factor to parental involvement in education. Teachers in both schools indicated that because parents work, they are left with little time to be involved.

"There are the times were they are working or they just can't come...so then you don't always get the best response too." (Teacher 2, Silver Oak School)

"working hours, in our school we have parents that work til very late." (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

"They say they too busy and they working and they can't make it, or their child behaves like that at home, it's normal." (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

nces. Parents are working because of monetary needs. If
es, they may not get paid for that day or hours. This was
indicated by teachers' responses in both schools. Some employers also do not allow the
parents to take time off.

“Most of the parents now, they are working for survival. They have to be at work, they cannot take leave from work.” (Teacher 1, Silver Oak School)

“...they find it difficult to get time off because they will probably have to take a drop in their monthly income or their weekly income if they do not pitch up at work. Many of them are not allowed time off to go and sort out personal matters so I think that the biggest factor is employment conditions that they experience.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

Thus it was found that work causes parents to have less time to dedicate towards their children's education and also prevents parents from going to school often. Some parents work in more than one job, resulting in the child being left alone for most of the time (Mestry & Grobler, 2007). Literature concurs that work is a factor militating against parental involvement. Lee and Bowen (2006) also agreed that parents' work schedules contribute to their lack of involvement in education. Many parents in South Africa do not have time to attend school meetings because of demanding work conditions (Michael et al., 2012; Naicker, 2013). Some work schedules are not flexible and do not allow for time off (Ryan et al., 2010). There are some employers who do not give the parent permission to attend school meetings (Mncube, 2009). Money is also a constraint because parents need to work to earn a living and if they do not attend work because they need to go to school, they will not get paid for that time. Some parents cannot afford to take time off from work (Mbokodi, 2008).

Although time constraining parental involvement was a similarity at both schools, the amount of time spent with the children is different. In Silver Oak Primary, according to parents' responses, they get home earlier compared to parents of Riverside Primary. The parents at Silver Oak are also available on the weekends. Parents at Riverside Primary leave home early and get home later and work on the weekends. Most parents at Silver Oak Primary indicated that they have time to expose their children to extramural activities whereas parents at



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at Riverside Primary feel that they are not adequately because of time.

“I don’t have time for that [extramural activities for the children.] I leave home very early, five o’ clock I must be out. Come home half past seven. If I delayed it’s quarter to eight...some parents are working on weekends...it’s the time, but if I get time I can be [adequately involved in education].” (Parent 5, Riverside School)

“So they get home late their learners are probably sleeping by the time they get home and they leave early in the morning so they don’t actually interact in that way.” (Teacher 4, Riverside School)

Parents of Riverside Primary work longer hours thus leaving less time for their involvement in their children’s education. Literature concurs that the long hours that parents work inhibits their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) especially for underprivileged parents (Mbokodi, 2008).

4.2.2.2.2 The Single Parent

Another factor that constrains parental involvement is pressures due to being a single parent. All parents from Riverside Primary indicated that they were single parents.

“I’m a single parent...I’ve had my hands full with so many things.” (Parent 4, Riverside School)

“...because I don’t have time. I’m a single parent, everything is on my shoulders.” (Parent 5, Riverside School)

Being a single parent inhibits them from becoming fully involved because they are left with more responsibilities they need to take care of. The single parents in this study were all women. Hornby (2011) found that being a single parent is a factor that prevents optimal parental involvement in education. Mmotlane et al., (2009) found that South African women are amongst the poor and depend on their spouses. This implies that being a single parent creates a financial burden for women. Literature agrees that single parent households usually have a lower income than two parent households and the focus is on finances, leaving less

... (Singh et al., 2000; Singh et al., 2004) thus contributing to the lack of parental involvement (Singh et al., 2013). Single parents sometimes cannot attend parent meetings (Sottie, 2011) and school functions because there is no one at home to look after the children (Trueger, 2008). Single parents also have less support than married parents and less help in monitoring their children (Amoateng et al., 2004).

4.2.2.2.3 Absence of Parents

The responses indicated also that sometimes both the parents of the children at Riverside Primary are absent because they are either deceased or they do not stay with the child.

“...and kids not being home, they were with my sister.” (Parent 4, Riverside School)

“Many learners are also orphans and are taken care of by elder brothers or sisters.”
(Teacher 5, Riverside School)

“...the parents are not at home or they only with their granny or their mummy didn't come home...it's either they don't stay there with the child and working somewhere else or the kids only spend the weekend...their parents not around, the child will be staying with the granny or the mums only come in the weekend.” (Teacher 6, Riverside School)

The absence of the parent from the home was another factor that constrained involvement. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) found that parents are absent because they seek employment away from home. Children are thus left in the care of other family members as found in this study. Lemmer (2009) found that in impoverished settlements, children live in extended households headed usually by the grandparents.

4.2.2.2.4 Socio-economic Factors

The teachers' responses at Riverside Primary indicate that poverty is another constraint to involvement in education. Poverty, which is a socio-economic status, is looked at separately from finances as mentioned earlier under the section 'working conditions of parents'. This is because a person can be financially wealthy but still tied to working conditions, as outlined in the sections above. This section looks at having less or no finances, that is, a low socio-economic status as a hampering effect.



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...e ability to support their children in education due to
(Teacher 4, Riverside School)

“They don’t have enough bus fare or taxi fare to come.” (Teacher 5, Riverside School)

Parents in Riverside Primary experience financial constraints which restrict their involvement. Mbokodi (2008) contends that amongst other factors, poverty accounts for a lack of parental involvement in some South African schools. Mestry and Grobler (2007) found that some parents struggle to survive, are paid a very low income and work unsocial hours.

In addition, some parents at Riverside Primary feel that they do not have the ability to help their children with school work. This can be seen in the response of a parent who states:

“Yeah I find maths and fractions, I don’t know much about it, so I can’t really help in that way.” (Parent 6, Riverside School)

Literature concurs that parents from a low economic status feel that they do not have the ability or knowledge to help their children (Cooper, 2006; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006). This feeling of inability can thus hamper their involvement with their children’s education.

4.2.2.2.5 School Leadership

According to responses, parents at Silver Oak Primary feel that the school can do more to enhance their involvement.

“I think they should have like more workshop with educators at school to uplift some of the parents’ knowledge and get involved in like workshops; have more parent meetings...I think they should have more parent meetings. In that way parents will exchange ideas as well.” (Parent 1, Silver Oak School)

“Principals of the schools should contact the parents so that the parents can go and see the teachers on behalf of the children...the school principal must get all the parents



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to be part of their children's education." (Parent 3, Silver

Some parents may want to get involved but do not know how to and want the school to find ways that suit them. Naicker (2013) found that some parents claim to be interested in visiting school and assisting their children but do not know how to. Thus parents feel that the school should engage in activities to enhance the parents' involvement. Cheng (2005) found that parents could form support groups in which they can offer their expertise. Based on Epstein's theory, schools must create good programmes that recognise the overlapping sphere of influence, that is, between the school, family and community.

Thus factors that constrain parental involvement are diverse and complex within the wider context in which parents live. The above findings indicate that schools can be environments that enable and/or constrain parental involvement. The verbatim quotations from the participants highlight the importance of parent-school interactions in order to determine factors that enable and or constrain parental involvement.

The findings from the data thus answer the research questions of this study, firstly, by identifying the similarities and differences between parental involvement in privileged and underprivileged schools. The data shows that similarities in parental involvement between the two types of school do exist. These similarities include parents' involvement in and support of their children's academic and social life. The data also shows that differences exist in the level of the parents' involvement between the two types of schools. There is a majority of parents in the privileged school that are involved in their children's education as compared to the minority of parents in the underprivileged school that involve themselves. Secondly, the data also provides an understanding as to why these similarities and differences exist. The similarities for their involvement exist because parents in these two schools not only consider their involvement in education as their role and responsibility but also have high aspirations and expectations for their children. Furthermore, the school and parent are in constant communication and thus collaborate with each other. The school leadership and support also strategize on ways to involve parents in their children's education. The differences in parental involvement between both schools exist because work conditions and socio-economic factors constrain parents' complete participation in the underprivileged school. Furthermore, the parents from the underprivileged school in this study were single parents and are thus in a

findings thus demonstrate that parental involvement in
context specific. There are many different reasons as to why
parents involve themselves in their children's education in the varying ways that they do.
These reasons are context bound and thus when involving parents in education, their varying
context must be taken into account.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the data analysis and discussion of findings from the data generated from the interviews and questionnaires. The data were presented using themes and categories generated from the interviews. Further, verbatim quotations were used to ensure that the voices of the participants remain intact in the presentation. Literature was also integrated in the discussion of the findings.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the final chapter of the study. This chapter presents a summary of the findings that are inferred from the themes in the previous chapter. Recommendations based on how the privileged and underprivileged schools promote parental involvement as well as further recommendations are made by the researcher. The recommendations can be considered and followed by other schools in a similar context, as well as by the two schools in the study. Recommendations for future research are also outlined.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following inferences were made regarding the themes discussed in the previous chapter.

5.2.1 Experiences of Parental Involvement within Privileged and Underprivileged Schools

Most parents from both privileged and underprivileged communities are concerned and employ a variety of strategies to get involved in their children's education. Parents from both schools offer care and support to their children by involving themselves in their children's school work and supporting them socially. The parents understand and speak to their children about the importance of education. Academically, parents check their children's homework daily to ensure that it is completed and ensure that their children have completed their projects and study when it is exam time. Another way in which the parents are involved in children's education is by encouraging children to do independent study at home and ensuring that their children are engaged in extra learning activities. Socially, most parents attend and participate in school sports. Besides taking active role in school sports, the parents want to know about their children's behaviour, with the intention to assist teachers. When children show unacceptable behaviour the teachers contact the responsible parent and more often parents have been responding positively.

Although parents from both schools participate in school events the levels of their participation differs. The parents from the privileged school have formulated a variety of social activities to be involved and assisting in, such as involvement in classroom activities, educational tours and children's sports, the formation of feeding committees to ensure

and assisting in learner discipline before the assembly and prepare children for sports competitions. At the underprivileged school however, although some parents may participate in school activities such as debø ball and sports, not all parents can participate or assist with activities. The parents are unable to volunteer at school, take their children to visit places of educational interest or get them involved in any extramural activities.

Parental involvement in underprivileged and privileged schools is diverse and complex. The teachers and parents agree that parental involvement in school is essential for childrenø academic and holistic development. However, the degree of parental involvement differs from school to school. In the privileged school, parental involvement is active and high whereas it is minimal in the underprivileged school.

5.2.2 Ecological Factors that Enable and Constrain Parental Involvement within the Schools

Parental involvement is influenced by many ecological factors which may enable or constrain parental involvement in schools. The factors that enable parental involvement are: parentsø roles and responsibilities, parentsø aspirations and expectations, the nature and adequacy of communication and school leadership and support. The teachers and parents from both schools feel that it is the parentsø role and responsibility to be involved in the school or in their childrenø education. Parents see their roles as sharing responsibilities with teachers in shaping the well-being of their children and understand that their roles mean empowering them as co-partners in education. This motivates and enables them to become involved in education. Parentsø aspiration and expectations for their children also enhances their involvement in education. Most of the parents in both schools exhibit high aspirations and expectations for their children and this makes them want to get involved in their childrenø education to ensure that the children meet those aspirations and expectations.

Communication is also a factor that can enhance parental involvement. In both schools, the school and parents communicate to stay updated on the child. The teachers contact the parents to inform them of their childrenø progress and behaviour, especially if their children are performing poorly or misbehaving. The schools thus collaborate with the parents in remediating the child. Verbal and written communication occurs between the school and parents. Both schools employ methods such as phone calls and meetings to interact with

parents who come home late from work during the week schedules parent meetings on the weekend. The number of parents, however, at the underprivileged school that attend meetings is lower than that of the privileged school. Thus the attendance rate of parents at meetings is lower in the underprivileged school than at the privileged school. Majority of the parents, however, in both the privileged and underprivileged schools do initiate communication with the school through phone calls and visitation to school. Parents at the privileged schools appear to be more enthusiastic about contacting the school than parents at the underprivileged school who wait for the school to contact them. Some parents thus find it difficult to initiate communication with the school and remain passive.

Both schools employ methods such as questionnaires, letters, messaging services and a homework/communication diary as a means to communicate with parents. Contacting and communicating with some parents in both schools, however, is not very easy. Thus teachers experience difficulties communicating with some parents. In the privileged school contacting the parents of weak learners is difficult. In the underprivileged school, contacting most parents, irrespective of the child's academic ability, is difficult. In the underprivileged school, communication is done in both English and isiZulu, but parents still do not respond readily. Home visits are also undertaken in the underprivileged school to communicate with parents. Thus the underprivileged school uses home visits to build communication between parents and the school thereby enhancing parental involvement.

Both the privileged and underprivileged schools, despite barriers, employ strategies to enhance and support parental involvement. Some other strategies include giving parents the opportunity to exhibit their ideas and guiding them with their children's educational needs. The schools also use homework as an opportunity to engage parents with their children's learning at home. In both schools, all parents must then sign the homework to show that they have assisted with and checked the homework. Parents in both schools are also afforded the opportunity to volunteer at school and they are invited to the learners' social events in which they can participate or assist their children. Both schools have a functional SGB which parents can join and the SGB makes the decisions of the school. In addition, the underprivileged school provides support to parents who need intervention with their children at home through educators who do home visits, as well as social support is also provided to the poor parents. Thus both the privileged and underprivileged schools are trying to involve

Some factors encouraging parental involvement, parents still
education process.

Parental involvement in their children's education depends on a number of conditions that parents find themselves in. The factors that hamper parental involvement in education are the working conditions of parents, being a single parent, the absence of parents, socio-economic factors and the school leadership. Most parents from both schools are employed and thus do not find time to visit school often and become involved. If parents do not attend work, in some cases, they may not get paid. Some employers also do not allow the parents to take time off. Work therefore causes parents to have less time to dedicate towards their children's education. In the underprivileged schools, parents work longer hours during the week and work on weekends as well leaving even lesser time for their children's education. In addition, being a single parent inhibits parents from become fully involved because they are left with more responsibilities they need to take care of and less time for their children's education. The absence of the parent from the home, either because they are deceased or do not stay with the child, is another factor that constrained involvement in the underprivileged school. Socio-economic factors such as poverty and parents feeling of inability is another constraint to involvement in education. Parents in the underprivileged school experience financial constraints which restrict their involvement. In addition, some of these parents feel that they do not have the ability to help their children with school work. The school leadership can also be looked at. Parents feel that schools can do more to involve them. Some parents want to get involved but do not know how to and want the school to find ways that suit them. Thus there are various factors that inhibit parental involvement in education.

In conclusion, both the privileged and underprivileged schools experience parental involvement as well as non-involvement in education. In both the privileged and underprivileged communities, the parents show interest and concern in their children's education and provide care and support in various and different ways. The level of involvement however, varies between the two schools. More parents are suggested to be involved in the privileged school than in the underprivileged school. Many parents in the privileged school formulated a variety of ways to be involved in and assist and volunteer at school. In the underprivileged school, however, parents rarely assist with activities and are unable to volunteer their time and services. The privileged school also has a higher attendance rate at parent meetings than at the underprivileged school. Whilst the privileged

al participation, there are also some parents who do not
the parents of the weak learners.

The reasons, uncovered by this study, for parents' involvement and non-involvement vary. Parents in both the privileged and underprivileged context involve themselves in their children's education because of psychological factors such as their view on their role as a parent and responsibility towards their child. The parents also have high aspiration and expectations for their children which motivate them to become involved to ensure that the children meet those aspirations and expectations. The parents' involvement in both contexts is also strengthened by communication between home and school. In addition, in contexts, the school leadership and support employ a variety of strategies to enhance and support parental involvement. Thus indicating that parental involvement exists in both privileged and underprivileged contexts because some parents want to be involved as well as the school makes an effort to involve the parents. However, there are factors that constrain many parents' involvement in both privileged and underprivileged contexts such as working conditions. This is especially a constraint to the underprivileged where parents work long hours and on weekends as well, leaving very little time for their children. In addition, parents at the underprivileged school experience financial constraints which restrict their involvement. In the underprivileged school factors such as being a single parent, the absence of parents and socio-economic factors such as poverty and parents' feeling of inability to help their children, constrain their involvement. In the privileged school, some parents want to get involved but do not know how to and want the school to find ways to involve them. Thus in both privileged and underprivileged contexts, there are factors enabling and constraining parental involvement.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a variety of strategies that schools can employ to enhance parental involvement. The strategies mentioned below are some which the schools under study can consider and borrow from each other, where applicable. Other schools in a similar context can also borrow some of the strategies that the schools in this study employed.

5.3.1 The School Leadership

The school leadership should ensure that parental involvement is improved and sustained. This can be done through the formation of a policy with clear guidelines on how parents can

play in education and at school. In addition, the school
is called the "Action Team" which was proposed by
Epstein (1995) and later adapted to suit the South African context by van Wyk and Lemmer
(2009). The Action Team can be made up of 3 teachers, 3 parents and a social worker or any
member of the community willing to serve on the team (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). The
purpose of the team will be to improve, run and sustain parental involvement and also give
support to families in order to improve parenting skills (van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). The
Action Team can manage all the parent related activities as mentioned below:

- Different clubs can be established in which parents can volunteer in and involve themselves. The clubs can cater for the holistic development of the learner and can range from academic activities such as a reading club, to social activities such as sports training. Other clubs that can be formed include fundraising, cultural activities, art, music and drama activities and chess. The list is non-exhaustive.
- The Action Team should facilitate a community support programme to single parents. Thus if there are problems that parents are having which prevents them from getting involved in their child's schooling, they can be referred to places in the community that will be able to assist them better. Home visits can also be done, to understand and provide support to parents.
- Parental programmes can be done in the form of workshops where parents can be made aware of their roles and responsibilities in their children's education and then trained to enhance their parental skills. This can be held at school or alternatively the community library so that the parent does not have to incur any cost by travelling far out.
- Resources can be provided to parents such as information books, tapes, guidebooks on parenting and an itinerary of activities at school that parents can involve themselves in.
- Newsletters can be given out to parents informing them of school news and upcoming events. The newsletters can be done in both English and isiZulu, or in the applicable home language of the school.

In addition to an Action Team, the school can also be flexible in the arrangement of parent meetings and schedule parent meetings on the weekend when most parents are not working. Parents who are still unable to attend because of work should be allowed to make an

teachers when it is convenient for both the teacher and

The school can also offer classes to parents and encourage them to complete their matriculation or other training for parents who did not complete school. The government can also play a role by providing a grant to parents to further their studies.

5.3.2 Tertiary Institutions and the Government

Tertiary institutions can prepare pre-service teachers on how to include parents in education. This can be done through a module on parental involvement or a part of a module. The government can also ensure that in-service teachers are sensitised to parental involvement. This can be done by subsidising mandatory workshops for teachers to attend. Policy makers can also take into account the diverse context that South Africans live in. Every context is different and thus a universal policy cannot be created and applied to all. Policies should be context specific. In addition, instead of a top down approach, policies can be made from the ground upwards.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following recommendations for future research have been provided below:

- This study has only explored teachers and parents' experiences of parental involvement in two schools (peri-urban). Therefore, a much larger study involving a range of schools from other contexts (rural and urban) is needed in order to get a better picture and clear perspective of the magnitude of parental involvement in schools.
- Conduct a study with more participants including learners using a range of child-friendly methodologies such as arts-based methods in order to get the voices of the learners in relation to parental involvement in their schools.
- The study has only focussed on primary schools, therefore, there is a need to conduct research in secondary schools to determine what shapes (or not) parental involvement of learners' education path.

in education. Many parents however do not involve themselves in education. This study looked at what is happening with regards to parental involvement in schools and why this is happening. The study looked at two contexts, privileged and underprivileged schools. From the parents voices it can be seen that they are interested and try to get involved in their children's education. It was found that parents in both contexts do get involved in education however at varying degrees, with some participating more than others. The study does not state that underprivileged parents are not interested in getting involved in education, but rather takes into account the number of factors that contribute to this difference in participation. Teachers' perceptions of poor parents also inhibit them from involving parents. However this study shows that despite low parental involvement, teachers of underprivileged schools have not given up and still offer ways for parents to get involved. Recommendations were drawn based on how the schools in this study can involve parents. These recommendations can be considered by other schools in a similar context. These recommendations are not idealistic strategies, but rather a series of realistic, daily, practical, concerted efforts which in the long run will yield positive results, not just for the children, but for educators, parents, communities and ultimately for the future of South Africa.

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25 November 2014

Ms Rubaine Manlal (204502261)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Miss Manlal,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0434/014M

Project title: Parental involvement in education: A comparison between a privileged and underprivileged school

Approval Notification – Amendment

This letter serves to notify you that your request for an amendment received on 24 November 2014 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in Supervisor

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully



Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Ms FP Khanare
cc Academic leader Research: Professor P Morojele
cc School administrator: Ms Bongji Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8360/4567 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4800 Email: xtmbao@ulkn.ac.za / snymann@ulkn.ac.za / mohuno@ulkn.ac.za

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

17 Innerford Place
Sunford
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4068

11 May 2014

Mr Sibusiso Alwar
Research Department
228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

I hereby apply for permission to conduct research towards the completion of my Masters in Education degree at the University of Kwazulu Natal (Edgewood Campus). The topic for research is on PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN A PRIVILEGED AND UNDERPRIVILEGED SCHOOL.

The purpose of this study is to:

- Determine the similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.
- Investigate why there are similarities and differences in parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools in South Africa.

The research will involve interviews of teachers and parents, thereafter followed by a questionnaire. The interviews with the participants will be conducted after school hours at times that are convenient for the participants.

Participants will be given consent forms and made aware that this is a voluntary participation. I do assure no participant will be identifiable in any way from the research results.

Awaiting your approval.

Thank You

í í í í í í í í í í í í í
Miss R Manilal



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PRINCIPAL AND CONSENT

Dear Principal

My name is Rubaina Manilal. I am a master's student from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Registration number: 204502261. I am required to carry out research to write up a thesis. Your school has been selected to participate in this research project. The title of my research is, **Parental involvement in education: a comparison between a privileged and underprivileged school.**

The importance of this study are as follows:

- The study will provide an account of what is happening with regard to parental involvement between the privileged and underprivileged schools. Such knowledge will help schools identify where there might be a shortfall in parental involvement. These results could also lead to the schools rethinking their strategies, or perhaps borrowing strategies from each other to involve parents.
- The study will also provide insight as to why parents are involved or not. This insight can be used by the schools when planning their parental involvement strategies and parent related activities.

The study requests the participation of teachers and parents in interviews. Participation is purely voluntary and participants can withdraw from the study at any time if they wish and no harm will befall them. I will observe maximum respect to your institution and participant's anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study as well as in the reporting of findings. Information will be made available to all participants before publication of the study.

Thank you
 Yours faithfully,
 Rubaina Manilal

CONSENT

I, the principal of _____ Primary School, give permission to Rubaina Manilal to conduct the study entitled "Parental involvement in education- a comparison between a privileged and underprivileged school" at this school. I hereby confirm that I understand the nature of the research project, and I consent to the school participating in the research project.

 Principal name

 Principal signature

 Date

RS AND PARENTS

1. Nature of the research project

Researcher	Name: Qualification: Telephone No.: E-mail:
Supervisor	Name: Qualification: Telephone No.: E-mail:
Purpose	To compare the similarities and differences of parental involvement between privileged and underprivileged schools.

2. What is required of participants

I understand that:

- The research is about parents' involvement in the education process.
- My participation in the research is voluntary and subject to informed consent.
- I can withdraw from the research process at any time without any negative consequences.
- My participation in the research will not affect my position as a teacher/parent or my relationship with other teachers/parents at school.
- Participants' rights will be respected.
- The information obtained will be used with the strictest of confidentiality.
- I can refuse to answer any questions asked to me.
- The researcher will use information from me in a way that will assure my continued respect amongst other learners, colleagues and the wider fraternity.
- The interviews conducted will be audio recorded.
- My identity will not be disclosed in the thesis.
- Photographs/videos of me will not be used in this thesis or any display related to the research.
- The research interview will not impact on my working time.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		



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_____ (name of
participant) have been approached to participate in the research entitled: **Parental
involvement in education: a comparison between a privileged and underprivileged
school.** I hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the
research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. In understand that I am
at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, so I should desire.

I **agree** to participate in a study that Rubaina Manilal is conducting.

Name (of participant): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Please fill in the applicable section.

Teacher Participant:

Name of participant: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Highest qualification obtained: _____

Length of service: _____

Parent Participant:

Name of participant: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Highest qualification obtained: _____

Nature of work: _____

Interview guide: Teacher Interview

What is parental involvement?

Do you think that it is necessary?

Why?

Which ways do you think can be employed to enhance parental involvement in education?

What do you think are the factors hampering parental involvement?

Parenting:

Are there ways in place to involve parents in learning activities at home?

Are there any kinds of support provided to parents?

Communication

Do you keep in contact with parents?

How often?

Why?

By what methods do you contact the parent?

How often does the parent contact you?

How do they do this?

Why do they do this?

Do you inform the parent of their child's progress and behaviour?

What is the parent's response when you contact parents for any issue?

Volunteering

Do you have parent volunteers at school or in your class?

What do they do?

How often do they do this?

Has the school provided parents with any opportunities to volunteer?

If so, name them.

Are parents given a chance to participate in school activities?

Do parents participate in any school activities?

h tells you that parents have monitored their children's

homework?

Do parents enquire about homework?

Do parents provide any feedback about homework?

Do parents enquire about tests and assignments?

Do parents provide any feedback about tests and assignments?

Decision making

How often does the school have parent meetings?

What is the parent response rate to meetings held by the school?

Does the school provide opportunities for parents in the running of the school?

Are there any parent organisations or committees present at the school?

Has the school provided opportunities for parents to be a part of the decision making process

If so discuss.

Collaborating with the community

Are there any mechanisms in place that allows parents to become more involved in

community activities? (Such as sports groups or clubs where parents can supervise, etc.)

Interview Guide: Parent Interview

What is parental involvement?

Do you think that it is necessary?

Why?

Are you involved in your child's education?

In what ways?

Why are you involved in these ways?

Why are you not involved?

Which ways do you think can be employed to enhance parental involvement in education?

Do you have a child in another school?

Are you involved there?

What are the similarities and differences in parental involvement between those schools?

What are factors hampering you or other parents from taking part in schools?

Parenting:

Do you know where your child is after school?

How do you monitor his/her activities after school?

Do you monitor activities such as television, internet and the cell phone?

Do you monitor the time your child goes to bed?

Do you talk to your child about the importance of his/her education?

What are your expectations for your child?

Does your child know what you expect of him/her?

Communication

Do you keep in contact with the school?

How often?

Why?

By what methods do you contact the school or teachers?

How often does the school/teacher contact you?

How do they do this?

progress and behaviour?

Volunteering

Do you volunteer at school?

What do you do? How often do you do this?

Has the school provided you with any opportunities to volunteer?

If so, name them.

If not, have you enquired about this?

Do you participate in any school activities?

If so, are you obliged to do so?

Learning at home

Do you monitor your Child's homework?

Do you help your child with homework?

Do you provide your child any additional learning activities?

If so, what?

Do you ensure that he studies for tests and exams?

Do you supervise with projects and assignments?

Do you know when your child is writing tests and exams or has project due?

Decision making

How often does the school have parent meetings?

Does the school include you in the running of the school?

Are there any parent organisations or committees present at the school?

Has the school provided opportunities for parents to be a part of the decision making process

If so discuss

Collaborating with the community

Do you take your child on visits to places that would be of educational interest?

Is your child enrolled in the local library?

Are you or your child apart of any community groups or organisations?



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Questionnaire: Teacher

1. Do you think that parents are adequately involved in their child's education? Please explain why.

2. Do you think the school is adequately involving parents in the education process? Please explain.

3. What do you think be done to enhance parent involvement at school?

Name of teacher: _____

12 November 2014

The University of Kwa Zulu Natal

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Dr. N. V. Joseph, had the privilege of reading the dissertation by Rubaina Manilal, entitled **Parental involvement in education: A comparison between a privileged and underprivileged school.**

My reading allowed me to make the following corrections:

1. Grammar mistakes of concord and tenses
2. Spelling errors
3. Punctuation
4. Redundancies
5. Quotation marks
6. Referencing techniques
7. Layout and set up including spacing
8. Removal of colloquialisms

It was easy to read this piece of writing. It flows legibly and coherently.

I wish the student success in all her studies.



Dr. N. V. Joseph

(B. A. Law, H.E.D., B. Ed. Honours, F.D.E. Management, M. Ed, D.Ed)

Contact: 0834464593

0315071018 (Principal of Whetstone Primary School)

Parental involvement in education: a comparison between a privileged and underprivileged school

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