EXPLORING TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A TOWNSHIP PRIMARY SCHOOL IN PINETOWN DISTRICT

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Rachel Thandi Majozi, declare that **"Exploring teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in a township primary school in Pinetown District"** is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university. All sources that I used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

In memory of my late parents, mom Helen and dad Joseph Mazibuko, my late brother Vuma, my late sister-in-law Phumzile and my late sister Zandile.

I am dedicating this dissertation to:

➢ My husband Mandla for his love, support and understanding when I could not spend time with my family. Who always expressed pride in my love for learning.

➢ My daughter Sthabile, the boys Ntuthuko and Phiwa, my grandchildren Khwezilokusa and Lubanzi who kept me with my studies, and for missing my love and presence when I was away at the University.

➢ My brother Nhlanhla and sister Zanele (who motivated me to register). For all the courage and support they have demonstrated. My friend, sister, twin Mimmy for all the invaluable support she offered to ensure that I make the most of my educational opportunity.

May God grant them many more years of peace.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the attitudes of teachers towards involving parents in their children's learning. The aim of the study is to identify the attitudes of teachers, and to understand why teachers have the attitudes they have towards parental involvement. The location of the study was a township primary school in the Pinetown District in KwaZulu-Natal. The literature revealed that parental involvement has a positive impact to learners' academic achievements.

This study sought to ascertain an understanding of teachers' attitude towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning.

Data were generated through semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the participants, which were eight teachers. The study adopted an interpretive qualitative approach to closely interact with the participants to gain more insight and understanding of teachers' attitudes. The items of the data were analysed into meaningful themes using Miles and Hubert thematic approaches. Interpretations were noted and added to the research conclusion. The findings indicated that teachers' attitudes are important for developing a welcoming environment for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Parents and teachers need to work as partners in order to develop learners' full potential. Teachers have a positive attitude towards involving parents in their children's learning which ultimately benefitted their children. However, the barriers they encounter hinder implementation of parental involvement in said township primary school.

Findings also indicated that communicating effectively is essential for a good parent teacher relationship. It was recommended that establishing of positive attitudes by teachers could improve successful learning in a school environment. Parents need to be guided on how they could become more involved in their children's learning. Moreover, schools should employ parent centred practices, where the assistance of parents to be involved in their children's learning is welcomed and acceptable.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANA   Annual National Assessment

CAPS   Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements

DBE   Department of Basic Education

DoE   Department of Education

HOD   Head of Department

KZN   KwaZulu-Natal

NCLB   No Child Left Behind

SACE   South African Council for Educators

SASA   South African Schools Act

SGB   School Governing Body

SMT   School Management Team

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The top priority within South Africa is education, however, there seem to be challenges that often appear insurmountable in the system. Nevertheless, the department is taking initiative in meeting trials encountered by offering improved prospects for teachers, learners and parents all over the educational stages of the country. The Minister of Basic Education (Angie Motshekga) has mentioned that there are ongoing implementation challenges of overcoming the curricular divisions which result in the review of the national curriculum, but education is having a significant duty to perform in improving culture of learning and quality life for all citizens (Department of Education, 2011). Also, Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa in his speech delivered at launch of Mindset Network in 2003 indicated that education is the most powerful weapon which can be used in changing the world. Ndlovu (2011) stated that parental involvement in teaching and learning is associated to socio-economic status which is strongly linked with learners' progress.

In addressing some of these challenges teachers have to rise above any challenges to build upon, and make the necessary adjustments so that they can serve their highest purpose of teaching and learning. One of the most positive and fitting contributions to education that teachers can make is to increase the degree of parental involvement in children's learning which ultimately benefits the learners (Lemmer, 2002). Moreover, teachers' positive attitudes to the involvement of parents in learning lead to more conducive environment, which leads to more focused participation and increased learner achievement (Macmillan, 2003).

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (DoE) Provincial concern was that there is lack of parental involvement in many schools (Maphanga, 2006). There are critical challenges learners encounter that affects their ability to effectively engage in their schoolwork or homework. Amongst these challenges can be the environment they live in, where some of children are from child headed families. Christenson & Sheridan (2001) stated that parental involvement clearly influences students' learning. The initiative of increasing parental involvement by teachers will stimulate and empower both the parents and learners. This is because teachers' attitudes and behaviour is likely to impact positively or negatively on parental involvement, which could influence learner progress.

Moreover, teachers' attitudes are known to be highly beneficial to learning. Teachers are best tools in providing comprehensive information to parents regarding the knowledge given to children by the school so that they can support children better (Shezi, 2012). Asli (2008) cited in Abdullah, Seedee, Alzaidiyeen, Al-Shabatat, Alzeydeen and Al-Awabdeh (2011) said that involving parents in the learning of their children is a vital connectional feature in connecting teachers with parents, which ultimately contributes in the academic achievement of learners. However, numerous parents feel uninformed about current educational practices and they lack knowledge on how to be involved in the learning of their children (Mutodi & Ngirande, 2014). Therefore, the study aimed at exploring teachers' attitudes toward involving parents to be part of learning of their children in a township primary school in the Pinetown District in order to ascertain if these have an impact on children's academic achievement.

1.2 Background and context of the study/Rationale

The school is situated in a township where unemployment and high rate of learner dropouts are evident. This known to the researcher as she is a community member. The school population comprises of Grade R up to Grade 7 with the enrolment of 1086 learners and 35 staff members. The majority of parents are young adults who barely avail themselves for school activities such as viewing their children's quarterly reports or when invited for parents' meetings to discuss learners' progress, they nonetheless do avail themselves for filling social grant forms. This is the opportunity for teachers to meet parents.

I am at an epi-centre in curriculum delivery as Head of Department (HOD) at Phathakahle Primary school for nine years. This position has afforded me space in creating structures of support workshops such as meetings for learners, teachers and parents. When engaging with parents in general, they have indicated that teachers are not involving parents to be part of learning for their children. Furthermore, parents stated that they do not assist their children with homework because they do not know how. They felt that they are not embraced as significant players for curriculum delivery, to address all the challenges related to their children's learning. This is supported by Van Wyk and Lemmer, (2009) who assert that parents may be willing to support children through their work, however, there is possibility of parents not knowing exactly how to assist.

In addition, I have observed that teachers become frustrated by learners who do not complete their homework. Failure in successfully completing homework by most of the learners leads to their poor performance. This means that parental involvement is important to ensure that learners complete their homework in order to improve their performance. Therefore, my study will explore teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in their children's learning. Brown (2006) indicated that working with parents is an activity of mutual benefit. In addition, Keyes (2000) stated that collaboratively working partnerships between parents and teachers would benefit the child in achieving better performance.

Besides the belief of parents taken as first, primary and most prominent educators to children (Bronfenbrenner, 2011), involving them is in compliance with departmental policies. The research problem is vital in the life of a learner since the new curriculum reforms such as Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and Annual National Assessment (ANA) dictate increased parental involvement. The Minister of Department of Basic Education (DBE) for ANA report (2011) has reported this. Moreover, Winter (2012) has stated that many researchers have revealed that engaging parents in their children's learning develops learner academic achievement. Teachers also have repeatedly acknowledged the involvement of parents as an essential tactic to advance learning. Again, Winter (2012, p. 2) mentioned that "teachers list parent engagement as the area where they feel least prepared and least satisfied with their performance." This is supported by the understanding that learner academic achievement can be disturbed through the attitudes and teachers' practices inside the institution (Protheroe, Shellard and Turner, 2003). The issue of teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in the learning of their children remains my central concern.

Lemmer (2007) has added that even if the involvement of parents interconnect with academic achievement, teachers often stop to create sound solid relationships connecting them with the parents, particularly where involvement of parents is negligible. Mestry & Grobler (2007) who have demonstrated that the good academic performance in school is the product of parents who actively assist their children with homework also emphasize the significance of collaboratively working together of teacher, parent and learner. According to Hornby (2000) cited by Naicker (2013, p. 24), "learners tend to have improved behaviour when parents are active participants in their education".

It was therefore imperative to conduct this study to understand teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children in this township primary school which invariably impacts on learner progress.

1.3 Focus and Purpose of study

This study intended to explore teachers' attitudes regarding the involvement of parents to be part of their children's learning in a township primary school in Pinetown district. The focus was specifically on teachers' attitudes.

The study was located in a township primary school of Umhlathuzana Circuit, Pinetown district in KwaZulu-Natal. I happen to teach in the same school and serve as a member of the senior management team as Head of Department (HOD). The study focused on understanding teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement.

1.4 Aims and objectives of the study

This study aimed to explore teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in the learning of their children. The study seeks to pursue the following objectives:

1. To identify teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children.
2. To understand attitudes that teachers have towards parental involvement in the learning of their children.

1.5 Key research questions

There are two interconnected key research questions that this study responds to. They are the following:

1. What attitudes do teachers have towards involving parents in their children's learning?
2. Why do teachers have these attitudes?

1.6 The significance of the study

In South Africa, parents have been given the mandate through the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 Section 5A (1) (a) to remain involved in the learning of their children (South African Schools Act, 1996).

This Act stipulates that parents have to be actively involved in the learning of their children and facilitate the completion of given homework. One of the key effects for ANA on schools is to capacitate parents with essential knowledge on the performance of their children. "In many parts of the world, teachers, policy makers, and researchers are increasingly recognizing school and family partnership as vital for learner success" (Abdullah et al., 2011, p. 1403).

Studies that have been conducted locally focused on attitudes of parents and school principals regarding parental involvement (Sibiya, 2004; Shezi, 2012). However, my study looks at the attitudes of teachers. Some of the studies focused in the secondary schools (Sibiya, 2004; Shezi, 2012). My study differs in that it has been conducted in a township primary school.

Findings from this study could inform more primary school practices for encouraging positive attitudes of teachers for active involvement of parents in their children's learning. Furthermore, it might motivate teachers to inform parents on the schools' policies and regulations periodically.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

This study is restricted to a township primary school within the Umhlathuzana Circuit in Pinetown District, KwaZulu-Natal. The participants were eight teachers, one teacher per grade, commencing from grade R to grade 7.

1.8 Definition of key terms

The following key terms are defined: parental involvement, teachers' attitudes, academic achievement and learning.

Parental involvement

According to Feuerstein (2000) cited by Wright (2009, p. 11), "parental involvement is defined as an activity encompassing a wide range of behaviours, ranging from discussing school with children to attending parent-teacher conferences." Again, Wanke (2008) defines parental involvement as where children get assistance from their parents in gaining satisfactory academic requirements. She elaborates that parental involvement can be noted where parents help their children in doing homework, partake in most school gatherings and often interconnect with school. Kruger (2002) defines the involvement of parents as effective and supportive contribution made by parents as allies of teachers in the primary aspects of formal and informal education of their children in achieving the objectives of education.

I can define parental involvement as parents' contributions or interventions to their children's learning and achievements. This study therefore, employs all of the above definitions of parental involvement.

Teachers' attitudes

Rajeckitt (1990) points out that people's attitudes are unavoidable and are decentralized on personal factors, such as anxiety and estrangement. Bush (2002) has explained that attitudes could influence future reactions to the change process. Attitudes are the feeling or beliefs that people claim to hold in relation to a particular issue. Teachers' attitude is certain kind of behaviour of teachers which could be impacted positively or negatively. It is where individual's perception of an object is based on their experience with it. This study therefore, describes teachers' attitudes toward the involvement of parents in learning of their children.

Academic achievement

Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain (2005) define academic achievement as a cumulative purpose of current and prior school experiences which leads to attainment of success in studies. Academic achievement is the school improvement effort resulting in learners' knowledge and progress. I can define academic achievement as adequate yearly progress or the ability to obtain high grades in school. It is the need for successful completion, through effort of the acquisition of academic context and skills.

Learning

De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes & Moor (2013) functionally define learning as changes in behaviour that result from experience. Learning is a broad and abstract concept but is more formal in schools than in other contexts. Learning involves a specific mental process (Hall, 2003). Learning can also be defined as "changes in the behaviour of an institution that are the results of regularities in the environment of that institution" De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes & Moors (2013, p. 3).

1.9 Preview of the chapters

Six chapters are presented in this dissertation. The outline of the chapters is as follows: Chapter One presents the introduction and background to the study.

Chapter Two provides an outline of reviewed literature relevant to the study and the synthesis of literature review.

Chapter Three consists of the theoretical framework which serves as a guide for the study

Chapter Four focuses on the research design and methodology that has been employed to generate data for this study.

Chapter Five discusses the analysis of findings from collected data and data presentation.

Chapter Six discusses the summary of the study, conclusions of chapters and recommendations that have been derived from the study.

1.10 Conclusion

A brief introduction, focus, together with purpose of the study has been provided in this chapter. It also explained the background, context and rationale of the study. Key research questions, aim and objectives were explained. Delimitation of the study has also been detailed. Key terms have been defined. Lastly, the preview of the chapters were included. The following chapter is the review of literature relevant for this study.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the focus and purpose of the study has been addressed. It also foregrounded the background, context and rationale of this study. In addition, it captured the aim and objectives of the study, the significance and delimitation of the study, and key research questions. It also included the definition of key terms, and preview of the chapters for this dissertation. Pertinent literature was reviewed and integrated into my study, hence this chapter's focus is on the literature review. The chapter aims to review current literatures on teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in the learning of their children.

The background and phenomenon will be contextually reviewed to incorporate international, national and local understandings. Literature review enhances much to an understanding of the research problem (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Furthermore, it allows the reader to advance more understandings from the study. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011), the literature review sets out what the concerns are in the arena to be explored, and why they are key concerns, and identify gaps that need to be filled in the field of study. Smit & Liebenberg (2003) contends that research relating to teachers' attitudes on the involvement of parents in learning is limited. Therefore, this study is significant to contribute to existing research on teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in the learning of their children in the South African context.

2.2 Literature Review

According to Cohen *et al*. (2011, p. 121), "literature review sets out what the key issues are in the field to be explored, and why they are key issues." Furthermore, reviewing pertinent literatures serve as a constant acknowledgement of worldwide research that has proven that the importance of involving parents in learning benefits learners, parents and teachers (Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). Moreover, involving parents in the learning of their children has positive influence in improving learners' academic achievement (Eita, 2007). "Parents' involvement in their children's education is associated with a variety of benefits including higher achievements, yet teachers are not uniformly supportive and encouraging" (Pryor & Pryor, 2009, p. 45).

In this chapter, I commence with international literature, followed by national literature and thereafter explore local literature since parental involvement is understood to be essential in the local as well as international contexts (McDermott & Rothenberg, 2000; Soudien, 2007).

2.2. 1. International context

Eita (2007) conducted a study to investigate teachers' practices in the involvement of parents in the learning of their children in Namibia, Ombuumbuu cluster schools of Onesi circuit. Five primary schools were selected where two of them are located at the centre of the township. Data was gathered by means of questionnaires with mainly open-ended items which were directed to 15 teachers at 5 participating schools.

Eita's study concentrated on homework as part of children's learning. She conducted the study using literature study and empirical investigation of exploring teachers' views regarding parental involvement in the learning of their children. Both primary and secondary sources were utilized to specify the background to the empirical investigation. Qualitative and quantitative designs were employed to investigate teachers' practices of involving parents in homework. Focus group interviews and questionnaires were used as data gathering instruments. The findings specified that although most teachers in the study approved that parental involvement is vital, the empirical investigation revealed slight parental involvement in many schools. The researcher as an interpritivist completely understood individual practices as a core of what actually creates feeling of their experiences by communicating and listening to them in a sensible way.

Moreover, Eita (2007) concluded that the dearth of motivation of teachers in involving parents in the learning of their children is because they had not been sufficiently skilled and taught about the benefits of parental involvement. Assumptions made by some of the teachers in the study are, that lack of worth positioned to parental involvement make difficulties in the effective parent participation in homework.

Limitations were acknowledged when the researcher utilized a small sample approach. This sample was restricted to five schools and a reasonably small sample of 15 teachers. Thus, controlled predictive significance was evident and not generalizable. My study which will also be conducted in a primary school will attempt to explore the attitudes teachers have towards parental involvement.

Since Eita (2007) has revealed slight parental involvement in many schools through teachers' practices of involving them in homework, this study is aimed at identifying teachers' attitudes to their practices of parental involvement. Also, I would explore why teachers are having the attitudes that they have towards the involvement of parents in the learning of their children.

Dor (2013) conducted a qualitative study to gain in-depth understanding of the attitudes of teachers to the involvement of parents in the schools of Israel, and also to investigate teachers' feeling and their experience in the involvement of parents in learning. The study consisted of 27 teachers from Israel elementary and secondary schools, who participated in interviews by answering four research questions. Interviews were private and face-to-face. Participants were invited for personal semi-structured open interviews. The study aimed at exploring reflective glance to teacher's individual opinions towards the involvement of parents in schools. Limitations indicated that the study possessed the ability to generalize findings to the entire Western population. Interviewees were from the same socio economic environment. Teachers expressed their sincere opinions and genuineness in their responses which contributed mostly on teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement.

Findings displayed contradiction between affirmed positive attitudes, observed encounters and threat. This discrepancy implies a need for substantial growth in teacher-parent link in Israel. Implications of the study are training programs that should be created in improving teacher-parent partnership, with the focus on systems of cutting teachers' tension and developing their understanding of opportunities and possible effects of parental involvement. Content analysis of the findings was conducted. The themes for the research were listed in accordance with the way in which questions were asked. Teachers had positive feelings toward parental involvement although wishing for more practice and understanding on the phenomenon's benefits to children's academic achievement. Most participants shared their reluctance in working with parents who were restraint with such commitment.

A study conducted by Addi-Raccah & Ainhoren (2009) probed teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in schools. They followed a quantitative approach with principals, school governing bodies' chairpersons, and 318 teachers from 11 primary schools in a town of Israel. Questionnaire was administered to all participants. Teachers' attitudes towards parent involvement were one of the four parts in the questionnaire.

Semi-structured interviews were also utilized to interview head teachers about parent-teacher contribution in governance and making of resolutions in school. My study, also concentrates on exploring teachers' attitudes towards parent involvement in their children learning.

The findings of the study demonstrated that teachers' anxieties about parents appear to be tempered by the situation and the scope on how teachers cooperate with parents. Other finding is that the schools with empowered teachers and parents had outlined positive attitude to the involvement of parents in learning. Teachers therefore have to adjust the attitudes they contain towards parental involvement and acquire a successful effort of practices. My study intends to identify teachers' attitudes and to understand those attitudes that teachers have towards the involvement of parents in learning for positive interaction between teachers and parents in the township primary school. Stating Israel and in most countries, Addi-Raccah & Ainhoren (2009) mention that parent-teacher relations need to be further examined. My study will add significantly to existing literature and contribute to policy makers.

Abdullah *et al*. (2011) conducted a quantitative study with the purpose of examining in-service teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in 20 primary schools in Jordan. Participants of the study were 200 teachers doing in-serve. The study was quantified according to teachers' ages, qualifications and their experiences. Questionnaires were forwarded to in-service teachers. The instruments used 23 questions. The findings of the study implied positiveness to the attitudes of in-service teachers towards involving parents in learning but there were number of factors affecting their attitudes towards involving parents in their children's learning. Findings also exposed a statistically major connections concerning the attitudes of in-service teachers, their ages, qualifications and experience.

Besides any factors affecting teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in learning, the study resolved great meaning to them to involve parents in their children' learning. My study will also attempt to understand the cause of the teachers' behaviour contextually.

Chindanya (2011) conducted a study in Zimbabwe to determine how teachers, principals and parents could be motivated to promote parental involvement in schools. A qualitative case study was conducted using observations and semi-structured interviews for principals, open-ended questionnaire for teachers and focus group discussions for parents. Hundred and forty participants were selected from 10 primary schools in the Zaka District in Zimbabwe.

The researcher was positioned in the interpretive paradigm pursued to understand and interpret parental involvement in schools of Zaka District. The study revealed that teachers, principals and parents made incorrect attributions about themselves and each other about inadequate parental involvement in children's learning. Findings indicated that teachers, principals and parents possessed very limited considerate of the involvement of parents in learning. The participants were keen to learn how to alleviate obstacles that limit them in encouraging parental involvement. The participants emphasized with certainty that their challenges will be able to be resolved. The manner in which teachers interacted with parents was limited as indication of teachers' attitudes as one of the barriers to parental involvement in children's learning. Another pertinent finding was that teachers gave less peculiarity to the issue of parents motivating their children to learn.

Brennan (2011) conducted a study where he illustrated that teachers are mandatory to work in partnership with parents for learners' academic achievement. The study was conducted with the purpose of examining and qualitatively analysing the attitudes and practices of teachers about the involvement of parents in a particular high school in the Mid-West. 10 teachers were solicited for voluntary participation, out of 29 teachers. A qualitative case study was engaged to explore the attitudes and practices of teachers in controlling possible hindrances to connecting parents with schools. An on-line survey was developed and administered to conduct interviews with teachers. Because central obligations requiring parental involvement already exist, it was expected that schools will continue to be held accountable for their parental involvement measures (NCLB, 2002). Data was collected from an on-line survey and in-person interviews to apprehend the attitudes expressed by the participants and their practices. The on-line survey was sent via email to possible participants.

The researcher constructed the questions that potentially revealed teachers' attitudes on their methods of involving parents, strategies they considered to be most or least effective, perceived barriers to involving parents, and their own feelings of competence and vigilance for involving parents.

The results of the study were limited and can only be generalized to one particular school, given the slight scope of the participants. Also, on-line survey did not consider all variables of teachers' attitudes and practices. In my study I incorporate the thoughts and feelings for teachers' experiences in involving parents in the learning by utilising semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with the participants, graded by an interview schedule.

The findings of this study by Brennan (2011) discovered four barriers which were (i) teachers' viewpoints of their ability in involving parents, (ii) shortage of teacher training relating to parent involvement, (iii) lack of understanding of parents' attitudes and abilities for being involved, and (iv) the lack of support from the administrative. Although this study was based to high schools, my study is based to a primary school with an intention to further explore potential impediments to the involvement of parents in the learning.

My study explores teachers' experiences of involving parents in order to establish rapport with them. Hence, my study focuses on identifying and revealing teachers' attitudes as I maintain that having a comprehensive, introspective awareness of teachers' attitudes from teachers is primary to considering the attitudes and behaviour of parents.

Leatherman & Niemeyer's (2005) conducted a study to examine the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive practices and how it reflected to classrooms behaviours. They followed a qualitative study to apply observations and open-ended interviews. The participants were two pre-service teachers and two in-service teachers in pre-kindergarten inclusive classrooms. All the participants were employed for inclusive classrooms of South-Eastern United States of America. The participants were purposively selected. The results of the study indicated that the experiences teachers develop in inclusive classrooms prompted to their attitudes. Both in-service teachers conveyed the importance of parent involvement with the sense that they had a good connection with parents. Furthermore, for the in-service teachers, involvement of parents in learning was a common theme that developed in numerous sources of data. Pre-service teachers mentioned that parent involvement was a significant aspect in teaching and learning, as they had no direction for all classroom attributes.

Small sample size was a limitation for the study. Another limitation was that all participants were the product of the similar institution, making generalizations to be restricted to similar programs. Lastly, the emotional element of attitudes is challenging. Further studies were suggested in conducting in-depth explorations with in-service and pre-service teachers in examining more issues that they may give success to parent involvement in inclusive classrooms. Reviewing other pertinent literature indicates that schools are not only for teaching and learning, but also for care and support to all role players for ensuring operational efficiency and control over all aspects in the classroom. Whether it is inclusive or mainstream, involvement of parents in learning is vital.

Kimu (2012) conducted a qualitative study to examine parental involvement practice in Kenyan public primary schools in Embu West District. There were 9 public primary schools' principals, 16 teachers and 14 parents. A qualitative approach was designed utilising Epstein's model of parental involvement. Interviews were semi-structured and utilized in gathering data. The interview schedule was an instrument used to measure the involvement of parental involvement in Kenyan primary schools. The study aimed to develop recommendations for designing an effective parental involvement program suited to Kenyan public primary schools so that learners, teachers and parents will develop the greatest achievable benefits from the accomplishment of the program.

Limitations of the study included experiences of principals, teachers and parents with regard to primary schools only in Embu West District. Principals, teachers and parents in other countries may not have similar experiences. Generalisation of the findings should therefore, be noted. For the findings, all teachers interviewed were extremely committed but their lack of knowledge with regard to parental involvement resulted in little effort being made by them to involve parents. Moreover, inadequate communication was the major reason for the lack of parental involvement, especially the lack of clear and helpful information by the teachers to the parents. Also, the limited literature on the topic in public primary schools calls for further research on the topic. These validated the significance of my research on the exploration of teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children.

Teachers' attitude is an issue that requires a concentrated focus as several studies mention it as hindrance to parental involvement. Both teachers and parents in this study acknowledged that more parental involvement was required for improving the excellence in learning. My study seeks to understand the attitudes that teachers hold towards involving parents in learning so that constructive collaboration will be created between teachers and parents.

Hamilton (2010) conducted a study for the primary purpose of determining the link relating teacher character and teachers' attitudes and behaviours to parent-teacher collaborations. The purpose of her study was to explore different teacher demographic impact to attitudes and practices to partnership. 243 teachers practicing in public schools in the state of Illinois were the participants of the study. On-line survey was used as an instrument to collect data. The findings of the study mentioned that teacher demographic variables were discovered to influence the attitudes and practices of teachers.

Limitation of the study was the low response rate, which was difficult to determine if the participants in the study were all representatives of teachers in public schools. With my study I am quite clear that the participants are the teachers of Phathakahle primary school. Further research is needed as the recommendation of the study to better comprehend why partnership with families is less likely to develop. My study, similar to this one, is to explore teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children.

The study conducted by Macmillan (2003) within music education has indicated the involvement of parents as helpful to the improvement in musical instrument. He also contends that learner enjoyment together with achievement can be increased by positive instrumental attitudes of teachers. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for data gathering. The purpose of the study was to investigate instrumental teachers' attitudes and practices to parental involvement in children's music lessons. The other purpose was to know what do those teachers who promote parental involvement essentially encourage parents to do. Since, in her experience, few music teachers encourage parental involvement.

Interviews were conducted with 10 piano teachers from European Piano Teachers' Association UK (EPTA UK), 20 learners and 20 parents using open-ended interview schedules. My study also employs an open-ended interview schedule. Reading from this study indicates that both general education and instrumental learning have concluded that parental involvement has an impact to learning and learners' achievement.

According to Wei Gu (2006), teachers' attitudes toward the involvement of parents in learning are of great value in demonstrating essential tasks in the value of children's learning. He initiated his study to examine the attitudes of teachers to the involvement of parents in particular government kindergartens in China, and factors that might have an influence on their attitudes. The research hypothesis was that most teachers in Chinese kindergartens have positive attitudes to parental involvement. 159 teachers were selected for sample from government kindergartens of Nanjing in China. A self-designed survey questionnaire was an instrument used for the study. This study served as a caution to teachers that in all levels of education, parents are the necessity to be involved for the best of learning for their children. Parents at all levels are anxious about their children's learning and success, and need guidance and support from schools on ways of helping their children (Symeou, 2003). My study also shares a similar hypothesis by stressing that teachers need to develop positive attitudes towards involving parents in their children's learning.

2.2. 2. National context

A qualitative study was conducted by Smit & Liebenberg (2003) to understand the realities and dynamics of involving parents in schooling. These dynamics were facing parents when attempting to involve themselves in learning, so, the participants were parents in an extremely improvised community of Western Cape Province in South Africa. The study was a qualitative study using questionnaires. Data indicated that parents were disempowered by schools, where teachers were barriers to parental involvement. Findings demonstrated that teachers should actively involve parents in their children's learning without any limits. Teachers' attitudes were the contributing factor to parents' lack of parental involvement since Epstein (2001) has mentioned that parents seem to increase their interactions with children when they are home, and have a positive mood about their capabilities to support in primary grades when teachers have positive practice of parental involvement while learners progress academically. The results of the study revealed that parents experienced teachers as impediment to their involvement in learning.

Teachers should foster for better relationships with communities in which they work. Results also indicated that parents should be offered opportunities for empowerment. Moreover, Smit & Liebenberg (2003), contended that research concerning parental involvement in the learning of their children within South Africa is limited. My study will contribute to literature on teachers' attitudes toward involvement of parents in the learning of their children for most benefit in learners' academic attainment.

Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (Create) conducted research, and subsequently the South Africa Policy Brief was then written by Motala & Deacon (2011). The policy analysed involvement of parents in learning in two districts of Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces of South Africa. Purpose of the research was to explore the associations among parents' socio-economic conditions, and the scope of support they provide to their children's learning. A quantitative approach was used for this research study. The research site were 6 schools from Gcaleka district in Dutywa, Eastern Cape and 8 schools from Ekurhuleni South district of Gauteng. After examining the findings, the policy brief recommended the manner in which education policy can overcome any obstacles in encouraging parental involvement. Some of the obstacles that were raised were poverty, illiteracy and promotion of meaningful access to education in South Africa. The policy has stated that involving parents in learning is distinguished as influential in improving academic performance of their children in school, which also sustain better achievement of appreciated educational effects. Findings of this study indicated that 57% of parents in Dutywa mentioned that they supervise their children's homework daily. Some of the parents from Ekurhuleni South articulated their frustration concerning what they understood as teachers' impertinent attitudes.

 Not a single parent who uttered any feeling of power over what proceeds inside the school.

For the recommendations in the study, attempts to advance the involvement of parents in education in South Africa were encountered, the constraint of poor channels of communication was identified as one of them. Thus, involvement of parents should be fostered and in calculated in schools. However, cognizance of parents' personal level of education and how it may possibly impact to their contribution in the learning of their children should be noted.

According to Mestry & Grobler (2007), the inspiration of home on school attainment has not established the consideration it earns. The study was conducted for the purpose of examining parents and the society where they regulated the value of the society and parents' commitment in learning. A quantifiable research method was employed in determining teachers' perceptions concerning characteristics of parental contribution which reflected extremely vital in school governance. 400 teachers and principals from 20 primary and secondary schools in Johannesburg South and Sedibe districts, Gauteng Province were the participants of the study. The participants completed twenty structured questionnaires. Questions were planned to measure principals and teachers' perceptions in classifying aspects that were essential to the involvement of parents in learning. Recommendations emanated from the findings of the study were that: (a) an authentic collaboration with parents required an extensive adjustment in the attitudes and practices of teachers. (b) In-service guidance and support plan should involve the improvement of parent-teacher interviews, communication services, involvement of parents in the curriculum, and (c) Attributes of home-school partnerships. A reason for my study to explore teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in learning is when most literature requires a substantial change in teachers' attitudes.

Sethusha (2014) conducted a research study to explore and understand teachers' experiences regarding parental involvement in classroom assessment in primary schools in Gauteng Province. Participants were teachers from four different schools in the Tshwane North District of Education in South Africa who taught in the Intermediate Phase, in Grade 4, 5 and 6. The study employed a qualitative case study in assisting the investigator to understand varied practices for the teachers. In obtaining information from teachers, semi-structured interviews were utilised. Classroom assessment framework in South Africa proposes a three-way process involving the learner, teacher and parent (DoE, 2011).

The study applied the conceptual framework based on the work of Epstein (2008) following six types of involvement. A large body of literature has documented parental involvement as critical and essential support in the academic development of the learner. Sethusha (2014) contends that parental involvement does not only refer to helping children with homework.

There are number of activities related to classroom assessment that requires parents to work closely with teachers to enrich the child's academic achievement.

Previous studies on parental involvement comprehensively focused on the links with learner performance, by less consideration on how teachers experience parental involvement regarding classroom assessment.

Limitation to the study was that only teachers were interviewed, parents' views were elicited. They should have afforded parents an opportunity to raise their concerns about involving themselves in learning. Grounded on evidence gathered from interviews with teachers, parental involvement was a challenge although few parents were involved in their children's learning. Teachers revealed parents' poor attendance at parent meetings and being generally uncooperative in assisting their children with schoolwork. It should be acknowledged that there are obstacles which can stop parents from being more involved in their children' learning.

2.2. 3. Local context

A qualitative research study conducted by Maphanga (2006) investigated how much parental involvement occurs in the schools of Inanda area of KwaZulu-Natal Province. The researcher had constantly perceived the low rate of parental involvement and its negative impact in academic achievement of learners. The study was undertaken in 4 schools (2 primary and 2 secondary schools) with 10 teachers and 10 parents per school. Interviews were conducted for qualitative data whereas structured questionnaire was for obtaining quantitative information. Interviews were structured and unstructured to both teachers and parents. Data triangulation was adopted. Research tools were used to investigate what participants considered as profits of home-school link, their attitudes towards home-link, forms of parental involvement that were currently accessible in schools and what reflected as complications to parental involvement.

Findings revealed that: (a) teachers who appear to be unfriendly to parental involvement (b) scarcity of workshops to put parents on board with regular fluctuating curriculum, are among other contributing reasons to diminishing the involvement of parents in primary school. Experience of working within the area for the researcher engaged her to interpretive research approach as she has a compassionate understanding of the participants' daily-lived practices with their historical location. This study has a definitive link with my study as I also have the experience of working in the research school where I have observed slight parental involvement in their children's learning. Some of the parents have mentioned that teachers do not inform them of exactly what to do in assisting their children.

Kannapathi (2012) conducted a qualitative study in exploring the role of the schools in promoting parental participation in education. She also attempted to identify support structures designed and implemented by schools to assist parents to overcome barriers to their participation in their children's learning. Participants selected for the study were 4 teachers, 2 school managers and 30 parents. The researcher employed the case study methodology in attempting to understand participants' experiences of parental involvement and their interactions. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires and interviews which were recorded to provide the researcher with in-depth information in promoting parental involvement. Findings of the study revealed that teachers play an essential role in encouraging parental participation as they have control over the factors like school climate, home-school communication, and management of parental communication which impact the level of parental involvement within schools. What was also demonstrated was that schools needed support structures in assisting parents to overcome hurdles to their participation. Recommendation for better levels of parental participation in education was grounded on the findings of the study.

The main limitation was that the researcher was an employee at the same school where the study was conducted. Quoting from Bertram's (2003) explanation that the way participants view the research is very important. The researcher assumed that responses from the participants might have been affected by her presence.

Sibiya (2004) conducted a qualitative case study focused on teachers and parents' perceptions on their relations in accelerating the involvement of parents in schools. The study was undertaken in two secondary schools in the uBombo circuit of the Obonjeni District in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. Data was gathered through document analysis from parents, school-based teachers and school principals. For data collection, interview schedule was semi-structured. Sibiya (2004) contends that parent-teacher relationship and support to children are essential for effective education to be functional. The findings have shown that in some schools, principals still provide preference to imposing the agenda of involving parents (Feuerstein, 2000). This results in the majority of schools not involving parents in policy decision-making and taking decisions by themselves. Recommendations emanated from the findings revealed parent-teacher relationships in Schools were generally poor.

Both teachers and parents were to be considerate and simple. Teachers were found to be lacking in tactics for initiating parent-teacher relationship, whilst on the other hand parents depended upon teachers' skill and knowledge to initiate their relationship. Teachers have to communicate and foster healthy relationship with parents. Parents expected teachers to behave in a particular manner at school, and also expected teachers to be professional, competent, respectful and friendly. At the same time, both parents and teachers appear willing to work together and realise that they are mutually dependent on each other for the benefit of their children. So, dedication from all stakeholders was emphasised. Parents were willing to assist and support their children with school and homework, but preferred teachers to initiate open communication. Invitations of parents to schools to discuss matters related to child learning were encouraged. Schools have to be goal directed and make their goals and policies available to all stakeholders.

A study conducted by Naicker (2013) explored the factors promoting the involvement of parents in a Secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The study was qualitative using the semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents. The findings shared that there was a demand for better parental involvement. Parents and teachers approved that there are undeniable barriers that stop parents from involving themselves in their children's learning. They also agreed on a collaborative effort to communicate and work jointly in unity for effective academic achievement. It was recommended that "teachers need to understand that parents can make an important contribution to their children's academic achievement" (Naicker, 2013, p. 20). Here again, teachers have to nurtured a relationship of trust, kind and sensitive to parents' feelings. Beyond that, Naicker (2013) cited Nichols & Sutton (2010) where it was noted that teachers who actively inspire parental involvement enjoy an increased sense of professional ability.

A study conducted by Narain (2005) intended to examine the relationship of parents' involvement to learners' success at 2 secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The purpose of the study was to ascertain if there could be a link established between parental involvement and the academic achievement of their children. The purpose of the study was to determine whether there could be a relationship established between parents who are involved in their children's learning, and their children's academic achievement. Participants were 115 parents in Durban, South Africa. Narain (2005) stated that it is not correct to attribute all influences on academic achievement to parental involvement, as there are many factors that may influence academic achievement. 21

He mentioned that there are many reasons from the parents for this lack of parental involvement. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were both used. Data gathering was through questionnaire and structured interviews. Structured interviews were conducted within the qualitative approach with some of the learners' parents from both schools. After collection and analysis of data, the results were used as to inform the interviews.

The results of the study exposed that there was commonly low involvement of parents in learning in both schools. Interestingly, the results showed a relationship between learners' achievements and parent involvement. It was also disclosed that parents were involved the most in the communication of a parent and child regarding the school, and slightly involved in school undertakings. As it is stated above that there are many factors that may influence academic achievement, I have considered teachers' attitudes as the gap to be focused on to promote parental involvement for effective academic achievement.

Recommendation proposed was to assist teachers and parents in developing and sustaining a stronger and more positive relationship between the schools and parents. The study also concluded with recommendations for further research, leading to my study to explore teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement as a means to develop a stronger positive relationship between the school and parent. Besides, the rational of my study assume teachers' attitudes as one of the factors that may influence the involvement of parents and academic success. Furthermore, Narain (2005) also stated that research studies undertaken in South Africa especially in black communities signify that the obstacles which impede parents from participating in learning , such as illiteracy, a lack of time, a negative school climate, a lack of parental involvement opportunities, attitudes of parents, and the attitudes of both teachers and school managers. Amongst the obstacles mentioned above, my study has taken attitudes of teachers as the phenomenon of the research study to be explored. He mentioned that there has been widespread research done on this field, but, not as extensive in the township primary school. Hence new study focuses on increasing parental involvement can contribute to our understanding of teachers' attitudes. Findings of the study have demonstrated that in South African townships, the parents under study were not adequately involved in their children's learning due to various socio-economic factors which are illiteracy, lack of time and negative school climate.

Shezi (2012) adopted an interpretivist qualitative case study approach in conducting his study.

The study purpose was to explore principals' promotion of parental involvement in three selected secondary schools of Umbumbulu Circuit in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. The study also sought to highlight what is considered to be impediments to the involvement of parents by principals of schools. Researcher focused on interacting closely with the principals to gain insight to form clear identification of the impediments to the involvement of parents in schools. Semi-structured interviews were instruments for collecting data from the participants. 1 head of department (HOD), 1 teacher and 1 parent were also interviewed.

Recommendations were directed to the principals as people entrusted to the responsibility of promoting parental involvement in schools. One of the recommendations made was for the principals to work with teachers in adjusting their attitudes towards parental involvement. Although this study has recommended that principals have to work with teachers to adjust their attitudes to parental involvement in learning, my study will seek to understand why teachers have the attitudes that they have towards parental involvement.

A study conducted by Govender (2004) attempted to investigate the managing of the teacher-parent relationships in Chatsworth District primary school of KwaZulu-Natal. The study focused on determining the perceptions of school based personnel and parents regarding the current state of connection relating the school and parents. The principal, 2 HODs, the school clerk, 13 level one teachers and a sample of 80 parents of the learners of the school were the participants of the study. The methodology employed for the study was a quantitative approach. Data was gathered through questionnaires and interviews. Key results disclosed that there was possibility to enrich the relationships with parents at the school. Teachers should implement a participative and advice-giving style management when interacting with the parents. Teachers should also reassure operative two-way interaction with parents.

The proposed recommendation was to assist the school based personnel to develop and sustain stronger and positive relationships with the parents. For parents to be treated as civil partners in the learning of their children, it is necessary for teachers to guarantee accessibility and opportunities for parents in schools. The research study was limited to one primary school. It would have been ultimate to widen the scope of this research study to other primary schools in order to enable a proportional study of the responses. My study is based in a primary school and elicits teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in children's learning. Exploration of teachers' attitudes seeks to reveal the relationships between teachers and parents which is the purpose of this study. 23

2.3 Synthesis of Literature review

As noted from the aforementioned studies, teachers are aware of the significance of involving parents in their children's learning. However, their attitudes may hinder them to practice articulation. This study affords teachers in the township primary school to explore the benefits of working collaboratively with learners and parents. Moreover, studies have demonstrated in this chapter that attitudes of teachers towards involvement of parents in learning will add a significant improvement in schools and will be added substantial to the body of knowledge. Furthermore, Macmillan (2003, p. 1) has stated that, even with music, "positive instrumental teachers' attitudes to parental involvement leads to increased pupil enjoyment and achievement in music-making." According to Mitchell (2008), parental involvement in learning is becoming increasingly viewed as a critical and necessary assistance for the intellectual and emotional progress of the learner. Having reviewed literature internationally, nationally and locally, it can be noted that teachers' attitudes could impact positively or negatively on learner achievement. Moreover, teachers' attitude has been noted as a barrier to parental involvement in many studies cited in this chapter.

Many studies have been done on involving parents in education. But the issue on teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in their children' learning remains a constant challenge in many schools. The gap of exploring teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in their children' learning need to be related as it has effect on learners' academic achievement. Schools should create chances of parents to be part of learning to develop communication to improve the information teachers provide to parents (Smit, 2006). There have been a number of studies investigating various aspects of involving parents in children's learning. They focus more on parents' attitudes with schools and also on learners' attitudes. Many have focused more on identifying barriers to parental involvement where teachers' attitudes are amongst the barriers. Others focused on exploring the role of schools in promoting parents' participation. Even though, there is still lack of literature on teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in their children's learning. Dor & Rucker-Naidu (2012) have mentioned that positive attitude of teachers towards parental involvement is very much important to learners' academic performance. This study explored teachers attitudes towards involving parents in learning. It will serve to inform and change teachers' attitudes in positively combining theory and practice of parental involvement.

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2.4 Conclusion

This chapter included studies from abroad and those from South Africa on attitudes of teachers towards involving parents in learning. Most research indicates clearly that teachers have to work on adjusting their attitudes since there is slight practice of involving parents in learning. The existing literature on the attitudes of teachers towards parental involvement is more than adequate enough to alert teachers to inculcate parental involvement with care. Therefore, the current study attempted to explore teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in a township primary in Pinetown District is of great significance. Though teacher's role is to work with learners, but teachers find that, for numerous reasons, a significant and worthwhile role embraces their work with parents (Jones & Jones, 2010). Other pertinent literature will be integrated appropriately in latter chapters. The following chapter discusses theoretical framework that serves as a guide to the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Reviewed literature relevant to the study was presented in the previous chapter. This chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework underpinning this study. As I am concerned with the social process and meaning, Cohen *et al*. (2007) shares a similar concept by stating that most qualitative studies are conducted with a theoretical framework that focuses on social processes and the meaning, which participants attribute to social interactions. This chapter also focuses more comprehensively at teachers' preparation for parental involvement.

Cohen et al. (2007); Neuman, (2006) & Henning (2004) mention that theory is viewed as interrelated opinions or views which form a reasonable view of incidents and performance aiming at clarifying or predicting. In other words, theories are created for the purpose of clarifying and envisaging the phenomena. On the other hand, theoretical framework is necessary for relating the researcher to the existing knowledge. Henning (2004) states that a theoretical framework specifies the essential variables that persuade a phenomenon of interest and provides an orientation of the study so as to stay within the boundaries of the frame. The theory relevant to this study is discussed in the following paragraph and provides a general framework for the analysis. This is aligned with Cohen et *al.* (2007) when indicating that theories assist in clarifying the variables of the study for the researcher and give a common framework for data analysis.

3.2 Theoretical framework

The framework that serves as a basis for this study of exploring teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in learning is by Epstein (2001) which is the interpretivist paradigm. There are many models of teachers and parental involvement but Epstein's is most appropriate and moreover has gone through a wide review by research connection (Jordan, Orozco & Averett, 2001).

3.2.1 Epstein's Framework

Taking into consideration the stages of the basic planning model in the planning cycle of schools which are viewed in a holistic way, Epstein's framework holistically views the issue of teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in learning. Epstein developed this framework to assist teachers in creating school (teacher) and family (parent) partnership. She has postulated that to develop such partnership will help assert learners succeed in their academic achievement. 26

Designing the study around Epstein (2001)'s model allow teachers to create a welcoming environment between schools and families, and to build strong support for learners' academic achievement. In relationship, teachers, parents and community associates work collectively in sharing information, guiding learners, solving problems and celebrating achievements (Paratore & McCormark, 2005). They further emphasise that partnerships identify collective concerns of home-school-community for children's learning and development.

Epstein's model is explained according to the six types of involvement, which are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, and decision making and collaborating with community. This allows teachers to create a wide range of programs of involving parents in learning, since their attitudes affect teaching and learning (Brooks, 2004).

Moreover, the most successful learning happens when schools work together with parents in a mutual initiative (Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2009). Each type of involvement is important in helping teachers to understand that their attitudes have impact to parental involvement. From this theory, teachers can improve their attitudes towards the involvement of parents in learning, and the manner in which they provide information to parents. Brennan (2011) has emphasized that teachers require clear directives from building level support and from central administration regarding parent involvement best practices. Hence, my choice of Epstein's framework in my study.

3.2.1.1 Parenting: The extent and excellence of parent-teacher communication is indicated to be affected by school influences such as its culture, size and more (Seginer, 2006). Evidently, parents are assisted by the teachers with parenting skills to assist them understand their children's school work. This has been noted by Kimu (2012) that parents are assisted with parenting skills, family support, understanding child progress and positioning home circumstances in supporting different levels of learning. Parents are allowed to support and assist their children when they are home. Lewis & Forman (2002) cited in Addi-Raccah & Ainhoren (2009, p. 806) found that "when teachers felt empowered enough, they could establish better relations with parents and believed that they can work well with them." This is perhaps why teachers also are being assisted in understanding the ways of involving parents to their children's learning. Many governments now have deliberately included regulations confirming more emphasis on parental involvement in children's learning (Naidoo, 2005; Friedman, 2011).

The South African Council for Educators (S.A.C.E) has stipulated that teachers must recognize the role of parents and keep them informed regularly about the well-being and progress of the learners. Therefore, parent involvement is placed strategically within national policy. This positions parents to be effective patrons in reviewing and examining accomplishments of the school (Opltaka, 2002). According to Mncube (2010), encouraging parents' participation and providing them with tasks of accountability improves the functioning of the school. Ndlovu (2011) asserts that one reason that makes parents ineffectively involved in learning is poor relationship that exists between teachers and parents. Moreover, Mncube (2009) argues that at some schools in South Africa, parents are not yet playing their full role as mandated by legislation in SASA, (1996). Teachers need to be open and honest with parents about their children's development in learning, since trustful relationships are the key to effective partnership (Graue & Hawkins, 2005). Moreover, teachers have to understand families' background, culture and goals (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Furthermore, Monadjem (2003) indicates that parenting includes parent supervision and provision of a home environment that enables children to become responsible and able to learn. Again, schools encourage parental involvement by organising programs that offer family support to assist parents with child rearing and parenting skills.

3.2.1.2 Communicating: According to Kimu (2012), schools should communicate with parents to actively involve them in school-based events. In addition, "schools encourage parental involvement by inviting parents to participate in activities at school and facilitating parent-teacher communication" Sethusha (2014, p. 472). When parents are requested by teachers to support their children with homework in an explicit way, targeted and thoughtful, parental support in their children's learning at home becomes more fruitful (Hoover-Dempsey, (2004). Communication is an essential condition for effective collaboration and support for parents to assist their children learn. Teachers are required to enlighten parents in what manner they can support their children's learning. "It is assumed that teachers' tendency to interact with parents and attitudes toward parental involvement can be ascribed to the organizational characteristics of the school in which they work" Addi-Raccah & Ainhoren (2009, p. 806).

Mestry & Grobler (2007) conducted the study demonstrating that parents who are actively involved in their children's study schedules, promote their effective working in school.

Teachers provide information to parents through formal communication which occurs through school newsletters and notices. Informal communication also occurs through communication book that needs to be checked regularly or daily. Face to face conversations also happen as informal communication. Significant improvement in learner progress is noted where there is effective communications to support children from teachers and parents (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Parents and teachers communicate in discussing learner performance. Schools promote the facilitation of parent-teacher communication by welcoming parents to participate in school activities. Although some of the parents are less able to work with their children, it is important to keep them continually informed about their children' learning (Jones & Jones, 2010). Regular communications bring direction and progress to all stakeholders involved.

3.2.1.3 Volunteering: Lemmer (2000) reported that learners whose parents volunteered

At school had lower instances of absenteeism and unpunctuality. They also had considerably higher grades if their parents attend school events. Wright (2009, p. 17) has mention that "volunteering in schools is of good help for parents to gain a measure of ownership in the school" (Epstein, 2002). Moreover, it is also enriching to parents in different aspects to offer support in their children's learning environment. They take responsibility in assisting children doing homework. Parents are trained by teachers, and provided with work schedules that involve them as volunteers.

Improving recruiting and training to involve parents enable them an effort as volunteers to assist the school and children in learning. Parents need to volunteer time to teach learners, assist teachers by copying materials or share their knowledge on distinct issues with learners (Jones & Jones, 2010). Teachers share fruitful information for parents to support children doing their schoolwork, and to work together with the school in any activities. According to Jones & Jones (2010), when parents are well informed on school procedures, they likely to volunteer in supporting children. Parents' assistance are always welcomed and required in the school. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of (2001) encourages schools to expand parent involvement efforts beyond traditional school open hours, fundraising and parent-teacher conferences. Parents are considered an integrated part of a team that includes teachers, school and district officials, and community members (Blazer, 2006).

The ways in which the parents are involved is governed by the attempts that the school makes to involve parents and by eagerness of parents to embrace prospects to get involved (Kimu, 2012).Teachers need to propose open guidance to parents to facilitate them volunteering in school activities.

3.2.1.4 Learning at home: McDermott & Rothenberge (2000) have examine teachers' attitude about parental involvement and discovered negativities from most teachers' attitudes to the involvement of parents. They noted that parents themselves held negative attitudes.

Nevertheless, involved parents in schools are well prepared to support their children with school-related performances and influences academic outcomes (Hill, 2004). Teachers involve parents with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum related activities. Teachers provide knowledge to parents in order to assist their children with school work and what is expected from their children by providing them with classroom policies (Sethusha, 2014). Schools are tasked with implementing various strategies to parental involvement in learning (Kimu, 2012).

3.2.1.5 Decision making: According to Kimu (2012, p. 60) "parents are able to take part in goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personal decision and fund allocations for school programmes." Teachers' positive attitudes towards parent involvement are considered as dominant to parents' decision making in their involvement to children's learning (Abdullah *et al.* 2011). Parents are included in decisions made in school. According to Sethushe (2014), the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGB) is the part of decision making process.

For effective decision making, relationship among families and the school should be constructive, to ensure parents are involved in making choices that influence learning of the child (Epstein & Sanders, 2006).

Moreover, for a powerful parent-teacher relationship, teachers should be concerned to involved parents in learning and foster positive attitudes towards involving them. Involving parents in the decision making activity is very important, especially when there is a new program or practice that will impact their children directly (Dodd & Konzal, 2002).

3.2.1.6 Collaborating with the community: Epstein (2008) has referred collaboration to "where parents and teachers discover the resources in their community to build stronger programs in the school, family practices and children's learning" Sethusha (2014, p. 473).

Community resources are used to strengthen school, home and children's learning. Meaningful collaboration depends on open and supportive relationship among teachers and parents who communicate for a mutual aspiration of helping children become successful in school and in life (Dodd & Konzal, 2002). Further, Bauer & Shea (2003) have explained collaboration with parents as involvement of supervision, notifying and partaking. Teachers must be aware of their professional obligations when collaborating with the community. These collaborations offer a worthwhile framework where the behaviour of involving parents is structured and apprehended by teachers and parents (Barnard, 2004; Jordan, *et al*, 2002). Again, Epstein (2001) refers to collaboration as where parents and teachers discover the resources meant to assist in building stronger programs in children's learning.

This theory resonates with a poem by Swarat (1948) in her book "Thoughts into Poetry". This poem relates to the theory by Epstein (2001) when indicating that teachers' partnership with parents is paramount. The poem reads thus:

"Unity

I dreamed I stood in a studio

And watched two sculptors there,

The clay they used was a young child's mind

And they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher:

The tools she used were books and music and art;

One was a parent

With a guiding hand and gentle loving heart.

And when at last their work was done,

They were proud of what they had wrought

For the things they had worked into the child

Could never be sold or bought!

And each agreed she would have failed

If she had worked alone

For behind the parent stood the school,

And behind the teacher stood the home!"

Evidently, from the above poem, it is clear that teachers need to better understand parents of the learners they work with, which will be mutually and beneficially facilitate children's learning. This poem reveals the importance of working together of both the parent and the teacher in children's learning. It also brought a better understanding of parental involvement and strengthen me as a researcher.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework helpful in administering data collected for this study. It explained Epstein's six types of involvement in recognition to its essential part of an intense constructive link between parents and teachers. This relationship demonstrates how teachers may connect with parents to improve parental involvement and to support learning and success in a township primary school. Specifically for this study, teachers hold different attitudes and adopt differing actions towards involving parents in their children's learning. Consideration of different forms of engagement encourages a range of prospects for families, schools and communities to work collaboratively (Epstein 2001, Coates, *et al.* 1997). The next chapter addresses research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Theoretical framework relevant to this study was presented in the previous chapter. Research design and methodology employed in this research study is the focus of this chapter. The research design assists in bringing about guidance to be admired when generating and analysing data (Maree, 2007). The chapter begins by discussing the research paradigm in which the study is located, the approach employed, the methodology and the suitable instrument utilised to gather data for the exploration of teachers' attitudes regarding parental involvement in learning. Interpretive paradigm selected for this study relates appropriately with qualitative research methodology chosen for this study. Moreover, a schedule illustrating generation plan and analysis strategy of data is offered. Finally, the ethical issues directing the study are considered and the limitations of the study are presented.

4.2 Research paradigm

The beliefs, attitudes and values of teachers are based upon their own life experiences (Cashdan & Overall, 1998; 2000). The study is located within an interpretivist paradigm which focuses on understanding people's behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions (Willis, 2007). Furthermore, interpretivists believe it is possible to understand the particular area of social experience (Cohen *et al.* 2011). In support, Henning (2005) claims that interpretive paradigm pursues to apprehend societal partners' meanings and understanding of circumstances. The research is positioned in the interpretive paradigm in emphasizing Interpretation and experience of teachers towards parental involvement. Interpretive paradigm is used when engaging with the participants in their natural settings.

The interpretive paradigm will assist me to explore and identify teachers' attitudes to their extent of involving parents in learning. I also need to understand why teachers possess the attitudes they have. Cohen *et al.* (2007) cited by Shezi (2012, p. 29) mentioned that "interpretivist paradigm is used to understand people's social behaviour from the point of the participants that is context-dependent." Furthermore, it is attempting to apprehend the phenomenon (teachers' attitudes) through the point of view of the teachers. The uniqueness of a particular context is important to identify and understand the constructed meanings. Interpretive paradigm is most appropriate as this study seeks an actual reality in a specific situation in a township primary school.

This type of paradigm allows teachers to freely express their views on the questions posed. According to Maree (2007), the interpretive paradigm pressures the connections of people as individuals, who form a social order among themselves in their everyday life and create routines to be followed.

Terre Blanche, Kelly & Durheim (2006: 273-274) cited by Kimu (2012) explain that an:

"...interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology)."

This paradigm allows me to explore the depth of the phenomenon and to develop a sense of understanding teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in learning. It offers a perspective to analyse the situation and to provide insight into the way teachers make sense of the situation they encounter. According to Maree (2007), by investigating the value, extent and complications of the issue concerned, we can start to create a substance of understanding

4.3 Research approach

In this study, I used a qualitative approach. A qualitative study is designed for the researcher to understand the meaning teachers have constructed in making sense of their world, which is the school, and how they understand and experience the world in which they work (Merrian, 2009). Moreover, qualitative approaches usually concentrate on phenomena that takes place in their natural settings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). I will use a qualitative approach because I want to get descriptive data about the attitudes of teachers towards involving parents in learning in a township primary school. The aim of a qualitative approach is to comprehend social life and the sense people assign to their daily life (De Vos, *et al*. 2002).

Qualitative approach is used to get descriptive data about the attitudes of teachers towards involving parents in their children's learning. McMillan & Schumacher (2006) pointed that qualitative research design explains and explores people's personal and shared social proceedings, ideas, opinions, and insights. The study aimed to explore the attitudes of teachers where qualitative methodology is most suitable with an exploratory field. Moreover, investigators commonly favour a justly length and profound engagement in the ordinary context where qualitative research is exciting and vital (Mason, 2002).

This allowed me as a researcher to become closely accustomed with the life of the participants and to understand teachers' attitudes from different perspectives (Bridgemohan, 2001).

Qualitative approach is well-suited to this study when Cohen, *et al.* (2007) point out that it may be defined as a particular situation in social science that basically depends on interacting with people in their own territory. This study is an effort to attain a sense of meaning that teachers give to their situations through an interpretive understanding of their attitudes towards parental involvement. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) also state that a qualitative research approach engages the studies used and gathering of array of realistic tackles that include case study, personal experiences, interviews, interactive methods and visual texts that illustrate challenging instants and implications of specific lives. Hence this study is conducted in the natural settings in an attempt to create sense of, or clarify the significance teachers bring to them. Therefore, the qualitative approach was most suitable to explore the attitudes that teachers have towards involving parents in their children's learning.

4.4 Research methodology

"Case studies provide researchers with an opportunity to examine and present the descriptions of the phenomenon in detail with its context" (Shezi, 2012, p. 27). Case study was adopted as an appropriate methodology for gathering data and is likely to produce the required information in this study. The case study design is relevant for this research study because case studies are the most preferred approach within qualitative researches (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). Case studies provide researchers with a chance to examine and present the explanations of each phenomenon in detail with its context. The aim of this study is to understand what is real in its own uniqueness Yin (2003). My objectives were to understand the attitudes of teachers towards the parental involvement in learning. Bertram (2003) cited in Kannapathi (2012) also explains that case studies are often used by researchers in the interpretivist paradigm since it aims to capture the reality of lived experiences and thoughts of the participants. I have distinguished this method as it is an organized review of incident aiming to define and clarify the phenomenon of concern (Maree, 2007).

My study is a case 8 teachers from one township primary school representing all grades from grade R to grade 7 in Pinetown District, KwaZulu Natal where parents seem not to be adequately entangled in learning. These parents are generally mention teachers as the ones who do not invite them to the learning environment. A case study design is engaged with the aim of achieving a thorough understanding of a condition and its meanings for those involved. The interest is in the process of exploring teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in the context rather than in the outcomes. Henning (2004) states that a case study demands that the researcher be sensitive to the context in which he or she works. In addition, the phenomenon under study cannot be studied outside and separately from its context. A case study approach provides me with an ability to explore the applicable phenomenon in-depth within its particular milieu.

According to Christensen & Johnson (2008), a case study is an in-depth study of one particular case, where the case may be a person like a teacher, a learner, a principal or a parent. Participants were provided with a platform to issues and concerns involving parents in their children's learning. Parents have generally mentioned that teachers do not adequately involve them in their children's learning.

According to Yin (2009, p. 18), case study is "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not evident." Again, "case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries" (Yin, 2009, p. 4).

4.5 Sampling

Sampling is an activity or process used in selecting a segment of population for the research study (Maree, 2007). Researchers accumulate a sample that is suitable to their specific needs. Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007) suggest that, in qualitative research, the size of sample should be sufficient to generate thick descriptions and rich data. It should not be too large to overload the data and not so small to prevent achievement and data redundancy (Cohen *et al*. 2011).

The school begins from Grade R to Grade 7 with three or four teachers per grade. Participants selected for this study were eight teachers. They were given letters requesting them to participate in the research, together with informed consent forms.

Participants are selected purposively to represent teachers across all the phases at Phathakahle Primary School (pseudonym). In purposive sampling participants are chosen for some distinction that allows them bearers of data required for the study (Maree, 2007). Moreover, a reason for purposive sampling is that it is often a feature of qualitative research (Cohen *et al*. 2011), which is the research approach for this study. A purposive sampling acquires in-depth information from the teachers who are the people to relate their attitudes or feelings. Eight teachers were chosen for a specific purpose of gaining insight from their attitudes. Cohen *et al*. (2011) has stated that a concern for purposive sampling is to gain in-depth report from the people in place to provide such information. Furthermore, Cohen et al. (2011, p. 157) have explained that "purposive sampling is used to access 'knowledgeable people' who have in-depth knowledge about certain issues, maybe by virtue of their professional role, power or experience" (Ball, 1990).

Purposive sampling was employed and the teachers were selected because they have experienced the assertive experience of involving parents in learning. Moreover, Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007) noted that the purpose of sampling is not to make generalizations, not to make comparisons, but to present unique cases that have their own, fundamental value.

4.6 Data generation and research instrument

According to Scott (2001), in several countries evidence is collected by observations, interviews and questionnaires. In this study, one method was utilized to generate data, namely interviews. Data was analysed based upon research questions presented in an interview. According to Christensen & Johnson (2008), interview is data production method where the researcher probe questions to the participants. So, an interview is data collection method where the researcher is required to interact with the participants. The researcher prepares questions she wishes to pose to the participants. The researcher and the participants are engaged in a conversation where questions are asked and the participants' views and concerns are disclosed.

Information about teachers' attitudes was gathered through one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the selected teachers in the staffroom. "One-on-one interviews enabled participants to express their personal experiences, beliefs and opinions" (Cohen *et al*. 2007, p. 350). All participants in my study are the teachers who are familiar with the contextual background of the nature of the issue.

Semi-structured interview is variable in letting innovative questions to be created during the interview. De Vos *et al*. (2005, p. 296) mentioned that "semi-structured interviews are used in order to gain a detailed picture of the participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic" which is based on teachers' attitudes in this study. Moreover, interviews were semi-structured and were centred on the framework and insight evolving from the literature review (Cohen *et al*. 2000).

Furthermore, the benefits of semi-structured interview are that the researcher and the participants build belief, which permits the researcher to thoroughly understand the participants' opinions (Maree, 2007). Semi-structured interviews are conducted in order to generate relevant information from the participants for data collection.

This afforded me to get in-depth identification and vision of the occurrence around teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in learning. Open-ended questions assist in probing for more explanation and clarification from the participants (Neuman, 2006). The interaction allowed me to simplify interview questions for participants to understand and to formulate any follow up questions or if clarity was required. In choosing this research approach, Cohen *et al*. (2000) emphasise the meaning provided to the aspect of expression for all participants.

The interview schedule was used as my research instrument. All interviews were audio recorded then transcribed since all the participants agreed to participate by signing consent forms. Language used to conduct the interviews was English. Data was analysed through emerging themes. The semi-structured interviews intend to bring out evidence on the two questions: (a) What are the teachers' attitudes towards the involving parents in the learning of their children? And (b) why do teachers have the attitudes that they have?

4.7 Data generation plan

	Q1. What are the teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children?	Why do teachers have these attitudes?
Why is the data being collected?	To explore teachers' attitudes toward involving parents in learning.	To understand why teachers possess the attitudes they have.
What is the research strategy?	Semi-structured one-one interviews were utilised for data collection.	Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were utilised for data collection.
Who (or what) will be sources of data?	For data collection, teachers of township primary schools were interviewed.	For data collection, teachers of township primary schools were interviewed.
How many of the data sources will be assessed?	Eight teachers were individually interviewed during a semi-structured interview.	Eight teachers were individually interviewed during a semi-structured interview.
Where is data to be collected?	Data was collected from teachers in township primary schools in Pinetown District.	Data was collected from teachers in township primary schools in Pinetown District.
How often will data be collected?	Interviews were conducted for approximately 45 minutes.	Interviews were conducted for approximately 45 minutes.
How will the data be collected?	The data was collected through open-ended questions, during individual semi-structured interviews. Interviews were audio	The data was collected through open-ended questions, during individual semi-structured interviews. Interviews were audio

	recorded and transcribed verbatim.	recorded and transcribed verbatim.
Justification of this plan for data collection:	One-on-one interviews were the most appropriate method of data collection as they provided an opportunity to elicit views of teachers on why they have the attitudes that they have towards parental involvement in learning. Semi-structured interviews enabled me to gain a detailed understanding of teachers' views on this topic and in-depth information about families.	One-on-one interviews were the most appropriate method of data collection as they provided an opportunity to elicit views of teachers on why they have the attitudes that they have towards parental involvement in learning. Semi-structured interviews enabled me to gain a detailed understanding of teachers' views on this topic and in-depth information about families.

4.8 Data Analysis

A qualitative case study questions a phenomenon within its real-life perspective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In designing case study, the focus of data analysis is based on a single phenomenon that is chosen by the researcher to understand it completely irrespective of the quantity of participants for the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The study explored attitudes of eight teachers towards involving parents in learning in a township primary school. Data was analysed through emerging themes based upon research questions presented in an interview on teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children. The themes were (1) Teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in their children's learning, and (2) Hindrance to parental involvement. These themes would be elaborated in the next chapter. When conducting interviews, participants consented to the use of an audio during the interview. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcript was taken back to the participants to double check for authencity. Audio recordings would be stored for 5 years by the supervisor. To ensure that teachers' identity was protected, actual names for teachers were not used but pseudonyms. The interview questions were used to probe further into the attitudes of teachers towards parental involvement in their children's learning. Teachers provided their account of involving parents in their children's learning.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

"Ethics are generally considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad" McMillan & Schumacher (2001, p. 196). The preliminary step of research design is for the researcher to be granted permission to have access to conduct the research in that particular institution before the task embarks (Cohen *et al*. 2007). In this research project, teachers were interviewed. I wrote letters for permission to the DoE and the principal of Phathakahle Primary school as gatekeepers. I informed the principal about the aims, nature and procedure of the research (Cohen et al. 2007). I thereafter wrote letters to the teachers who will participate in the research informing them about the research project and its purpose, they were then requested to participate. All participants signed consent forms prior to the interviews. The participants in the study were promised secrecy and confidentiality, and that for them to participate was voluntary. The letters to the participants clearly stated that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any point in time due to discomfort. Participants were informed that no real name of the school and of the teachers would be cited in this study.

Attached appendices are: (a) The full ethical clearance approval granted by the University of KwaZulu Natal. (b) Permission to conduct research from the Department of Education. (c) A letter to the school principal. (d) A letter to the participants. (e) Principal consent letter. (f) Participant's consent letter. (g) Interview schedules for the research participants. The ethical endorsement was centred on the recognition of my responsibility to protect the privileges and safety of the participants in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Information transcripts would be safely kept in the supervisor's office in a locked steel cabinet for the period of five years.

4.10 Limitation of the study

It is a requirement for every research to proclaim the limitations that may promote questions regarding the integrity of the study. The limitation of this study is that it was conducted in one school in Umhlathuzana Circuit, Pinetown District in KwaZulu-Natal, which restricts the sample to eight teachers of the same site. The school is commencing from grade R to grade 7. The research findings and conclusions cannot be transferred to other schools. Whereas it could assist other teachers to conduct the study in different schools to share, compare and understand the attitudes that teachers hold towards involving parents in their children's learning. It is also a limitation that I am the HOD in the same school, which can cause the participants not to freely express themselves.

4.11 Conclusion

An overview of the methods employed in this research study are provided in this chapter. It illustrated the suitability of choice of the qualitative research approach, research paradigm, research methodology, and sampling method. The chapter also included data collection, research instruments, and data analysis. Data generated through the use of these methods is presented in the successive chapters. Furthermore, ethical considerations and limitations to the study are discussed. Chapter 5 is devoted to the emerging themes obtained from the data generated.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the research design and methodology of the study. This chapter comprises with data presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings. Creswell (2003) asserts that data analysis is the process of preparing, conducting and understanding better data and also representing and making interpretations of data. In this study, data was generated using semi-structured interviews. The main purpose of my research was to explore and to understand the attitudes of teachers towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning by answering the key research questions in this study, which are: (1).

What are the attitudes of teachers towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning? (2). Why do teachers have these attitudes? The generated data revealed emerging themes that provided responses to the main research questions. Teachers' profiles were presented in Table 5.2, themes emerged from the generated data were presented in 5.3. The themes enable me to understand why teachers have the attitudes that they have towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning in a township primary school. Interpretations and implications of the findings are reported under the themes emerged from teacher interviews. The findings supported by qualitative approach were presented and discussed in the light of the reviewed literature in chapter two and theoretical framework discussed in chapter three. Direct quotes of the participants were employed. The chapter specified how the analysis supports the given interpretations.

5.2 Teachers' profiles

Name	Gender	Grade	Years of Teaching experience	Residential Area
Nzuza	female	R	16	Hammarsdale
Dludla	male	6	9	Hammarsdale
Langeni	female	7	15	Pietermaritzburg
Ngubo	female	2	6	Hammarsdale
Koneni	female	1	27	Cato Ridge
Gcaba	female	3	5	Pinetown
Mdumo	female	4	12	Hammarsdale

| Mdlandla | male | 5 | 20 | Hammarsdale |

Teachers' profiles from the above table:

Teacher Dludla was a male teaching Grade 6. He had 9 years teaching experience. He taught Life Skills and IsiZulu. He was a local teacher who was familiar to the parents but could not motivate them to be actively involved in their children's learning. Dludla was also teaching Adult Basic Education (ABE) after school hours, where he could assist parents with supportive skills like reading, writing and counting.

Teacher Langeni was a female teaching Mathematics in Grade 7. She has taught Grade 7 for seven years with her 15 years teaching experience. She was living in the suburbs of Northlands in Pietermaritzburg.

Teacher Ngubo was a female teaching Grade 2 and had 6 years teaching experience. She was also a local teacher but not close to the parents and had no opportunities to create for parental involvement.

Teacher Koneni was a female teaching Grade 1 with a long service of 27 years teaching experience. She mentioned that she was very old. She was living in a place not that far from the school, it was about 15km away. She taught Isizulu, English and Life Skills. Koneni was interesting to see parents since English was introduced in Grade 1.

Teacher Gcaba was a female teaching Grade 3 with 5 years teaching experience. She is living in Pinetown, far away from the school. She was not worried about inviting parents for the meetings by stating that parents did not take the opportunity of being involved in this primary school.

Teacher Mdumo was a female teaching Grade 4 English and Social Sciences with 12 years teaching experience. She did her best in inviting parents, and mentioned that only parents for those learners who had no problems that showed up. She was a local teacher on a walking distance to school.

Teacher Nzuza was a female teaching Grade R with 16 years teaching experience but 4 years in Grade R. She lived in the school cottage. She mentioned that she was discouraged about most parents who did not respect teachers' invitations when called to school.

Teacher Mdlandla was a male teaching Grade 5 Mathematics and Natural Sciences &

Technology with 20 years teaching experience. He was a local teacher who mentioned that there was always communication breakdown between parents and the school.

He said when parents were asked about invitations, they mentioned that they did not receive any. Some learners did not give their parents invitations of the meeting.

5.3 Emerging themes from the generated data

5.3.1 THEME 1: Teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in learning.

5.3.1.1 Discipline to the learners

5.3.1.2 Focus of learners

5.3.1.3 Communication

5.3.1.4 Opportunities for parents

5.3.1.5 Community involvement

5.3.2   THEME 2: Hindrance/ barriers to parental involvement.

5.3.2.1 Illiteracy

5.3.2.2 Lack of confidence

5.3.2.3 Lack of interest

The questions were answered by open-ended interview questions. Most of the answers indicated positiveness in the attitudes of teachers as far as parental involvement is concerned.

However, there were some negative attitudes that were identified from teachers regarding the involvement of parents in their children's learning.

5.3.1 THEME 1: Teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in their children's learning.

5.3.1.1 Discipline to the learners.

From the data, teachers generally approved the importance of involving parents in learning as it gives discipline to the learners. Therefore, this affirms positive feelings for teachers towards parental involvement.

Teacher Dludla mentioned:

"My opinion is that it is very important to involve parents in their children's learning because of the following benefits: it provides discipline to learners as they are guided by teachers at school and at home as they are guided by parents. It helps learners to focus on their studies. It also provides help to learners who are lacking in their studies."

Teacher Koneni also mentioned that:

"I think if we involve parents in their children's learning, it will be easy to teach since they are the child's first educators. They listen and respect them better than teachers. So if we involve parents it will help us a lot because if they [parents] encourage them to learn or not to absent themselves from school, and come to look for their work at school, learners will easily take part at school."

From the above quotations, it was clear that involving parents in learning would play a huge part in the discipline of learners. Literature also supports this as Anthony & Walshaw (2007) state that learners perform better academically and gain more confidence with their attitude when their parents remain well informed and involved in their learning. Furthermore, Abdullah, *et al.* (2011) stated that teachers' positive attitude are considered as a good indicator to determine the quality of education toward parental involvement. It is notable that where parents and teachers work together to improve learning, there is improvements in learner achievements (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Even the theory by Epstein (2001) supports that teachers need to assist parents with parenting skills in order to help their children with their academic activities for positive achievements.

5.3.1.2 Focus of learners.

It emerged during the interaction with the participants that teachers view parental involvement as essential in ensuring that learners focus more in their scholastic performance. Teacher Gcaba mentioned:

"My opinion in involving parents in their children's learning is very beneficial to the child as the child will be able to get help from parents as well as from teachers because both parties know about the education of the child."

Teacher Dludla also revealed that:

"I have a good feeling in involving parents in their children's learning. It makes children to focus on their studies and make teachers and parents work cooperatively in providing support in learners' school work."

Clearly, teachers have a positive attitude towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning knowing that it enables learners to focus more on their schoolwork. Literature also support this view when Mestry & Grobler (2007) have contended that parents who are actively involved in the study programmes of their children contribute to their good performance in school. Furthermore, Macmillan (2003) has stated that positive teachers' attitudes to parental involvement leads to increased pupil enjoyment and achievement. 46

Even the theory supports this point, Epstein (2001) affirms that learners learn more and succeed at higher levels when parents and teachers work together. In addition, Epstein (2001) mentioned that involved parents in their children's learning could positively impact the child's attitude to schoolwork, focus and performance.

5.3.1.3 Communication

Interviews confirmed involvement of parents in learning as good in developing communication between teachers and parents.

Teacher Langeni reported that:

"If you teach learners you need to understand all children's background as well as their relationships with parents. So, if you communicate with a parent easily or involve a parent, you are in an advantage to easily find the barriers in a child's learning and to make it easily to come up with the solution for resolving those barriers."

She also revealed that:

"I am teaching a critical subject which is Maths. Therefore, in Maths it is very important to involve parents, as it is a failing subject. So a parent must know from the beginning of the year that

you are having this subject for the child and the parent must help the learner so that you work hand in hand in improving learner's work."

Teacher Gcaba mentioned:

"Open communication between parents and teachers must always be there so that it ensures that teachers are assisting parents to be involved in their children's learning."

Teacher Ngubo added:

"As an educator I can communicate with parents by using properly designed forms that the school send to parents informing them about the learner's progress, school meetings and misconduct of learners."

From the findings above, it is evident that parental involvement is a two-way communication process. It enables the parent to understand the process of teaching and learning for children, and teachers to have an idea about the learner's background. From the literature, Graham-Clay (2005, p. 126) has mentioned that "teachers should strive to use variety of effective strategies to make communication with parents as informative and interactive as possible, incorporating new communication methods and yet training the human touch."

Other literature note also that teachers need to have more understanding on effective communication skills with the child's society and parents where they share different opinions together and resolve issues concerning child's learning.

(Achinstein, 2002; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Jone, 2003; Lawsen, 2003; Pounder, Reitzug & Young, 2002). According to Kimu (2012), schools should communicate with parents in creating their active participation to support learning. A study conducted by Sibiya (2004) stated that teachers have to communicate and foster healthy relationship with parents.

Furthermore, Motala and Deacon (2011) has mentioned that the poor channels of communication are the constraints that need to be improved in schools. In Kannapathi (2012)'s study, teachers play an essential role in encouraging participation as they have control over the factors like school climate, home-school communication and management of parental communication which impact level of parental involvement within schools. According to Epstein's (2001) theory, communication is a necessary requirement for active partnership and support for parents to assist their children learn.

5.3.1.4 Opportunities for parents

All interviews confirmed good opportunities in children' achievements when parents are involved in their children's learning.

Teacher Mdlandla revealed this:

"It is our responsibility as teachers to make parents to be aware that their involvement in learning is very important for their children's achievement, and for their own knowledge about what is expected from them to assist teachers with their children's schoolwork."

Teacher Ngubo mentioned:

"Teachers must involve parents during parents' meetings. As educators they can try to give parents a platform to have a say in the administration of the school."

Teacher Mdumo also mentioned:

"We organise parents meetings to discuss about teaching and learning of their children. Allow parents to visit school more often when they have time to check the work of their children. Invite parents during sports days; let them participate in sport activities at school."

This clearly reveals that teachers have a positive attitude to involve parents in learning and in other school activities. Feelings of the teachers about involving parents in learning have openly been spoken. Teacher Langeni expressed that:

"They can get interested if we involve them like during speech and prize giving days, where they will be invited to see good performance of their children. I think they will be motivated to be involved in helping their children because by involving them in giving their kids prizes, they will believe that they are also contributing."

Butler, Uline & Notar (2008) support teachers when they state that schools must yield particular steps to improve parental involvement inspirations. Moreover, literature has recommended that teachers have to offer official scholastic seminars planned in developing competent parents concerning children's intellectual capacity and ambitions (Machen, *et al.* 2005). Also, Hill & Taylor (2004) suggested that when parents are actively involved in learning, their societal wealth improves and allow them to gain consciousness regarding departmental expectations. This will also create parent- teacher connection and allow parent to parent sharing. Furthermore, parental involvement in learning builds up parents' abilities to share knowledge that prepare them to support children with the school-related undertakings and has influence in academic outcomes (Hill, 2001).

The theory also supplements information of parents' gain on positive teachers' attitude in learning. Epstein's framework, as discussed earlier, of six major types of involvement allows teachers to develop more comprehensive programs of parental involvement in learning (Epstein, 2001). Secondly, she has mentioned in one of her six types of involvement, volunteering, that teachers have to advance recruitment, guidance, workshops as well as programmes for parents to acquaint themselves in learning. Their involvement to offer support at school or in other settings, parents will support their children with their 47 schoolwork. Therefore, teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement enrich parents with information to allow them [parents] to offer positive support in learning. It has also been mentioned that schools should encourage parental involvement by inviting parents to participate in activities at school and facilitating parent-teacher communication (Epstein, 2001).

5.3.1.5 Community involvement

According to Epstein (2008), collaboration is referred to as where parents and teachers discover the resources meant to assist in building stronger programs in children's learning like businesses and agencies that provide services to the community. The interviews confirm that teachers' positive thoughts regarding parents' involvement in learning of their children can involve the community at large and not be confined to the school only.

Teacher Mdumo reported that:

"A school is an organisation that is situated in a community. For the safety and security of the school, it is wise to involve parents of learners who are there in that particular school. Community must have that feeling of a school belonging to them. A school is an organisation which is made up of three components i.e. School Governing Body (SGB)-parent, learner and teacher. Without parents, there will be no learners at school. Without teachers and learners, there will be no teaching and learning takes place."

Teacher Dludla also reported that:

"We try by all means to work with various stakeholders. In this school as there are Adult Basic classes during evening, so that they [parents] will be able to know what to check on learners' schoolwork."

Clearly, teachers feel that it is vital for them [teachers] to involve parents in their children's learning in collaborating with the school and the community. Literature also confirms the importance of parental involvement when stating that, when schools, families and community work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and like school more (Harris & Goodall, 2007). McDermott (2008) also noted that positive practice of parental involvement provide parents and teachers with services of working together to improve the community. Overall responses are positive when saying that involvement of parents in learning have certain benefits. Throughout the research, it became clear that teachers have positive attitudes towards parental involvement, even though they were interpreted differently in practice. Unless their attitude is positive, involving parents will likely to be insignificant.

5.3.2 THEME 2: Hindrance/barriers to parental involvement

5.3.2.1 Illiteracy

Some teachers who were interviewed confirm that some parents in the research area cannot read and write. Parents' educational level acts a vital task in involving parents in schooling of their children.

Teacher Dludla mentioned:

"In my school we try our level best in involving parents but we experience challenges that most parents are illiterate, they cannot take that initiative of checking their children's schoolwork."

Teacher Langeni also mentioned that:

"There is no way teacher can improve parental involvement, it is difficult because of the environment that we are teaching in. Most parents are illiterate. They do not understand the importance of education."

Teacher Ngubo supported by stating:

"Most parents do not have time to come to school when they are called to view their children's work. Other parents are illiterate, they cannot read and write. Therefore, they cannot help their children with schoolwork and homework. Sometimes teachers do not have a positive welcoming environment to parents. Other educators also have negative attitude to parents when they come to school. I think that is why parents do not come to school when they are called."

Although teachers have mentioned parent illiteracy as a challenge in involving them in their own children's learning in a township school, on the other hand, they have also mentioned unwelcoming environment from teachers. Therefore, at Phathakahle primary school some teachers have negative feeling towards involving parents in learning although they are aware of necessity of parental involvement. Ditrano & Silverstein (2006) have mentioned that teachers know that parental involvement is beneficial, but they do not have distinct perspective of the issue on how best methods can be developed on involving parents in learning.

Although teachers' attitudes seem to consider the importance of parental involvement, there is negligible arrangement on the best manner to narrow the gap currently existing at Phathakahle primary school. Though some parents were not be able to work with their own children comprehensively, it is important to continually notify them about children's learning (Jones & Jones, 2010). Teachers should make parental involvement effective and to assure that relevant information is provided to parents, and include them in decision-makings that influence learning of their children (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Furthermore, Epstein (2001) contends that teachers need to understand the support they can provide to parents and make them not feel judged for their illiteracy.

5.3.2.2 Lack of confidence

Teacher interviews confirmed that parents need to be knowledgeable in order to provide assistance with confidence in children's learning.

Teacher Koneni explained:

"I think in this school the barriers that prevent parents to be involved in their children's learning is that some of them lack confidence since they did not attend school while they were still young. They did not go to school. Therefore, they do not have their self-esteem. They depend highly on people who go to school. I think that is the barrier that makes them not want to be involved in this project."

Teacher Langeni also explained that:

"As I have said that most parents are partly illiterate. They do not understand this type of education or the curriculum we are involved with. Most of them were involved in an old style of curriculum when learning should be teacher centred, they believe that we are trying to give them our work as teachers. So they believe that it is not their responsibility to help learners."

Teacher Dludla also added that:

"As I have said before that most of the parents are illiterate, they don't have that confidence of checking learners' schoolwork because they don't know as what to check on learners' school work."

It was evident that parents' lack of confidence can influence teachers' attitude toward parental involvement. This can be caused by parents' lack of knowledge due to different methods or approaches that are now being used compared to their schooling years. They may have feared that they do not know what to assist with. Abdullah*, et al*. (2011, p. 1404) mentioned that "many teachers have negative attitude towards parental involvement since parents themselves are the reason behind the negative attitude" (McDermott & Rothenberge, 2000). Even though, parents must be engaged in the learning of the child mainly when a new program or exercise is undertaken to impact their children directly (Dodd & Konzal, 2002). Again, Dodd & Konzal (2002) point out that parents are entitled that the school provides quality education for children irrespective of any circumstances.

Teachers' attitudes should be of confidence to the parents in willing to involve themselves in learning for the child's benefit, in spite of the circumstances. Sharing of curriculum reform is a very important manner for teachers to engage parents in supporting learning, when Shezi (2012) mentioned that teachers have to give full information to parents on what their children are learning at school. This will allow them to best support their children. Epstein (2002) has mentioned that teachers need to assist families with parenting skills.

Parenting skills also include assisting teachers in considerate of families' conditions, culture and children's aspirations (Glanz, 2006). Again, Epstein (2002) states that parents need training to effectively support their children with schoolwork. Workshops should be provided to families on learning how to institute a sincere and open home environment for learners.

5.3.2.2 Lack of interest

From interviewed teachers' perspectives, parents lack of knowledge about supporting their children in doing school activities when home is associated with their lack of interest.

Teacher Koneni expressed this:

"In this primary school the level is very high but we have problems. We do try very hard but parents seem to be less concerned about involving themselves in the learning of their children."

Teacher Langeni also mentioned that:

"There are many barriers that can be involved but some of them are illiteracy of parents, the working late of parents, and them working far, and them having other responsibilities that they see more bigger and better than their children's education."

The above clearly demonstrated that parents of learners in the school do not show interest in their children's schoolwork. This is displayed in the manner in which teachers responded to interview questions. Interviews also revealed that due to parents working far, they do not have time and showed no interest in their children's learning. According to Harris & Goodall (2007), work commitments is one reason for parents not being interested to be involved learning for support to children. Teachers indicated that parents have other responsibilities that take precedent than their children's learning. Hornby (2000) mentioned that certain common attitudes which many teachers hold towards parents, could contribute to parents' loss of interest. If teachers can develop an emphatic understanding of parents' position, then it is much more likely that an effective parental involvement will develop (Thomas, 2010). Again, Hornby (2011) has mentioned that teachers' attitudes needed to work effectively with parents are the ones that develop productive working relationships. Furthermore, Epstein (2001) six types of involvement highlight that parents need to be knowledgeable about their children's learning. Teachers should build on home routines by assisting parents to gain interest to be effectively involved in everyday activities for child's learning (Eita, 2007).

From the above, it was evident clear that teachers need to acquire better understanding of parents. The findings have demonstrated that in this township primary school, parents were not adequately occupied to be part of learning owing to various complications of a more practical nature. The findings suggest that positive parental involvement can be practiced if teachers' attitude towards involving them can be more sensitive. Narain (2005) emphasized that there is an urgent need for schools to find ways to support the success of all the children.

Furthermore, he stated that one element that contributes to more successful children is parental involvement in their learning. Again, parental involvement is beneficial for academic performance of the children (Radu, 2011).

5.4 Conclusion

For this chapter I have presented the data, analysed, discussed findings concerning the attitudes of teachers towards the involvement of parents in learning. The following chapter concentrates on the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented data analysis. The findings from the information obtained from the research participants were also summarised. The purpose in this chapter is to provide a summary of the study. Thereafter, it will draw conclusions from the findings and limitations regarding teachers' attitude towards parental involvement. Finally, recommendations that will be made may contribute to further research, and to strengthen teachers' attitude.

6.2 Summary of the study

The study aimed to explore teachers' attitudes towards involving parents in the learning of their children in a township primary school in Pinetown District. In chapter one, I commenced by explaining the focus and purpose, rationale/ background and context of the study. The aims and objectives, key research questions, the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of key terms, and lastly, the preview of chapters were included. Chapter two basically illustrated the literature review from international, national and local studies that are relevant to my study. The literature indicated that teachers' attitude has an effect to parental involvement. Chapter three presented the theoretical framework designed around Epstein's (2001) model of six types of involvement. This model allows teachers to assist parents with parenting skills so that they support children in doing school activities at home (Kimu, 2012). In chapter four I briefly explained the research paradigm, approach, methodology, sampling, data generation and research instrument. Furthermore, a data generation plan was illustrated. In addition, data analysis, ethical concerns and limitations of the study were also explained in this chapter. Chapter five presented teachers' profiles, emerging themes from the generated data, presentation, analysis, and discussions of findings concerning the attitudes of teachers towards the involving parents in learning. Teachers openly expressed their feelings about their concern to involve parents in the learning of their children. Findings of the study derived to certain conclusions which follow in the next section.

6.3 Conclusions of chapters

Teachers in the sample agreed that involving parents is vital in the learning of children. Also, that a good parent-teacher relationship has positive effect to learner academic achievement. Furthermore, Menheere & Hooge (2010) have mentioned that it is meaningful for teachers to invest in relationships with families in enriching child's learning. This study was envisaged as helpful to all stakeholders in primary education, more space particularly to teachers and parents who are involved in the lives of learners. This research found that the establishing of positive attitudes from teachers could improve successful learning in schools. Parents need guidance to be more practical in involving themselves in learning for the benefit of the child. The primary school should engage on practices of involving parents in learning where parental assistance should be welcomed and maximized. For parental involvement programs to be successful, significant communication must occur between home and school (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 1998). In addition, most teachers and parents believe that parent teacher relationship creates better school environments for learners (Epstein, 2008). Teachers should always understand that their attitudes could affect other stakeholders, in particular the parents. In addition, teachers' attitudes need to be concerned with parent experiences related to assisting their children with school related activities.

Teachers revealed positiveness in their attitudes when responding to the first question of this research. They mentioned positive feelings about the involvement of parents in learning of their children for it will create positive atmosphere to learners, when knowing that their parents communicate with their teachers.

The findings of this study contradicted with teachers' positive feelings about the need of involving parents in learning, when they mentioned that there are some barriers that hinder them to involve parents in learning of their children. Leading to the second question which relates to why teachers have the attitudes they have. The responses revealed that teachers were discouraged. Teachers mentioned that they have lost interest to motivate parents to support their children in learning, as they [parents] show no interest to be involved. Although most teachers in the study approved parental involvement as vital for the benefit of learners, the findings indicated that there is no actual parental involvement in this township primary school. There exists little constructive relationship between teachers and parents.

In conclusion, findings indicated positive attitudes from teachers in knowing that parents are important to be involved in learning, at same time this research shows no meaningful connections between their attitudes and practice of involving parents.

6.4 Recommendations

The findings of this research recommend further research for: (a) A consistent outlet of communication between teachers and parents is an immediate requirement, encouraging teachers to work openly with parents. (b) Teachers should encourage parents to monitor their children's academic activities by providing general info on how can they support their children in learning when they are home. (c) Teachers and parents should work collaboratively for the benefit of the learner. (d) To eradicate illiteracy, teachers should have motivational workshops for parents to attend adult basic education as they have mentioned that in the said township primary school there are afternoon classes for adult education. Furthermore, there is a vital need for significant strategies or skills in assisting teachers to make enormous effort in involving parents in the learning of their children.

6.5 Conclusion

Summary, conclusions together with recommendations for this study are presented in this chapter. Task of exploring teachers' attitudes is an enormous task since the notion is abstract. I had to understand that teachers have positive or negative attitudes by their words and actions. I had to rely on their interpretations since it is impossible to directly measure attitudes.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Ethical clearance

23 June 2014

Mrs Rachel Thandi Majozi 982196516
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0570/014M
Project title: Exploration of teachers' attitudes towards parental Involvement in their children's learning in a township primary school in Pinetown District.

Dear Mrs Majozi

Expedited Approval

In response to your application dated 05 June 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**
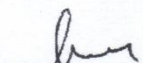
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further 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 a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Dr PM Nkosi
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr P Morojele
cc School Administrator: Mr T Mthembu
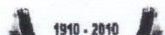
education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane	Tel: 033 392 1004	Ref.:2/4/8/272

Mrs RT Majozi
PO Box 12975
HAMMARSDALE
3700

Dear Mrs Majozi

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN A TOWNSHIP PRIMARY SCHOOL IN PINETOWN DISTRICT"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 October 2014 to 30 March 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Pinetown District).

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 15 September 2014

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004**beyond the call of duty**
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

A letter of request (principal)

Letter to the Principal for permission to conduct Research

P.O. Box 12975
Hammarsdale
3700
24 May 2014

The Principal
KwaMyeza Primary School
P.O. Box 134
Hammarsdale
3700

Dear Sir

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I, Rachel Thandi Majozi, hereby wish to request your permission to conduct a research project at your school. I am currently registered at the University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus) for Master of Education (Curriculum Studies- Student No.982196516). My topic for research is: Exploration of teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in their children's learning in a township primary school in Pinetown District.

The purpose of the study is to identify teachers' attitudes towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Furthermore, is to understand why teachers have the attitudes that they have. The data required for the study will be conducted through interviews. Interviews will be conducted with eight teachers from grade R to grade 7 in your school.

I wish to assure you that participation will be voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants will be respected and ensured. Your institution will not be identified by its real name in the research results but by pseudonym. A synopsis of the most important findings and recommendations will be forwarded to your school. For further information on this project please feel free to contact my supervisor Dr PM Nkosi at 031 260 3440 or email at nkosipm@ukzn.ac.za, or HSSREC Research Office Ms P. Ximba @031 260 3587 as a neutral contact person. My contact details: email thandimajozi@yahoo.co.za or 082 0416 784/ 031 7740 510.

I trust that my request will be favourable considered.

Yours faithfully

RT Majozi

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INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

I _____ the principal of _____
_____ have been informed by the researcher, _____ about the process of the research and that teachers will participate in the research project. I consent / not consent for my school teachers to participating in this study.

_____
Signature of the Principal

_____
Date

Letter of request (participants)

Letter to the research participant

P. O. Box 12975

Hammarsdale

3700

24 May 2014

Dear Participant

Re: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

I, Rachel Thandi Majozi, am currently studying for Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am specialising in Curriculum Studies. I am required to conduct a research as part of my coursework for the degree. I therefore kindly seek your permission to participate in my research project. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission from the University to conduct this study. The title of my research project is: Exploration of teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in their children's learning in a primary school in Pinetown District.

The aim of the research project is to explore attitudes of teachers towards the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Furthermore, I want to understand why teachers have the attitudes they have. I also want to understand the impact that teachers' attitudes have on learner academic achievement. This project involves teacher interviews which shall be conducted during non-teaching periods. The duration of the interviews will be approximately 45minutes, and you will be interviewed once. I will request your permission to audio-record the interviews as this will help in the data capturing process. The findings from this research will be used in the writing of my dissertation. Confidentiality and anonymity will be highly guarded. Pseudonyms will be used in order to protect your identity. As a teacher in this township primary school, I am of the view that you are a relevant resource person for this research. Please be informed that your participation in this research project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. I assure you that your decision not to participate or withdraw will not disadvantage you in any way. There will be no financial benefits for your participation in this research project. The benefit results from this research will be acquired by your school, and curriculum developers. The results will also add to the body of knowledge in the area of teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement in learning, hence very little research has been done on this phenomenon. The findings will be forwarded to the Department of Education together with recommendations. The gathered data will be kept by the University of KwaZulu Natal for a period of five years, thereafter; audio-recorded items will be destroyed and transcribed copies of interviews torn.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact my supervisor Dr PM Nkosi at 031 260 3440 or email at nkosipm@ukzn.ac.za. You can also contact HSSREC

Research Office Ms P Ximba at 031 260 3587 as a neutral contact person. Your positive response will be highly appreciated. My contact details are: Telephone no. 031 7740 510, cell phone no. 082 0416 784, email address thandimajozi@yahoo.co.za

Thanking you in advance.

Yours   sincerely
RT Majozi

Please read and sign the following declaration and indicate your full names as indicated in the attached schedule.

DECLARATION

I_____ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I <u>consent/ do not consent</u> to participating in the research project. I understand that I have a right to withdraw from the project at any time, should I do wish. My decision to participate or to withdraw will not result in any disadvantage to me. There will be no monitoring rewards for this interview. I hereby provide consent to audio-record my interviews (YES / NO).

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SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

Interview Schedule

1. What are your feelings towards involving parents in their children's learning?

2. What is your opinion about the benefits of involving parents in their children's learning?

3. How would you describe your role as a teacher in involving parents to their children's learning?

4. What is the level of teachers' efforts in involving parents in learning in this primary school?

5. Would you say that teachers have responsibility in taking measures to improve parental involvement in their children's learning in this primary school? Why?

6. What do you think can be the barriers that prevent parents to be involved in their children's learning in this primary school?

7. What support do you think you can provide in assisting parents to be involved in their children's learning?

8. How do teachers allow parents to volunteer in assisting children in learning in this primary school?

9. What support structures have been implemented to promote parental involvement in this primary school?

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THESE QUESTIONS.	YOUR CO-OPERATION IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED.