

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC

ACTIVITIES IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN CLERMONT :

A CASE STUDY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Thulisile Mthembu, declare that this research report :
"Parental Involvement in academic and non academic activities in
a secondary school in Clermont " is my own work and that all
sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and
acknowledged by means of complete references.

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1999

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my long suffering son Senamile Njabulo, my husband Thulani Douglas and my mother in law Queen Mantombi in appreciation of their courage, support and patience during this research.

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This study was done with the co-operation and support of several people. I am particularly grateful to the following people :

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the nature and level of parental involvement in academic and non academic activities in a secondary school in a disadvantaged township in Durban. The review of literature identified aspect of parent-educator relationships which should be developed to facilitate learner's success. It also included models of parental involvement, levels of parental involvement, role of parents in their children's education as well as barriers which affect parental involvement. The school with poor academic results is, among other factors, characterised by minimal level of involving parents in their children's education. To maximise parental involvement parents and educators should substitute the attitude of blaming each other, by the idea of coming together in the interests of the learners. This joint effort should also improve the schools academic results. One secondary school was used as a case study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with educators, parents and learners. Other information was taken from the departmental reports, Daily News paper, information from one of the school events speech context and the supervising manager of the school. Parents from this disadvantaged community tend to perceive

educators as professionals who know everything. Educators and parents are willing to be partners but they do not know how to initiate and sustain this relationship. Perceived barriers to parental involvement are illiteracy, unemployment, ignorance and transport problems. Some parents participate at the governing body level, while most parents are inactive.

Improved communication between parents and school personnel seems to be essential to achieve more parental involvement.

Educators need staff development to equip themselves for this task. Workshops could be used to inform parents of their rights to services and resources. Together parents and educators could develop strategies to use the school for the benefit of the entire community.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter begins with the introduction to the study. The introduction is followed by the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. The methods of the research used are also given. The concepts of this study are clarified.

It is a commonly held view among educators that it is crucial to involve parents in their children's education. It is seen as the parent's responsibility to participate actively in their children's education. Berger (1983) (cited in Swap, 1993) makes it clear what the responsibility of parents is :

"You bear a responsibility to participate actively in your child's education. You should encourage more diligent study and discourage satisfaction with mediocrity and the attitude that says 'let it slide' ; monitor your child study, encourage good study habits, nurture your child's curiosity, creativity and confidence and be an active participant in the work of the school" (Berger, 1983 cited in Swap, 1993 page 2). Berger (1983) highlights that the parent should work hard for the child's education. The parent should participate actively in child's education. Parental involvement is a joint effort between the school and learners' parents.

In order for the child to succeed there should be a link between the school and the home. This bond would be possible by active

Involvement of parents includes their attendance of school events (Stevenson and Barker,1987), reading at home as well as helping with homework (Morrow,1989).

1 Involving parents in their children's education is discussed as a problem all over the world, as Fine and Cooks (1991) studied parental involvement in the University of Maryland which involves urban schools in Baltimore and Philadelphia. This problem also applies to South Africa for instance in Ngwenya's study (1996) which was conducted in Escourt (South Africa). Her study was conducted in a rural area. Moller (1994) also stipulated in his study which was conducted in Soweto and Durban townships, that parental involvement is important especially with regards to supervision of homework. South African education system is always striving towards promoting the participation of parents in their children education. At first parents were included to some extent through the school committees. According to the writer's experience decisions were not made collaboratively. The school committees imposed to teachers and teachers became passive listeners. There was a shift from such committees to Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSA), which were aimed at encouraging understanding between parents, teachers and learners. this ended up by being monopolised by educators, as parents were made to listen to professionals. There was a lack

of parent-teacher relationship. There is a shift from PTSA's to the governing bodies. According to South African Schools Act of 1996, parents representatives should know what their roles and rights are in education. These are the parents who stand a better chance to actively participate in school matters. Other parents are still left out, so each school has a duty to encourage these parents to get involved in school matters.

According to the South African Schools Act of 1996 parental involvement is one of the methods which can be used to minimise some ills in education. This schools act does not imply that all the problems in education could be addressed by parental involvement but the participation of parents, could result in effective education. Involvement of parents in children's education is necessary but not sufficient to produce improved student outcomes. The government should not shift responsibility and blame for educational problems to parents. The powerful, supportive and activist national agenda for children can promote parental involvement. This will lead to society with parents who are seen as critical activists in their homes, in their schools and in community meetings. He also argue that children whose parents are actively involved in school matters are not the ones who perform effectively at school. (Garlington, 1991). Parental

involvement seem to be in practice in developed countries like England, Wales, Netherlands and the United States of America, where family resource centres are established near some schools as a means of providing home school support. In the American city, Dallas for instance, a parent-volunteer programme is in existence and is functioning in conjunction with the school (Iscoe,1995a). In less developed countries like South Africa which is stressed by poverty and illiteracy, most schools are still striving towards parental involvement.

1.1 ROLE OF PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Floud (cited in Wolfendale,1989) states that there is a positive effect that supportive educated parents have on the outcome of their children's education. Learners with better results emerges from supportive parents. Bond cited in Wolfendale, 1989 states that the importance of the relationship between the parent and the school as a determining factor for educational achievement. He views the relationship of parents and teachers as the basic for effective education. In for the school to succeed a better understanding between teachers and parents should be created. Morgan, Fraser Dunn and Cairns,(1992) describe some parental roles in education as recipients of information,governors,policy makers, fundraisers, experts, clients, co-educators and consultants. Rodgers, (1980) suggests that in order to have effective communication with parents, educators should communicate (the attitudes of) genuineness, respect and empathy. Purkey and Novak (1988) state that it is important to plan or

design some activities on how to make schools more inviting to parents. Beresford, (1992) stresses that parents and educators need a new quality of partnership in education if the possible parental influence is to be maximised. Parents should be made to feel that they belong to the school. Parents should not be treated as "less" than the professionals but as social equals with educators. Parents should be made aware of what their role is in education. This can be done by the school based educators and community leaders.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The school as an example in this study is similar to many others in other parts of South Africa, with similar circumstances and similar constraints within which they work. According to the writer's observation involving parents in academic and non-academic matters seem to be minimal in most township secondary schools. The level of parental involvement is seen as minimal due to the low percentage of parents who show interest by supporting the school. These are the fewer parents who support the school by responding to schools invitations to attend parent's meetings and school's functions. The low level of parents participation to school matters may be detrimental to the functioning of the school. This hinders essential communication which may create misunderstanding between parents, teachers and learners. In order for the school to succeed, parents and teachers joint effort is necessary. Joint effort could be possible if schools are made inviting to parents (Partington and Wragg, 1989).

These are the following constraints encountered by these secondary schools (observed by the writer). Most of the parents of secondary school learners in townships are illiterate and many are unemployed. Some of these parents are single parents who work very hard to earn a living. Some of the guardian parents are supported by pensioner's grant, These aged parents are the ones who financially support the families. Townships in South Africa are characterised by poverty, overcrowded housing, unemployment, high drug abuse, high rate of crime which has negative effects on parental involvement. Some of the problems encountered by the educators of the school under study seem to be similar with those of the Boude-Storey secondary school in Dallas. In this school many learners disregarded homework and had anti-academic attitudes. The principal of this school was very concerned about this issue and discussed it with the staff of the school. They wanted to start an after school programme for learners who failed to complete their homework. This programme was successful through involvement of parents (Iscoe, b1995). The problems encountered by educators in the school under study are as follows: Learners are reported to the school principal for not writing homework, uncompleted homework, some learners are reported for their anti-academic attitudes in school work, who

play truancy, who display poor performance in class tests and trial examinations. This is the school with the history of poor matric results. The pass rate of matric results being 13% in 1994, 40% in 1995, 25% in 1996 19% in 1997 and 33% in 1998. This is the school with fewer parents who respond to school invitations to parent's meetings. It is one of the schools which is said to be overstaffed. Some of the educators in this school are demotivated due to redeployment.

This school is also having a number of educators who qualify for one stream of subjects. As a result educators from other departments in the school are forced with heavy duty loads.

1.3 BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Schools could benefit if parents are involved, as parental involvement encourages parents to perform their roles in children's academic achievement and children's socio emotional development.

This will also develop the high quality of relationship between educators and parents and their partnership will improve learners outcomes. This will help learners to learn better (Hollidays, 1988). Henderson (1981) verifies it in thirty research studies, she has reviewed for the national committee for citizens in education. The involvement of parents in school

affairs calls for free and continual exchange of information between parents and educators. Exchange of information enables educators to acquire a knowledge of learners. Educators gain a direct understanding of difficulties experienced by parents, experiences of children and influences that have been determinants of their behaviour. They learn how parents think, act, what their attitudes are towards life and what they want for their children.

Due to parental involvement educators see learners differently and are able to deal more intelligently with their needs.

Parents also acquire valuable information from their contacts with educators, such information is useful in living with their children at home. Sometimes parents are not aware of what their children are like outside the family.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine the nature and level of involvement of parents in a township secondary school in both academic and non academic activities.

1.5 METHODS USED

This is a qualitative study whereby a Clermont secondary school has been used as a case study. Data were collected through semi structured interviews with educators, parents and learners.

Some of the information was collected through observation of the

meetings of the school from speeches made during school speeches and from the daily newspaper.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study, the following terms have been operationally defined:

1.6.1 PARENTAL

This is an adjective derived from the noun parent. Parent is a legal guardian of a minor i.e. the father or mother. In this study grandparents as well as other relatives and primary caregivers are also referred to as parents.

1.6.2 INVOLVEMENT

This term refers to participation of parents in the affairs and activities of the school. Parental involvement is an inclusive, collaborative partnership between parents and other stakeholders such as educators and learners.

1.6.3 ACADEMIC

This term will be used to describe classroom activities specific to actual teaching and learning e.g. reading in class.

1.6.4 NON - ACADEMIC

Matters pertaining to the school but outside the class e.g. parents meetings, sports, functions and fundraising.

1.6.5 ACTIVITIES

Events or matters taking place in school and at home concerning children's education e.g. homework.

1.6.6 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In this study secondary schools are viewed as those which cater for grade eight to grade twelve learners.

CHAPTER 2

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with definition of the concept "parental involvement" as used in this dissertation. This is followed by a discussion of parent - educator relationship. The focus then turns to models of parental involvement, levels of parental involvement and roles of parents in their children's education. Lastly the chapter focuses on some of the barriers affecting parental involvement in education of their children.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the South African Schools Act (1996) there is emphasis on the idea of partnership between all people involved in education. There is no complete way of improving schools without joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, local communities and the Department of Education. Parents are expected to have a greater influence in education. In the Act of 1996 the roles and responsibilities of parents are stressed. This Act makes it clear that all stakeholders in education should accept responsibility for the organisation and smooth running of the schools. The Act also stipulates that parents and local communities should know what problems the school is currently facing. To be involved in their children's education is seen a parental right. It is the duty of the government to make this parental right effective.

No matter what educators do, parents are regarded as the first

educators who must be involved in their children's subsequent education. Schools in this view are not only meant for educators and learners, but also for parents and the community at large. The South African Schools Act (1996) also stipulates that parents must play an active role in supporting a positive learning environment in their child's school. Parental involvement is not the only way of addressing all educational ills, although it is seen as an important way to improve the school. The South African Schools Act (1996) extends the rights of parents with regard to their children's education, but also places obligations and responsibilities upon parents.

2.2 DEFINITION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement in children's education is defined by various writers differently. Harold and Eccles (1994) perceive parental involvement as having five variables, which are:

"Monitor" - This is when the parent supervise the learner's task at home and respond positively, to what educators had asked them to do and provide the educator with the information needed by the school.

"Volunteer"-Participation of parent in school's activities without expecting any reward e.g. involvement of parent in school trip.

"Involvement" - Involvement of parents with child"s daily

activities.

"Progress" - When the parents make follow up, on how the learner is performing on his academic work.

"Extra" - When the parents contacts the school about the child"s performance, he should also inquire from the school on how to help the learner. Extra help may be necessary for improving the learner outcomes.

Parental involvement refers to the general participation, helping in classrooms, sponsoring and supporting school programmes and parent participation in the school planning and management team (Comer and Haynies, 1991). In the opinion of the above writers, parental involvement does not only refer, to the participation of parents in academic aspects of their children's education. It also includes involvement in non academic activities of the school. In order for the school to succeed the above ideas make it clear that the participation of parents in school matters should seek to improve the overall climate of the school. This opinion implies that parents have meaningful roles pertaining to their children's education. Parental involvement is seen by the above authors as necessary and it makes a difference in children's education though it takes time to develop.

2.3 THE PARENT-EDUCATOR RELATIONSHIP

Good relationships between educators and parents should be developed and maintained in order to maximise parental involvement. According to Swap (1993) good relationships between educators and parents could be improved through two-way communication.

By two-way communication Swap (1993) refers to the sharing of information by both educators and parents. This implies that shared expectations are developed, problem solving and decision making are jointly undertaken. Bond (cited in Wolfendale, 1989) states that it is important to create good relationships between the school and the home. Bond also claims that the relationship between educators and parents is a determining factor for educational achievement. In his opinion schools should prioritise parental involvement to promote the school's success. This could be possible if schools could be changed into more open, flexible systems. This should result in learners having more inner discipline, with educators and parents having good relationship. In order to develop an effective partnership, educators and parents should have positive relating skills. Effective communication could be developed through promoting the attitudes of genuineness, respect and empathy. When parents and educators work collaboratively as partners in education, they should not

blame each other or defy each other, but they should always strive for better communication. Bastiani (1987) presents four models of parent-educator relationship. Two of them illustrate the process of blaming.

2.3.1 COMPENSATION MODEL

The first model is the compensation model which is more concerned about parental encouragement and child's educational support.

Bastiani (1987) also describes this model as a way of blaming parents for their children's educational failure. It perpetuates the myth of parents as being a passive, ignorant, undifferentiated body, needing the knowledgeable professionals (Bastiani, 1987).

2.3.2 ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL

The second is the accountability model, whereby educators are blamed for learners' failure. Parents are given permission to encroach over educator's territory (Bastiani, 1987). Counter to the cycle of blame, lie the other two models which identify the relationship between educators and parents. They are communication and participation.

2.3.3 COMMUNICATION

According to Bastiani educators should try different means of

communicating with parents as to avoid the problem of blaming each other. This could be possible if educators and parents could treat each other as real equals. These partners should listen to each other willingly, as this will improve their communication.

The more or appropriate use of channels of communication will develop good relationship. Communication could improve the participation of parents in children's education.

2.3.4 PARTICIPATION

Participation of parents in children's education should mean showing concern towards education. Their concern should be highlighted in sharing the responsibilities as equals with educators. This should also be indicated in understanding and listening in their children's learning encounters rather than showing ignorance and prejudice towards their children's learning. In participating it is then worth supervising their classwork, homework, school attendance, sports meetings and school outings where the children's interests .Bastiani views this active participation as something which could improve parent - educator relationships and which could better shape the vision of all participants.

Bastiani's models highlight the notion that the educators and

parents are considered to be indispensable in children's education. Learner's failure is mostly associated by the public with the roles of educators and parents, as is the case in the South African situation with reference to matriculation results. Poor matriculation results are matched with educators' and parents' efforts made towards children's education. When attempting to initiate and promote parental participation one should be aware of blaming as the undermining factor in attempting to build the partnership between educators and parents. So as to avoid this blaming cycle, parents and educators should develop a genuine and mutual partnership based on listening and understanding rather than ignorance and prejudice (Bastiani, 1987).

According to Johnson (1990) parents and educators have different views on home school relationships. Educators evaluate parental involvement by the level of parental visits to the school. Some parents may not visit the school because they lack interest in their children's education, but other parents look at learners as grown ups who could work on their own. Some educators viewed parental involvement as an additional load to their work. Some educators are not used to after school hour activities involving parents. They feel that this consumes their own time.

According to the Carnegie Forum for education and economy (1986)

and Epstein and Becker (1982) educators and parents are willing to be in contact with each other but they do not know how to initiate and sustain this partnership between them. Harold and Eccles (1994) mention that educators and parents could benefit from parental involvement. They could develop their own skills and fun would emerge from such programmes. This will also promote learners' academic outcomes, school attendance, behaviour and improve their self esteem , according to Harold and Eccles (1994)

2.4. THE NATURE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

When attempting to initiate parental involvement in school one should start by identifying the existing nature of parent educator relationship in that school. Swap (1993) mentions four models of home-school relationships. They are:

2.4.1 THE PROTECTIVE MODEL

The aim of this model is to reduce misunderstanding between parents and educators , Conflict is reduced through the clear separation of parents and educators' duties. The school is protected from parents who want to intrude into the school and parents roles are kept separate from those of educators. In this model there is no parent educator collaborations. Parents are not recognised as partners with professionals , who are seen as

specialists. This model seems to be traditional as there is no provision for sharing of ideas.

Information comes from educators and it is poured to parents. Parental support for the school is not encouraged as parents responsibilities are considered to end at home . There are no chances of building mutual understanding between educators and parents. The system is a fixed one which is not open to change. According to the researchers experience, disadvantaged secondary schools in South Africa have been operating in this model . Educators have been seen as professionals who know everything and parents voices were not heard. Schools in this situation used to "belong " to educators. Parents were excluded as they were seen as having a role to play only at home. From the researchers observation of all the changes taking place in South Africa , one could see that such schools need to undergo change. They should become more flexible and open systems. This could be possible by the inclusion of parents as partners in all school matters.

2.4.2. THE SCHOOL TO HOME TRANSMISSION MODEL

The aim of this model is to include parents in their children's education. It promotes continuity between the home and the school. It is the school personnel who make decisions and control programmes.

Swap (1993) make it clear that , this model is in support of parental involvement but it does not promote two-way communication. There is no sharing of information parents have to listen and follow what educators have decided .There is no time set aside for parental inputs. The researcher view this as what is happening in some schools which are claiming to be open systems. Such schools have not yet included parents in practice.

2.4.3. THE CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT MODEL

The aim of this model is to include parents in the making of decisions concerning the curriculum. It promotes interaction between educators and parents. Parents are recognised as special experts who can contribute towards curriculum planning. It focuses on the curriculum and instructional aspects of the school.

According to the researcher's experience of disadvantaged secondary schools in South Africa, curriculum planning used to be the responsibility of the professionals without consultation with parents. In the South African situation the syllabus has usually been prescribed by the central or provincial government, and schools have been restricted in extent to which they undertake curriculum development. Outcomes Based Education (OBE) provides opportunities at the school level and involves

parents more directly than the previous system on the issue of syllabus. As schools are reported to be moving towards change, there is a hope of including parents in curriculum planning. The involvement of parents should not only focus on curriculum planning but in all matters of the school.

2.4.4. THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

This model describes an alliance between parents and educators to encourage better school and academic success of all children in school. In this model, parents and educators are encouraged to work collaboratively. They have a common mission. This partnership model differs from the three models because it emphasises two-way communication. It focuses on all aspects of the school, unlike the curriculum model which focuses only on the curriculum aspect. The partnership model supports involving parents in both academic and non academic matters of the school.

2.5. LEVELS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

In trying to identify the level and nature of parental involvement, the writer suggests that models of parental involvement stated by Swap (1993) be studied and compared with levels of parental involvement reported by Morgan Fraser, Dunn and Cains (1992). According to the study on parental involvement conducted in Ireland Morgan et al, (1992) reported that parental involvement can be divided into three discernible

levels. These are:

2.5.1.LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

This level is of a formal nature, whereby parents are more concerned with their children's academic progress. The educators focus is on academic matters, and non-academic affairs are not mentioned.

According to the researcher's view this is the situation in some of the disadvantaged secondary schools.

Academic matters are considered to be the main focus of parents and the school.

Parents at this level of involvement do not seem to be interested in non-academic affairs of their children's school experience.

2.5.2 THE SECOND LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

This is taken by Morgan et al (1992) from Epstein (1990) who stresses that this level of parental involvement is when parents extend beyond academic support at home. For example, the parents even do voluntary work at school or participate in school trips. In this model their participation goes beyond the classroom. Involving parents in academic and non-academic matters of the schooling in this way leads to learners' success (Morgan et al, 1992).

2.5.3 THE THIRD LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

Morgan et al (1992) describe this level of involvement as being more formal and more structured in nature, such as participation in the school board. It is only a smaller number of parents who involve themselves at this level. What they referred to as third level is what the researcher view as happening in some of the South African disadvantaged schools. In such schools the small number of parents who make themselves available to serve on the governing bodies, are seen by educators to be the most involved parents in their children's education.

2.6 THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Berger (1987) mentions that parental awareness towards their children's education is important. Parent Awareness Programmes would clarify what the expected roles and responsibilities of parents are.

The aim of parental involvement is not just visiting of the school by parents without a purpose. Their visits to the school should be of more benefit for the school. Parents could become real assets to the school by fulfilling their negotiated roles. "Most commonly parents are spectators who merely observe what the school does with their children in the educational process. They view the school as an authority figure, best able to handle the education of their children" (Berger, 1987 Page

10).

What is highlighted by Berger (1987) is what most of the Secondary schools in South Africa are experiencing. Parents do not readily participate in school matters. They withdraw themselves from school's activities. Some of them do not attend parental meetings in schools. Berger (1987) also states that there is a variety of roles parents could assume at school. Parents could become volunteers at school. They can provide voluntary services which are unrelated to formal education and their children would be affirmed if the event is a success. Parents volunteers could play a vital role in fundraising for the school.

According to the researcher's observation the government in South Africa is always stressing that there are insufficient funds as the country is undergoing an economic recession period. This contributes to the problems faced by the schools. Schools are enforced to encourage parents to become fundraisers so as to cater for some of the needs of the school.

Iscoe (1995), also reported the importance of parental support for the school. She also mention that developing parent volunteer programme is difficult and it takes time. It needs strategic planning as has been done in some schools in Texan

cities.

Parents could play a role of being experts in their own areas. Their specialisation could be used and this would make them feel they belong to the school. For instance a school can arrange with parents to make presentations of their careers to learners. Learners would also feel that their parents are not looked down upon by the school. Finally, parents should always be reminded that they are also teachers of their own children. The school will continue at what the parent has taught the child and vice versa (Berger, 1987).

2.7 BARRIERS AFFECTING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Parental involvement can be hindered by certain barriers. Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski and Postoleris (1997) cited in Pressley (1997) identify a hierarchical model of barriers affecting parental involvement. These factors are:

2.7.1 INDIVIDUAL LEVEL (PARENT AND CHILD INFLUENCE)

In this level the characteristics of the parent and the child contribute to parental involvement. Their thoughts and beliefs about parental roles in education can affect parental involvement. If their attitudes are positive towards the inclusion of parents in school matters, parental involvement would be improved.

This is also highlighting that if their attitudes are negative towards parental involvement in school affairs, the result would be minimal involvement of parents in school affairs.

2.7.2 CONTEXTUAL LEVEL (FAMILY CONTEXT)

According to the researcher's opinion the person is seen as performing whatever he does due to environmental influences. The child's behaviour can not be taken in isolation. Parents, family and his environment must be considered. The surroundings of the school can affect parental involvement. Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz and Simons (1994) also reported that the entire environment of the school can negatively affect the level of parental involvement.

"We suggest as have other, that beyond demographic measures per se, it is the parent's experience, inadequacy of resources that will be most likely to disrupt involvement" (Conger et al, 1994).

The above statement is highlighting that socio-economic problems can hinder parental involvement in schools. It can lead to high rate of stress in parents which will have an influence on their involvement in school matters.

School functions and school meetings may also add to pressures parents have nowadays. Parents' ethnic, religious, cultural

identities as well as parents' history of involvement in their children's education have an impact on school parental involvement (Wolfendale,1989).

2.7.3 INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS : ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF EDUCATORS

The staff of the school can minimise parental support through practices and attitudes of the school personnel. Parental involvement depends on what educators believe concerning parental roles in education. If educators are positive about inclusive collaborative partnership between parents and educators, parents participation will be encouraged.

2.7.4 EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

McGeeney (1980) reported that some changes in education may be detrimental to parental involvement. The burning issue of redeployment demands the transfer of educators in posts declared in excess, leave their school to less favourable disadvantaged schools. Another possible obstacle is Outcome Based Education (OBE) which involves parents, learners and educators in the new curriculum. This new curriculum is termed as skill based curriculum which requires the learner centre approach. According to the researcher's experience educators are not properly trained to implement it, resulting into failure to educate parents about their role in OBE. Researcher view some parents in

disadvantaged secondary schools as being illiterate. As a result they are not confident to participate in curriculum development and planning of the school.

CHAPTER 3

3. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

In this chapter the research questions are outlined. The reason for the choice of the research design is explained. Procedure followed to gain entry into setting, sources of information are discussed. Sampling procedure and data collection techniques used which are interviews and observations are discussed. The chapter concludes with considerations of validity and ethical issues, the problems encountered during the study.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature and level of involvement of parents in a township secondary school, in both academic and non academic activities.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key questions of the study were;

- 1) How do educators attempt to involve parents in the activities of the school?
- 2) How do parents respond to the invitation made by the school?
- 3) What is the parent's perception concerning their involvement in school matters?
- 4) What is the learners perception concerning the involvement of parents in their school?

3.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1 CHOICE OF THE RESEARCH SETTING

Case studies are appropriate for exploratory research. Exploratory studies examine a topic in which there has been little previous research and designed to lead to further inquiry. The focus may be on persons, specific events or processes. The purpose is to elaborate a concept or to develop a model with its related sub components and empirical meanings (Mcmillan and Schumacher, 1993). The case study research method was chosen because the study focused on one school and on an identifiable group of parents, from the same geographical area. This secondary school is situated in Clermont which is a township situated in the North-West of Durban in kwa Zulu-Natal. It lies between Westville North and kwa-Dabeka. New Germany borders in the West and Newlands East on the east. It is administered by the Kwa-Zulu Natal Provincial Administration and falls under the Inner West City Councils jurisdiction, also called Ethembeni. It is used as a case study to examine the nature and level of parental involvement in academic and non-academic matters of the school.

The population of Clermont consists of people originally from various places, viz ; Eastern cape , Lesotho, Gauteng , kwaZulu - Natal and Mozambique. As a result, although Zulu is a language spoken by many of Clermont population , Xhosa , Sotho , Swazi and Portuguese are also spoken. There is a high rate of

unemployment among the people of Clermont. People that are employed are mainly transported to and from work by taxis which are under the Clermont kwa-Dabeka Taxi Association. Crime is one of the serious problem the youth encounter, especially car hijacking and robbery. This has resulted in problems such as termination of ambulance services. Many youth from the township end up in Westville Prison for car hijacking and fraud. The school under study was established in 1976 .It was from grade eight to grade ten. Then it has extended up to grade twelve since 1993. Its enrolment in 1998 was 850 learners.

3.3.2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The primary sources of information included the parents of the registered learners, learners and school based educators. Other sources of information included a report from the Department of education ,information from Daily news, information from school meetings, the content of speeches at school events, for example, observations from the speeches on the prize giving day.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1. CHOICE OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data were collected through observations and interviews as the researcher was the employee of the targeted school. The person to person encounter was used, which was directed by the researcher in order to get more information from the respondents (Bogdan and Biklen ,1992).

3.4.2. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Convenience sampling, sometimes called availability sampling, rest on the closest and most available subjects to constitute the sample (Azaliah College, 1998). The sampling used was convenience sampling of accessible individuals from the targeted group of possible respondents.

Eleven school based educators, ten learners from each grade as to represent learners from different classes and eleven parents of registered learners were used. Parents and educators were interviewed during home visits. Appointments were arranged prior to the interview. Some learners were interviewed during home visits but most of the learners preferred to be interviewed at school after school. Such learners seemed to be ashamed of their homes and their parents. (See appendix 8.4)

3.4.3 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

In order to address the key questions, the following data collection techniques were applied i.e. interviews and observations.

3.4.3.1. INTERVIEWS

Parents, educators including the principal and learners were interviewed. Each interviews lasted for not more than thirty minutes.

3.4.3.1.1 PARENT INTERVIEWS

Parents were interviewed by means of person technique

using semi-structured interview schedule (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). The interview questions covered issues such as personal details and perception about their involvement in the school (see appendix 8.1). All interviews were conducted in Zulu, the parents' own mother tongue. Eleven parent participated in the study. Parents were encouraged to elaborate on their own original responses through the researcher's use of probe, non verbal cues and silence to motivate parents to voice their comments. The researcher also asked questions for clarification but not for challenging interviewees' response. She had to attempt to remain neutral as an interviewer. The information from the interviewees was collected , written on the notebook for record purpose as well as to make it easier for the researcher to organise and analyse the information.

3.4.3.1.2. EDUCATORS' INTERVIEWS

The teaching staff who participated included the principal and ten educators who volunteered after the meeting with the researcher who gave them the explanation on her research dissertation. The educators interviews aimed at investigating the interaction between educators and parents, as well as to examine educators' perception of parental involvement (see appendix 8.2) Educators preferred to be interviewed in English.

3.4.3.1.3. LEARNERS' INTERVIEWS

The person to person interview technique was used. The interview questions addressed issues regarding their perception of parental involvement (see appendix 8.3). The purpose of the interviews as well as the issue of confidentiality were explained to learners as a group. Ten learners participated in the project, comprising of two learners from each grade. They were interviewed in English and they preferred to answers in Zulu.

3.4.3.1.4.OBSERVATION

The researcher had an opportunity to observe several school meetings of relevance to this study. The following are the meetings observed; the governing body with the school management team , one meeting for educators and the governing body, one meeting for grade eleven educators and lastly one meeting was arranged by the governing body. The purpose was to observe the level and nature of parental involvement in the school.

3.5.VALIDITY CONCERNS

Validity and reliability of the data collection instruments. These concerns were addressed through methodological triangulation.Triangulation is a technique used to verify data. The verification of the data is dependent upon whether a quantitative or qualitative method has been adopted by the researcher. With the qualitative method. Tricker (cited in

Vulliamy and Webb , 1992) argues that triangulation allows for evidence from different sources to be examined, compared and cross checked. Tricker claims the greater the number of viewpoint on the same issue, the greater the chance of its validation. Differences in interpretation and disagreement about what happened are inevitable when many participants have a different role to play in the same action (cited in Vulliamy and Webb,1992 page 165). Although the nature and level of parental involvement was being investigated, contributions were not collected from parents only, but included the perceptions of the principal,educators, learners of the school,some of the information was collected through observation of the meetings of the school, information from the prize giving day speeches, information from the Daily newspaper.

3.6 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Appointments scheduled for some educators were problematic due to educators strike of the South African Teachers Union in June 1998. This strike resulted in frustrations and stress for many educators. It was not possible for the researcher to conduct her interviews for educators. Such appointments were cancelled and re-scheduled. Some parents were working shifts, as a result some parents could only be available during odd hours for interviews. For example, some of the parents had transport problems. They had to wait for taxis to transport than from work, this delayed

them. Sometimes it was not easy for the researcher to conduct the interview due to disturbances caused by children at home, while the interview was in process. The main cause for this was the fact that most of the learners were staying in one room with their parents. The researcher would interview the parent in front of children watching television while some of them were busy making a noise. The interviewee would have to control the family for order while being interviewed.

CHAPTER 4

4. PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter begins with the description of empirical work. It goes on to the observations of meetings between parents and educators, which is followed by the analysis of the speeches made during the prize giving day. The chapter turns to the perceptions of the school community on parental involvement, which was collected through interviews. The chapter concludes with information from the Department of Education circulars.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

All the data for this intensive case study were collected from the Clermont Secondary school understudy. The primary sources of information included the parents of the registered learners at the school, registered learners and school-based educators. Other sources of information included the report from the Department of Education in Kwa-Zulu Natal, information from the articles in the Daily newspaper, information gathered from the school meetings, and the information from the speeches made on the prize giving day.

Having collected the data from the field, the purpose of data analysis is to make sense of the accumulated information. According to Jansen and Vithal, (1997), Stake (1995) data analysis includes at least three steps, which are scanning and cleaning the data, organising the data and representing the data

The researcher has followed the same procedure in analysing data. The researcher started by reading the data and arranging it in a manageable form. The formulated meanings were placed into categories. The researcher then rechecked the original data in order to ensure the relevancy of the information. The following emerged from the data collected.

4.2. OBSERVATIONS FROM THE MEETINGS BETWEEN EDUCATORS AND PARENTS.

The first meeting was between educators and parents who were members of the school governing body. The purpose of this gathering was to plan for the prize giving day. The researcher observed that parents were very acting and they were supporting each other on this issue. Educator seemed to be withdrawn. It was as if parents were being prescriptive to them.

The researcher also attended a meeting between the governing body and the school management. The purpose of this meeting was to plan for the official opening of the researched school. The original opening function was planned. For September 1997. Owing to a lack of parental support, the occasion was cancelled three weeks before the appointed date. From this meeting a decision was taken that the governing body should plan for a meeting with educators.

They were supposed to apologise to the school personnel about their approach in their previous meeting. The issue of the school

opening function would be discussed when the atmosphere was conducive. The researcher observed that parents were actively involved , one parent was chairing the meeting. In this meeting there was two-way communication between educators and parents. The third meeting attended by the researcher was that of the governing body and educators. The aim was to plan for the prize giving day for learners, opening of the library and the official opening for the school. In this meeting it was observed that there was a change of attitude between educators and parents. Both parties were actively involved in this meeting. A consensus was reached in the meeting. For the success of the school functions, it was decided that a steering committee would be elected. It was to be formed by educators, learners and parents. The decision made was that this matter should be taken to a parents meeting.

The fourth meeting was organised between educators and parents. The invitations were made by the governing body through letters given to learners. The purpose was to decide for the school functions suggested by the governing body in conjunction with educators. Parents agreed to contribute financially and to actively participate for these functions. They were prepared to work together with educators when preparing for such functions. They even elected parents who would represent them on the parent

educator committee. Only few parents attended the meeting. The researcher noticed that the official opening of the school failed as well as the opening of school library did not take place owing to lack of parental commitment. ✓ They did not contribute funds as expected for the preparations of the school functions.

They did not attend the last meeting they were supposed to plan for such functions. The school had managed to organize the prize giving day and it was successful. This success was achieved through the joint efforts of the school personnel governing body and it was facilitated by the steering committee.

4.2.1. OBSERVATIONS FROM THE PRIZE GIVING DAY

The researcher also attended the school prize giving day. During this function the supervising manager pointed out, that he expected more parents to see and appreciate what their children are doing at school. To the few parents who attended, he encouraged them to give more support to their quality education, parents, educators and learners should come together and work hard. According to the supervising education manager, parents have to create a conducive atmosphere for education in the school and in the community. Parents should involve themselves in education and should it happen that parents realise that there is something wrong taking place at school, they should come together and work very hard. The supervising manager did

not suggest activities for parents to intervene in school matters. To the few parents who attended this function, he stated that he expected to see more parents in the function of this nature. In the very same function, the school principal also mentioned that parents and educators should come together for the benefits of the school. She suggested that the governing body, should educate other parents and the entire community concerning their responsibility in education of their children. She also mentioned that she was expecting more parents. The chairperson of the governing body appreciated the joint efforts of the educators and parents in preparing for the prize giving day. He also suggested that in a function of this nature, he would appreciate to see more parents. He also urged educators and parents to attend school meetings scheduled for parents. According to him, partnership could be developed through parental meetings.

4.3. PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

4.3.1. PARENTS INTERVIEWS.

Parents showed interest in what the researcher was doing. They even pointed out that, it was for the first time to have a conversation of this nature with the educators. Some mentioned that they never thought of being visited by the teacher in their one-roomed houses. Some of the parents at first, were not

happy, they thought that the researcher was going to blame them for their children's failure in school work. The following six themes emerged from content analysis of the parental interviews as reasons for the lack of parental involvement.

4.3.1.1 PARENTAL ALOOFNESS

It came out from the interview that most of the parents or guardians do not visit the school. Some parents alienate themselves from the school due to the lack of parental educational awareness. Parents stated that they do not visit the school not because they are in conflict with teachers.

They mentioned that according to their perception secondary school learners are believed to be matured and expected to be on their own. Parents perceived parental roles as sending the learner to school, paying school fees, buying of books and school uniform as well as paying for the learners school transport. They also considered themselves as people who should visit school only when there is a crisis. Concerning the issue of parents attendance at school meetings they reported that the nature of their job sometimes becomes a barrier for them to attend meetings. Some of them are working shift work and some even work on Sundays. One of the parents commented "I work from Monday to Saturday as a result I reserve the Sunday to do the house chores, I do not get time to attend school meetings".

4.3.1.2 FINANCIAL MATTERS

According to some parents the high rate of unemployment affects them. Some parents are affected by this, in such a way they even fail to attend parental meetings. It is perceived that due to insufficient funds allocated for schools by the Department of Education, school governors find themselves in a situation of always trying to persuade parents to pay more money to the school. School governors are aiming at improving the school, but some of the parents are excluded from the school by that issue.

One parent stated that when the school calls for parental meeting, ^{Mthambeni workshop} in their agenda there is always an item on finance.

Parents are always expected to pay, yet they are unemployed.

So as a result of unemployment, they fail to meet school requirements eg. they were expected by the school to employ an accounting teacher for grade eight (as there was a shortage).

The official opening function of the school failed and opening of school library failed, due to the shortage of funds.

4.3.1.3 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE PARENTS

The level of parents' education is perceived as a barrier for parental involvement in school affairs. Some parents are literate, while the majority are semi-literate. As a result they distance themselves from school matters. One parent from this disadvantaged community explained I do not visit the school because I have never been to school. I do not know how my child

will react if I visit his school. Consequently, professionals in this community are viewed as people who are expected to know everything.

4.3.14. PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATORS AND PARENTS

It also came out from the parents interviews, that parents are willing to be partners with educators. They do not know how to initiate this partnership. They mentioned that they are prepared to help the school. If the school can allocate some duties to them, they could be pleased. ^{This is} Parents are prepared to do ^{Contrary} volunteer work at school, if they are not expected to pay. Most of them are prepared to be involved in school fundraising and being involved in the cleaning of the school as some of them have experience in cleaning.

4.3.15 ADULT SUPERVISION IN SPORT

It emerged from the interviews that parents would be pleased if the school personnel could involve them in sports meetings. Some parents said that they could come to support the school teams if they could be requested to do so. As they are not employed, they could schedule their time for schools sports. They even suggested that they could involve themselves during school trips. As the school is having a problem of misbehaving learners during school trips, adult supervision would be welcomed.

4.4. EDUCATORS INTERVIEWS

The researcher observed that educators do not generally invite parents to school. They gave some reasons, whereby they explained that they are aware that parental involvement in children's education is important. Through their experience in the researched school, there is minimal parental involvement. They have observed this even during parental meetings. There is always a low level of parental attendance in meetings. There is always a low level of parental attendance in meetings. Educators were willing to be partners with parents but they did not know how to develop this partnership. The following two themes came out from analysis of the educators interview as possible reasons for poor parental involvement:

- (a) Lack of supervision in learners academic progress and
- (b) Ideas of educators on parents responsibilities.

4.4.1 LACK OF SUPERVISION IN LEARNERS ACADEMIC PROGRESS

According to educators , parents are perceived as people lacking interest in their children's education. Parents do not check learner's exercise books at home. Most of the learners do not write of complete homework , as no one supervises them at home. Learners do not have study sessions at home. To educators, parents are not showing interest in learners' academic progress. Educators also mentioned that some of the learners do not write

class tests leads to learners failure of quarterly examination. They rely on these class tests for marks. This high failure rate of tests, teachers associate with a lack of parental support. They mentioned that even if a parent is called by the school to discuss this issue, parents do not respond to it . Parents do not enquire at the school about the child's poor progress. Educators perceived parents as people who only respond to the school invitations, when the child has misbehaved. They seem to be more concerned about the suspension of the child by the school as compared to the child's academic progress. One teacher mentioned that she has never called a parent, because she has never encountered a problem that needs parents. She has observed that in the school under study, parents only come to school, when there is a crisis. If the situation is normal they do not attend the school meetings. As a result she has been discouraged to invite parents on matters pertaining to the learner's academic performance. To these educators, lack of parental support indicates that parents are not serious about their children's education.

4.4.2. IDEAS OF EDUCATORS ON PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

According to educators the roles of parents in academic activities should be, to help the child to do homework. Help the child in reading and assist him in school projects. Parents are expected to assist the child by encouraging him or her to

visit public libraries and to make use of the available information in libraries. Educators believe that parents should read newspapers almost everyday and give them to children. This will also develop their language proficiency. According to educators parents should encourage children to watch educational programmes on television.

These interviewed educators believed that parents should supervise their children study sessions at home. They should control their watching of television programmes. Parents should try to contact subject teachers, class teachers to enquire about their children's progress. Educators thought that parents have a great role to play in sports meetings Educators suggest that parents should be included in school budgeting committee as to safeguard the handling of school funds.

4.5 LEARNERS' INTERVIEWS

Learners were willing to be interviewed; they were not against the researcher's intentions. At first these respondents were reluctant. They thought that the researcher had a hidden agenda. As the researcher continued they then, understood her purpose. The following four themes emerged from learners interviews;

4.5.1. Parents as participants in academic matters of the school

(4.5.2) Children's responsibilities and chores at home.

(4.5.3) Parental involvement in non academic matters of the school.

(4.5.4.) Involvement of parents in decision making

4.5.1. PARENTS AS PARTICIPANTS IN ACADEMIC MATTERS OF THE SCHOOL

The researcher observed that learners were in support of parental involvement. They would like their parents to become active participants in the academic matters of the school. They consider their parents as people who would manage to assist them with their homework. They suggested that the school personnel should work collaboratively with their parents. To them, if parents could work together with educators, than parents would realise that they are suppose to give them moral support at home. They mentioned that they would like to see their parents being involved in discussions with their educators. They think this type of the discussion will improve their school progress. They see parents as people having interest in their academic progress. When parents received learners academic progress cards, they become happy. Some parents spend their time in reading their progress cards, which they receive at the end of each quarter of the year. According to learners, the reading of the progress cards, encourages a parent to make time for discussing school matters with the learner.

4.5.2. CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND CHORES AT HOME

It came out from this research, that most of the learners are having many responsibilities at home. Some of them are supposed

to collect their younger brothers and sisters from the creche, which delayed them.

Some of them have to do house chores after school and some are responsible for cooking at home. Some learners are responsible for cooking at home. Some learners are supposed to wash their young brother and take them to creches in the morning. Due to the problems mentioned by learners, their time for homework and studying is affected. This leads to the change of attitude towards learning . If they do not write homework, they do not study and this leads to failure in class tests and examination. According to learners, the school should develop parents towards parental education. This should also include parenting skills.

4.4.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN NON ACADEMIC MATTERS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are perceived by learners as people who have a great role to play in non-academic affairs of the school. The school should invite parents to school meetings regularly. The invitations should give parents an allowance of time so as to be able to prepare themselves for such meetings. Learners suggested that parents should be involved in sports meetings. One learner even suggested that parents and teaches could form a team which will play against learners' team. This would develop partnership. The nature and the level of parental involvement could be improved in this way. Parents are also looked upon as

people who could become active volunteers. They suggested that parents could help the school in fundraising, repairing of the school and school plumbing. Parents could be used during career presentation. The school counsellor could invite parents to expose learners to their parents fields of work. This will help the school as learners would be exposed to more career options. This could improve the level of the involvement of parents.

4.5.4 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN DECISION MAKING

According to learners' experiences, this school has managed in the past to involve parents in school matters only when there is crisis. They appreciate it, as this is an indication that their parents are given a role as problem solvers. They also suggest that their parents should be consulted, before decision are taken by the school personnel. The school personnel should taken by the school personnel. The school personnel should take decisions in conjunction with their parents . According to learners, the school personnel decided to change of the curriculum without the consultation of parents. The change of curriculum was intended for the learners' benefit. This matter should have been discussed with parents before it was implemented.

4.6. INFORMATION GATHERED FROM OTHER SOURCES ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

4.6.1 INFORMATION FROM KWA-ZULU NATAL MINISTER OF EDUCATION'S SPEECH

In a speech by Dr Vincent Zulu quoted in the Daily News (03 August, 1998) it was mentioned that school success takes joint efforts. The success in our schools requires a contribution from all stakeholder's in education, facing up to their responsibilities. According to his speech, learners who handle school well, come from families where the parents are very family focused. He mentioned that parents should involve themselves by taking on interest in their children's school years e.g. "If the children are late for class, it is probably because their parents do not care"

4.6.2 INFORMATION FROM KWA-ZULU NATAL REPORT FOR SCHOOLS IN DURBAN SOUTH REGION

A report (see appendix 8.7) was compiled by subject advisors and school principals (23 February 1998) in Kwa-Zulu Natal for schools in Durban Region. This referred to the schools with matriculation pass rate below 40%, the researched school is one of those schools. In that report a mention is made of factors contributing to the high failure rate. Factors mentioned here are: Inability to raise funds from poor parents community, unmotivated learners, poor relationship between learners, educators and parents, illiterate parents not interested in education, learners ill disciplined and lack of community involvement. The compilers of this report criticised the

situation found in the school from disadvantaged communities. The situation criticised is the one which lead to poor matric results. The writers are not informed about the realities of life for poor people. They have also made some suggestions on how to improve matriculation results (see appendix 8.7). One of them is that of involving parents in school affairs. To them parental involvement have impact on academic results of the of the school.They did not design activities for developing parental involvement in schools.

CHAPTER 5:DISCUSSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Involvement of parents in their children's education is emphasised by the South African school's Act (1996) as well as literature in chapter 2. It is seen as one of the factors which can improve the schools outcomes. Some writers have also stressed that involvement of parents in education is one of the responsibilities of the government. The government expect schools to initiate and sustain partnership between parent and educators. There is an opinion which has emerged from this study that parent-teacher partnership is necessary for the school to succeed. Involvement of parents in the school under study is seen as minimal , being affected by certain barriers. According to the writer's perception this school is still in its initial stage of developing parental involvement. The findings of this study discussed are three fold and they are : level and nature of parental involvement , problems affecting parental involvement and partnership between parents and educators. Following is the discussion of the findings:

5.2. LEVEL AND NATURE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

According to the researcher involvement of parents seemed to be minimal in the school under study , as evidenced by the low percentage of parents who support the school in its academic and non academic activities. Parents from the governing body were observed by the researcher as being actively involved during school meeting.

Other parents were few in number and were few in number and were not as active as the governing body expected of them. Most of the parents did not turn up for the last meeting which they were asked to attend in order to prepare for the official opening of the school. From the observation made during the prize giving day, the supervising manager noted that there were few parents who attended the function. The minimal involvement by parents at this school is asking to what Morgan, Frazer, Dunn and Cairns (1992) described as a third level of involving parents, in which only a small number of parents make themselves available to serve the school. This contrasts strikingly with what Berger 1983 (cited in Swap) emphasised about the involvement of parents. He espoused the notion that every parent is expected to be actively involved in school matters.

Berger's view has been recognised and adopted by the legislature in South Africa in the form of the schools Act 1996) which stipulates that parents should be actively involved in their children's education. Dissenting views have, however been expressed. While conceding that maximum parental involvement is a noble idea , Garlington (1991) has warned against the government shifting its responsibility to parents. The government should likewise take responsibility for what goes wrong at school instead of blaming parents for this. Divergent views have been expressed on the effect of parental involvement on academic performance of learners at school. Dr Vincent Zulu concluded from the data he collected that learners who perform well at school are those whose parents are actively involved in school matters.

This conclusion is in harmony with the findings of the compilers of the report for schools under the Durban South Region which highlighted the fact that a school with good results is associated with parents who actively involve themselves in school matters. Garlingtong (1991) on the other hand maintains that there is no correlation between good academic performance and parental involvement in school matters. Be that as it may, there is an opinion in this study that parental involvement in school matters has a positive impact on academic performance of learners.

5.3. PROBLEMS AFFECTING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The main hindrances affecting parental involvement that loom large in this study are two-fold ; namely school finance and low level of education of parents. It emerged from interviews conducted with parents that the issue of school finance, which features prominently in the agenda of most meetings, is a thorn in the flesh amongst many parents. This state of affairs is attributable to the high rate of unemployment in South Africa, coupled with economic recession experienced worldwide. In the result the inclusion of the topic of school finance in the agenda tends to dampen the spirits of many parents from involving themselves in school matters , as the topic makes them uncomfortable.

In regard to low level of education of parents it is important to note that the demands made on parents by changes in education (in particular the advent of the outcomes based education, which

most parents do not understand) have the effect of alienating the parents. This in turn negatively impacts on parental participation. This accords with what Mc Geeney (1980) reported, namely that some changes in education can be detrimental to parental involvement. This is further exacerbated by the fact that most parents are illiterate and consequently hampered from making any meaningful contribution by this handicap.

The factors enumerated above at this school have given rise to the phenomenon similar to that described by Grolnick et al. cited in Pressley (1997) discussed under the topic "barriers affecting parental involvement. In their study these writers mentioned that parent and child characteristics , family context, attitudes and practices of teachers.

5.4. PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

From the observations and interviews it is evident that parental involvement is considered necessary. Parents are not actively involved in this school and the researcher views this as one of the factors contributing the low pass rate of grade 12 learners. School results have such an impact on the image of the school (and for the community at large) that the successfulness of each and every school is gauged by viewing the published academic results.

In order for the school to succeed, parents and educators should come together. This partnership is to emphasised in the South African schools Act 1996 This agrees with the view of Harold and Eccles (1994) as they perceive this partnership as a determining

factor in promoting the school's outcomes.

In order for the school to be effectively managed , parent teacher partnership should be one of the challenges facing the principal. Chubb and Moe (1990 page 5) reported that "Parents who unite behind the school, trust it to do what is best and support its objectives and programmes in the home can be real assets to a school, that want to build an effective organisation." (Page 5)

Parents could be assets to the school if there is a good relationship between educators and parents. This relationship could only be possible through effective communication, which Swap (1993) perceived as a two-way communication. Through this communication parents and teachers would share information, which will be of benefit to the school. This will develop their relating skills instead of blaming each other for the school's failure. This is congruous with what Bastiani (1987) reported, viz. That teachers and parents should treat each other as equals who are accountable for children's education. On the observations from the prize giving day, the supervising manager maintained that in order for the school to deliver quality education, the partnership between educators and parents should be developed. From interviews parents and teachers are willing to be partners but they do not know how to initiate and sustain

it. This is also reported by Epstein and Becker (1982).

According to learners' interviews, learners would like their parents to become active participants who could work with the school personnel collaboratively. Dr Vincent Zulu is also in support of this partnership, as to him the school success is dependant on joint effort from all stakeholder's.

When this partnership is developed, it should promote mutual support and understanding amongst the stakeholder's of a school as an organisation. Harold and Eccles(1994) maintain that once educators and parents become partners, who support each other, the school will prosper.

The researcher is trying to highlight how necessary it is for the school to develop the partnership. A partnership involves the sharing of power, resources, knowledge and decision making between the home and school. The claim made by the learners that the curriculum change was done by professionals without any input from parents, points to the absence of shared decisions between parents and teachers. According to learners, teachers are regarded as experts who imposed the curriculum change on parents and learners.

5.5.CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the nature and level of parental involvement. It has also focused on the problems encountered affecting parental involvement and concludes with partnership between educators and parents in children's education.

CHAPTER 6 :

6 CONCLUSION

This chapter considers the implications of the findings of this research and make some suggestions as to how these findings can be used to plan appropriate interventions. The implications are divided into sub – topics which are : levels of parental involvement, communication between the parents and the school, parents and educators as partners in education. This chapter has concluded with strenghts and limitations of this study as well as indications for further research.

Table 6.1 The relationship between research aims, methods of investigation and findings

AIMS / OBJECTIVES / RESEARCH / QUESTIONS	METHODS/ TECHNIQUES USED TO PURSUE THIS OBJECTIVE	WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS	FIND JUSTIFICATION FOR TECHNIQUE USED
How do educators attempt to involve parents in the activities of the school	Information was gathered through parents and educator’s interviews. As well as through observations from the school activities arranged by educators	Educators invited parents to school meeting, the prize giving day and official opening of the school but its only few parents who were observed by the researcher as being actively involved i.e. parents from the governing body.	Yes, interviews were appropriate as information was successfully gathered from parents and educators.
2. How do parents respond to the invitation made by the school	Observations	According to the researcher, the involvement of parents seemed to be minimal in the school understudy, as evidenced by the low percentage of parents who support the school in its academic and non-academic activities.	Yes, observations made it easy for the researcher to get information.
3. How is the parent’s perception concerning their involvement in school matters ?	Interviews	Parents would like to be involved in school matters. As they said through interviews that they are willing to be partners with educators. There is a problem of not knowing how to initiate this partnership.	Yes, Parents were willing to be interviewed. Interviews were appropriate.
4. What is the learner’s perception concerning the involvement of parents in their school ?	Interviews	According to interviews, learners would like their parents to work collaboratively with their educators. According to learners teachers are regarded as expects who imposed the curriculum change on learners and parents. The claim made by learners that the curriculum change was done by professionals. Points to the absence of shared decisions between parents and educators.	Yes, Information was gathered successfully through this instrument.

6.1.1 LEVEL OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Home and school are basic environments for child development and socialisation. Positive bonds between home and school can promote children's abilities to adapt well to school and to achieve good academic results (Booth and Dunn, 1996). This statement is highlighting that home school relation can improve academic result of the school. By looking at this statement as well as the findings of this study, one would realise that the study is claiming higher level of parental involvement may lead to improvement in school's academic results. It has emerged that the academic results in the researched school are still poor as the level and nature of parental involvement are minimal. The study is not claiming that parental involvement is the only method which can be used in trying to improve school academic results. According to the school under study it is difficult to attempt securing parental involvement in the school.

6.1.2 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

The study also indicated that there is communication breakdown which seem to exist in the researched school. By communication breakdown the writer refers to the lack of contact between parents and educators, these affect parental involvement in the school.

A number of models described in chapter 2 state that the quality of communication and relationship between teachers and parents may be determinants of children's educational success or failure. In a model proposed by Harold and Eccles, (1994) it is mentioned that parents influence their children's outcomes at school by

supporting children's influence their academic activities as well as by communicating with the school and by involving themselves in the school's non - academic activities (e.g. parent volunteer at school).

The writer has observed that some learners are having anti - academic attitudes and neither writer nor complete homework. This intention may be improved upon by encouraging teachers and parents to communicate with each other more effectively. It comes out that parents need to be informed about what is happening at schools (both academic and non - academic activities). In improving communication from the school, the school should provide clearer guidelines for parents such as explaining how to monitor homework and helping parents to understand the school's expectations. The school has to device some means on how to improve communication between parents and teachers. School's reports need not to be the only way of such communication. School magazines and flyers could also be designed with the purpose of making parents aware of what is happening at school.

6.1.3 PARENTS AND EDUCATORS AS PARTERS IN EDUCATION

From the school under study it is clear that parents and educators are willing to work as partners in education, but they do not know how to do it. In attempting to address this problem, the writer suggests the following programmes :-

6.1.3.1 PLANNED WORKSHOPS FOR EDUCATORS

Parents need to be educated about parental involvement in their children's education. Educators need staff development programmes for professionals on the issue of parental

involvement, prior to their meeting with parents.

The writer recommends that the school management could plan with the school personnel, on when to discuss matters pertaining to involvement of parents in education. The staff of the researched school has decided to have staff meeting on a fortnightly basis. It will be more relevant to use such periods to develop each other on parental involvement.

The guidance educator with the assistance of one of the Heads of Department and one educator from sports committee of the school, could facilitate such programmes. They should organise such programmes not more than two hours as to avoid boredom, in each quarter of the school term.

so as to maintain parental involvement these programmes could be done yearly. The facilitator could request the staff to suggest topics which are of relevance to parental involvement. They should prioritise these topics in order of preference. The supervising manager from the Department of Education could be invited to such meetings.

Sometimes he could be requested to present a talk on one of the topics. To answer the question on how educators perceive parental involvement, it will come out from such programmes.

6.1.3.2 PLANNED WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

In order to be able to develop partnership between parents and educators, the writer suggests that the school should organise workshops for parents and educators. Workshops would help parents in understanding their roles in education of their children.

Educators and parents will be exposed to each other on their worldviews. From the findings it came out that parents and educators are willing to be in contact, but they do not know how to initiate and sustain their partnership, this will develop through workshops. The study also indicates that parents and educators perceive parental involvement differently.

In this study, parents in this community were found to view educators as professionals who know everything. As a result, these parents tend to be submissive and fear to question and challenge educators. Some parents view themselves as people lacking information as they are illiterate.

The workshops should aim at developing partnership between parents and educators. This would promote participation of parents in school matters. The development programmes for parents, are viewed by the writer as the responsibility of the school, ie. The principal of the school, educators and the governing body of the school. As to let such programmes take place, a committee should be elected for parental involvement (including parents and educators). The committee will have to be active in planning and organising workshops for educators and parents. They should discuss topics of their common interests. Suggested topics, which can be useful are: "how to involve parents in their children's education: in checking homework, reducing television viewing time, buying school books, the need for schooling. Functioning of the particular school their child attends, parental involvement in sports, dealing with conflict and disputes between home and school, parenting skills.

When schools plan for such workshops it is advisable for

educators to keep in mind the skills and levels of education of parents from this disadvantaged community. As the school is said to be under resourced, educators and parents could work together and decide on the programme, which will help them on sponsorship to the nearby firms.

Sponsors would help them making their plans happen, the school would be able to buy some of resources that they need.

The writer suggests the issue of sponsorship, because the researched school is near the industrial area where there is a number of firms, and some of the learner's parents are working in these firms. This would be a good opportunity for the school.

6.1.3.3. PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMES

Shortage of time and space at home, for learners from this community, to do home work and to study their school books, could be addressed by the school.

Parents and educators should be encouraged to work collaboratively on how to organise supervised study at school. The writer has observed that most of the learners have duties as house cleaners, cooks, to collect their young sisters and brothers from crèches. As a result they end up not having done homework. The writer suggests that parents volunteers and educators has to supervise the study at school, as to control learners from the disturbance at home for homework purposes. The parent-educator committee for parental involvement should be organised at meetings for homework programme. On this meeting it should come out what

the purpose of supervise study is, who should supervise, the duration of the study period.

Parent volunteers and educators time should be listed and these volunteers should come and discuss their roles in the study periods. The school counsellor should remain as the facilitator of this in conjunction with the Hod from the school.

Parent volunteer programmes need strategic planning by the parents and educators.

The study also indicated that the community need parent awareness on the services and resources they are entitled to. The school personnel should work jointly with the governing body of the school to persuade the local Government, to ensure that there are enough youth centres in the townships under the Department of Health. Youth Centres should be used by the school for its benefits. The school under study is fortunate because there is a nearby Youth Centre which should be used properly, i.e. the school has to revisit the centre and find out what services the centre could offer and the educators should promote good relationship with such community workers.

6.2 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher being the educator at the researched school perceives this as the strength of this study. The researcher had access to information as she was known to the respondents. The researcher was in a better position to get first hand information. This could also be perceived as a limitation because some of the respondents did not want to express themselves freely, on issues pertaining to educators. The researcher assumes that possibly,

the parents and learners thought that the researcher would be prejudiced and the respondents would become victimised in some way. The research was conducted in English and Zulu languages. Most of the respondents preferred Zulu which is their mother tongue. The researcher also being the Zulu speaker, perceives this as the strength of the research.

She is claiming that respondents were able to understand questions so as to express themselves in Zulu, in a way that would not have been possible if the language used was English.

Other strengths perceived are that the researcher in this study has established the extent to which parental involvement have sought in the school.

Awareness has been developed to both the management team and educators of the school, that parents need to be taught about their parental role in children's education. This awareness has resulted in school personnel attempting to develop the partnership between themselves and parents. This partnership is still at an early stage of development. This research could be used by other schools, with similar situation with Umqhele Secondary School. They could use it in planning for their workshops as guidelines when attempting to involve parents in their children's education.

Another limitation perceived by the researcher is that of time frame. The researcher took ten months for conducting her research. According to the researcher this was too short a period. To be able to initiate and promote parental involvement in children's education, needs more time. The duration of the

research was short because the researcher was doing her study, as a part-time researcher. Most of the parents who were willing to be researched were females. The researcher perceived this as a limitation. May be the involvement of men could have a greater contribution towards this study. The researcher suspects that men were not interested in this study due to cultural influences.

In this community women seem to be regarded as being inferior, so men may be reluctant to be interviewed by a female researcher. They referred the interviewer to the females. There was only one man among eleven parents who agreed to be interviewed.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.

The insight gained in this study need to be extended to research in more intervention strategies on how to make schools more accessible to parents. Initially the researcher thought, that she was going to expose respondents of this study to intervention strategies. Due to time factor she was unable to do it. She managed to suggest some strategies on developing parental involvement but this needs a full-time researcher who will spend more time on exploring the implications of different intervention strategies.

The researcher thought that she was going to manage to promote more parental involvement in children's education. This did not happen as the researcher has planned. She recommends that any researcher interested in the study of this type could use action research. The writer suggests this, because in action

research, the researcher would become a participant observer over a certain period of time. The researcher could be able to identify the problem, plan, intervene and assess the situation. This was going to be done in cycles. As a result, it was to be more possible for the researcher to initiate parental involvement in the researched school. Maybe it was also going to be possible through a collaborative research involving university students and lectures.

Most of the time, the researcher spent on the nature and level of parental involvement in academic matters. Sometimes she neglected to concentrate on parental involvement in non-academic affairs of the school. The writer also suggests that more studies be done on parental involvement in non-academic matters of the school. Concerning the learners as respondents, some learners were interviewed at school and some opted to be interviewed at home. According to the researcher there was a difference between their responses. Learners interviewed at home were not responding as those interviewed at school. The researcher assumes that, this was caused by the fact that most of the learners are staying in one roomed houses. They were disturbed by the presence of parents. As a result they could not articulate what they had in mind. Some found themselves compelled to impress their parents.

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PARENTS/GUARDIAN INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

Personal Details: _____

Gender of parent _____

Relationship _____

PERCEPTION ABOUT PARENTAL/GUARDIAN IN SCHOOL:

1. How many times do you visit the school per month? _____
why _____

2. What do you do at school on these visits _____

3. What would you like to do on these visits _____

4. Why do you find it difficult to visit the school _____

5. What is it that you like to help the school at? _____

6. Would you like to work with teachers _____

7. Which volunteer work would you like to do at school _____

8. Would you like to be invited on sports meeting _____

9. Do you attend parental/guardian meeting at school _____

10. Do you attend parental/guardian meetings at school_____

11. Are you happy with the method used concerning invitations for meetings

12. Do you have any other comments pertaining parental involvement in school

UMHLELO LWEMIBUZO ULUYA KUMZALI/OMELE UMZALI.

IMININGWANE YAKHO:

UBULILI BOMZALI; _____

UBUDLELWANO: _____

UVO NGOKUBANDAKANYWA KWABAZALI ESIKOLENI.

1. Uvakashele kangaki esikoleni ngenyanga? _____
Isizathu; _____

2. Ufika wenzeni esikoleni uma uvakashile?; _____

3. Yini ongathanda ukuyenza uma uvakashile esikoleni?

4. Yini eyenza kubenzima ukuvakashela esikoleni? _____

5. Yini ongathanda ukusiza ngayo esikoleni? _____

6. Ungathanda / ungakwazi ukusebenzisana nothisha? _____

7. Imuphi umsebenzi ongazinikela ukuwnza esikoleni ngaphandle kweholo?

8. Ungathanda ukumenyelwa emihlanganweni yezemidlalo esikoleni?

9. Uyayihambela imihlangano yabazali esikoleni? Uma ungayihambeli, yini isizathu; _____

10. Iyakugculisa indlela enibizelwa ngayo emihlanganweni? _____
Uma ingakugculisi, iyiphi indlela oyibonayo engatshenziswa. _____

11. Ikhona yini eminye imibono onayo ngalokhu okungenhla;

TEACHER'S INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

INTERACTION WITH PARENTS

1. How often do you meet parents/guardian _____
why _____

2. Have you ever contacted a parent/guardian:
- if yes, how did you contact him/her _____
- if never, why? _____

3. Did the parent/guardian come and how was the conversation: _____

if not, do you see a need to contact a parent/guardian _____

4. What do you think the role of parents/guardian is in the following areas:
(a) academic activities _____
(b) sports activities _____

5. Can you regard parents/guardian as your partners in education? _____

6. Do you think parents/guardian have a say on school budget? _____

7. Do you think parents/guardian need guidance programmes: _____

how can they be guided and by whom? _____

8. What is the barrier to the parental/guardian involvement? _____

9. What is the nature of parental/guardian involvement in school _____

10. Can you suggest how to improve parental/guardian involvement _____

11. Is the governing body involved in promoting the role of parents/guardian in school?
- if not why _____
- if yes how _____

12. Any other remarks _____

UMHLELO LWEMIBUZO OLUYA KUTHISHA

UKUXHUMANA KUKATHISHA NABAZALI

1. Uxhumana kangaki nabazali? _____
sizathu; _____

2. Wake wambila umzali/omele umzali esikoleni? _____
Chasa, Uma wake wambiza; wambiza kanjani uma ungakaze umbize,
yinindaba; _____

3. Wafika yini umzali/omele umzali naxoxa kanjani?: _____

4. Uma ucabanga qhazalini elibanjwa abazali/abamele abazali kulokhu
okuphathelele nezifundo zomntwana. _____

Okuphathelele nezemidlalo yasesikoleni; _____

5. Umzali/omele umzali ungamthatha njengomuntu ongabambisana naye
emfundweni? _____

6. Ingabe abazali/abamele umzali banalo yini uvo mayelana nohlelo
lokusetshenziswa kwemali yesikole? _____
7. Ngabe abazali / abamele abazali bayadinga yini ukukfundiswa ngemfundo
yabantwana? _____
Bangafundiswa kanjani, ubani? _____
8. Yini eyenza abazali / omele umzali bangaphumeleli uma bebandakanywa
esikoleni? _____

9. Lingakanani izinga lokubandakanywa abazali / omele umzali esikoleni;

10. Iyiphi indlela yokubandakanywa abazali esikoleni iphemelele.

11. Isigungu sabazali siyasetshenziswa yini esikoleni ukuqguqumezela iqhaza okumelwe libanjwe abazali esikoleni; _____
_____ uma uthi cha, kungani singasetshenziswa _____

12. Ikhona yini eminye imibono onayo mayelana nalokhu okungenhla.

LEARNER'S INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Are you happy with parental/guardian visits at school? _____
- if not, why _____
- If yes, why _____

2. Would you like your teacher to know your parents/guardian and discuss your progress with them? _____

3. Do you find advantage in being helped by parents/guardian in your school work

4. Do your parents/guardian read your progress card? _____

5. Would you like your parents/guardian to do volunteer work at school _____

6. Would you like the school to involve parents/guardian in sports activities?

7. Does the school invite parents/guardian for school meetings? _____

8. Do your parents/guardian attend parental/guardian meeting at school?
- if not, why _____
- if yes, why _____

9. Are your parents/guardian proud of your school? _____

if not why _____

10. Any other remarks _____

UHLELO LEMIBUZO OLUYAKUMFUNDI

1. Kuyajabulisa ukubizelwa kwabazali / omele umzali esikoleni?

Uma uthi cha, yinindaba _____

Uma uthi yebo, yinindaba _____

2. Kungakuthokozisa yini uma umzali / omele umzali nothisha bexhumana, baxoxe ngomsebenzi wakho?

Uma uthi cha, yini engakujabulisa. _____

3. Ubona kukuhle yini, ukusizwa umzali / omele umzali uma ubhala umsebenzi wesebenzi wesikole ekhaya. _____

4. Umzalo wakho / omele umzali wakho uyalifunda yini iripoti lakho?

Wenze njani uma eselifundile. _____

5. Ungakujabulela yini uma isikole sibandankanya abazali kwezemidlalo yasesikoleni. _____

6. Ungathanda yini umzali wakho / omele umzali enze umsebenzi wokuzinikela esikoleni ngaphandle kweholo? _____

7. Isikole siyababizela yini abazali / abamele umzali emihlanganweni yesikole?

Ukubona kanjani lokho; _____

8. Umzali wakho / omele umzali uyayihambela yini imihlangano yasesikoleni?

Uma engayihambela yini isizathu; _____

Uma eyihambela uyibuka kanjani. _____

9. Umzali wakho / omele umzali uyaziqhenya yini ngesikole sakho? _____

Uma unaziqhenyi, yini emenza azenyeze; _____

10. Ikhona yini imibono eminye onayo ngokungenhla; _____

Appendix 8.4

A PROTOCOL FOR ADMINISTERING THE INTERVIEW FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The researcher will do home visits on May 23 and 24. The aim of the visits is to make appointments and give brief explanation of what the purpose of the researcher's visit is to the parents.

The following is the manner in which the researcher will introduce herself.

I am a student at Natal University in Pietermaritzburg, I am doing this research as part of the fulfilment of the degree. I am requesting you to help me by answering the following question orally. But you are not compelled to do it, this is not forced. There is a great need for collecting this information. I am trying to find out more information of what is happening in children's education, you are so important, you are representing other parents. I am not directly going to change the situation, such matters are very important in our society. I am trying to write something on parental involvement in academic and non academic activities in a secondary school in Clermont. I am having a hope that stakeholder's in education may read this the parents her registration card as a proof that she is a student a the University of Natal.

The researcher would have to dress smart casual as to be similar with the participant's style. The date and time for the interview to take place will be agreed upon amongst the researcher and the parent. Should it happen that the parent is not at all interested in assisting the researcher concerning the

interview, the researcher will have to admit it as the respondent has a right no to permit her. The researcher will thank the parent in advance for the contribution to the research project, the information that is gathered will be used for the study to be undertaken.

Confidentiality of all the participants will be respected at all times.

In 28 May, the researcher would request eleven learners whose parents are to be visited on May 30, 31 and June 1 and 2, to remind their parents that the researcher would be visiting their parent. In fact learners would have to take the message of reminding their parents for the researcher's visit. On May 30 four parents would be interviewed and on 31 May two parents would be visited. On the day of the interview the researcher would arrive on time, introduce herself, state that she has come in accordance with previously made arrangements. The researcher would be accompanied by one of her colleagues for recording purpose. The colleagues will also be introduced by the researcher and her registration card from the University of Natal would be shown to the parent. The researcher would come with questions. As the interview drew to a close the researcher would thank the interviewee for the courtesy of giving her the time. On June 1 five parents will be interviewed by the researcher and the colleague from the afternoon in accordance with her appointment list. The same steps will be used for teachers' interviews, as they are the second group of participants to be interviewed. The researcher would also ask the permission from the principal to meet with a group of teachers during break, and she will explain

to the principal what the purpose of the meeting is, as she is aware that the researcher is undertaking a research project. The meeting will take place on June 4, 1998, its only ten teachers (and the principal) who are willing to assist the researcher and they will be visited. In this meeting the researcher would explain to this group of teachers that she would like them to be her participants in the interview for the study she is doing. She would find out from the teachers when and where to meet the individual teacher for the interview. She would make it clear to teachers that it's a short interview and that it will not disturb them. Since time is valuable to school based educators it is intended that the project will not demand more than 30 minutes. The interview question will be distributed to educators as to let them familiarize themselves with questions. The participants would be thanked in advance for their contributions to the research project. The researcher would have to declare the date for appointments with the educators, will be from June 9 to 15. The researcher would follow the steps used for parents interviews i.e. The researcher would visit the participants on the date and time agreed upon but before visiting them, she will remind the educators before hand.

On the day of the interview she will briefly explain the purpose of her visit to the teacher as it has been arranged. She will thank the respondent for the contribution and be assured that the information is not for inspection, it would remain confidential.

The confidentiality of the participants will be respected at all times. The researcher will come with her questions to each participants in case they have lost their question sheet. She

will read question for the participants as they are in the interview schedule. After the last question she would thank the participant for the contribution. After dealing with school based educators, the researcher will deal with the last group of participants, i.e. the learners.

The learners will be interviewed immediately after the permission has been granted by the department of education. These interviews will also take one week. The researcher will not interact with learners during teaching and learning periods. On the first day she will arrange and ask the permission to meet the learners during their break. She will meet with ten learners. On their first meeting the researcher will thank them for their contribution on the research project, explain to them what the purpose of the meeting is, clarify to them that she is doing this for study and mention that she will not bring any changes. The researcher should also explain to them that they are important, they represent other learners and that they are free to withdraw, i.e they are not forced to participate. The researcher will make appointment dates and time with them. Prior to the day of the interview, she will remind learners about their interview. Each learner would have to suggest the place where the interview would take place, e.g. home visit or at school after school . On the day of the interview for each participants, the researcher will come on time, thank the interviewee and give a brief explanation of her purpose concerning her study. After that the researcher would read (from her interview schedule) the question as they are. At the end of the interview she would thank the participant for contribution. The researcher should always keep in mind to remain friendly to the participants and dress smartly-casual.

APPENDIX :8.5

Box 304
CLERNAVILLE
3602
20 April 1998

The Governing Body
Umqhele Secondary School
Box 240
CLERNAVILLE
3602

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE:APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT
UMQHELE SECONDARY.**

I am a final year Masters student of Natal University (Pmburg) specialising in psychology of education with the topic "**Parental involvement in academic and non-academic activities in Secondary school in Clermont.**"

Thank you for your favourable considerations.

Yours Faithfully

Thulisile Mthembu

*Permission granted.
W.D. Makathini*

Umqhele Secondary School
Box 240
P.O. CLERNAVILLE
3602

20 April 1998

The Supervising Manager of Education
Westville Circuit (Durban South)
Private Bag X 13
CONGELLA
4013

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH PROJECT

I am applying for permission to carry out a research project at Umqhele Secondary School in Clermont. I am a final year Master's student of Natal University (Pietermaritzburg) specialising in psychology of education with the topic: Parental Involvement in academic and non-academic activities in a Secondary School in Clermont.

Thank you for your favourable consideration.

Yours Faithfully

THULISILE MTHEMBU (MRS)

Umqhele Secondary School
P.O. Box 240
CLERNAVILLE
3602

25 May 1998

R.H.T. Ngcobo
Superintendent of Education (Management)
Westville Circuit (Durban South)
Private Bag X 113
CONGELLA
4013

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH PROJECT

Thank you for your letter dated the 14th May 1998. Thank you for congratulating me for my academic progress.

I have enclosed the Research proposal, letter from the covering body whereby the principal is also the member.

This project will not have negative impact on my job as an educator as I am supervised by Robin Farman who is the senior lecturer and a registered educational and counselling psychologist. He supervised on Fridays after school hours and Saturdays. I will also arrange with the learners to interact with them after school and do home visits.

Thank you for your attention, your favourable attention will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

THULISILE MTHEMBU (MRS)



UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO NAMASIKO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR
DURBAN SOUTH

Province of KwaZulu-Natal / Isifundazwe saKwaZulu-Natal / Provinsie KwaZulu-Natal

CHATSWORTH AND PINETOWN DISTRICTS

40 Howard Avenue, Glenwood, Durban

Telephone/Ucingo/Telefoon: 031-256345
Fax/Isikhahlamazi/Faks: 031-253014

APPENDIX 8.6.2

Postal address/Ikheli lokuposa/Posadres:
Private Bag X13, Congella, 4013

Queries/Imibuzo/Navraag:

Reference/Inkomba/Verwysing:

R.H.T. NGCOBO

27 July 1998

Mrs Thulisile Mthembu
Umqhele Secondary School
P.O. Box 240
CLERNAVILLE
3602

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

1. My previous correspondence regarding this matter as well as my telephonic conversation with you on 23 June refers.
2. This serves to confirm that permission has been granted for you to carry out a research towards a Master's degree in Educational Psychology at Umqhele Secondary School.

Best wishes for your studies.

R.H.T. NGCOBO
SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION [MANAGEMENT]
WESTVILLE CIRCUIT

DURBAN SOUTH REGION : REPORT ON SCHOOLS WITH PASS RATE OF BELOW 40% : CONTRIBUTORY REASONS FOR FAILURE RATE

KEY: CD = CAMPERDOWN; UN = UMLAZI NORTH; US = UMLAZI SOUTH; U = UMBUMBULU.
CW = CHATSWORTH; P = PINETOWN

PROBLEM	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REPORTING PROBLEM	IN WHICH DISTRICT					
		CD	UN	US	U	CW	P
OVERCROWDING	13	8	1		4	1	1
POOR STATE OF BUILDINGS AND/OR GROUNDS	21	10	3	2	4		2
NO LABORATORY EQUIPMENT	17	4	2		9	2	
NO LIBRARY BOOKS	16	4	2		8	2	
POLITICAL INSTABILITY / VIOLENCE	16	5	1	1	8		1
UN- AND UNDER-QUALIFIED TEACHERS	16	4		1	11		
LACK OF COLT	13	1	3	1	5	3	
SHORTAGE OF TEXTBOOKS	23	5	1		15		2
NO ELECTRICITY	2	2					
INABILITY TO RAISE FUNDS FROM POOR PARENT COMMUNITY	2	2					
LACK OF SECURITY/FENCING	13	6	3		2		2
SHORTAGE OF RESOURCES	17	5	5		6		1
PROMOTION BY AGE & NOT BY ABILITY	9	5	2	1	1		
EMPLOYMENT OF EDUCATORS WITHOUT THE NEEDED SUBJECT ABILITY	3	1			2		
NOT ENOUGH TOILETS	1	1					
FAILURE OF DEPT TO SUPPLY STATIONERY	3	1					2
DEMOTIVATION OF EDUCATORS	14	3	5	2	3	1	
COATS IN CLASSROOMS	1	1					
LIBRARY BOOKS BUT NO LIBRARY	3	3					
SCIENCE KIT BUT NO LABORATORY	2	2					
NO LIBRARY BUILDING	12	7	2		3		
NO LABORATORY	14	7	5		3		
LEARNER ABSENTEEISM	29	4	6	3	10	4	2
UNMOTIVATED LEARNERS	17	3	6		4	2	2
NO TRIAL EXAMINATION	10	5	3				2
LEARNERS WRITING HG WHEN THEY SHOULD WRITE SG	5	2			3		
LACK OF SEA INVOLVEMENT	40	4	5	3	26		2
POOR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LRNRS, TCHRS & PARENTS	24	5	5	4	9	1	

DURBAN SOUTH REGION : REPORT ON SCHOOLS WITH PASS RATE OF BELOW 40% : CONTRIBUTORY REASONS FOR FAILURE RATE - page 2

KEY: CD = CAMPERDOWN; UN = UMLAZI NORTH; US = UMLAZI SOUTH; U = UMBUMBULU; CW = CHATSWORTH; P = PINETOWN

PROBLEM	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REPORTING PROBLEM	IN WHICH DISTRICT					
		CD	UN	US	U	CW	P
VANDALISM / THEFT	17	3	5		7	1	1
TOILETS UNUSABLE	2	2					
SHORTAGE OF FURNITURE	9	5	1				3
NO ADMIN BLOCK	4	4					
TRIAL EXAM WRITTEN BUT NOT MARKED	2	1	1				
NO REVISION	8	3	1	1	2	1	
TEACHER ABSENTEEISM	17	4	5	2	4	1	1
LOST TIME NOT MADE UP	5	3	2				
CONSTRUCTION NOISE DURING EXAMS	1	1					
LACK OF STORAGE FACILITIES	3	2			1		
LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY LEAVING - TEACHERS & LEARNERS	16	1	3	1	9		2
NON-COMPLETION OF SYLLABI - ALL GRADES	13		5	2	3		3
LACK OF SEM INVOLVEMENT	20	2	5	1	6	1	1
SQUATTER COMMUNITY USES CLASSROOMS AS TOILETS	1		1				
SCHOOL OF LAST RESORT - ATTRACTS LEARNERS REJECTED ELSEWHERE	1		1				
ILLITERATE PARENTS NOT INTERESTED IN EDUCATION	4		1		3		
LEARNER-CAUSED DISTURBANCES	6		3		2	1	
IGNORING ADVICE OF SEA'S	1		1				
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT	7	1	1		3	2	
MEDIA SOURCE OF INFORMATION INSTEAD OF THE DEPT	1		1				
NO SYLLABI	2	1	1				
DRUGS / ALCOHOL ABUSE	5	2	1			1	
LACK OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	10	3			2	1	4
NO REPLACEMENT OF EDUCATORS LEAVING LATER	5				3	2	
MANAGEMENT COMPONENT ACTING	4	1				1	2
INACCESSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL	12	2			10		
LEARNERS ILL-DISCIPLINED	8	1			7		

EDUCATORS UNPAID	2				1		1
EXCESS STAFF	1				1		
LACK OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	8	2			6		
LEARNERS OFFERING SUBJECTS WHERE THEY LACK THE SKILLS	2				2		
SHORTAGE OF STAFF IN CERTAIN SUBJECTS	3	1			2		
UNCONTROLLED DISTRICT SPORTING & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES	2				2		
LEARNERS ABSENT DURING MID-YEAR TRIAL EXAMS	1				1		
DISRUPTION TO CLASSES FOR LONG PERIOD +2 WEEKS	5	1			3		1
ISSUING OF FALSIFIED REPORTS TO LEARNERS PROMOTED TO GRADE 12	1	1					

GENERAL COMMENT ON COMPILATION OF STATISTICS:

See attached list of schools.

SOURCE OF DATA

The information tabulated in this report was extracted from a combination of reports submitted by SEM's and school principals.

THE WAY FORWARD : SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM SEM'S AND PRINCIPALS ON HOW TO IMPROVE RESULTS

The suggestions below do not come from "ivory tower" education department officials but from the people at the chalk face. They are proposals born from experience and not from idealism.

1. SEA's to have greater involvement with the schools, with the stress on improvement of educators' classroom skills (rather than on subject knowledge).
2. SEM's to have greater involvement with the schools, particularly in the field of management training, to obviate poor planning control and administration
3. Books: a catalogue from which to choose textbooks is needed, together with book displays.
4. Stimulating courses for educators are needed at which they can improve their subject knowledge.
5. Consideration should be given to establishing special schools for learners who do not progress at the standard rate, to enable them to advance more slowly rather than be pushed forward to the next grade as is perceived to be the case presently.
6. There should be controlled examinations at the end of Grade 9.
7. Parents need to be educated about schooling, the need for education, their involvement with the child's school work and the functioning of the particular school their child attends.
8. Schools need a vision - they need to change the way they look at themselves, particularly when they perceive themselves to be an inferior school.
9. Schools should provide supervised study time for learners, especially in view of the difficulty many learners face in trying to study at home.
10. Parents need to be more involved with their children's schooling - for example in checking homework, reducing television viewing time and buying school books.
11. Learners must be encouraged to write examinations on the appropriate grade: learners capable of a standard grade pass should not be doing all subjects on the higher grade.
12. Tests and examinations of an acceptable standard must be written and marked regularly. Many learners are seen to have gone into the examination with little or no preparation for and practice in answering exam questions.

13. Discipline must be re-introduced to schools. The abolition of corporal punishment is perceived to have contributed to indiscipline and a subsequent unwillingness on the part of learners to listen to their teachers.
14. Teachers need to have high expectations of the learners: the teacher who expects little will get little; the teacher who expects much will find that the learners are capable of giving a great deal.
15. Centralised common examinations within the Districts for grades 7,9 10 and 12.


W. DORKIN

DIRECTOR : EDUCATION PROVISION SERVICES

23 February 1998

DURBAN SOUTH REGION

ANALYSIS OF MATRIC RESULTS - SCHOOLS WITH PASS RATE OF 40% AND LESS

<i>DISTRICT & CIRCUIT</i>	<i>SCHOOL</i>	<i>PASS %</i>	<i>LEARNER EDUCATOR RATIO 1:</i>
<i>CAMPERDOWN DISTRICT</i>	18		
<i>Inchanga Circuit</i>	Siphesihle Secondary	19.6	46
	Siyajabula Secondary	35.9	36
<i>Mpumalanga North Circuit</i>	Amatshezulu High	26.9	49
	Gabigabi High	17.3	40
	Phezulu High	24.1	25
	Wozanazo High	32.3	32
	Mabomvini		28
	Thanduza High		31
<i>Mpumalanga South Circuit</i>	Isibukosezwe High	35.2	36
	Luthayi High	21.2	42
	Sikhethuxolo High	35.4	28
	Ukusa Secondary School	22.6	33
	Wozamoya High	26.9	42
<i>Table Mountain Circuit</i>	Banqobile High	22.3	45
	Inhlanhlayabebhuze High	33.9	38
	Mdepha High	29.2	34
	Ngangezwe High	24.4	33
	Nogunjwa High	10.7	32

CHATSWORTH DISTRICT	4		
<i>Chatsworth Circuit</i>	Brindhaven Secondary	36	28
<i>Clermont Circuit</i>	Chesterville Secondary	8.5	30
	Umqhele High	19.6	25
	Ziphathele High	13.2	31
PINETOWN DISTRICT	8		
<i>Kwadabeka Circuit</i>	Kwadabeka Secondary No. 7	29.3	29
<i>Molweni Circuit</i>	Ingqungqulu High	17.8	31
	Kwadinabakubo Intermediate	28.5	34
<i>Ndengezi Circuit</i>	Dassenhoek High	19.2	32
	Dick Ndlovu High	11.6	35
	Ndengetho High	39.1	29
	Ntee High	22.4	35
	Thokozamnganga High	13.04	37

UMLAZI NORTH DISTRICT	7		
<i>Maphundu Circuit</i>	Dloko Secondary	15.2	30
	Ekwazini High	14.2	28
<i>Mfongosi Circuit</i>	Kwashaka High	17.1	28
	Makhumbuza High	6.9	25
	Mafumbuka High	17.9	24
<i>Umlazi East Circuit</i>	Lamontville High	20.9	32
	A.J. Mwelase	20.9	27
UMLAZI SOUTH DISTRICT	4		
<i>Mafa Circuit</i>	Ndukwenhle High	30	30
	Shumayela High	18.10	24
	Igagasi High	16.1	29
	Zwelihle Secondary	1.5	37
UMBUMBULU DISTRICT	32		
<i>Amanzimtoti Circuit</i>	Dr Nembula High	12.3	29
	Umkhumbi High	18.4	23
<i>Folweni Circuit</i>	Folweni High	4.3	18
	Isolemamba High	5.11	40
	Ntwenhle High	45	36
	Sibambanezulu High	2.08	21
	Sobonakhona High	40	26
	Zuzumqhele High	30.65	33
<i>Imfume Circuit</i>	Bhekaphambili High	19.7	14
	Singele High	10.71	28
	Samuel Mkhize Secondary	11.63	22

<i>Mid-illovo Circuit</i>	Funundu High	6.67	35
	Inkumane High	9.38	35
	Madlanyoka High	2.4	40
	Nsikakazi High	18.52	71
	Yise High	17.65	65
	Dwengu High	23.08	40
<i>Ulovu Circuit</i>	Mcothoyi High	16.67	23
	Umhente High	2.78	17
	Kwaphikaziwe Secondary	32.26	23
	Mbambangwe High	31.58	45
	Charles Hlengwa High	22.92	44
	Hlengiwe Commerical High	7.89	24
	Mganiwakhe High	7.69	23
<i>Umbumbulu Central Circuit</i>	Hamilton Makhanya High	7.69	27
	Lugobe High	12.87	25
	Nomavimbela High	10.53	22
<i>Umbumbulu West Circuit</i>	Gcewu High	15.79	46
	Isisusa Secondary	5.7	34
	Khayelihle High	8.7	31
	Mthambo High	23.53	38
	Kwa Jabula High	8.51	28
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	73		