

Experiences and Perspectives of Home-Schooling in KwaZulu-Natal.

By

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Master of Population Studies

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Declaration

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Signed

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List of Acronyms

HSLDA – Home School Legal Defence Association

CAPS – Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements

ECHSA – Eastern Cape Home Schooling Association

NSC – National Senior Certificate

GED – General Education Development

BCVO – Beweging vir Christelik-Volkseie Onderwy

BELA Bill – Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill

Dedication

Psalms 91:11, God will put His angels in charge of you. Thabisile Mthethwa is that angel. Everything I have achieved in this life is because of the sacrifices my mother made. Thank you Thabisile, thank you mum.

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I will forever be grateful to the persons mentioned below, for their presence, constant support and words of encouragement. I extend my gratitude to the following:

My heavenly Father, I am thankful for this opportunity, your strength carried me through this journey. For the Lord listened to my prayers, prepared and guided me.

Azania and Swelihle, herd by God and God's divine plan, my days start and end with them.

Pranitha Maharaj, my supervisor, no one has had my back like this woman. I thank her for pushing me through the year, setting deadlines, paying attention to detail and for the constructive criticism. Her patience and guidance was all I needed and more.

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Abstract

In South Africa, home-schooling is defined as a programme of academic learning for children outside a formal institution that is conducted at home and facilitated by parents and might include tutor services that attend to the specific interests of the children. A large proportion of learners in South Africa are home-schooled, with KwaZulu-Natal having the second largest population of home-scholars. The overall objective of the study was to broaden the understanding of home-schooling, while evaluating the experiences of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This study seeks to make a contribution to research on home-schooling in a South African context and specifically it will shed insights into the reasons why parents desire to home-school their own children and their experiences.

A qualitative approach was utilized for this study to broaden understanding of home-schooling. The data was collected from 10 participants who home-schooled their children and they were residing in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This data was thematically analysed. The analysis revealed that parents decide to home-school for a variety of reasons such as seeking a better quality education; the desire to maintain a good moral standing, cultural and value systems; also for medical needs and convenience. Parents removed their children from conventional schools because they felt it was very rigid and does not accommodate to the varying needs of students as individuals. In addition, they pointed out that mainstream schools have a large class size, resulting in a limited focus on the individual in the class situation. They preferred home-schooling because there is greater flexibility as it can be tailored to the needs of each individual.

This study confirmed the findings of previous research on home-schooling from the point of view of parent teachers, which generally views home-school in a positive light. This research suggested there be a development of a survey on home-teaching in South Africa, to increase the reliability of information on the subject. In addition, a development of better communication tools between the government and the home-schooling population is encouraged as it might help address the attitudes parent educators have towards registering under the Department of Education.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background

Historically, home-schooling was the standard method of educating children, and public schools only became mainstream in the 1900s (Gaither, 2008). Since then, there has been emphasis on compulsory education, and as a result 95% of the world has some form of mandatory education laws requiring children to be educated for as few as four years to as many as thirteen years (Donnelly, 2012). However, for the last few decades, home-schooling has re-emerged, and this re-emergence was influenced by claims that the objective of mainstream education was a concept of westernization in the United States of America, that it is used by government officials as a means to shape a principled and law-abiding citizenry (Angelis, 2008). Eventually, concerned parents felt that mainstream education reforms were failing to educate their children in line with their philosophical and moral value system (Levy, 2009).

This argument led to an extensive discussion and debate on education, schools and the school systems, during the 1960s. The debate concluded that the students' poor academic performance was influenced by the school system itself and not by the lack of effort put into the school system (Razi, 2016). Educational reforms appeared to have failed, that in the 1970s some parents turned to an alternative of public schooling, which was home-schooling (Angelis, 2008). Modern home-schooling then gained momentum in the 1970s with a dual motivation, one group with religious motives (Isenberg, 2007) had specific beliefs, values, and skills that they sought after in education for their children to learn and embrace (Angelis, 2008). Another group were philosophical and saw home-schooling as a route to a superior academic education (Isenberg, 2007).

In the early 1980s, the purpose of compulsory education changed from teaching common moral elements essential for all citizens, to a more diversified curriculum, reflecting an economic goal for education (Angelis, 2008). By the mid-1980s, an increased number of parents began to take their children out of public schools and enrol them in alternative schools; among the alternatives were magnet and charter schools, voucher-based education and home-schooling (Levy, 2009). A number of scholars such as John Holt, Raymond and

Dorothy Moore became important supporters and consultants of home-schooling (Razi, 2016).

Currently, home-schooling is relatively widespread in countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and Britain (Gaither, 2008). It is one of the most significant social trends of the past 50 years (Moore et al., 2004), however, in these countries, home-schooling remains somewhat controversial (Ray, 2016). To the extent that in some parts of the United States of America, families have engaged in court battles wherein they declare that it is their constitutional right to educate their children at home (Moore, 2002). There are more than 2 million home-scholars in the United States of America alone, and it appears that the home-schooling population continues to grow (Ray, 2016). The growing interest in home-schooling has led to the emergence of an immense industry offering support and resources to parents who choose to home-school their children (Moore et al., 2004). The home-schooling movement is becoming a significant part of the education system across the world and South Africa is not an exception.

1.2. Home-schooling in South Africa

Home-schooling in South Africa was legalised in 1994, and the right to home-schooling was acknowledged in 1996 with the introduction of Article 5, No. 84 of the South African School Act, which states that, people or parents should register their children for education at home at the Department of Education (South Africa Schools Act. 84, 1996). According to the Policy for the Registration of Learners for Home Education published on 23 November 1999, in South Africa, home-schooling refers to an educational programme of academic learning for children outside a formal institution that is conducted at home and facilitated by parents and might include tutor services attending to the specific interest of the children (de Waal and Theron, 2003; Mills, 2009). Thus, home-schooling is a legal, independent form of education alternative to attendance at public or independent schools in South Africa (Moore et al., 2004).

The Association for Home Schooling was established in 1992 when home-schooling was still actively repressed by the apartheid government (Newton, 2005). Although government oversight has eased during the following decades, families can still come under heavy scrutiny (Donnelly, 2017). Home-schooling was incorporated into the South African Schools Act of 1996 only after a massive battle, and after the Home School Legal Defence

Association (HSLDA) of the United States of America exercised political pressure to have home-education recognised in South Africa (Newton, 2005).

By the end of 1996, the new South African Constitution enacted in 1996 entrenched and ensured the legal status of home-schooling. The act required every home-school student to be registered with the relevant provincial education department unless there is a good reason not to (Olatunji, 2014). As part of the effort to secure government approval of home-schooling in South Africa, several associations were established in 1996 (Olatunji, 2014). This coalition is one of the home-schooling associations in South Africa that estimated that in 1997 approximately 2000 children were home-schooled in South Africa and that this represented a vast increase in the number compared with those of previous years, this was estimated based on surveys of curriculum suppliers nationally and home-schoolers in the Pretoria area (Olatunji, 2014). Although education at home is presently a legal option, some aspects regarding home-schooling in South Africa still need to be addressed (Olatunji, 2014).

On the 28th July 1998, the first draft of the National Policy guidelines for home-schooling was published in South Africa. The instructions included information regarding the registration, conditions for registration and withdrawal of registration. The second draft was released on April 9, 1999. On the 23 November 1999, the National Education Policy Act No. 27, the final policy for the Registration of Learners for Home Education was passed. (Olatunji, 2014). This document stated that home education would only be registered if the provincial head of the Education Department is satisfied with the expected standards of home-schooling. These include that home-schooling will be in the children's best interest, that the minimum requirements of the curriculum in public schools will be met and that the standard of the home education will at least match that of public schools (Moore, 2002).

However, the home-schooling population complains that, many provincial departments do not have the administrative capability to register children for home-schooling. Botha (2005), noted that most officials for home-schooling in the Department of Education do not have an understanding of what home-schooling is and what the laws on home-schooling (Kruger, 2015). They have many requirements for parents and students that have not been stipulated by law. As a result, more than 95% of home-schooling families do not register with the department (Van der Eems, 2012). Thus making statistics that are available for home-schooling unreliable.

In 2001, the Eastern Cape Home Schooling Association (ECHSA) estimated that there were more than 10,000 home learners in South Africa, a considerable increase over the number quoted for 1997. Van Oostrum (cited in Olatunji, 2014), estimated the number of home learners in South Africa was between 30,000 and 50,000 in 2003 (Olatunji, 2014). This indicates that home education is growing more popular in South Africa (Kruger, 2015). There was an estimation of over 100 000 children being home-schooled in South Africa, verifying current research which indicates that home-schooling has become increasingly accepted (Mills, 2009). South Africa had more than 150 000 home-scholars by 2014 (Guilherme et al., 2014).

Often families have a stay at home parent, are self-employed or can afford to forfeit a salary which allows for the involvement of the parent as an educator (Moore et al., 2004). Although it appears as if home-schooling is most popular amongst Whites, there are also members from other populations groups who prefer home-schooling (de Waal and Theron, 2003; Ray, 2016). Home-schooling has a growing market at approximately 20% per annum in South Africa, and the number of home-scholars in South Africa will be approximately 360 000 in a few years, especially with an estimation of home educators of approximately 90 000 in 2013 (Kruger, 2015).

By 2010, the Association of Homeschooling launched an initiative for an independent website to assist these groups are an essential component of the home education movement. Home-school support groups consist of parents that live in the same area. They come together regularly to encourage and support each other, create opportunities for the children to socialise and go on educational field trips (Van der Eems, 2017). The home-school associations in South Africa have an online platform they created to facilitate effective communication with parents who are home-schooling and offer support those starting with home education to find a support group in their area (van der Eems, 2017). The home and private school sectors have expanded rapidly (van Oostrum, 2014). By 2011, the national census showed that there were approximately 57,000 home learners in the country, of whom about 80% classified themselves as Black African. Of the whole number, about 3000 were registered (van Oostrum, 2014). Approximately 95% of home learners were unregistered (van Oostrum, 2014).

Since 1994, the South African government developed new regulations regarding home-schooling in South Africa seeking to monitor, regulate home-schooling and protect home

learners (de Waal and Theron, 2003). However, home-schoolers express uncertainty about aspects like the minimum requirements of the curriculum in public schools and the standard of education in public schools with which they are required to comply with should these policies be implemented (Van der Eems, 2012). The result was that more and more home educators started to operate without registration. By 2010, a study found that as many as one-quarter of private schools in less affluent areas were unregistered. Most home educators continued their practice of non-compliance with the unenforceable registration requirements (Van Oostrum, 2014).

Majority of the home-schooling population saw the proposed legislation unreasonably interfered with the rights of both parents and children to home educate, HSLDA will be opposing this legislation and supporting the South African home-school community (Donnelly, 2012). In 2017, the Department of Basic Education invited the public to comment on the draft Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill (BELA Bill) (Van der Eems, 2017). The home-school association, parents and educators came to know about this on the 14th October 2017, it was covered by the press and available on the department's website, the closing date for submissions was the 10th of November 2017 (Karin, 2017).

This amendment required home-schooling content to be CAPS curriculum which is used nationally, home learners must be assessed annually by registered assessors, they are not allowed to enrol for alternative matriculation qualifications such as GED and Cambridge, and the penalty for not registering will be increased from 6 months to 6 years (Karin, 2017). In this environment, parents must become increasingly careful when making curriculum choices. They need to be aware of the wide variety of educational approaches and curriculums which are available (Van der Eems, 2017). Although home-schooling is legal in South Africa, it is not actively encouraged by the government as government authorities see some home-schooling endeavours as an attempt to avoid racial integration in the classrooms (Newton, 2005).

Proposed policies to regulate the home-school system seem to have failed because of the criticism from parents and home-school associations/support groups, who see policy as attempts to overregulate home-schooling with restrictive and unconstitutional tactics, assumed to restrict the choice of curriculum, and the selection of standardised testing (Van der Eems, 2017). Parents regard the over-regulation of home-schooling as a violation of a fundamental human right stipulated in *Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human*

Rights of 1948, which states that parents have the right to choose the kind of education their children, must receive (United Nations, 2015). This form of education has received scrutiny through various sources, yet parents are increasingly choosing home-schooling as an alternative to the conventional school system, with an indication that home-schooling is a feasible alternative in education (Mills, 2009).

1.3. Rationale for the Study

The South African education system is performing poorly regarding international standards, there are issues concerned with the production of quality students that can compete at the international level (Lodge, 2014). Within South Africa, the quality of education varies widely, several authors characterize the South African school system as effectively consisting of two differently functioning sub-systems (Van der Berg et al, 2011). The vast majority of university entrants are produced by this well-functioning system, formerly as known as White, Indian or model C schools. The much larger second system, formerly known as Black and Coloureds' schools include poorer children who are further disadvantaged through attending schools with dysfunctional management and classroom practices. Children in poorer system have low functioning in reading and writing and can perform only simple numerical operations (Department of Basic Education, 2013). Generally, the South African education system is known as a well-resourced system however, this system is embedded by an inheritance of a weak institutional functionality, uneducated teachers and misdistribution of resources (Masondo, 2016).

Parents are concerned about the quality of education available for their children in mainstream school as there are various reports on the reduced level of education in schools, over-crowded classrooms, and lack of discipline, bullying, and drugs (Department of Basic Education, 2013). These factors make up an environment that children are exposed to when they attend mainstream school (Ray, 2016). The issues within the South African education system influence parents to consider alternative measures for children to acquire a good quality education (Mills, 2009).

There are accessible means to attain education, alternatives such as home-education. The home-schooling movement is experiencing a period of rapid growth in South Africa and abroad (Mills, 2009). Although home-schooling has received significant coverage in the media in South Africa recently, relatively little academic research is available on this subject. It would prove useful to establish the extent to which the emergence of home-schooling could

contribute to the needs of the country with regard to education. There is a need to determine the status of the home-schooling movement in South Africa within the broader social context and the legal education system.

This study seeks to make a contribution to research on home-schooling in a South African context and specifically it will shed insights into the reasons why parents desire to home-school their own children. The researcher identifies the essence of human experiences of home-schooling, as described by the participants, understanding that lived experiences mark phenomenology as a philosophy, in this process (Creswell, 2009). This study goes on to unpack the various dynamics of home-schooling in South Africa, from a personal perspective it attempts to identify why parents would choose such a method of educating their children and how it impacts the social development of children. Lastly, it defines the principal actors in the process of home-schooling, and what is needed to determine the success of this learning method.

1.4. Aims of the Study

The main aim of this study was to broaden the understanding of home-schooling, while evaluating the experiences of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To understand the concept of home-schooling in a South African context.
- To identify the reasons for home-schooling.
- To investigate the positive and negative aspects of home-schooling.
- To determine the feasibility of home-schooling.

1.5. Theoretical Framework: Theoretical Model of Parental Involvement

In 1995, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler developed a theoretical model of parental involvement (Walker et al., 2005), which was influenced by the social learning theories, social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001), social constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and most importantly, the Epstein Parental Involvement Model (Epstein and Salinas, 2004).

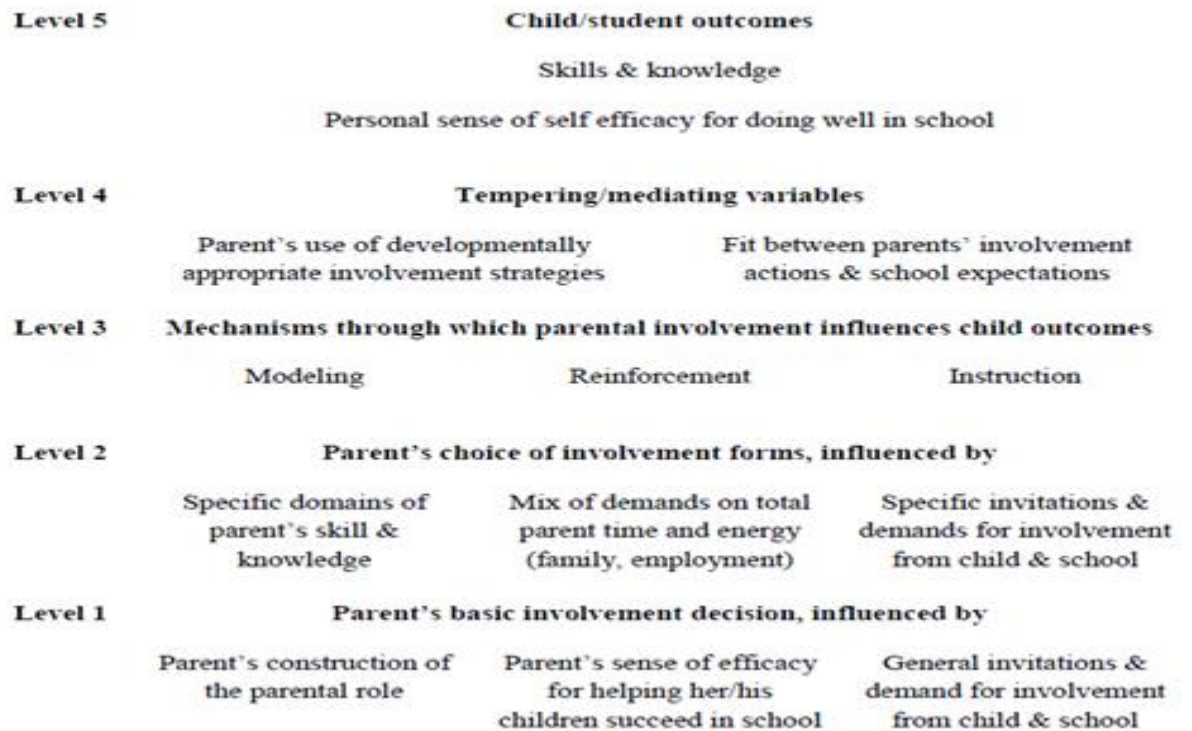
Doctor Joyce Epstein developed a framework for parental involvement which focused on how schools can assist families create home environments that will allow them to support children as students (Johnson, 2015). Epstein defines parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities including: assisting their child's learning; being actively involved in their child's education at school; serving as full partners in their child's education and being included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child (Johnson, 2015).

The model suggests that learning at home involves parents engaging with their children not only with homework, but also with academic goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities (Epstein and Salinas, 2004). The Epstein Parental Involvement Model encourages the development of a partnership between school, family and community. The main reason for such is to help students succeed at school. Educators and parents play a major role in the educational success of students. Students need a positive learning experience to succeed in school, motivation and quality instruction (Durisic and Bunijevac, 2017).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler drew from the Epstein Model; however, their model suggests that specific parental beliefs and social contexts may influence parents' decisions about involvement in their children's education as well as the influence of their involvement choices and activities on students' educational outcomes (Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011). The figure below displays the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical model of the parental involvement process.

Figure 1.1: Theoretical Model of the Parental Involvement Process

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Theoretical Model of the Parental Involvement Process (duplicated from Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997)



Source: Swenson, (2016: pp. 38).

This model proposes three major sources of motivation for parents' involvement in their children's education, parent's motivational beliefs, contextual invitations and life context variables. This model believes, the parents' understanding of their role in the child's life encompasses; what they believe that parents are supposed to do in relation to their children's education and educational progress. Parents become involved in schools if they hold the belief that they should be involved (Avvisati et al, 2010).

Parent's motivational beliefs are influenced by the role construction for involvement, sense of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school. The parents' understanding of their role in the child's life: what they believe that parents are supposed to do in relation to their children's education and educational progress. Parents become involved in schools if they hold the belief that they should be involved (Avvisati et al, 2010; Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Alghazo, 2013). The parents' sense of efficacy for helping their child succeed in school: do parents believe that their involvement can exert a positive influence on children's educational outcomes? (Avvisati et al, 2010).

Contextual invitations refer to general invitations to involvement from school, specific invitations to involvement from the teacher, and specific invitations from the child (Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Alghazo, 2013). The general invitations, demands, and opportunities for parental involvement by both the child and the child's school: do parents perceive that the child and the school want them to be involved? (Avvisati et al, 2010). **Life context variables** parent's skills and knowledge, time and energy (Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Alghazo, 2013). The model of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler provides a strong, specific theoretical framework to examine the motivations for parents choosing to home-school their children (Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011).

The theory predicts that children whose parents are involved in their education will be more likely to develop a strong, positive sense of efficacy for successfully achieving in school-related tasks than will children whose parents are not involved (Avvisati et al, 2010). The parental role and their views on child development play a significant part in affecting child-rearing and home-support roles (Green, 2005). This model assumes that parental involvement is instrumental to children's outcomes, it is a positive influence the child's achievement (Avvisati et al, 2010).

According to the self-efficacy theory of Bandura, parents first develop goals for their behaviours which are shaped by their expectations, and then they plan on how to fulfil these goals, and estimate the relevant strategies to use in addressing the situation at hand, which is self-efficacy for helping a child to succeed academically (Deslandes, 2006). Parents' self-efficacy refers to the parent beliefs about the personal ability to help children succeed in school (Green, 2005). Parents with a strong sense of self-efficacy generally set higher goals and invest more work into realising these goals than do parents with a low sense of self-efficacy for helping their children succeed (Bandura, 1977). The greatest likelihood of positive parent involvement occurs when parents understand their role and believe in the efficacy of their skills, interests and abilities (Swenson, 2016).

Parents' beliefs about child development are shaped by their values, goals and knowledge on the one hand, and a variety of parental behaviours pertinent to the development of the child on the other (Deslandes, 2006). The parent's knowledge and skill level in a specific domain is critical to their thoughts and actions. Applied to the parent involvement area, parents'

perceptions of their own knowledge and skills have an important influence on their choices with regard to their children's education (Tekin, 2015).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model provides a technical definition for researching parental involvement in home-schooling. This theoretical model defines parental participation according to three main points: why parents become involved in their children's education; how parents choose specific types of involvement; and why parental involvement has a positive influence on students' educational outcomes (Alghazo, 2013).

The model suggests that once parents decide to participate, they choose specific activities shaped by their perception of their skills and abilities, other demands on their time and energy and specific invitations to get involved from children, teachers and schools (Deslandes, 2006). The model holds that parental involvement influences children's educational outcomes through modelling and reinforcing instructions which are facilitated through mechanisms which include appropriateness of parents' development strategies, the fitness of their actions and meeting the required expectations of the school (Deslandes, 2006) and (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2005).

This model is typological for parental involvement, because it deals with the specific types of parental involvement, attempts to explain why parents choose to be involved to this extent, and what mechanisms exist through which parental involvement exerts positive influence on students' educational outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997). In relation to home-schooling, role construction explains that parents' decision to become involved starts and ends with their children's education, based on the parents' beliefs about child development, child rearing and their appropriate role in home-schooling (Swenson, 2016).

According to Fan and Chen (2001), this theoretical framework promises to be more than a typology for parental involvement, because it not only deals with specific types of parental involvement, but more importantly it attempts to explain why parents choose to be involved, and what the mechanisms are through which parental involvement exerts positive influence on students' educational outcomes (Walker et al, 2005). Parental involvement practices also vary with the child characteristics. Psychologists have also shown that family involvement in school changes over time, as children mature, in response to their changing needs and to their new educational environments (Avvisati et al, 2010).

Similar to a study conducted by Green (2005), this research sought to determine why parents decide to home-school their children. The model holds that parental involvement influences

children's educational outcomes through modelling and reinforcing instructions, facilitated through mechanisms that include appropriateness of parents' development strategies, the fitness of their actions and meeting the required expectations of the school (Deslandes, 2006).

1.6. Structure of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter one provides background information on home schooling. The next chapter is an in-depth literature review which looks at the history of home-schooling in South Africa, its advantages and disadvantages, reasons why parents choose to home-school their children, the impact of home-schooling, and curriculum options parents have. The literature review also discusses the controversial nature of home-schooling and the over-regulation of home-schooling. Chapter three presents the research methodology used in the study; it outlines the target population and study sample and the selection process. It further discusses the data collection methods and techniques used for analysing the data. In addition, it looks at ethical considerations and the limitations of the study. Chapter four details the findings of the research and the final chapter provides a discussion of the main conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on home-schooling, reflecting on the manifestation of home-schooling in South Africa, also exploring the practices of home-schooling in well-developed nations. This chapter will look into detail the research of established advocates of the home-based education practice and offer insight on issues that pertain to the method. Authors such as Mills (2009) and Brain Ray (2016), bring to light the positive views of home-schooling. While authors such as Martin (1997) and Botha (2005) provide insights into not only the good but also the bad that comes with home-schooling. This chapter provides an overview of home-schooling then discusses the reasons parents' home-school their children as well as the advantages and disadvantages of schooling at home.

2.2. Understanding Home-schooling

The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996, states that, in South Africa, home-schooling is a programme of learning that a parent of a learner may provide to his or her child at their own home (de Waal and Theron, 2003). In addition, the parent may use services of a tutor or any other legal, independent form of education, which is an alternative for parents who do not want their children to attend a private or public school (Mills, 2009). The parents are the primary educators, and they generally choose methods in the subjects and curriculum covered (Mills, 2009). It is a circumstance where parents make a conscious decision to provide an education for their child in place of that provided by schools, and where the parents are the principal teachers or facilitators in the program of instruction (Yin et al., 2016). Some parents feel very strongly that it is their responsibility to educate their children throughout their academic journey (Newton, 2005). Mills (2009) emphasises that children are unique therefore, they learn differently and have a right to be responsible of what they learn and when to learn them. Therefore, home-schooling provides a conversational platform whereby the individuals get to learn according to their priorities (Mills, 2009).

While there may be specific government controls present in the actual home-schooling environment, the bottom line is that the parent, not the government, is in charge and

responsible for providing the child's education (Donnelly, 2012). Moreau (2012) outlines that though certified teachers are the ones tasked with the main duty of teaching in home-schools, the parents play a huge role in deciding the curriculum. Mills (2009) explains that they decide the philosophy, content, experiences and style of learning they want for their children. This is because they perceive a kind of education they feel is best for their children.

Moreover, home-schooling is an option that is regarded as an open learning educational approach because it is a learning experience without conventional structures and limitations (Mills, 2009). Any proposal to education needs to utilise a variety of teaching strategies for greater options so that individual learner's needs and personal circumstances can be accommodated (Olatunji, 2014). Home-schooling is an elective practice whereby parents control their children's education. It is an informal learning environment which provides children with a rich social experience which is more natural in helping children discover different things and to learn through experiences (Mills, 2009). In a home-school model, education can take place every hour of the day (Moreau, 2012). Unlike mainstream school, home-schooling is not a system designed by one group of people and implemented by another (Olatunji, 2014).

Contemporary home-schoolers tend to spread out in a broad range of communities, cutting across ethnic, religious, political, and economic backgrounds (Ray, 2016). They generally use resources that are at their disposal to aid in teaching, or else they opt to create their tools that may offer help (Mills, 2009). Families in rural areas, where children can learn by interacting with nature, are as just as effective in home-schooling their children as those who live in cities where museums, cultural centres, and libraries become teaching and learning resources (Ray, 2016). Other families use travelling as a tool for teaching, finding their lessons in the landscapes and landmarks of many locations across the country (Ray, 2016). Parents who decide to school their children at home commit time and energy to an activity that is usually conducted by specialised professionals (Hill, 2000). Home-school parents are highly active in their child's education and have a strong sense of efficacy supporting their beliefs that they can teach their children and give them full training outside of an organised school system (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). They invest substantial resources such as time, energy, income, knowledge, and skills; into teaching their children at home (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). Parents need to develop a comprehensive understanding of the child's experience of home-schooling so that they can make informed choices on behalf of their children (Mills, 2009).

Before parents choose a curriculum, they have to identify a teaching approach suitable to their children's needs and from there they look for an appropriate curriculum. It is believed that children should not receive formal education until at least the ages of 8 or 10, and possibly as late as 12 (Angelis, 2008). It is emphasised that if a child learns to be diligent at a young age that diligence will carry over to their academic performance as they mature (Carter, 2009). The Moore Formula inclusive of balanced chores, study, and work outside the home in an atmosphere geared toward a child's particular development, interests, aptitudes, and abilities (Angelis, 2008). It is believed that if parents will relax, pay close attention to the needs and interests of their child, allow them to mature at their rate, work alongside them, and focus on non-academic learning opportunities at least as much as book learning, their child will succeed (Carter, 2009).

In general, unschooling is a term that communicates that children are born with an innate curiosity and desire to learn that is facilitated by allowing the child to select and direct his or her learning. John Holt held a belief that children are by nature and from birth have an innate curiosity about the world around them, have an eagerness to learn, and are much better at learning than adults (Carter, 2009). In unschooling, the parent's role is that of a facilitator who is available to provide resources and guidance (Carter, 2009). In the past it was evident that people did not want to give children more freedom, choice, or self-direction in their education (Angelis, 2008). Holt viewed schools as institutions that categorised and divided children according to test scores and eventually, concluded that the best way to educate children was home-schooling (Angelis, 2008).

Mills (2009) portrays unschooling as a highly unstructured form of education, where the parents direct their teaching towards their child's interests and needs. Unschooling is not instruction free learning. If a child wants to learn to read, an unschooling parent may offer instruction by providing help with decoding, reading to the child, and giving the child many opportunities to encounter words (Carter, 2009). Therefore, even within the constructs of home-schooling, unschooling contrasts with most home-educators, as the child's education is not directed by the teacher or a curriculum. The main difference between conventional school and unschooling is that school is considered a case of knowledge, that someone else has determined to be essential for shaping student education, while unschooling puts the student as the one responsible chasing and learning the knowledge pattern they decide to be crucial and necessary (Mills, 2009).

The Principal Approach was primarily used by Christian home-schoolers (Botha, 2005), it began with Verna Hall and Rosalie Slater in the early 1960s motivated by a need to restore Christian moorings to a lost nation in the United States of America school system (Keller, 2006). This approach strives to restore religion in society (Kunzman, 2010). It is based on the belief that God gave Christians principles that govern every area of their lives (Botha, 2005). For religious conservatives, the intellectual life only finds meaning when it aligns with the spiritual truth.

The Montessori educational method for children is a child-centred alternative to conventional education and is based primarily on child development theories (Mills, 2009). This method characterised by children being self-directed in their educational learning, and the teacher, being more of a guide encouraging the child's self-discovery (Mills, 2009). The Montessori Method is a natural, extensive educational system designed to afford the child liberty to move and act in a prepared environment encouraging self-development (Schilling, 2011). It stresses the importance of adapting the child's learning environment to his or her developmental level, and of the role of physical activity in absorbing abstract concepts and practical skills (Mills, 2009).

The theory of multiple intelligences integrates educational theories and teaching strategies into meaningful and beneficial ways to better address the needs of students and views each child as an individual, with unique learning styles and needs (Davis et al., 2011; Mills, 2009). The seven core intelligence that Gardner (1999) identified are as follows: linguistic (language), logical-mathematical (logic and abstractions), spatial (vision and spatial judgement), kinesthetic (bodily movement), musical, interpersonal (interaction with others) and intrapersonal (self-reflective) and naturalist (nature and nurturing) (Davis et al, 2011). The teaching methods used within the home-schooling tradition are thus explicitly tailored to meet the specific child's needs and learning style and intelligence of each child (Mills, 2009). Education which is designed to help students develop their strengths can also trigger their confidence to establish areas in which they are not as strong. Students' multiple learning preferences can be addressed when instruction includes a range of meaningful and appropriate methods, activities, and assessments (Davis et al., 2011).

Home-schooling through the public school system is a relatively new trend in education (Horsburgh, 2005). Some parents may opt for the School At Home approach, which follows a pattern of traditional schooling which is highly structured and formal. The parent takes the

role of a teacher and the children the part of students during school hours, and it relies heavily on textbooks and workbooks (Botha, 2005). The student may use the facilities of a public school they are registered under, depending on the arrangements between the parents and the school the student may submit their assignments to a teacher at that school and write exams at that particular school (Farenga, 2007). Parents' motivations for home-schooling through the public system, rather than home-schooling on their own, are centred on financial advantages, regarding refunds, and on support and guidance from trained teachers (Horsburgh, 2005).

2.3. Perception of Home-schooling

Educators and educational authorities are often very critical of the home-schooling movement (Moore et al., 2004). There are concerns expressed about home-schooling with some arguing that it aggravates social inequality, worsens societal conflict, and works against the best interest of the children. In addition, many believe it is not necessary because of the incredibly diverse school choice system which incorporates a variety of school types (Moreau, 2012). Society has frowned upon home-schooling for decades, but Americans have become more receptive to the idea of home-schooling (Moreau, 2012). Critics say that home-schooling could harm students academically; it could hurt society by producing students who are ill-prepared to function as democratic citizens and participants in a modern economy; and it could make it more difficult for other parents to educate their children by harming the public education system (Hill, 2000).

In 1991, White people represented 75%, and Africans represented only 10% of all home-schooled children in America (Mazama and Lundy, 2013). The fact that the majority of home-schooling families are White may be because of the increased racial integration of public schools. Consequently, the low percentage of racially underrepresented groups who choose to home-school may be related to the issue of segregation within the home-schooling movement, increasing a level of multicultural socialisation among home-schooled students are currently unavailable (Levy, 2009). However, according to Ray (2016), home-schoolers tend to spread out in a broad range of communities, cutting across ethnic, religious, political, and economic backgrounds. The government does not adequately regulate home-scholars, meaning there is not a lot of information about how home-scholars are being educated (Moreau, 2012). Critics believe that home-schooling shelters children from society, whereas,

traditional schools ensure that children will grow up to be complete people by teaching them vital social skills such as cooperation, respect for others, and self-control (Medlin, 2000).

Critics of home-schooling are concerned that the school environment is artificial and does not allow the same opportunities to deal with a variety of social situations and concerns are raised that children do not learn how to interact with children of the same age (Mills, 2009). Many feel that home-schooled children are isolated and miss out on interactions with other children; therefore, they do not develop important, critical social skills (Martin, 1997). Mills (2009) emphasises that home-schooling shelters children from the real world. He argues that this may hinder the development of individual coping skills, which are necessary for helping children to deal with day to day challenges, such as bullying and peer pressure. More so, it denies them the perceived opportunity to develop coping skills within the child that will aid them in adapting to group settings, therefore helping children to become successful citizens (Mills, 2009). Critics believe that in public schools settings, children work together in groups. In these groups, children learn necessary life skills such as working together, sharing and showing respect for each other (Martin, 1997).

Studies show that the achievement levels of home-schooled children are high. It is evident that home-schooled children perform well in comparison to children in conventional schools (Moore et al., 2004). Research has addressed the issue of adequate socialisation of home-school children, which indicates that home-schooled children are seldom isolated socially (Smith, 2015). Many home-schooling families network extensively; the home-school itself allows for personalised socialising; and the home-schooled children are exposed to diverse environments, such as libraries, theatres, restaurants, and churches which allow the child to socialise (Moore et al., 2004).

2.4. The Growth in Popularity of Home-schooling

There was a strongly held belief that society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the primary purposes of schooling, and of the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain those (Mazama & Lundy, 2013). Parents viewed the quality of public education negatively; they have a desire for a spiritual focus in their children's education, a culture that is free from negative cultural influences of public schools (Collom, 2005). Home-schooling grew by 74% between 1999 and 2007, becoming the fastest growing form of education in the United States to date (Mazama & Lundy, 2013). In 2016, it was estimated

that more than 2 million children are home-schooled in the United States (Ray, 2016), as opposed to 300,000 in 1990, thus indicating a dramatic increase over a relatively short period (Mazama & Lundy, 2013). The rise of home-schooling over the years may be owing to problems children face while in school, such as bullies, or by not being prepared to be educated in a formal academic environment and also due to gifted children cases (Guilherme et al., 2014).

Although most laws provide exceptions, few explicitly support home-schooling. After these many decades of government-run education, parents are increasingly seeking alternative education for their children. Increasing problems with public education systems are only part of the equation in parents' decision to home-school their children (Donnelly, 2012). While the right of the state to require education is an accepted legal judgment, the extent to which that right may be exercised is not free of limitations or controversy (Angelis, 2008). In the United States, there has been on-going debate on the government's authority to regulate private alternatives to public education (Angelis, 2008).

The two most common reasons people choose home-schooling as a substitute for mainstream education, are religious or countercultural, but it is also because children experience problems in school, both academically and socially (Mills, 2009). Children who are medical, psychologically, or otherwise unable to attend school, usually complete their studies at home. These children, though they learn at home, remain under state supervision and usually receive instruction from state teachers, use a state-approved curriculum, and are monitored and assessed according to state standards (Donnelly, 2012).

While home-schooling is gaining popularity around the world with the United States taking the lead, the exception is the case in African countries (Olatunji, 2014). According to Guilherme et al. (2014), in Germany and Netherlands home education is not yet a legally recognised form of education, and therefore children must attend school. However, in Germany, the practice is acceptable for parents who move around, for children with long-term illness and immigrants living in Germany for a short period and inspection is not applied. In the Netherlands, it is only an option for parents with philosophical/ religious objections (Guilherme et al., 2014). The statistics of home-schooling in South Africa shows an estimated 25000 – 50000 households with 1 to 10 children in each that are being home schooled (Newton, 2005). All over the world, war is being waged between the state and parents over the best method of schooling for children. Over the last 100 years, the country

gained almost complete control over education as public schools became increasingly prevalent (Van der Eems, 2017).

Research on home-schooling has increased in the past decade or so, because of parent educators', and policymakers' interest in this growing phenomenon. Home-schoolers are a challenging population to study, and much of the existing research is limited (Collom, 2005). The home-schooling movement is relatively widespread in countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and Britain (Ray, 2016). It is one of the most significant social trends of the past 50 years (Moore et al., 2004). In the United States, there are more than 2 million home-scholars, it appears the home-school population continues to grow (Ray, 2016). Increasing interest in home-schooling has led to the emergence of an immense industry offering support and resources to parents who choose to home-school their children (Moore et al., 2004). Home-schooling is little or unknown in Africa. However, the Republic of South Africa is still trailing far behind in home-schooling when compared with countries such as the United States of America, Australia, Canada, France, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, and United Kingdom (Olatunji, 2014). Apart from a relatively small number of families in the Republic of South Africa and even much smaller families in Botswana, Kenya and Uganda, contemporary home-schooling is still very uncommon in African countries (Olatunji, 2014).

2.5. Reasons for Home-schooling

The decision by parents to home-school might be influenced by several factors, which might be; the desire for quality of education, maintaining religious and family values, for convenience and medical needs (Winstanley, 2009). The ideological decision to home-school is due to a lack of faith in the public school system of preserving beliefs and family values (Moreau, 2012). These parents want to have more control over what values that are taught to their children. By home-schooling, they have the means to accomplish the goal, of not only education but also instilling religious values such as Christianity (Moreau, 2012). Practical reasons of home-schooling are circumstantial, these parents choose to home-school because they have little or no access to conventional education and struggle to find the education that is appropriate to their children's needs amongst other reasons (Moore et al., 2004). Parents may also decide to home-school because they have had previous negative experiences with the public school system (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). These include

large classes, offensive study material, drugs, pornography and immoral values being learnt in the school environment, the low matriculation pass rate and lastly the lack of provision for children with learning difficulties or special needs (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007).

2.5.1. Quality of Education

Pedagogues are home educators that believe that public schools are not able to educate their children holistically. Therefore, they keep their children at home to teach them at a presumed higher level which they feel precede the standards offered at mainstream schools. They view schools as not being able to connect with their child in a way that will best educate their child (Moreau, 2012). South Africa has over 12.3 million learners of different colour, race, and gender enrolled at schools across the country. There are 366 000 teachers, in government-funded public schools, with the average ratio of scholars to the teacher as 32.6 to one, while private schools generally have one teacher for every 17.5 scholars (Mills, 2009). Home-schoolers, therefore, seek to provide their children with the best educational environment possible and believe individualised one-on-one teaching to be this (Mills, 2009). Parents make school choice decisions based on preferences, the quality of local schools, and constraints of income and available leisure time (Isenberg, 2007). Many parents look to home-schooling as an alternative way of educating their children, to provide the best opportunity for their children's future. (Mills, 2009).

South Africa has a high-cost, low-performance education system that does not compare with education systems in other African countries (Department of Education, 2009). Despite the considerable dedication and financial investment that has been channelled into the education system, it has failed to ensure consistently acceptable standards throughout the country (Timaeus et al., 2011). There are various well-known problems in the South African's education system which include a shortage of teachers, underqualified teachers, and inadequate teacher performance (Levy, 2014). In the classroom, this results in poor learner standards and results, a lack of classroom discipline and is exacerbated by insufficient resources and inadequate infrastructure (Department of Education, 2009). Many schools still operate under challenging conditions, lacking necessary facilities such as buildings, electricity, clean running water or phone lines (Timaeus et al., 2011). These issues within the South African education system do push parents to consider alternative measures for children to acquire a good quality education (Mills, 2009).

It has been over 20 years since apartheid ended, yet many schools remain without necessary facilities (Simkins, 2013). The legacy of apartheid is apparent in the lack of educational resources for South African students and the occupational deprivation they experience (Dodge and Welderufael, 2014). During apartheid, Black South Africans were subjected to severe oppression and discrimination in education and career opportunities (Dodge and Welderufael, 2014). The South African education system inherited a dual education system from this, where there are well-functioning and resourced schools amongst historically white and Indian schools. These schools serve the elite and middle-class children of all race groups and perform at a level similar to that of middle-class children internationally (Department of Basic Education, 2013). This well-functioning system produces the vast majority of university entrants. The much larger second education system includes more impoverished children who are further disadvantaged through attending schools with dysfunctional management and classroom practices. Children in this system have low functioning in reading, writing and can perform only simple numerical operations (Department of Basic Education, 2013).

The majority of South Africa's poor, who desperately need the school system to provide a pathway out of poverty, typically receive a low quality of education which ensures that existing patterns of poverty and inequality continue in the subsequent generation (Department of Basic Education, 2013). At the government level, difficulties have been caused by a failure of proper inspection and monitoring, and confusion caused by changing curricula without appropriate communication and training (Department of Education, 2009). It has led to massive demoralisation and disillusionment among teachers and a cynical and worsening perception of the teaching profession (Department of Education, 2009).

Generally, South Africa has a relatively well-resourced education system that poorly performs when it is compared to schools functioning in much more impoverished social settings (Lodge, 2014). Within South Africa, the quality of education varies widely (Van der Berg et al., 2011). South Africa's system of public education is close to being the worst in the world because it performs poorly based on international comparative data (Lodge, 2014), as it produced an annual national mathematics assessment by the Department of Basic Education of Grade 9 students who generated a 13% score for basic competence in 2012. In the same year, nearly 30% of children in Grade 6 were illiterate, and 40% did not have the numeracy that would be expected at this level (Lodge, 2014).

Home-schooling comes as an alternative means of obtaining an education in South Africa; some parents choose it as a means of achieving improved mathematics, science and technology results (Moore et al., 2004). Home-schoolers seek to provide their children with the best educational environment possible and believe individualised one-on-one teaching to be this (Mills, 2009). Home-schooling means being taught at home, the education may be provided internationally by a public or private school system, via the internet or correspondence. Parents can be strictly the mentors, or a certified teacher can perform the actual instruction by use of a curriculum, and the parent is responsible for the education and resources, parents have control over the type of education their children get (Moore et al., 2004).

2.5.2. Religion and Family Values

Ideologues are considered religiously motivated and have specific beliefs, values, and skills they want their children to learn and embrace (Angelis, 2008). These parents are critical of the public education system because of perceived lack of discipline and manners, low standards, unsafe conditions, and hostility to religious practice (Hill, 2000). Parents wish to protect their children from negative peer pressure and social influences or merely want to strengthen the family bond (Moore et al., 2004). Parents do not believe the public school systems are adequate to accomplish these ends. Since their motivation to home-school is religiously based, they view the public school systems as not including Christian values, and is either inadequate or hostile to their educational goals for their children (Angelis, 2008). Religious and spiritual beliefs feature strongly as the motivation for home-schooling (Moore et al., 2004).

There is a large group of home-schoolers in South Africa who are Christian parents, who are not satisfied with the neutral religious approach presently followed in public schools (de Waal and Theron, 2003). There is no separation of church and school, so parents are free to teach the doctrine intertwined in the way they want to while teaching a course such as a history or biology subjects (Moreau, 2012). Due to the amount of time children spend in the school environment, parents are choosing home-schooling to control the influences on their children's lives and increasing their opportunity to transmit their values to their children thus evading the problems of drugs, pornography and immoral challenges associated with mainstream schooling (Mills, 2009).

This group of home-schooling families believe that our society was experiencing moral decay; their educational focus was on the Bible and the teaching of religious history to instill their religious beliefs and values in their children (Angelis, 2008). These parents seek to protect their values and ideas through the integrity and autonomy of the family (Moore et al., 2004). The core of home-schooling emphasising family, freedom and informal learning, this has given rise to many challenging questions and elicited much concern of whether the best option for the child is indeed the traditional schooling system, or this alternative of home-schooling (Mills, 2009).

Some parents home-school because they want to maintain the status quo. Angelis (2008) argues without making any value judgments that parents might have a tradition that they pretty much want their child to have. It may be political, religious, social, or intellectual, and they look out at the world, which is quite diverse, and parents are concerned that when their children go out there going to be taken away from their traditions (Angelis, 2008). Many home-schooling families believe the family is superior to any other institution of society (Angelis, 2008). Home-schoolers are often highly individualistic, and home-schooling is symbolic of the family's independence from social institutions (Moore et al., 2004). Therefore, home-schooling represents an attempt by parents to make education valuable in ways that are understandable to them through the cultural means at their disposal (Angelis, 2008).

2.5.3. Convenience

The possible factors contributing to the expansion of home-schooling could also be the expenses of schooling, and the distance and travelling difficulties families encounter (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). Parents' concerns include; bullying in schools, poor academic quality, the teaching of conflicting values, financial constraints within the school system, and exposure of students to specific health risks (Angelis, 2008). Many turn to home-schooling after observing their children suffering emotionally or academically in the school system, often because the school system is unable to serve what they believe to be their children's unique learning styles or scholarly needs (Angelis, 2008). People may home-school because they do not have many options, for instance, in game reserves, lodge managers are hired as a couple, in a remote setting like that, parents may have transportation issues, and in that situation, parents don't have many choices and home-schooling seems viable (Van der Eems,

2012). If parents are dissatisfied with the public schools for academic, religious, or other reasons, they must choose between home-schooling and private schooling. The private school has tuition costs, while home-schooling has opportunity costs of time (Isenberg, 2007).

Parents believe home-schooling provides a more appropriate program for their children than public schools which are overwhelmed by financial and personnel resources (Angelis, 2008). Winstanley (2009) argues that online resources make this alternative impactful and easier for home-schoolers. In no small degree, online education is recommended in the home-schooling environment since technological innovations and computers have become an integral part of life in this age (Miron and Gulosino 2016).

2.5.4. Medical and Special Needs

Parents may choose to home-school because they have a child who has specific learning difficulties (Moore et al., 2004). Learners with special educational needs include all learners who struggle to learn due to barriers in their lives. The government adopted the policy of inclusive education in South Africa, meaning that all children should be included at all mainstream schools, which made education open to everyone type of student (Newton, 2005). However, children with special needs just do not fit into the mainstream; teachers are unable to help, mostly for reasons beyond their control, but sometimes for more hostile, occasionally baffling reasons. Gifted students cannot always find friends in their school environment, this then has negative consequences such as dumbing-down to fit in better (Winstanley, 2009). Additionally, children with disabilities face higher levels of discrimination and abuse in a school setting; research indicates that violence against children with disabilities occurs at a higher rate than their non-disabled peers at school (Cater, 2015). Children with learning difficulties or handicaps often feel anxiety in the classroom (Mills, 2009).

It is increasingly challenging to find an appropriate school for disabled children, (Cater, 2015), not all schools have the resources, and not all teachers have the skills to handle all learners (Newton, 2005). Sometimes parents are faced with limited space issues leading them to be placed on waiting lists; here an alternative is needed (Cater, 2015). Parents with children with learning difficulties or handicaps often find that they know how their child learns best (Mills, 2009). Home-school stands out as an option for those parents who wish to give their children with special needs the best they can. Often these children are not catered for in conventional state schools (Newton, 2005).

A parent may choose home-schooling as the best education option for their children who are either diagnosed with any form of disability, Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or with autism (Mills, 2009). These learning difficulties can be seen as too difficult to accommodate in a classroom. The disruptive behaviour in the class often leads to the child being disciplined and defined as a child with problem behaviour (Mills, 2009). Thus given that some children might need to be under medical care, which might be considered to alter behaviour, it is challenging to have such children attend mainstream schools.

2.6. Challenges of Home-schooling

Parents who choose to home-school their children may have to overcome some difficulties. One of the main challenges is sustaining the same amount of enthusiasm and commitment for home-schooling in the face of any emerging challenges in the household (Moore et al., 2004). The commitment to home-schooling often comes with a financial sacrifice should the parents decide to be home educators themselves. In most cases for one person to remain home as a teacher, he or she may have to give up their job effectively reducing the family income (Brown, 2013). Should the family experience a loss of a second income, this may have significant financial implications and restrictions (Botha, 2005). Depending on the type of home-schooling curriculum program parents use, educational resources, such as books, teaching materials and technology, which need to be purchased, may be costly (Moore et al., 2004). Another is time, balancing socialisation opportunities and the extent of government involvement.

2.6.1. Emotional Challenges

Home-schooling takes a tremendous amount of time and energy, even though the actual time devoted to home-schooling children is far less than the time they would spend in school each day, parents still have many things to do to prepare for that instructional time (Martin, 1997). The scale and intensity of home-schooling as parents search for ideas, materials, and relevant standards of performance, for instances, in only one month, home-schooling websites can post new ideas and materials for teaching mathematics, history, social studies, classics, literature, art, drama, and creative and expository writing (Hill, 2000). The need to adjust to the particular requirements of the individual child requires careful planning and creativity, which makes heavy demands on the parent educator (Moore et al., 2004). Home-schooling

can absorb a substantial amount of a parent's time (Brown, 2013), it may confine the parent educator to long stretches of time spent at home every day and also contribute to feelings of isolation, stress and burnout, which are often encountered among home-school families (Moore et al., 2004).

Support is significant when home-schooling, and parents often need reassurance that the decision they have made to home-school is the right one. Having the support of family and friends is very important, and one of the excellent sources of moral support available to home-schoolers is the local support groups (Martin, 1997). Many home-schoolers may feel intimidated when faced with the many responsibilities associated with educating their children (Botha, 2005) and often support groups act as a support system to help these parents cope. The best way to find a home-schooling support group in the area is to contact a government home-school association which usually can direct you to a local support group (Martin, 1997). At support group meetings, parents can discuss any problems they may have such as changing their curriculum and testing, or they can exchange information and socialise (Van der Eems, 2012).

2.6.2. Government's Role

The control of home-school and curriculum programs depends upon the regulations of a country (Brown, 2013), in countries where high management is applied, some rules such as testing students annually and parents having to provide the government with information about their curriculum and the content covered along the semester is compulsory (Hill, 2000). In high regulation systems, parents who show the interest and decide to home-school their children have to inform the authorities about their wish to start home education and complete a kind of entry requirement, giving information concerning the curriculum, conducts home visits and set standardised tests. As a measure to discourage inadequate home-schooling, parents should be required to be certified teachers. On the other hand, in reasonable regulation, parents have to send notification and are asked to submit a kind of progress report, which consists of test scores or external evaluation (Guilherme et al., 2014). It is important for the government to regulate this form of schooling because unregulated home-schooled children are at a greater risk of abuse and parents that home-school have an option not to immunize their children which creates a health risk for the nation (West, 2009).

In South Africa, it may be suggested that home-schooling parents who hope their children will attend colleges and universities must learn how to assess their children's progress against higher education admission standards (Hill, 2000) and opt for a curriculum similar to the one utilized nationally to attain a matriculation equivalent qualification (Karin, 2017). Even though, when reflecting on the legislative history, there is no specific policy on cooperation between home-schoolers and public schools in South Africa, nor from the government to guide parents through the process (de Waal and Theron, 2003), and even with attempts to develop policy, parents are often not engaged in a proper manner (Newton, 2005).

2.7. Benefits of Home-schooling

The benefits of home-schooling range in scope and effect, they depend upon the person teaching, their circumstances and their ability, the characteristics or nature of the student or students involved, together with the type of learning method utilised (Brown, 2013). Regardless of the parents' previous education, the one-on-one mentoring that they can give their children are guaranteed to be effective (Smith, 2015). Home-schooling does provide teacher training programs, and many people learn how to teach, assess results, and continuously improve instruction through those programs (Hill, 2000). Home-schooling often requires one-on-one interactions, and the parent educators usually care deeply about their children's optimal development. Thus their attentiveness and patience towards their children are required (Mazama and Lundy, 2013).

Research conducted by Ray (cited in Smith, 2015), which included tests on one's self-concept and self-esteem, revealed that the home-educated are doing well, typically above average, on measures of social, emotional, and psychological development (Smith, 2015). These children develop confidence and independent thinking, away from negative peer pressure to conform, in the security of their own home (Miron and Gulosino, 2016). A child in a home-school environment can build more confidence in her or himself resulting in better social, emotional, and psychological development, which can help in future performance on a job. Personal growth and academics are a couple of benefits related to home-schooling (Smith, 2015). Parents have the liberty to place a greater emphasis on study skills, critical thinking, working independently, and a love of learning (Moore et al., 2004). Therefore, home-schooling gives a child the upper-hand of establishing a better, well-rounded perspective of themselves without the thoughts of others affecting them (Smith, 2015).

2.7.1. Individualized Education

Children who are home-schooled can learn without being intimidated by other students, they can show their capability without feeling shy with others (Ray, 2016), and by taking the pressure of constant testing out of the picture, home-schooling allows time for mastery of content (Mazama and Lundy, 2013). Parents can choose the amount of structure that is best for them and their children. Each program can be individualised to suit the needs and interests of each child. Each child can progress at his/her rate instead of at the speed of the group (Martin, 1997). The pace of learning and the given time children spend on a subject is up to the parents' judgment and the child's capability (Brown, 2013). There is an assumption that parents can give their children more protection because they are with them all day long (Ray, 2016). Each child is treated as an individual, not as a set of records, grades are less important and gaining applicable knowledge is more important (Martin, 1997). Parents do not have to deal with bullying, school calendar issues for vacations, clinic or doctor's appointments, lack of religion based education, and negative peer influences (Moreau, 2012).

Parents have to read the curriculum that their children will be using so that the parents may help their children with any questions that they might have (Smith, 2015). Parents can find advice on the type of educational program that is likely to work for their children, and they can enter chat rooms with other parents struggling with the same issues (Hill, 2000). Parents can decide the curriculum and subject which their children can focus on (Brown, 2013). Because in home-schooling it is assumed that parents know their children best and understand their strengths and weaknesses as they can devote all their time and attention to their children (Martin, 1997). Parents are also able to evaluate their children on a daily basis and provide further instruction if needed. (Martin, 1997).

2.7.2. Curriculum Choices

Most home-schooling materials are designed to be used by parents and students who are not familiar with the subject matter. Curriculum programs are a list of topics, concepts, ideas that will be taught, they are self-explanatory and in most cases a teacher's guide is provided for the subject (Moore et al, 2004). Home-school curriculums usually include the textbooks, workbooks, and other materials used to teach that subject, and directions for parents (Miron and Gulosino, 2016). Curriculums normally have weekly study plans that tells educators

exactly what to study and when. This is flexible and can be changed to suit the needs of the learner (Miron and Gulosino, 2016). The home-schooling approach to education is gentle and flexible than the systematic education within the school setting, with major focus on the child's environment, the child's behaviour and lastly the child's curriculum all influencing the child's experience and motivation for knowledge and development (Mills, 2009). There is also diversity in the methods of educating within the home-schooling paradigm. Home-schoolers have a choice of the method they want to use to provide their child with the education and curriculum that is right for them which makes the child's education customized to each child (Moreau, 2012).

There are ample learning materials available for home schooling in South Africa from a number of reputable curriculum suppliers. Parents can choose material that reflects their values and morals, because home-schooling allows time for full exploration and mastery of the material (Martin, 1997). Home-schooling allows parents the advantage to customise a curriculum to meet the individual needs of the learner is one of home schooling's major benefits (Moore et al, 2004); it allows parents to choose their own curriculum. (Martin, 1997). Most people start home schooling with packaged curriculums, and then find their way from there, for what works best for their child. For some children this involves more formal studies. Some subjects, like mathematics, work better with a formal curriculum (Miron and Gulosino, 2016).

2.7.3. Assessment in Home-school

Home-schoolers use many methods of assessing what their children have learned, some use grades, and children can also demonstrate what they have learned through projects, papers, and performance and other parents use a written evaluation. (Martin, 1997). They believe in allowing a child's natural curiosities to set the scope and pace of education, even if it means waiting a long time before the child expresses interest in a particular topic. Feeling that the manner in which schools teach is not the way that children learn, they often view standardized testing as a part of the misguided system that they have left behind, and they put great effort into avoiding such testing in their children's education (Welner and Welner. 1999). Home-schooling allows the time parents need to set and achieve academic standards (Martin, 1997). Parents choose to home-school in order to avoid what they view as the restrictiveness of set curricula and testing (Welner and Welner. 1999).

2.7.4. Academic Performance

It is very hard to determine the defiant conclusions on the academic outcomes and achievements of home-schooled learners (Lips and Fienberg, 2008), however, a study conducted by Ray (2010) indicated that the achievement levels of home-schooled children are high compared to mainstream scholars. The achievements measured using standardised tests carried out in the United States America revealed that home-schooled children perform well in comparison with their counterparts in conventional schools and college (Moore et al., 2004). Home-schooling families even have the option of whether or not they want to participate in state testing at all, whereas, these assessments are compulsory in public schools (Bergstrom, 2012). These students typically score above average on the state assessments, and college entrance exams (Moreau, 2012) such as SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and ACT (American College Testing), tests that colleges consider for admissions (Ray, 2016).

Home-schooling shows children that their parents are interested and committed to providing the best opportunity for them to excel (Mills, 2009). This form of education is centred on the students' capabilities, for instance, if a child shows exceptional ability in music, or dance, it is possible to provide an education that focuses predominantly on that ability (Winstanley, 2009). Parents have options when making decisions regarding their children's education. If the child's interests and propensities lead them to want to study the same subject for extended periods of time, this can be accommodated better in the home setting, although specialist equipment and tuition may be more complex to come by as the child's knowledge and skills increase (Winstanley, 2009).

Smith (2015) asserts that the reason why home learners do so well is that home-schooled children can get more one-on-one mentoring from their parents, enabling children to excel in their studies by getting the individual attention that they need at the times they need it (Smith, 2015). Home-schooled children academically excel because home-schooling integrates elements essential for learning in the classroom, namely parental involvement, small classroom size, and individualised learning styles (Mills, 2009). While public schools have requirements for attendance and standardised testing, home-schooled children and families have this as options (Ray, 2016). These parents believe home-schooling provides more rigorous standards and one-on-one teaching conditions which generally motivate children to learn better, and, therefore, ensure academic achievement (Angelis, 2008).

2.7.5. Flexibility

Home-schooling allows flexible routines (Mazama and Lundy, 2013) of the curriculum work adapted to lifestyle and pattern (Brown, 2013). It will enable flexible scheduling which can accommodate parents' work, vacation and many activities (Miron and Gulosino, 2016). Parents usually follow some pre-established daily schedule, the liberty to schedule time necessary for educational or social purposes, impromptu hands-on activities and field trips can be added at any point (Mazama and Lundy, 2013). Parents who home-school can teach anywhere, so their classroom is not limited to the home. They can take trips during the school year, visit relatives, and take vacations (Martin, 1997). Children have time to think and explore new interests and communication between different age groups is enhanced (Miron and Gulosino, 2016), they have more time to develop their talents and hobbies (Martin, 1997). Therefore, it may also allow for greater participation in extracurricular activities (Jeffery and Giskes, 2004). Learning is a year-round experience, and the home-school provides this. The diversity of knowledge is an essential factor in learning and need not be interrupted by the calendar (Martin, 1997). Home-schooling makes it possible for parents to redefine the purpose of education (Mazama and Lundy, 2013).

2.7.6. Socialisation

Socialisation refers to the ability to adapt to the needs of any given group, to follow the rules of society, and live harmoniously in the particular community in which we live (Mills, 2009). There are existing concerns society initially has about home-schooling, which is the question of socialisation, the lack of social interaction. The concern is children do not receive maximum exposure to the various types of people they will have to deal with in the broader perspective. Meaning their ability to develop the correct coping mechanisms in dealing with social challenges is affected (Brown, 2013). Children in home-school may not receive sufficient opportunity to socialise with other children, especially those who are culturally different from themselves, to adapt to society (Moore et al., 2004). Students may also have limited involvement in team sports and other extra-curricular activities (Brown, 2013). Parents have to consistently make efforts to keep their children in a social environment, they must learn to rely on one another, and many parents are likely to create new institutions that look something like communities (Hill, 2000). Parents may lack adequate time to prepare the

child in the face of regular domestic chores. Moreover, children may be deprived of certain amenities, which only schools can provide such as large libraries, sports equipment or expensive technology (Moore et al., 2004).

In contrast to the mainstream schooling system of separating children into age-appropriate classes, break times and assemblies, home-schooling children have a more significant opportunity to interact with a broader representation of society on a daily basis, which thus prepares the child to be socialised and skilled to handle a variety of social situations (Mills, 2009). Home-schooling parents do realise that their children need to develop relationships with other children and adults, home educators go to great lengths to provide them with opportunities to build these relationships (Martin, 1997). Children, who are home-schooled, have gained the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to function in society at a rate similar to that of conventionally schooled children (Ray, 2016). Not only that home-schooling may improve a child's social development but that it promotes, a child's self-concept and helps children develop the ability to withstand peer pressure (Mills, 2009) and (Moreau, 2012). Children learn to socialise positively through time spent with people who love them unconditionally and are interested in their growth, in their development and their knowledge (Mill, 2009).

Research in the field of gifted education consistently shows that intellectually engaging peers are vital for healthy development and that, because of their abilities, highly able pupils cannot always find these people in their school environment, with negative consequences such as dumbing-down to fit in better (Winstanley, 2009). Most spend time with other children through support and networking groups, scouting, churches, and other associations. Many spend time with adults other than their parents through activities such as community volunteer work, home-based business, and tutoring or mentoring (Martin, 1997). Home-schooled students with parents that have time, knowledge and resources can be just as successful or more successful as those students in public schools (Moreau, 2012). Since home-schoolers are active members of clubs, churches, and other social networks and activities, this is not typically a problem. Children who are home-schooled, have gained the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to function in society at a rate similar to that of conventionally schooled children (Mills, 2009). It can be said that home-schooled students are more socially mature than the public school students are (Martin-Chang et al., 2011).

A study found that home-schooled children perform well in comparison with their counterparts in conventional schools and colleges (Moore et al., 2004). Research has addressed the issue of adequate socialisation of home-school children, which indicates that home-schooled children are seldom isolated socially (Smith, 2015). Many home-schooling families network extensively; the home-school itself allows for personalised socialising; and the home-schooled children are exposed to diverse environments, such as libraries, theatres, restaurants, churches, youth movements such as Scouts and the neighbourhood, all of which allow the child to socialise (Moore et al., 2004).

2.7.7. Effect on family relationships

In a home setting, children get an opportunity to develop in an atmosphere which is free from bullying, pressure from other students and harassment. Children will grow up in a pleasant environment, and that will prevent them from adverse impacts of the social life like drugs or free sex (Ray, 2016). The family experiences unity, closeness, and mutual enjoyment of each other. Children learn to manage their time well; they do not waste time on material they understand. Whereas in public schools children have to wait for the other students to be done with their work, wait for the teacher to move on to another subject, or they have to wait for lunchtime end to continue their lessons. Home-scholars can cut all of the unnecessary waiting because they learn alone at home; they can manage their time without thinking for other students (Dewi, 2012). Home-schoolers can provide a warm, nurturing environment in which their children can learn, the atmosphere in the home can be where learning is exciting, and not painful (Martin, 1997).

2.8. Summary

For this study, both national and international sources reflected on provided a detailed account of available studies on the subject. The literature was acquired from various peer-reviewed journals and online sources, government reports and books from interdisciplinary studies that cut across education, social sciences and psychological disciplines. Thus, the literature covered some scientific aspects that help explain issues on home-schooling. However, studies on home-schooling remain limited in the South African context as compared to other countries such as the United States. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution in covering this gap, which has outdated academic, and research outputs besides

the online news outlets and websites that offer home-schooling support in the country. Therefore, the chapter reflected on available literature to provide detailed avenues of addressing the perceived challenges and improving the standards of home-schooling in the country.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The overall objective of this study is to shed insights into the understanding of home-schooling and experiences of home educators in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This research adopted a qualitative approach, it utilized a semi-structured, in-depth questionnaire to obtain relevant information regarding; the nature of home-schooling, factors that influence the decision to home-school, positive and negative aspects of it as well as the parent educators' experiences.

3.2. Study Area

Based on the census conducted in 2011, South Africa had an estimation of 12.3 million learners in mainstream school by the year 2013 (Lehohla, 2011; Kruger, 2015). With the number of home-scholars in 2014 estimated to be 150 000 in the country, which means that home-schooled learners amount to 1.25% of the total learners in the country (Guilherme et al., 2014).). As parents are becoming more aware of home education as an option, this figure may continue to increase (Kruger, 2015). This creates a need to collect descriptive and an abundance of data on the home-schooling population. Below, Table 3.1 shows the number of both register and unregister home educators in each province of South Africa.

Table 3.1: Home Educators in South Africa 2011

Province	Number of Home Educators
Gauteng	21 000
KwaZulu-Natal	18 000
Eastern Cape	12 000
Western Cape	10 000
Limpopo	10 000
Mpumalanga	7 000
North-West	6 000
Free State	5 000
Northern Cape	2 000

Source: Kruger (2015).

Kruger (2015), derived these figures from the Statistics South African census 2011 which enquired about the home-schooling population from there an estimation of home educators amounted as per province. This table demonstrates that KwaZulu-Natal has the second largest number of home educators in South Africa, which is a motivation as to the selection of the province for the study and the logic of the researcher residing in the same province.

3.3. Qualitative Methodology

The focus of this study was to understand the perspectives and experiences of home educators, utilizing qualitative methodology to understand their experiences of educating their children at home. Qualitative research allows a descriptive approach to understanding human experiences (Patton, 1988). It offers an approach to obtaining knowledge and meaning that is not easily quantified (Yilmaz, 2013). This type of method allows people's experiences to be examined in detail, and for the purpose of this study, in-depth interviews were used, which enabled the researcher to identify the different aspects of home-schooling (Hennink et al, 2011). Qualitative methods have the ability to study phenomena that are simply unavailable elsewhere because it is flexible and interactive it gains insight into the

participant's experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Moreover, qualitative research methods are used for a wide range of interconnected, interpretive practices to get an understanding of the subject matter at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The researcher chose this descriptive research approach, which is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group, whereas quantitative research studies determine the frequency with which something occurs or its association with something else (Kothari, 2004).

Qualitative research methods have been criticised by scholars for their subjectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Some critics argue that results in qualitative research are easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and dependent on the researcher's skill, training, intellect, discipline, and creativity (Patton, 1988), because qualitative methods tend to generate large amounts of detailed information about a small number of settings (Mays and Pope, 1995). However, the ability of qualitative methods to provide detailed information is one of the reasons for using this method. Qualitative methodology is an applied research approach, which illuminates the home-schooling phenomena, which to some people is a concern, pre-conceived as a system for a certain type of people, and to others it is unknown. The purpose is to contribute knowledge that will help people understand the nature of home-schooling (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. Hence, it aims at helping understand the social world in which they live in and why things are the way they are (Cohen and Manion, 1994). It is concerned with the social aspects of the world and seeks to answer questions about: Why people behave the way they do, how opinions and attitudes are formed, how people are affected by the events that go on around them, how and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have (Creswell, 2010). The main aim of the research was to evaluate the perceptions and experiences of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal and a qualitative method is, therefore, the most appropriate approach regarding researching people's subjective and unique experiences. The researcher interviewed people who practice the home-schooling system of educating, to discover the reasons behind their decisions, and their experiences of home schooling in South Africa.

This study draws on views expressed by the participants being studied, it makes this approach very compactable in relation to reviewing the potential of home-schooling, and background knowledge and experiences of participants are highly recognized. As this allows findings and analysis that are drawn from data collection are based on the phenomenological strategy of

inquiry (Creswell, 2009). The researcher identified the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. Understanding the lived experiences marks phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method, and the procedure involved studying a small number of subjects through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning. In this process, the researcher set aside her experiences in order to understand those of the participants in the study. A qualitative research design was utilized for this study, as it attempts to broaden our understanding of how home-schooling came to be in our society (Hancock et al, 2009).

3.4. Sample Method

This study used non-probability sampling, whereby the selection of a portion of the population of interest took place (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Non-probability sampling methods do not attempt to select a random sample from the population of interest (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Since the selection is non-random, non-probability sampling does not allow the estimation of sampling errors, and may be subjected to a sampling bias. The advantage of this technique is that information from a sample cannot be generalized to the population (Warren, 2011). This type of sampling method is common to qualitative research and is advantageous as it is difficult to generalize from data gathered through non-probability methods, enabling the researcher to explore the depth of the participants' experiences of home-schooling (Warren, 2011). For this study, the sampling framework selected took the form of purposive as well as snowball sampling.

The researcher employed both purposive sampling and snowballing sampling strategies simultaneously as the researcher was looking for a particular home-schooling population that can in some instances be hard to reach. With the snowballing process, the researcher collected data on the few members of the target population she could locate, then sought information from those individuals that enabled her to locate other members of that population (Patton and Cochran, 2002). For the purpose of this study, ten participants contributed to the study. The researcher is of the opinion that by focusing on these participants' experiences of home-schooling, it allowed an in-depth exploration of their experiences of home-schooling. It also allowed for further research on whether the findings acquired from this study can be transferable to the South African context.

Based on non-probability sampling technique, it allows accessibly to collect data on participant's thoughts based on causal factors and perspectives on home-schooling and its different curriculums (Powell and Steele, 1996). Interviews with ten home educators that have experience in home-schooling their children were be conducted. Realizing that it was going to be difficult finding interviewees, a snowball sampling method was utilized to identify and contact hidden home educators through links to locate other respondents based on existing ones.

Snowball sampling is a method that yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). Snowball sampling is employed as a particularly effective tool when trying to obtain information on and access to hidden populations (Noy, 2008), here the recruited participants help the researcher find other potential participants, and they become *de facto* research assistants (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). Although all of the study's respondents might be asked to refer others, all of them cannot and should not engage to assist the research on a regular basis (Noy, 2008; Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981).

Control is exercised in an attempt to ensure that the sample includes a range of participants that in qualitative terms reflect what is thought to be the general characteristics of the population in question (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). In order not to bias the sample, the sample must be selective and be based on theoretical considerations, the final effort in controlling snowball sampling chains is made on the basis of verification considerations, the researcher must continually ask; how many more cases should be collected and in what direction should the referral chain be guided? The decision here should be based on at least two considerations; representativeness of the sample and repetition of data (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981).

Although this method hardly leads to representative samples, it may sometimes be the only way to reach hard-to-reach populations or when no sampling frame is available a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions intended to capture responses from the participants in a standardized manner (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The chosen research approach was appropriate, because it allowed initial qualitative exploration of the research topic on a small scale, in order to gain insight of the research situation; gathering of information for development of a consequent comprehensive analysis of the research phenomenon. In this study, the target population consist of parents who are home-schooling

their children in KwaZulu-Natal. Only one parent in a family was approached. Since the interviewees were unknown, a gate-keeper was not required.

3.5. Data Collection

Data in this study was collected using face-to-face interviews conducted through the use of a semi-structured questionnaire. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Pandey and Pandey, 2015). The sample consisted of parents who practice home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal. It was the researcher's intent to record all the interviews to effectively engage with the interviewees. Ten parent educators were interviewed, the requirements for participation in this study was that, parents were currently home-schooling their children and residing in KwaZulu-Natal. The interviews were face-to-face interviews and conducted at the home of participant. This setting presented an advantage for the participants in the comfort of their own home. The one-on-one in-depth semi-structured interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants.

A consent form was signed by participants to indicate their understanding of the purpose of the study and their willingness to participate in the study. They were also asked to give their consent to the interview being tape recorded. Participants were assured of confidentiality. Each interview lasted for a period of 15 minutes. All the participants were assured of anonymity and pseudonyms were used in the reporting of findings. The interview consisted of a list of questions relating to the study. The questionnaire involved open-ended questions. The data collected was processed and analysed through thematic analysis, which requires coding the interview replies, observations, and tabulating the data (Kothari, 2004).

The study also made use of secondary data in the form of newspaper articles and published literature, which is existing information, collected from books, journal and newspaper articles, to reflect on the study at hand. The literature review in this study has these reflections discussed in defining and understanding the roots of home-schooling in South Africa and other countries (Kothari, 2004). This assisted in placing the study into context as well as having a better understanding of home-schooling. The data consisting of complex details which was derived from previous research findings, available at a level of analysis suitable for answering the researcher's questions.

3.6. Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to bring order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. It aims to describe and summarise the data, identify a themes, establish relationships between themes and codes, compare themes, and forecast outcomes (Vosloo, 2014). This data analysis determined; the potential of home-schooling, the effectiveness of home-schooling and the appropriation of home-schooling to provide for the learning needs of children. For qualitative data, Dawson (2002) suggests that the researcher can analyse as the research progresses, continually refining and reorganising in light of the emerging results. This holds true of the study. During the interview, questions were refined and follow up questions were posed by the researchers on interesting thoughts or ideas that emerged during the interview.

Once data was collected from the in-depth interviews, thematic analysis was then applied to the study. The researcher listened to all 10 of the interviews and also reflected on the written notes when analysing the data. The researcher identified initial themes after the data had been sorted. In using thematic analysis, the researcher did not look beyond what the participant said. However, some themes were predetermined prior to the interviews. Once the transcription had been completed, codes were generated. Codes identify predominant themes from the raw data.

The thematic analysis approach is suitable for the study of qualitative research. It focuses on examining themes within the data and organizing data sets (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis was used here on data which was gathered from personal interviews. This is the type of research whereby data gathered is categorized in themes and sub-themes, for it to be comparable (Langkos, 2014). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysis and reporting patterns within data is best, as it organizes and describes a dataset in detail, interprets various aspects of the research topic. A theme captures important data about the relation to the research question and represents the level of patterned response in the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The process of thematic analysis entails reading and reflecting on the written transcripts and recorded tapes (Boyatzis, 1998). The process of coding involves organizing data into meaningful groups, tags, and labels. The data was then sorted by themes. According to Boyatzis (1998), themes are developed from the generated codes and during the process of coding themes are developed. Boyatzis (1998) also notes that some initial codes form main themes and some form sub-themes. Themes are then reviewed and defined. Coding should be

done carefully to avoid error in coding and for this purpose, the reliability of coders needs to be checked. (Kothari, 2004). This gave the researcher ability to structure the collected data in an accomplishment of research objectives (Langkos, 2014).

3.7. Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Conformability

Validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account (Creswell, 2013). Terms abound in the qualitative literature that address validity, such as trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000), and it is a much discussed topic (Creswell, 2013). The validity procedures reflected in this thinking present criteria with labels distinct from quantitative approaches, such as trustworthiness and authenticity (Creswell and Miller, 2000). The researcher ensures that the conclusions are based on supporting evidence and include analysis of cases that fit those conclusions and that there is enough context for readers to judge interpretation (Patton and Cochran, 2002). The same topic can be used as a guide to generate similar information (Patton and Cochran, 2002). Methods are written up so that readers can see exactly how the data was collected and analysed (Creswell, 2009). To maximise reliability a thorough analysis of the whole data-set was conducted.

Trustworthiness refers to the manner in which qualitative data is dependable, consistent, stable, predictable and reliable, thus producing the same results or outcomes in the future as it had in the past (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011). The researcher enhanced trustworthiness through the following verification techniques. The credibility of this study entailed external reflection and input into the study and conformability, the researcher used a number of strategies to minimise biasness (Patton and Cochran, 2002). The researcher had never been home-schooled or been exposed to home education prior to this study, and this helped the researcher to conduct the investigation in a non-subjective judgemental manner and kept her emotions in check and not make judgements on the basis of facts.

Dependability is the accuracy of the responses received from the participants was checked by the researcher on the spot through paraphrasing questions and seeking clarity where possible (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011). The use of a tape recorder made it possible for the researcher to reflect on what the members actually said and to think more deeply about their responses. Reference to field notes also highlighted the observations made by the researcher during the

discussions. The researcher's observations, comparison and contrasting of information was a validation of this study. Editing is an essential tool to promote consistency and quality data as data has its own errors that may distort the study (Creswell, 2009). To ensure that the study is rigorous, the researcher used a theoretical framework and the methods that are explicit. The context of the research was clearly described, the sampling strategy clearly was described and justified, and fieldwork was clearly described in detail, the procedures for analysis was clearly described.

3.8. Ethical Consideration

The key ethical issues were considered in this research are consent and anonymity (Patton and Cochran, 2002). Anonymity is an ethical measure used in this research to ensure the protection of participants and acknowledgment of their rights (Creswell, 2009). Pseudonyms such as P1 for parent 1, P2 for parent 2, and so on, were used as codes for the participants. It is not always easy or even possible to measure the dangers of a certain context to a given population, let alone to individuals. It is therefore essential to protect the identity of the person and the identity of participants was protected at all times and will not be left lying around in notebooks or un-protected computer files (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

Every participant, in this study was informed of their right to consent to participation, without being coerced or unfairly pressurised. This encouraged their voluntary participation, so that the participants are able to exercise his or her free power of choice without intervention of force, fraud, deceit, duress or other forms of constraint or coercion (Holloway, 2005) the participants were not forced to answer questions that they were not comfortable answering during the interview. Meaning, they were well-informed about what participation entails, and reassured that declining would not affect them in any way (Patton and Cochran, 2002). An informed consent form was issued at the beginning of all the participants' engagement in the study (Creswell, 2009).

Before conducting the study, the researcher developed a research proposal that was approved by the Ethical Committee of the College of Humanities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The proposal included the research methodology to be followed. The University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Ethics Policy mandates anyone undertaking a study involving humans to apply for ethical clearance. The policy advocates for research to be carried out with honesty and integrity; safe and responsible methods; and fairness and equity for the participants.

3.9. Limitations

The scarcity of academic writing on home education in South Africa made it a challenge to find context appropriate and accurate or reliable information on home-schooling, there is hardly any scientific and systematic research available on home-schooling in the country. The problem of adequate validity or reliability is a significant criticism, because of the subjective nature of qualitative data and its origin in single contexts, and it is difficult to apply conventional standards of reliability and validity. During the process of collecting secondary data, the researcher found that she had to select the translation option when looking at home-school websites. This created an assumption that home-school is for Afrikaans literate people which can often be assumed as the white population. The issue of bias in this study might have been shaped by the views and experiences of both the researcher and participants; the researcher generalizing information, and being influenced by the political views of many writers on home education, while the participants as glorifying the subject of study.

Although the sample size was relatively small, with 10 participants, a bigger sample would probably enhance the reliability of the research; home-scholars are a difficult population to identify given a lack of adequate sampling frames. The refusal of many parent educators to participate in this research, made the time required for data collection, analysis and interpretation lengthy. The interview process delayed the researcher, five participants agreed to the interview but did not follow through, regardless of the constant phone calls the researcher made and other forms of communication used. There was also a struggle to find participants of different races, the two potential interviewees that the researcher managed to find agreed but also did not follow through. At the beginning of this research, the researcher aimed for a representation of all racial or ethnic groups in South Africa, unfortunately the researcher did not manage to find participants of different race groups to commit to interviewing.

3.10. Summary

This chapter outlined the qualitative research methods used for the study and that non-probability sampling was used to select the population employed for exploring the perspectives and experiences of home-scholars in this study. Purposive sampling was used to identify home-educators with snowball sampling used as a referral mechanism. The referral

mechanism was required as the study consisted of a hidden population and if they did not want to participate, then they could recommend someone else, where possible. The data was analysed using thematic analysis. The thematic approach was used because it has a better approach to understanding the experiences of the participants. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the participants were comfortable at all times. In this study, privacy was achieved through ethical considerations whereby the participants were notified of the informed consent, which included measures to protect the participants. These measures included voluntary participation, the right to withdraw from the study at any stage, the maintenance of the confidentiality of the data and the anonymity of the participants. It also reviewed the issue of the validity of the research findings. Limitations of the study were presented and ethical issues were considered.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The overall aim was to shed insights into the understating of home-schooling, while evaluating the perceptions and experiences of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The objectives are; to understand the concept of home-schooling in a South African context, examine the attitudes towards home-schooling, explore the reasons for home-schooling, and investigate the positive and negative aspects of home-schooling and to evaluate the potential of home-schooling as a means of producing quality education. Interpreting the findings of this study was done cautiously as the results are not applicable to the general population because it is based on a small sample of 10 parents in the whole province of KwaZulu-Natal with approximately thousands of homeschooler parents.

4.2. The Demographic Profile of Participants

Table 4.1 describes the characteristics of the sample. In total 10 participants were interviewed for this study, the sample consisted of nine women and one man. The sample was highly educated and many were professionals. Nine out of the 10 participants had a tertiary education, only one had just completed their secondary education. It was interesting to note that a number of the participants were teachers. All of the sample were married.

Table 4.1: Distribution of participants: Parents that Home-school

Interview	Gender	Race	Marital status	Qualification/ Profession	Location	No. of children home-schooled
1	Female	White	Married	Nurse	Durban North	1
2	Female	White	Married	Matriculation certificate	Mhlanga	1
3	Male	White	Married	Environmental Conservationist	Hluhluwe	2
4	Female	White	Married	PhD in Tourism Development	Drakensberg	2
5	Female	White	Married	Teacher	Kloof	4
6	Female	White	Married	Teacher	Glenwood	2
7	Female	White	Married	Teacher	Jozini	2
8	Female	White	Married	Neurologist	Hillcrest	1
9	Female	White	Married	Teacher	Durban North	2
10	Female	White	Married	Doctor	Pinetown	3

4.3. Understanding of home schooling

Participants provided several descriptions of home-schooling according to their understanding. It is important to note that, participants expressed their knowledge of home-school differently. Thus, the following statements reflect on how participants understood, home-schooling:

“Schooling undertook at home with or without the aid of a tutor. Special learning material is provided by institutions that support this form of learning...” P4.

“Where the mother takes the role of the education of her children, but fathers also do it...” P1.

“Home education (as the preferred term) is when a child received education in their own home. A parent or tutor may facilitate the teaching of” P5.

“It is more relaxed at home, but you get more work done compared to mainstream school. The amount of work required every day at home to get through a curriculum is two hours, so if you do two hours of work every day, you will finish the curriculum by the end of the year” P2.

According to the participants, home-schooling also referred to as home education, to them it is education that is provided by parents and usually occurs at home, with or without the aid of a tutor. Home-schooling presents an opportunity of providing a specialised learning program through organisations and institutions that support this form of learning. In this context, the parent, either the father or the mother, may act as the teacher. There is a difference between home-school and mainstream education. Home-schooling is more personalized than mainstream schooling. What differentiates the home-schooling environment is in terms of the classroom, the number of classmates, the amount of attention giving to an individual, the educational approach and customized learning.

“There is a huge difference, with the mainstream, it’s this way or no way, it is very academic they are not willing to stir from anything. I think personally it is not correct. There are no real-life situations where you are thrown into the same room every day with 50 people, and you are forced to get along with them. On the playground, you are limited to run around for a few minutes... Home-schooling you can tailor make learning for each child, even if you have four children in the home you can work according to each child, and you can go at each child’s pace. Unlike mainstream, where you got to keep up, or you get left behind, so there is a big difference” P2.

“I have nothing against the mainstream school, it is more the way it is done that is my opposition, it can be done so much better than can reach children in a better way” P6.

The participants describe mainstreaming schooling as very rigid and not very accommodating to the varying needs of individuals. In addition, they pointed out that the class size in mainstream schools are very large and sometimes there was limited focus on the individual in the class situation. They preferred home schooling because there is greater flexibility as it can be tailored to the needs of each individual.

4.4. Reasons for Home-schooling

The motivation behind opting for home-school is different for every parent as it is for every student involved. Whether it has anything to do with the quality of education parents seek for their children, a need to maintain morale standing and the convenience home-schooling provides for them and their children. There are a number of reasons why parents opt to home school their children.

4.4.1. Quality of Education

The quest for a better quality education is pedagogic motivation for home-schooling, rooted in the criticism of mainstream education. Parents who are not satisfied with the way conventional schooling goes about educating their children, feel their children do not receive enough attention to help them develop through an education system that often pressures children; whether it is a pressure to complete a set of activities in a set time or the standards placed on their children in order to progress to the next level (Moore, 2002). The following quote explains how this parent is convinced she can provide a better education for her children compared to the education the government can give.

“We are aware that South Africa has the second lowest standard of education in the world, and the lowest standard of Maths and Science. Whereas, good quality education is available in boxed curricula as well as online, much being free” P5.

It is a known fact that South Africa struggles, especially with its education system; this includes the ever-changing education policies, failure to implement policies accordingly, corruption, the inability of maintaining even necessary facilities, and issues of compensating teachers adequately (Dodge and Welderufael, 2014). It is hard for parents to put their faith in an education system that is not producing quality students. Evidently, in 2012 the South African Department of Basic Education discovered that nearly 40% of Grade 6 students had inadequate mathematics abilities for their level, over 30% of them were found illiterate according to national assessments conducted under the department (Lodge, 2014). Although matriculation rates have been increasing, it is worrying that the minimum required percentage pass rates have decreased from 2011 (Lodge, 2014). In the present study a parent argues that they home-school to provide a better quality of education for their children one that is not restricted by a certain curriculum. This parent also pointed to the number of online resources that are available to support home schooling.

“When we talk about education, we never talk one-sided, ever! Children are individuals, and I think we often forget we are dealing with individuals. And if you mind their individuality, mind that special person and ask ‘who do you have the potential to be one day?’ The classroom is so big; teachers cannot get to the child as an individual. So when you talk about education, you need to be looking at it as a whole. ‘Who is this person? Who is this individual? How can I mind and educate them holistically?’ Education is not only on paper, based on one method and one-sided. I feel they want our children to be the same, they are just teaching the same concept and want them to be robotic. We are all individuals, we all have so much to contribute, and that is what’s missing in the mainstream, a way to encourage individuality and educate holistically” P10.

Parents seek a holistic approach to education for their children that is of a high quality and they believe that they are in the best position of providing for their children’s educational needs, as they are said to know their children best. They see themselves as doing the public school system a favour, as one parent said:

“Imagine if home-schooling was abolished in South Africa and all of these children were to be released into mainstream schools. How would the government cope with the tens of thousands of new students? It will surely require quite a lot of finical resources to accommodate these students; they may even need to provide new schools for them, let alone the teachers that will be needed. So I see us doing huge favour for the government by home-schooling” P6.

Parents believe that they are in a better position to provide a quality education to their children. They also feel that their children may require an education that is responsive to their needs and this may not be possible in mainstream schools because of the high ratios of learners to educators. They are also worried about the performance of mainstream schools specifically with respect to science and mathematics. There is a huge concern that schools in South Africa are not internationally competitive.

4.4.2. Religion and Family Values

This ideological motivation for home-schooling states that parents want to maintain a good moral standing, cultural and value systems; they want to protect their children from harmful influences either from peers, educators or society as a whole (Hill, 2000). Religious and spiritual beliefs feature strongly as the motivation for home-schooling and the families are

generally politically conservative (Moore et al, 2004). For home-schoolers, who choose to home-school for religious reasons, Martin (1997) states that these parents feel their children do not obtain moral and ethical training much less religious values in public schools. Home-schooling allows for these parents to pass on their spiritual values to their children. It also allows families to incorporate their personal religious beliefs and values into all areas of the curriculum (Martin, 1997). Parents choose to home-school their children for religious concerns have a desire to use a school curriculum that reinforces their family's religious beliefs (Brewer and Lubienski, 2016).

The present study also found that parents want to instil a strong moral education to their children and they feel that they are best placed to provide this kind of education. The following quote expands on this:

“I am a Christian that is my motivation, so I use a curriculum that incorporates Christianity. I feel that as much as most of the schools in this country are Christian centred, the religion is not entirely integrated into the school day. Maybe there is a prayer in the morning but they will teach the theory of evolution in class, this defeats the purpose. I want my children to be able to proclaim their faith, for them to know God, live and learn about Him through the day and throughout their lives” P1.

Parents want their children to hold the same values as themselves. They are particularly worried about protecting their children from harmful influences either from peers, educators or society as a whole. For this reason, they opt to home school their children. They point out that there are problems with bullying, drugs and alcohol in mainstream schools and they fear that they will not be able to protect their children from these social ills.

“There are the problems with bullying, drugs, alcohol, and sexual promiscuity in many schools” P5.

“The privilege of being home-school is that my children do not get tainted by peers and by the things teachers speak over them, sometimes the negativity that teachers speak over them...” P6.

Reflecting on participants' comments, there is negativity associated with mainstream school, from the negative influences of peers which often takes the form of bullying and the influence of educators with their own morals and values which they may pass on to the children.

4.4.3. Convenience

Parents may decide to home-school because it is convenient for the family especially if there are not many options with regards to the availability of good schools, distance and transport issues and affordability of what they assume is quality education. The following quotes express how parents found the option of home-schooling convenient for their families:

“We moved a lot with Nature Conservation and wanted our daughters to have stability” P3.

“Private schooling is extremely expensive, and for those parents wanting better education for their children, home education can be the answer” P5.

*“The flexibility of schedule, a lot less time is spent preparing for school, no extremely early morning, no stressing over time. Home-school is not confined to the home, every second is a learning opportunity which means it can be done anywhere.”*P10.

Parents choose to home-school because they do not have many options, for instance, in game reserves, lodge managers are hired as a couple, in a remote setting like that, parents may have transportation issues, and in that situation, parents don't have many choices and therefore home-schooling seems viable. In addition, some parents would like to send their children to private school but there is also a recognition that this is very costly in South Africa. Some parents therefore decide to home school their children because of limited opportunities.

4.4.4. Medical and Special Needs

Parents seek to provide a more appropriate learning programme for their children especially those who have special needs, and a system that does not impair their children's development. They want a learning environment that does not require children to be heavily medicated just to be accepted into a school.

“I was unable to find a school for my mentally challenged child. For those children with learning difficulties and special needs, home education can be a wonderful option as there are few special needs schools” P5.

“My son is far behind in school, with reading, maths and every other subject, he is two years behind. We decided to home-school because of the label teachers put on our children, that

medication is the only way. Ritalin! Ritalin! Ritalin! And the side effects. I cannot believe the side effects of Ritalin” P2.

“My youngest daughter has always been seen as a problem child when she is not. I took her out of school because of the first term of grade one the teachers had already picked up three problems; she was performing below average, she was a roadie and could not concentrate. My daughter has problems with concentration, so she needs more time with me just to consolidate concepts and make sure her foundation is solid” P6.

Learning difficulties feature as a motivation for parents choosing to home-school. Parents feel they can educate their children in an environment that does not discriminate against their children, where the children can be seen as normal human beings in their disabilities. The parents also try to avoid having their children under heavy medication just to be accepted into mainstream school especially those who have children that are diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or with Autism. As stated previously, these learning difficulties can be seen as too difficult to accommodate in a classroom (Mills, 2009). Often Ritalin is advised as a means for these children to cope in the mainstream school environment. Parents are concerned with the type of properties that Ritalin has which is similar to cocaine, parents say the side effects are not worth it because it generates mindless obedience, suppresses emotions and ideas, and diminishes self-esteem so their decision to home-school was influenced by that, a finding consistent with another study (Powers et al, 2008).

4.5. Challenges of Home-schooling

The reality of home-schooling requires parents to play the role of teaching the children, supervising the school work, evaluating the work and planning for activities (Green and Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). This in turn demands a lot of time and energy, parents then suffer emotionally from stress, frustration and lack of motivation. This study finds that parents have issues with the regulation of home-schooling and say that it is a preventing factor for them to register.

4.5.1. Emotional Challenges

It is clear from the interviews that home-schooling requires a great deal of commitment. Emotionally it requires parents to be commitment, to make plans on a day-to-day basis and stay motivated. These demands may leave parent educators feeling overwhelmed and frustrated (Botha, 2005). Parents express the difficulties they have experienced as home educators.

“Home-schooling is very demanding on a parent especially, trying to find the balance between home life and schooling and integrating the two... As the children get older the more hands-on you need to be, and stricter” P3.

“You need to be interested in what is best for the child... I challenge to separate myself from being a mother and being a teacher, but in the morning I try my best to be a teacher and a mother throughout the day. But everything is so integrated, my children do everything together, and I try my level best to be approachable” P1.

“My main challenge was how I will get my child to understand the information to develop a love of learning. I got my children to love learning by presenting them with an opportunity to learn with a purpose. I realised that children apply themselves when they realise the purpose” P7.

Reflecting on the quotes above, it is evident that these parents struggle to find a balance between the domestic demands and schooling. One parent found it particularly difficult to be an educator and a parent at the same time that she had to find means to remain approachable as a teacher during the set school hours and a parent at the allocated family time. The big challenge is the separation of roles: parent verses teacher. The last quote revealed how the parent stressed about the effectiveness of her teaching methods; how to make the material enjoyable and understandable; having realised a way to create a love of learning the challenge was then averted. Parents find that they have to be resourceful, having to be a teacher to the children means providing for them as teachers. The responsibility of teaching and providing relevant learning material rest upon one parent regardless of the support the parent educator may receive from the spouse or other relatives. They find that it is solely their responsibility to make it work. The following quotes explains this further:

“You need to know places to get things because it isn’t a school setting, you as a parent have to manage all things for the children ton have sports we as parents have to arrange for activities. Activities, aren't always free. In order to get the best of the world and learn more

while they're at it, I supplement their lessons with trips to planetariums, art exhibits, lectures, showcases, nature preserves and my children are enrolled in various community activities, but these things can cost money” P9. “As the parent teaching, it can be a very lonely journey, the responsibility is completely on you as the educator, yes my husband has been amazing, but at the end of the day, the responsibility is on one individual” P5.

“It is quite intense, and especially if the child has learning difficulties, my daughter has concentration issues, and we would box a lot, and it often happens” P6.

Not all parents who home-school their children are cut out for the task as most participants observed. Home educators suffer from frustration, burnout and a lack of support from close relatives, extended family and society; this may impact negatively on their journey of home-schooling. It requires a lot of commitment from parents, hard work and time while facing negative attitudes from friends and family about their choice of education.

4.5.2. Government’s Role

The regulation of home-schooling in South Africa by the government is seen in a negative light, it is said that it does not benefit the people and that the government just wants to restrict and overregulate home-schoolers (Van der Eems, 2017). However, scholars such as West (2009), say that it is important for the government to regulate this form of schooling because unregulated home-school children are at a greater risk of abuse and parents that home-school have an option not to immunize their children which creates a health risk for the nation (West, 2009). The following quotes capture how these parents feel about government’s watchful eye:

“The main challenge is the active discouragement by Government. The Pestalozzi Trust and the other Associations I mentioned are actively engaged with Government in making changes to policy and law regarding home education. The government actively discourages home education. For those parents that choose to use a ‘boxed’ curriculum, there is generally good support” P5.

“As far as I know there is no government system to support; they don’t like what we are doing. But from overseas there are a few I mean America is very big on Homeschooling, so the support from there is massive, for example, if you want a learning program, you will get it from there, help is just an email away” P2.

There is a perception created by home-schooling parents that the government is trying to over-regulate the system, as a way to control and limit their choices. This is a contributing factor that home-schooling parents choosing to register their children under home-school associations/groups instead of under the Department of Education. Home-school parents fear that should they register with the Department of Education they will forfeit their freedom to choose any curriculum program of their choice and forfeit the opportunity in the method of learning, which they feel is more suited to their children. When it comes to registration parents say:

“I am not registered. I am against registering because if you are registered, apparently they force you to use a certain curriculum... because one reason for choosing homeschool is to find a different way of educating” P2.

“We are registered. Home-schooling Association was quick and very helpful. Whereas the Department of Education took months of back and forth” P3.

“We are registered through colleges that are well recognised in South Africa. It was done online and telephonically” P4.

“So we are registered to the Pestalozzi Trust, and it was very easy” P6.

“Yes, we are registered with the Department of Education. The bottom-line is that the government wants to know that we are not neglecting the children and that’s understandable, they want to know if we are giving our children an education and if it is a good education... officials come into our home, and all they want is to know if we are not busing our children, that we have a good curriculum, stationery and a place that is good enough to learn in” P10.

Those that are registered to the Department of Education complain that it generally takes too long to process registrations, with a lot of back and forth that some parent ends up enrolling under home-school organisations. Parent complain that the process of registration is long and complicated. They were quite critical of the government in their processing of home-schooling.

4.6. Benefits of Home-schooling

Home-schooling provides home-scholars with benefits such as; individualized education, a range of curriculum choices, and flexibility together with the freedom for a child to learn at

their own pace. The education is customized for every individual, which allows the learners to develop a love of learning. When something does not work out, home-scholars have an option to try a different approach or even change curriculums. There are various character building opportunities as the family spends a lot of time together, this type of learning also allows parents to spend time with children and for their children to spend time with each other. This research categorized the benefits as follows.

4.6.1. Individualised Education

Parents can devote all their time and attention to their children, as they are most likely to know their strengths and weaknesses. Parents can choose the amount of structure that is best for them and their children. Each program can be individualized to suit the needs and interests of each child. Each child can progress at his or her own pace instead of being influenced by the group. Parents are also in a better position to monitor the progress of their children on a daily basis and provide further instruction if needed.

“The freedom of the child to learn the way their brain operates. My child is very practical, he likes doing things with his hands, reading was never his thing, but I have to trick him. I got him a toy, a train and we had to assemble it but first, we had to read the manual, now he enjoys reading especially if it’s for his projects, he builds those prototypes; a water well and irrigation systems and they all require reading a manual” P7.

“You get to learn at you own pace, you get to learn what your brain has the tendency to absorb, take for instance my son, he is more practical, so we do not learn the theory of history when we learn about World War II, we focus on engineering, architecture, invention of electricity, how a cobb works stuff like that.” P2.

4.6.2. Curriculum Choices

Home educators follow a curriculum of their choice. The vast majority of home-school parents handpick their instructional materials, custom-designing the curriculum to presumably suit the needs of their children, their family lifestyle, and applicable government regulations, as also found by other studies (Martin, 1997).

“I used Clonard from lower grades to grade 9, the best syllabus ever, it is close to what Kloof High School uses as well as other private schools standards, and from grade 10-12 we

did Impaq. Both Impaq and Clonard were the closest curriculum to mainstream curriculum” P3.

In this study, the quote above reveals that the parent chose a curriculum program closest to mainstream school because she wants her children to be able to attend colleges and universities. Therefore she adapted a program that allows her assess her children’s progress against higher education admission standards. Other parents choose to use a variety of curriculums to accommodate their children. These parents designed their own learning programs, adopting from different existing curriculums. They see this as a way to educate their children while catering for their individual needs.

“So I use different curriculums for different subjects, at this age my children are still young, and when they get older, I am going to opt for the Cambridge Curriculum” P1.

“I use an eclectic approach, formulating a curriculum for each child according to their learning styles and needs” P5.

Some parents do not have a curriculum for the first year of home-school because this is a phase of getting to know the child and their capabilities. Other parents have the choice to use a variety of curriculums for different subjects especially for children under the age of 13 years; they then switch to a more structured curriculum at high school level. The following quotes capture this:

“Because my daughter are different, when the eldest started in grade 4 we just continued with the mainstream curriculum for that year... the following year we used a curriculum called Sunlight, it is from America, and it was amazing, it included; English Studies, Language Arts, Science that combined anatomy, geology we are talking about grade 5. The social science covered geography and history of countries such as; North Korea, Angola, South Korea, India, China, Russia, Australia, you name it. We covered all that, excluding America and Western Europe. In maths, we used something called Maths Teaching Textbook; she even thanked us for using that because it laid such a good foundation for. We later used Cambridge at the high school level, because it is a very good final qualification, she is very bright, so she needs the stimulation of a content rich curriculum” P6.

“I have not chosen a curriculum yet because when I started, I was advised against buying a curriculum too early. I have borrowed a curriculum from someone, where I thought ‘this is beautiful, this was just what I was looking for’. It only took us a day, my son was yawning, we

had to do history, and he was staring out the window, and I was like 'Oh My God!', I found that the curriculum was too structured for me , there was a lot of preparation required, and I am not like that... I have been asking around, asking other parents what they use. I also do not want to take a curriculum because someone suggested it and their children are academic when mine is practical” P2.

A curriculum programme should be individually appropriate, for each child’s unique interests, learning styles and cultural background. This is important in ensuring effective and quality education of children in home-schools. Parents warn against purchasing curriculum programs too early; one must first know where their children stand academically, an aptitude test might help. They also pointed out that it is important to research and analyse the curriculum before purchasing it, ask questions, and make informed decisions. Parents emphasise the flexibility in following any curriculum, to ensure that children learn what is important to them and what they are passionate about. Thus, some parents even use different programs and methods to teach at their disposal.

4.6.3. Assessment in Home-school

Home educators use many methods of assessing the progress of their children. Some use the grading system of assigning marks to their children’s work. Children can also demonstrate what they have learned through projects, papers, and performance. Others use a written evaluation based on tests. In many places, home educators are required to have their children tested periodically with a standardized test (Martin, 1997). When the parents are asked about their views on standardized testing and assessments they said:

“I won’t do standardised testing for now, because I teach one-on-one, I know what standard he is at, and I know what he is struggling with and what he is capable of. So I do not need a test for that” P2.

“No, not at this point but I plan on doing standardised testing at a later stage... I am not against it, and I keep records of my children’s progress, I just don’t report them to the department” P1.

“I feel it is unfair to test, as children are very different and should be allowed to develop at their own pace. But, I do test my children as per curriculum” P3.

“I do not test my youngest daughter, but my eldest one started getting tested at grade 8 level. She went to a tutoring centre at the time in Hillcrest that was tutoring filling gaps that might be missing with her studies and working on things she was not picking up or understanding. And they did exams on previous grades just to make sure what to work on” P6.

Home educators have a choice of whether or not to use standardised assessment for their children, most of them choose to delay the testing of their children, and they only test their children to obtain a matriculation equivalent qualification. Based on the responses above it is clear that most parents delay assessments. They believed that if parents will relax, pay close attention to the needs and interests of their child, allow them to mature at their own pace, work alongside them, and focus on a range of learning opportunities at least as much as book learning, their child will flourish.

4.6.4. Academic Performance

On average, most parents indicate that academic performance is not merely dependent on the percentage their children achieve. These parents are concerned with the quality of education they expose their children to which fosters a love for learning and encourages them to continuously seek opportunities to learn and develop them into well-rounded individuals. The following quotes support this:

“My son is eleven and he is two years behind in school, but I am not worried because every person learns at a different pace, he wanted to study WWII which is high school History, so he can study anything. I am not concerned with testing and pressurizing him as he is still young” P2.

“My children are both average students; the eldest is good at Tourism and Business Studies while the youngest is good at languages. Depending on the subject they score between 68-88%, my eldest average is 68%, and the youngest is 72%” P3.

“My children are excelling academically as home-scholars. Home-schooling allows us to enrich our children’s strengths and supplement their weaknesses. The kids’ education moves as fast or as slow as required for that particular subject area. We can work on the kids’ behaviour and work ethic throughout the day. My son’s poor work effort at school was nearly impossible to address. The teachers didn’t have time to make my son repeat work they felt

was average quality. We wouldn't see the work until days after it was completed. Finally, we've been able to push him to his full potential" P10.

The parent educators find that being involved in their children's education is an advantage because they get to understand the process of learning for their children. They also get to know their child better, particularly what their children are interested in learning and how well their children absorb information. If the children struggles with any concept they have the advantage to work on it before moving to another concept, they have an advantage of helping their children without the pressures of working at the pace other children work at and by this these parents believe that it helps them achieve more in a small space of time. Parents are satisfied with the results of home-school based on their children's academic performances.

4.6.5. Flexibility

Home-school also offers a flexible schedule, most parents opt for school holidays, and some do not. Most of the parents have a structured routine, and some do not, parents do what feels right for them and their children at all times. The following quotes capture how these parents structure their day-to-day routine to accommodate their children with their own special needs:

"I massage my child every morning before we start learning, so he can relax because when he is relaxed, he can learn, and he can enjoy learning... first, I massage his ears, this helps him to hear better, here we work on our senses to simulate learning, I count to 8 and repeat it three times. I then run my hands on the outline of his body, this works on the sense of touch in order to gain his trust... lastly, I place my finger on the halo of his collar bone, on the left-hand side, there is a button there, I just rub on it, this stimulates the tissues and clam nerves" P8.

"On average we start at 7:30 am. I am very structured and routine; it is school at home. My youngest daughter starts playing the cello at 7:30 am, music calms her and helps her focus. Every day is different; we have a break at 9:30 for an hour, then we back at it until 1:00 or 1:30 pm" P6.

Depending on the type of learning method, those using structured methods spend more time learning compared to those families that choose a less structured learning style. Generally

these families spend 4-5 hours schooling with the day beginning with intense work activities and ending with revising work they did during the day. The following quotes explain this:

“We spend 4 hours learning a day, we are very relaxed. We have no routine, but depending on what we have to do, we may start at 9 o’clock. Reading is very chilled, we sit on the couch and read, with maths we sit down and do it because I am still in the process of finding a curriculum, things are relaxed, we are not structured” P2.

“Our school hours are 8:00 – 10:00 am consists of learning, then a half an hour break. From 10:30 – 12:30 pm we continue, we take a one and half hour break then they do homework, revision and reading with a tutor from 2:00 – 3:30 pm. If the work is not completed by 3:30, we take a break and continue work after dinner for 2 hours, especially if it is exam time... we generally spend +/- 5 hours a day but can go later if it is an interesting subject or during exam period” P3.

Moreover, home-schoolers have a choice whether or not they have school holidays or not. In order to accommodate their children and public schooled peers, parents will have holidays after considering what is best for their children above what is best for them.

“My son insists on holidays, I feel we don’t need holidays, but we work according to national school holidays” P2.

“I go according to the national school term holidays to accommodate my children’s friends from mainstream school so that they get to spend time with them” P1.

“We don’t do school holidays except for 3 weeks over Christmas and New Year. This is for two reasons; one, the children love school, and two, there are some days we don’t do school because of Clinics etc.” P5.

Flexibility is one advantage of home-schooling, parents do not have to stick to a strict schedule, so children have more time to develop their talents and hobbies. Parents who home-school can teach anywhere, so their classroom is not limited to the home. They can take trips during the school year, visit relatives, and take vacations. They can just pack up their books and go. Learning is a year-round experience and home-schooling provides for this. The continuum of experience is an important factor in learning and need not be interrupted by the calendar (Martin, 1997).

4.6.6. Financial Cost

Education is an investment, and many parents seek an opportunity to provide their children with the highest quality education. Usually the better the quality the higher the cost and private school tuition is a testament to that. Many parents feel that home-schooling has an advantage of providing quality education at affordable costs. The price of home schooling may vary depending on the type of curriculum utilized, supplies, equipment, extra-curricular activities, transportation cost and the loss of income, and the following quotes confirm this:

“It doesn’t cost much. It is mainly the internet, computer paper and ink. There is the cost of loss of income for me though” P5.

“So far I have spent very, very little because I haven’t bought a curriculum just yet. I have spent about R500 per month on reading material” P2.

“I can’t really tell you that, it is different every time, but I think it is much cheaper than private school tuition, cheaper than the school my son use to go to in Durban North” P1.

It is hard to gauge the exact amount these parents spend on home-schooling because their responses are based on the money they spend solely on learning materials. They do not reveal the amount of money they spend on traveling to social group meetings and extra-mural activities, social group membership.

“Depending on grade we spend R7 000 – R10 000 annually” P3.

“Despite the loss of income, home-school is affordable, an alternative to private education with no overhead costs and budgets for transport and uniforms. We spend far less than normal school fees, about +/- R12 000 per annum” P4.

Home-schooling is a decision where one parent has to forgo their earnings to stay home and educate their children. However, despite the loss of income, home educators say that home-school is affordable, an alternative to private education with no overhead costs and budgets for transport and uniforms. Many of the participants did not feel comfortable revealing the exact amount of money they spend on home-schooling annually. Besides losing a salary in the household parents feel that home-schooling is cheaper than private school fees but it ensures that their child is receiving a high quality education.

4.6.7. Socialisation

The issue of socialisation is the most critiqued aspect of home education; the concern is that the children do not get enough exposure to social interactions. The social development of children which fosters the ability to adapt to the needs of a group of people, the ability to follow the rules, coping skills because they are assumed to be sheltered from society (Moore et al., 2004). Home educators know that their children need to develop relationships with other children and adults. In the interviews, it is clear that parents will go to great lengths to provide their children with opportunities to develop their social skills. The following quotes confirm this:

“Every day, every day we have something, Monday we got a support group where a lot of home-schooled children come to interact with each other. My children have a playgroup on Thursday afternoon, weekly market, Sport’s Day every September in PMB and an annual Gala in February” P1

“I know a lot of people say that home-schooled children aren’t socially developed, but that is not true at all. Our children mingle with different age groups, some old, others young. They not only; the 10 year olds play with 10 year olds, they get to play and interact with different age groups. My daughters both do martial arts, combined sports such as; cricket, netball and soccer. Every afternoon they have piano lessons, art lessons, so they always get an opportunity to be outside the home” P9.

Parents that home-school are aware of the issue of socialisation, they are strongly committed to providing positive socialisation opportunities for their children, and they ensure their children are involved in social events on a regular basis. This study found out that parents put so much effort into developing relationships with other children and adults.

“We are a large family, and most have others their own ages. We have friends with children their ages who we see regularly. Home educators believe that forced socialisation with children of the same age is not beneficial. Children should be able to socialize with children and adults of all ages” P5.

“There is a dad in our group that hosts Bible study with children; we also have Art’s group that rotates visitation from each home-schoolers’ home... when we get to art lessons, we have to seat next to the same person every week in order to encourage interaction with a person my son may or may not like. We have sports, a team interaction. We have a very good group of home-schoolers that also socialise every week. He gets together with other children too,

children from his pervious school, he goes to youth. It is very important for me to make time because it can very easily slip into dysfunction” P2.

“We belong to a very big church, so they have a lot of friends from the previous school, their friendship groups are quite rich. As a mum, I just have to make sure that we have enough play dates inside and outside the home quite frequently. They also attend youth my younger daughter goes to junior youth and the eldest goes to senior youth; she is actually a youth leader. They have friends in the neighbourhood too” P6.

To promote better socialisation these home-schoolers are members of home-school groups, social network groups, churches and many other communal activities. As a result, these parents feel that their children have more significant opportunities to interact with a wide variety of age groups which develops their self-esteem and confidence levels.

4.6.8. Support Structures

Support is very important when home-schooling and home-school associations and support groups often aid in ensuring, parents can discuss any problems they may have such as changing their curriculum and testing, or they can exchange information or to socialize. The support groups also provide opportunities for home-schooled children to interact with other children, play together, and to go on field trips together. Here are some of support groups home-schoolers refer to:

“www.oikosfamily.com. This website supplies curriculum programs and how to start with home-schooling. We receive a lot of support with the Home-school community... the Home-schooling Association also put us in touch with home schoolers in our area, where groups are created to help each other out. They arrange craft days, sports days etc.” P3.

“There are social media support groups and tutor services that provide lessons for the children” P4.

“There are Home Education groups and Associations that provide information and guidance. The Pestalozzi Defence Fund is the primary source of support. The Pestalozzi Fund has been good it hasn't really guided us, it is more as a back-up, should we have any problems, legal problems or anything like that, they are more like a legal entity” P6.

At support group meetings, parents get to plan field trips, organize team sports and spelling bees in groups. They organize art classes, gym classes, recitals, and many other activities. Support group members keep in touch through phone, fax, and newsletters. In the interviews, parents observed that the more efficient way to find a home-schooling support group in any area is to contact a home-school association which usually can direct you to a local support group.

4.6.9. Effect on Family Relationships

According to Yin et al. (2016), home-schooling promotes family bonding by fostering a nurturing family atmosphere allowing families to knit a strong bond. The home-school environments averts the generational gap between children and parents, while building good relationships among siblings. In this study, parents reported that home schooling has helped them to develop a strong bond with their children. One parent note that it also allowed her to find out more about her child. The following quotes capture this:

“It is incredible from a mom’s point of view, it helps to develop a relationship with your children, it has children, and it has helped me discover who my son is. It is a lovely family journey” P2.

“Home-schooling is a brilliant way to stay connected with your son or daughter, and it can have its benefits” P9.

Home educators achieve family unity by surrounding their children with a loving, family oriented environment that allows them to be nurtured in a way that is consistent with their religious values and beliefs. The ability to include religion into the learning programme is an advantage some parents very enjoy. They say it is an added advantage together with the fact that it brings their families so much closer together. The children begin to enjoy each other’s company, they become friends and the parents feel closer to their children in this setting.

“We start every day with a prayer and a reading from the bible. We pray before we eat and the stories I read to them are based on biblical events at all times. We attend children’s bible study at least twice a week” P1.

This parent goes to great lengths to make sure her children get an education that is shaped by her religious views. Prayer and bible studies are a part of this family’s learning program.

“Watching and being part of every new development in their learning and growing as a person. I spend time with my children and am able to travel as schooling goes with it. The good is that you get to watch your children unfold in front of you and you see them grow, that’s a privilege” P3.

“We yell at our kids less. Home-schooling forces us as parents to maintain a loving authority in the household. We stopped spanking our kids. You can’t get your kids to write essays or complete a large set of math problems if you don’t have their respect and obedience. Spanking and corporal punishment establish fear, not effective, loving obedience” P10.

“Our family spends our best hours of each day together. We were giving away our kids during their best hours, when they were rested and happy, and getting them back when they were tired, grumpy and hungry. I dreaded each evening when the fighting and screaming never seemed to end, and my job was to push them through homework, extra-curricular, and music practice. Now, our kids have a happy time together each day. At recess time, the kids are actually excited about playing with each other” P9.

Many factors including the parents being emotionally connected to their children with a good understanding of who they are as individuals and students are contributing factors that foster love and create strong ties among the family members.

4.7. The Overall Experience of Home-schooling

Home-schooling presents families with numerous challenges as well as benefits for both the home educator and the learners involved. To grasp what they go through the researcher queried the parents on their experiences as home educators, as a family and if they would recommend this form of educating to anyone. Parents feel that home schooling has advantages for their families, as parents learn more about their children and they develop a strong bond with them. The quotes that follow express how the participants feel about their journey:

“I love being with my children, and getting to know my children, spending time with them, they are my children, and I need to spend time with them. My children are happy, they are well adjusted, and they love learning” P1.

“It has been a wonderful, wonderful journey; it’s a learning opportunity for the parents as well, a fantastic opportunity to get to know your child from an academic perspective in

education, how he learns, what he is interested in and helps master the love of learning. You find that everything in life is a learning opportunity. You go to the supermarket, and he will ask me ‘mum what is on the shelf?’ next thing we have a full on biology lesson as to where the pork comes from... So yes, I am 100% happy with my child’s education. I wish that every single child had this privilege. It breaks my heart to hear most children say how they hated school. These children go through school learning without a sense of purpose, not understanding why they are learning certain things” P2.

“I love home-school, it is very hard work, but so rewarding and I am blessed to be able to be with my children” P3.

“It’s the best thing I ever did for my children. It allows each child to learn in a way that suits them. It also gives me insight into where they excel and where they have difficulties. I have absolutely no doubt that I am doing the right thing. My children love school; they have a love of learning and reading. They are unstressed, relaxed and happy. I would recommend it for those that have the need and the desire, your heart and commitment need to be there. I believe it is the way of the future” P5.

“I like parenting more, by far. As a mom of school-aged kids, I felt like my role as a parent had been diminished to mini-van driver, schedule-keeper, cook and disciplinarian.” P10.

Parents beam with joy when asked about their experiences during the journey of home-schooling their children. They say that they value individualized education and the freedom of choosing an educational programme that is best suited for their children, depending on whether their child is academic, practical or creative.

4.8. The Potential of Home-schooling

Studies on the feasibility of home education often question; how realistic is it, how accessible is it and does it work? The following quotes indicate how accessible home-schooling is in South Africa, the researcher asked the participants, how they find out about home-schooling.

“I had friends that educated their children at home and I got a hold of the Home Schooling Association, and other families in Nature Conservation also home-school their children” P3.

“Research. I was researching ‘alternative ways of learning’, ‘how the right brain and left brain works’ and ‘visual learning’, because my son was struggling with school and the

physiological assessments suggested he be put on Ritalin which I am firmly against. So, I came across home-schooling and read up about it. I contacted people that I knew were home-schooling and met up with them. I asked them how it works and what do they do? What curriculum do they use?” P2.

The internet plays a valuable part in providing information on home-schooling for parents. Those that desire to home-school often seek advice from home-schoolers to give them a picture of how to go about the home-schooling journey. Home-school associations and groups also provide a lot of information on home-schooling.

Home-schooling parents mentioned some places they got information on home education. Some of the sources of their information include the following:

- *Pestalozzi Trust*
- *Home Schooling Association*
- *Virtual Schools*
- *Oikosfamily*

Although some parents did not mention other associations and groups by the name they referred to a group from America; *“the guys from America helped me...”*, *“I contacted a group from America, and they helped me”*, *“We get so much support from guys in America”*. The internet is a powerful tool because it is the basis of most of their communication with these groups, this is a digital form of education, curriculum programmes are found and ordered online, tutors and around the clock assistance is found online via websites, chat rooms, and social networks.

4.9. Summary

The demographic profile of the participants of this research reveals the participants are educated, their qualifications vary from matriculation to doctorates, and all the participants are married. This chapter reveals that the reasons parents choose to home-school their children include; religion, the opportunity for customized education, and ability to monitor their children’s learning and personal relationships closely. All the participants of this study selected their curriculum program, learning methods and daily routines based on their preference and their children’s abilities. Socialization is not a concern for these parents as

they believe that the social interactions in conventional schools are generally negative. They prefer to provide more character building social opportunities for their children, such as community group involvement. All the parents here found home-schooling to be a tremendous amount of work, as a result they found support as an essential factor which is validated by their memberships in local support groups. Overall, parents agreed that their children's development outcomes as a result of home-schooling were positive and appreciative. Parents think that homeschooling is not for every family and that those who consider it must have the time, commitment, motivation and discipline.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter determines whether the study addressed the aim and objectives, which was to broaden understanding of home-schooling, while evaluating the experiences of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This chapter assesses how effectively the research methodology and data collection worked to address the aim. It also integrates and compares findings to relevant literature concerning home-schooling. Lastly, it provides recommendations for future research based on the findings and limitations of this study, with conclusions on the overall research findings.

5.2. Discussion

De Waal and Theron (2003), state that, although it appears as if home-schooling is most popular amongst whites, there are also members from other populations groups who prefer home-schooling (de Waal and Theron, 2003). However, in America, white home-schooled students still represent about 75% of all home-schooled children, but there has been a noticeable increase in African American involvement in the home-school movement. In 1999, it was estimated that nearly 10% of all home-schooled children were Black, and those numbers appear to be consistently growing (Mazama & Lundy, 2013). Ray (2016) supports this by stating, there has been a visible shift in diversity of the home-school population, that home-schoolers tend to be spread out in a broad range of communities, cutting across ethnic, religious, political, and economic backgrounds (Ray, 2009). This research's demographic profile suggests that white people dominate the home-school population this sample research, as the whole sample size was White. Although, the researcher did locate a few Black home educating parents, it was difficult to conduct interviews with them. Interestingly, the sample is very educated, and 40% of the participants hold a qualification in teaching and had taught in conventional schools previously.

The literature review discovered that the term home-schooling has different definitions depending on the context and people (Donnelly, 2012). The most general definition of home-

schooling was derived from Mills (2009), stating that home-schooling is simply an education received in a home setting conducted by a parent, with an option of a tutor service (Mills, 2009). The researcher referred to the National Education Policy Act No. 27, to make it applicable to the context, which refers to home-school as home-education, here it is a programme of learning that a parent provides for their child at their own home, at their own terms (de Waal and Theron, 2003). This relates to the definition the participants of this study provided, which states that home-schooling is an alternative learning programme which occurs at home, it is conducted by a parent with or without the aid of a tutor. The Theoretical Model of Parental Involvement is highly influenced by the social constructivist approach, which allows the participants to describe and create their own understanding of home education (Jackson and Sorensen, 2007). It was therefore, convenient to obtain from participants their perspectives of home-schooling and determine if it differs from mainstream education and how so. The participants that had previously enrolled their children in mainstream schools found that there is a difference between home-schooling and conventional school, they said that mainstream schooling is very restrictive and does not accommodate for individuality. They noted that home-schooling allows the home educator to customize the educational programme to the interests of the learner as an individual.

In line with the Theoretical Model of Parental Involvement, the objective to identify the reasons parents home-school, this was addressed through this model which questions why parents decide to be involved in their children's education to such an extent (Alghazo, 2015). Moore (2002) revealed that parents choose each child for different reasons. Fuelled by the criticism of mainstream education, parents seek a better quality of education that is well-rounded. The parent educators here believe that they are in a better position to provide a quality education to their children. They also feel that their children may require an education that is responsive to their needs and this may not be possible in mainstream schools because of the high ratios of learners to educators. There are concerns about the performance of mainstream schools specifically with respect to science and mathematics. There is a huge concern that schools in South Africa are not internationally competitive.

Parents who classify themselves as ideologues justify the decision to home-school as a lack of faith they have in the public school system, as well as their belief in the religious and family values. These parents also want to have more control over what values are taught to their children. By home-schooling, they have the means to accomplish these goals, of not only education but also other religious values such as Christianity, consistent with other

studies (Moreau, 2012). This study found that parent educators want to instil a strong moral education to their children and they feel that they are best placed to provide this kind of education. Parents want their children to hold the same values as themselves. They are particularly worried about protecting their children from harmful influences either from peers, educators or society as a whole. For this reason, they opt to home school their children.

The factors contributing to the expansion of home-schooling are also the expenses of schooling, and the distance and travelling difficulties families encounter. The participants of this study decided to home-school because it is convenient for the family especially if there are not many options which regards to the availability of good schools, distance and transport issues and affordability of what they assume is quality education.

According to Thomas (2016), parents are motivated by the medical needs their children have to home-school, as they view home-schooling as an educational alternative which accommodates special needs. The participants reveal that learning difficulties, in the form of mental and physical disabilities motivated them to home-school. The participants feel they can educate their children at home in a non-discriminatory environment, where their children do not need to be medicated to be accepted by the schooling system. This is achieved by providing alternative learning techniques to accommodate their children's learning styles. While the reasoning behind choices is often varied and complex, examining the factors influencing home-school, the Parental Involvement Model helps to illuminate why home-school families make the choices they do when it comes to education.

Home-schooling requires a significant amount of time, commitment and hard work. Parent educators may eventually experience loneliness and stress. The participants do suffer from frustration, burnout and a lack of support from close relatives, extended family and society; which impacts negatively on their journey of home-schooling. Home-schooling requires a lot of commitment from parents, hard work and time while facing negative attitudes from friends and family about their choice of education.

This study finds that parents have issues with the regulation of home-schooling and say that it is a preventing factor for them to register. The regulation of home-schooling in South Africa by the government is seen in a negative light, it is said that it does not benefit the people and that the government just wants to restrict and overregulate home-schoolers. The participants of this study feel the government is trying to over-regulate the home-school system, as a way to control and limit their choices. As a result, only 1 parent was registered with the

Department of Education. Home-school parents fear that should they register to the Department of Education they will forfeit their freedom to choose any curriculum program of their choice and forfeit the opportunity to choose a method of learning, which they feel is more suited to their children.

Home-school is advantageous because it allows home educators to follow a curriculum of their choice. The majority of home-school parents handpick their instructional materials, custom-designing the curriculum to presumably suit the needs of their children, their family lifestyle, and applicable government regulations, as also found by other studies (Martin, 1997). The participants that chose a curriculum program closest to mainstream school have to compete with other students when applying to universities. The other parents choose to use a variety of curriculums to accommodate their children these parents designed their own learning program adopting from different existing curriculums. They see this as a way to educate their children while catering for their individual needs. Some parents do not have a curriculum for the first year of home-schooling because this is a phase of getting to know the child and their capabilities. Other parents have the choice to use a variety of curriculums for different subjects especially for children under the age of 13 years; they formerly switch to a more structured curriculum at the secondary school level.

Home educators use many methods of assessing the progress of their children. Some use the grading system of assigning marks to their children's work. Children can also demonstrate what they have learned through projects, papers, and performance. Others use a written evaluation based on tests. In many places, home educators are required to have their children tested periodically with a standardized test (Martin, 1997). Home educators have a choice of whether or not to use standardised assessment for their children, most of them choose to delay the testing of their children, and they only test their children to obtain a matriculation equivalent qualification. Based on the responses above it is clear that most parents delay assessments as long as they can taking a page from the book written by the Moores called *"Is institutionalising young children a sound, educational trend, and what is the best timing for school entrance?"* (Angelis, 2008). They believed that if parents were more relaxed and paid more attention to the needs and interests of their child, while allowing them greater independence and focusing on non-academic learning opportunities they are more likely to achieve success.

Home-school also offers a flexible schedule, most parents opt for school holidays, and some do not. Most of the parents have a structured routine, and some do not, parents do what feels right for them and their children at all times. Depending on the type of learning method, those using structured methods spend more time learning compared to those families that choose a less structured learning style. Generally these families spend 4-5 hours schooling with the day beginning with intense work activities and ending with revising work they did during the day.

One huge disadvantage of home-schooling is that many parents do not participate in the economic sector and they often have to leave work. The participants of this research confirm that at least one parent in the family had to leave work and stay home and educate their children. However, despite the loss of income, home educators say that home-school is affordable, an alternative to private education with no overhead costs and budgets for transport and uniforms. Many of the participants did not feel comfortable revealing the exact amount of money they spend on home-schooling annually. Besides losing a salary in the household parents feel that home-school is cheaper than private school fees but it ensures that their child is receiving a high quality education.

Murphy (2012) found that home-schoolers have very rich social networks which encourage good socialization skills. The participants of this study are aware of the issue of socialisation, they are committed to providing positive socialisation opportunities for their children, and they ensure their children are involved in social events on a regular basis. To promote better socialisation these home-schoolers are members of home-school groups, social network groups, churches and many other communal activities. As a result, these parents feel that their children have more significant opportunities to interact with a wide variety of age groups which develops their self-esteem and confidence levels. A study conducted by Medlin (2016), revealed that parent educators expect their children to interact socially with different people, as they provide their children with a variety of social opportunities outside the family.

The participants emphasized that support is very important when home-schooling and home-school associations and support groups often aid in ensuring, parents can discuss any problems they may have such as changing their curriculum and testing, or they can exchange information or to socialize. The participants found support group through home-school associations. Martin (1997) supports this, saying, support groups also provide opportunities for home-schooled children to interact with other children, play together, and to go on field trips together.

Home-school learners tend to have better relationships with their families and other adults (Medlin, 2013). The parent educators say they achieve family unity by surrounding their children with a loving, family oriented environment that allows them to be nurtured in a way that is consistent with their religious values and beliefs. The ability to include religion into the learning programme is an advantage some parents very enjoy. They say it is an added advantage together with the fact that it brings their families so much closer together. The children begin to enjoy each other's company, they become friends and the parents feel closer to their children in this setting.

In a study conducted by Thomas (2016), some families base their experience to the type of curriculum and learning styles, but majority of the families emphasized on the growth and development of their relationship as a family. The findings of the present research indicate there is a development of a closer relationship between the parent educators and their children, the parents have this love for spending time with their children and getting to know and manage the relationship between siblings.

Home-schooling has a growing market at approximately 20% per annum in South Africa, according to current estimates, the number of home-schoolers in South Africa can be in the hundred thousand in a few years, especially with an estimation of home educators of approximately 90 000 in 2013 (Kruger, 2015). The findings of this research reveal that home-school associations such as; the Pestalozzi Trust, HSDLA and the Association of Home-schooling have supplied home-scholars sufficient information and guidance to those who are interested in home-schooling and to those who are currently home-schooling. Although there are provincial government operating associations in South Africa, home-scholars state that it is support groups and associations based in America that have been most supportive to them.

5.3. Recommendations

There is a need for more research on home-schooling in South Africa as this population is continuously growing and also there is a need for the provision of adequate and reliable information. This can be achieved by developing descriptive data set such as a national household survey focusing on home-schooling in South Africa, a survey similar to the one that is conducted in the United of America called the National Household Education Survey. This dataset should include a detailed information that includes socio-economic class, marital

status, employment status, educational level, type of curriculums, the money they spend on it and the reason for choosing this type of educational alternative. It is important for the government to investigate further on the nature of home-schooling, its benefits, and provide an effective support structure for home-scholars.

The South African government needs to decide whether it wants to have a strict or lenient regulation of the home-schooling system. There is a grey area in the South African Schools Act of 1996, which does not mention that the parents have to comply with using a curriculum used at mainstream schools when they register. However, the requirements to register at the Department of Education implies that home-scholars are required to use the curriculum programme utilized in mainstream schools. The policy should be amended effectively taking the home-schoolers' views into consideration and a well-rounded policy should be developed for the government to monitor and regulate the system without undermining the home-schooling population. Furthermore, the Department of Education needs to work cooperatively with the different home-school associations and support groups as a way to communicate with parent educators and to encourage parents to register; this will allow the department to be able to regulate the system effectively.

Future research should explore how home-schooled children cope as adults once they are done with school in South Africa. Research developing effective measures of the self-esteem and self-concepts of home-schooled learners should be considered. There needs to be a focus on the impact home-schooling has on family relationships. Researchers should consider investigating the relationship income has on academic outcomes of home-scholars and the influence money spent on their education has on their academic outcomes. Research should also address the dangers of home-schooling concerning health, abuse and negligence. If there are any, there need to be effective solutions and how to overcome these. Moreover, the scope of quantitative studies on home-schooling is almost non-existent especially in South Africa, future research on home-schooling should consider adopting a quantitative approach.

5.4. Conclusion

The study based the definition of home-schooling on the one provided by the South African National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996. To broaden the understanding of home-schooling the participants provided their own description of home-schooling and the way it differs from mainstream education. This shed insights on the meaning of home-schooling in

the South African context. The motivations for home-school were different for every parent as it is for every student involved. The research concluded that parents here seek a better quality of education for their children, participants felt there is a need to maintain morale standing and that home-schooling is convenient for them and their children. According to the model of parent involvement parents base their decision to home-school on their beliefs about child development, child rearing and then apply it to home-schooling. The parent's choice of involvement is based on their skills, knowledge, and the potential time and energy home schooling demands. A positive outcome of parental involvement in the form of home-schooling occurs when parents understand their role as educators and believe in their abilities to identify and nurture their children's interests. In a home setting, parents are expected to provide a safe and healthy environment, one appropriate to accommodate learning experiences, support and develop positive attitudes to education.

The parent educators shared their experiences, which revealed that home-schooling is a life altering decision. Home-schooling is a journey that requires discipline and commitment. There are various benefits associated with home-schooling, but the most common advantage is that home-schooling presents families with the opportunity to grow and develop together creating a rare bond. With the different views on academic assessment it is difficult to conclude on the academic outcomes of home-schooling. However, based on the views of the parents who are satisfied with their children's overall development, it is clear that academic outcomes are not the basis of good quality education.

This research gave insights on how home-schools operate and how parents interact with their children. This study confirmed the findings of previous research on home-schooling from the perspective of parent educators, which generally views home-school in a positive light. Despite the fact that it is over two decades since the legalization of home-schooling, the home-schooling population continues to report negative attitudes and experiences with the way home-schooling is regulated. There needs to be a development of better communication tools between the government and the home-schooling population, which might address the attitudes parents have towards registering under the Department of Education. One recommendation is to develop a survey on home-schooling in South Africa, to increase the reliability of information on the subject. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will be in consideration of home-schooling as a viable option in South Africa and play a vital role in mitigating the challenges facing the education system and developing appropriate ways to monitor the system.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Interview Guide

Section A: Demography of Participants

1. Name:
2. Gender:
3. Race:
4. Education Level:
5. Marital Status:

Section B: Objective 1 – Definition of Home-schooling

6. How would you describe home-schooling?
7. How does home-school differ from mainstream education?

Section C: Objective 2 – Reasons for Home-schooling

8. What motivated you to practice home-schooling?
9. Could you estimate how much you spend on your child's education per annum?
10. How do you feel about the amount of money you spend on your choice of education?

Section D: Objective 3 – Challenges and Benefits

11. What are the benefits associated with home-schooling?
12. What are the challenges associated with home-schooling?
13. What does your daily routine look like?
14. How many hours a day do you dedicate to teaching your child or children with direct instruction?
15. How many hours a day does your child spend studying outside?
16. Do you have school holidays? When do they occur?

17. What type of opportunities does your child or children have to interact with peers?
18. What are the choices in extra-curricular activities or any activities outside the home?
19. What curriculum did you choose? Why?
20. What do you think of standardized testing?
21. Do you test your child or children academically?
22. How does your child or children perform on these tests?
23. Do you report the test scores?
24. How do you feel about home-schooling?

Section E: Objective 4 – Potential and Accessibility

25. How did you find out about home-based education?
26. Do you recommend it? Please explain your answer.

APPENDIX 2: Consent Form

I am Nonkululeko Dlamini, student number 212521019. I am currently studying my Masters in Population Studies, at the School of Build Environment Development Studies under the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am conducting research on **Experiences and perspectives of home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal**, and would like for you to participate in this study.

The interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to members of the research team. Do you give your consent for: (please tick one of the options below)

Your name, and other personal details.	
For the interview to be recorded.	
For the researcher to quote your responses in study.	
None of the above.	

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project. Please note that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary.
- You are free to refuse to answer any question.
- You are free to withdraw from this study at any time.

Please sign this form to show that I have read the contents to you

Signature ----- Date----- (Name:)

Write your email address below if you wish to receive a copy of the research report:

Email Address	Do you wish to receive a copy of research report	Yes	No

Interviewer to keep signed copy and leave unsigned copy with respondent.

My contact details are as follows:

Cell phone number: +27 729293585.

Email Address: 212521019@stu.ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX 3: Ethical Approval



06 April 2017

Ms Nonkuleleko Dlamini (212521019)
School of Built Environment & Development Studies
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Dlamini,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0300/017M
Project title: Experiences and perspectives of Home-schooling in KwaZulu-Natal

Approval notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 03 April 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

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

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

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

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Pranitha Maharaj
cc Academic Leader: Dr Oliver Mtshali
cc School Admin: Ms Nolundi Mzolo

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