

**INVALUABLE ALLIES? A CASE STUDY OF PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARENT-
TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS IN THREE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE
PHOENIX- WEST CIRCUIT**

BY

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION

I, **Tenisha Chetty**, declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation (Invaluable allies: A case study of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West circuit), except where otherwise indicated, is my original work;
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university;
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons;
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been acknowledged;
 - b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed within quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) The work described in this dissertation was carried out in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2016 under the supervision of Dr P.E. Myende (Supervisor); and
- (vi) The Ethical Clearance No. HSS/0325/016M was granted prior to undertaking the fieldwork.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

This dissertation is submitted with/without my approval.

DR PHUMLANI ERASMUS MYENDE

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late aunt, Mrs S. Narain, who would have been so proud of this attainment. This strong woman has taught me, that even in my weakest moment, I have to be strong. Thank you for EVERYTHING.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates promoting effective parent-teacher relationships in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit. This study sought to find out from the SGBs (School governing bodies); teachers and parents as to what role do the SGBs play in promoting effective relationships between parents and teachers: how do SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and what are the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The study was conducted with three SGB members, three teachers and three parents, one from each of the three schools. The theories on parent and teacher relationship that guided this study were Epstein's parental involvement framework and Bronfenbrenner Ecological System's theory.

The methodology used to obtain the data was semi-structured interviews with the SGBs, teachers and parents. A qualitative method was used to determine how the SGBs promote effective parent and teacher relationships. Given the method that was use, this study was frame in an interpretive paradigm. Themes were form, using the collected data that was organised and analysed.

The findings of the data showed that there is a great need for the SGBs to promote effective parent and teacher relationships. Both parents and teachers agreed that there are obstacles that prevent healthy parent-teacher relationships. There is a greater demand that parents and teachers communicate better and work collaboratively for effective teaching and learning to take place. Recommendations based on the findings were made: To provide training for the SGBs, so that they understand their roles better, especially in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. Teachers (schools) and the parents (community) should work closely with each other to meet their mutual goals. The SGBs need to assist the teachers and the parents to foster a positive relationship. Therefore, this will create an environment for teachers and parents to communicate on a regular basis through various ways other than just using parent-teacher meetings to communicate with each other.

Key words: Parent-teacher relationship, parental involvement, relationships and partnerships, and school-community partnership.

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CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE SCENE: PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARENT- TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

1.1 Introduction

This dissertation presents the results of a study that investigated the role of the SGB in promoting effective parent and teacher relationships. It focuses on the perspectives of SGB members, teachers and parents in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit. The study examined how SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent and teacher relationships and explored the enabling and challenging factors which SGBs are face with in this phenomenon. This determines what school governance can do to contribute and assist towards these enabling and challenging factors.

Significant to this phenomenon of parent-teacher relationships is that children are more prone to succeed academically and socially if children's parents become more proactive in monitoring their academic attainment. Therefore, this chapter presents a background to the study, statement of the problem and rationale for the study. It is follow by the significance, objectives, critical questions, a brief definition of the key concepts used in the study and the limitations of the study. Towards the end of the chapter, I present the structure of the dissertation and a conclusion.

1.2 Background to the Study

The topic for this dissertation, specifically, "Invaluable allies: A case study of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit" is found in the field of Educational Leadership, Management and Policy. This study stems from debates and genuine concerns amongst the management and teachers of schools who argue that there is an insufficient level of parental involvement at school. Due to this, parents and teachers are unable to have fluent forms of communication because the parents are unable to see their children's teachers on a regular basis to understand how they can work together with the teachers to the benefit of their child.

The South African Schools Act [84 of 1996] determines that relationships between parents and the school in school governance would be establish. Furthermore, the Outcomes Based Education [OBE] Policy was design more specially to encourage and support parental

involvement in education at large. The policy enables parents to share the concerns of education with the government. However, schools at large reveal that they do not fully understand the role that parents should play in education. Parents are unable to comprehend their role at school and are required to be work shopped to portray a more meaningful role in their children's academic attainment and to participate in school tasks. Dalton (2012) rightly concludes that in order to have a fruitful nation, it is necessary for parents to dialogue with teachers about the learners. Hence, the effective relationship between parents and teacher would be very valuable concerning the children's education.

In agreement, Grant and Ray (2013) argue that parents who remain active participants in their children's academic advancement are more likely to be supportive and helpful towards the school and more especially towards the teachers that teach their child. Therefore, the relationship between parents and teachers would then aid the child to improve in his or her academic success (Lemmer, 2013). The partnership between parents and teachers establishes an awareness that parents are also allies to support their child's academic success.

Grant and Ray (2013) argue that because a child's first experience of anything will be from home, the home is the first learning environment. Kioko (2013) concurs that parents are a child's first teacher and therefore they should continue a positive guidance to the child through his or her academic years. Thus, it is imperative that teachers involve parents as much as they can in school events and tasks that will aid learners' growth. Daniel (2011) mentions that parent-teacher relationships empowers parents to contribute in decision-making in their children's educational welfare. Venter, Joubert and Chetty (2014) point out that effective relationships between parent-teacher are most likely reduce the dropout rate and rebellious nature of children at schools. Lemmer (2012) concurs those effective parent-teacher relationships benefits in well establish and developing countries. Therefore, the community at large will also benefit from effective parent-teacher relationship because it increases discipline in learners and higher academic success.

Even though there is an emergent frame of literature on parent involvement at schools, studies have revealed that SGBs play a limited role in promoting effective parent and teacher relationships. In the day we are living in, it is a high demand for teachers and parents to work in partnership (Joseph-Goldfarb, 2014). Teachers need to therefore, work in partnership with the parents due to learning and behavioural challenges that occur at schools. This assist the teachers to resolve issues, which occur at schools. Meier and Lemmer (2015) note with

concern that effective communication is an imperative aspect to create relations between parents and teachers. By encouraging and enhancing effective two-way communication, fecund relationships are form on behalf of the learners.

In contradiction to this background that this study planned to investigate the role of the SGBs in promoting effective relationships between parents and teachers, to examine the ways through which SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship and to explore the enabling and challenging factors towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationship.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

According to Sanders (2001), Sanders (2006), Epstein (2008), Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009) and Epstein (2010), parental support in children's education is vital. This is the case because parents are in possession of crucial details about their children that schools may not have. Sanders (2006) mentions that their involvement, however, not only benefit children, but also they themselves benefit greatly from being involved with the school. This usually depends on the kinds of expectations they might have concerning the school.

Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009) state that parental involvement can benefit learners in their academic achievement because they are more successful if their parents participate at school and encourage education at home, regardless of educational background or social class of the parents and improved attitudes to learning. However, at the school I taught in I observed that parents zealously engage in school tasks. Their main concern stems from previous academic performances. From my personal perspective, I have observed that if a child does not perform as the way the parents expect, they would often blame the teacher rather than work with the teacher to find better solutions to enhance their children's academic performance.

The parents try to find possible faults on how the teachers teach their children. The children create an assumption about their teachers to their parents. Sanders (2001) and Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009) postulate that a learner's attitude about themselves and their control over their environment are critical to achievement. In other words, when parents show an interest in their children's academic attainment and they cherish great prospects for their performance, they encourage positive attitudes that are key to achievement and decreased dropout rates. This has led me to conduct this research, which focuses on the role of the SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Family involvement in education is considered as an essential component of children's academic success. According to Epstein (2001), all stakeholders agree that family involvement makes a significant difference in the education of the child. Sanders (2007) further postulates that the involvement of families allows the school to access resources beyond their boundaries. Adding to this, Epstein (2011) states that family involvement boosts student attendance and attitudes towards school, decreases student discipline problems and increases student achievement and aspirations. In South Africa, the South African School Act No. 84 of 1996 supports parental involvement (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Part of the responsibilities of SGB members is to promote effective relationship between parents, community and school (RSA, 1996).

Xaba (2004) mentions that SGB members are elected as representatives of certain interests, which connects to the school. Each stakeholder represents his or her own interest. Therefore, this may result in ineffective, dysfunctional governance and tension amongst the principal, SGB, teachers and parents. Bush and Heystek (2015) support this by stating that there is a non-existence of reverence or mutual aid amongst the diverse stakeholders by means of each group complaining about each other's non-existence of impetus, obligation and correction.

Xaba (2004) further postulates that SGBs are placed in schools to protect the staff first in the best way possible. Therefore, when issues between parents and teachers do occur and are not dealt with immediately by the SGB 'teachers would often feel that SGB members lacked confidence and were not sure about their duties' (Van Wyk, 2004; pp.49). However, as stated in my rationale, I have observed minimal participation or minimal parent-teacher relationship where I work and in the same vein, I realised that literature focus on parental involvement, school community partnerships without giving special attention on what SGBs can do to promote parent-teacher relationships, therefore this study focuses on that phenomenon.

1.5 The Focus and Purpose of the Study

Given the statement of the problem as mentioned above, the purpose of the study is to investigate the role of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The study focuses on the role of SGBs in promoting effective relationships between parents and teachers, the way in which the SGBs play these roles and the challenges that SGBs encounter in promoting parent-teacher relationships.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

Based on this focus section 1.6 presents the objectives guiding this study.

1.6.1 To investigate the role of the SGBs in promoting effective relationships between parents and teachers.

1.6.2 To examine the ways through which SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship.

1.6.3 To explore the enabling and challenging factors towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationship.

1.7 Critical Research Questions

Based on these objectives section 1.7 presents the research questions guiding this study.

1.7.1 What role do the SGBs play in promoting effective relationship between parents and teachers?

1.7.2 How do SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships?

1.7.3 What are the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships?

1.8 Significance of the Study

It is known that the SGBs was supposed to promote effective relationships between parents and teachers (Hartell, Dippenaar, Moen, Dladla, 2016). However, there are no clear roles in terms of what the SGBs must do to promote these relationships. This study will therefore provide clarity to those roles. Through this study, it may establish how SGBs were supposed to play their roles to promote effective relationships between parents and teachers. This study also contribute on the understanding of what can help SGBs in playing these roles in that way it could also lead to identifying some of the ways of dealing with the challenges.

Therefore, the expectation of the findings of the study will also contribute towards the SGBs to be more considerate to the possible suggestions and solutions. This will further assist them to overcome the challenges, which they faced with in addressing this phenomenon with the aim of refining parent-teacher relationships.

1.9 Clarification of Key Concepts

On the way to comprehend the mandate of this study, it entails these terms parent-teacher relationship, parental involvement, relationships and partnerships and school community partnership. This segment defines and explain the terms that this study requires.

1.9.1 Parent-teacher relationship

According to Christenson (2002), the relationship between parents and teachers creates an essential connection for the benefit of the children's academic and social success. In addition, Moore-Thomas and Day-Vines (2010), assert that school-community partnerships are relationships, which develop between school staff members who have a partnership with families and other community members to assist in the progression of learners. Lekli and Kaloti (2015) mention that we are living in a very complex world and the school environment is vast changing into that complexity. Teachers are finding it challenging to manage the children within the classroom, consequently it is vital that schools promote parent and teacher relations as a strategy to assist student learning.

This relationship involves the parents, other family members and experts to work together for the benefit of the learners as much as possible (Lekli & Kaloti, 2015). Therefore, the relationship will include the responsibility of both parents and teachers of the progression of the learner. Horny (2011) mentions that parental involvement includes good communication between parents and teachers. The communication between parent and teacher would consist of discussions regarding the learners' difficulties with homework, participation in school activities and the engagement in classroom discussions (Lekli & Kaloti, 2015). We are living in a society where there is much added pressure to increase the amount of professionalism to be executed in the school context.

This kind of pressure comes from the Department of Basic Education (DoE) itself. They are stressing mostly on schools creating an effective collaboration between parents and teachers, which is vital for the learners' basic needs (Carvalho & Franco, 2015). Parents are the learners' first role models (not by choice) to encounter first hand learning experiences, this includes; eating, sitting, walking, colouring, talking, writing, reading, loving and caring. Given the fact that parents are the first few people who are a part of the basic developmental stages of the learners' lives, the government saw it as fit that the parents continue assisting their children at the school level to do well (Carvalho & Franco, 2015).

Therefore, it is crucial for schools to promote parent-teacher relationship as a strategy tool to guarantee support of the learners' development process in the school environment (Carvalho & Franco, 2015). Effective parent-teacher communication is vital for the teacher to be successful, but also crucial for learners to make progress (School, family and community partnerships, 2008). Lekli and Kaloti (2015) point out that some teachers actually consider it vital to have good parent-teacher relationships while other teachers merely view good parent-teacher relationships as something that just happens in the teaching and learning environment.

Moloi (2011) explains that when learners foster a learning culture, it will assist them to understand the requirements and expectations better. This requires a great deal of teamwork between the parents and teachers for the sake of the child. The author further explain that South African schools reflect wider social relations and economic, political and social wellbeing of society. Schools have less resources, inadequate trained staff, and insufficient learning materials and facilities (Moloi, 2011). Therefore, it is imperative that parents get more involved, which will assist the school to gain better and efficient services to provide to the learners. This also breaks barriers to school discipline.

1.9.2 Parental involvement

The term 'parental involvement' is refer as various methods of contribution towards education and this includes schools. Mncube (2015) mentions that the parental involvement assists schools with student attainment. This also highlights that constant communication between parents and teachers assist learners to grow academically and socially (Mncube, 2015). The engagement of this practice is continual. Lemmer (2012) mentions that parents who are proactive at school have the tendency to minimise behavioural difficulties as well contribute to academic attainment. In addition, it is most likely to expect great excellence from a learner whose parents are proactive at school.

Progressive engagement of parents reveals that both primary and secondary schools as well as in both rural and urban schools. At large parents are mostly involved at primary school level (Lemmer, 2012). Their participation enables them to monitor school and classroom tasks, also to organise their effects by means of teachers to reassure suitable classroom behaviour and make sure that the child finalises his or her schoolwork. Teachers with extremely involved parents have the tendency to give greater attention to those students, and they are more likely to identify at earlier stages problems that might prevent student learning.

The involvement allows parents to monitor school and classroom activities, and to coordinate their efforts with teachers to encourage acceptable classroom behaviour and ensure that the child completes schoolwork (Lemmer, 2012).

Cotton and Wikeland (2010) mention that parental involvement presents a diverse aspect of involvement in education and with the schools. By assisting the school, parents are prone to attend school functions, react to school responsibilities, for example, parent, and teacher meetings. They are more involved in assisting their children to improve their schoolwork. This creates a teaching environment at home. It gives parents reassurance that their children are making the effort to learn their schoolwork and excel. Parents are therefore, viewed as supporters for the school. They can volunteer to assist the school by conducting tasks in the classroom or they can portray a vigorous role in the SGBs. This will enable them to be a part of decision making at school. It will also empower them to uplift the community.

1.9.3 Relationships and partnerships

Thijs and Eilbracht (2015) point out partnerships enhance student learning when schools put programmes and processes in place that link their parents to student learning. Lekli and Kaloti (2015) mention that schools are fashioned simply because parents no longer felt completely capable to execute their educative task. Therefore, parents need to have an effective relationship or partnership with the teacher, because it is an important part for learner to succeed.

Lekli and Kaloti (2015) further mention children's academic attainment education demands an effective relationship between home and school. The school represents the teacher and the home represents the parent. The act of educating the child is inseparable and cannot divide into two secluded spheres of home and school, as this would cause damage to the child's social, emotional and cognitive development. Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) argue that parental education and school education do not represent two opposing worlds; school education activities accord with and build upon the foundations of the home education.

According to Meyer, Mann and Becker (2011) educative tasks cannot conduct completely without the assistance of both parents and teachers. In an effective relationship, they can complement each other. Therefore, there should be collaboration between the parent and teacher in order to create and maintain an effective relationship. Lekli and Kaloti (2015) reveal that parents is view as the primary school teachers of the learner whereas; the teacher

is view as the secondary school teachers. This creates a form of joint interdependence, a relationship that has grown, or even improved, and a relationship, which has to grow.

The more responsible parents consider their children's education to be very important. They want a daily update of their child's growth at school by getting more involved in their children's education (Lekli & Kaloti, 2015). Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) point out that research has indicated that the development of home and school relations are dependent upon the eminence of parent and teacher partnership and is significantly related to the improvement of the learner's academic attainment, school presence and amended student conduct. Tveit (2009) shows that schools, parents and learners frequently profit from ensuring a pleasant parent and teacher relationships.

1.9.4 School-community partnership

School-community partnership form relationships through which a school collaborates with its community to work together with a formal plan to assist learners to achieve success at school (Epstein & Voorhis, 2010). Sanders (2012) outlines community partnership with its association concerning; schools, community, individuals, organisations and businesses that are forged into a straight line or indirectly encourage students in regards to their communal, emotional, corporeal and academic growth.

Schools design more especially so that they can co-exist within a community. It builds upon the remarkable individuals who are unique to each other. These same young individuals will grow up to be a part of that same community and they will have their own set of goals and interest, enabling them to co-exist in society. The crux of it all, schools are a community within communities. Hence, parents are view to be a part of that community. Myende and Chikoko (2014) mention that school-community partnerships therefore remain highlighted by means of the reciprocated relations concerning the school as well as the community. This indicates that there is a joint association between the school and the community.

Sanders (2008) argues that schools and families ought to work together at every facet of education to make their partnerships to work. By doing so, it makes it easier to deal with various issues at school. Consequently, functional partnerships between schools and the community are equally courteous and meant to aid with the involvement of parents regardless to social status. Meier and Lemmer (2015) point out that community partnership have to be rooted in the school development strategies. It will form well-resourced engagements and

stimulate a two-way communication between schools and parents. Schools and families need to work collaboratively with the community that would benefit the child.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

One of the schools proposed in the study is the researcher's own school. Based on the fact, that the researcher is known to some of the participants may limit me to the study. Nevertheless, to cover this limitation the researcher also introduced two other schools. Within the two of the three schools, I have observed that there is no smooth relationship between the parents and teachers. The third school however, have a strong relationship between parents and teachers. This relationship is foster by the SGBs. Therefore, my aim is to understand how the two schools that do not have effective parent-teacher relationships that can learn from the school that does have effective parent and teacher relationships.

1.11 Outline of the Study

This dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the study. In this chapter, I discuss the background to the study, rationale of the study, problem statement and purpose of the study. Thereafter, I present the objectives, critical research questions, significance of the study, a brief definition of the key concepts used to understand the study a little better and the limitations to my study. To conclude chapter 1, I present the outline of the study and the chapter summary.

Chapter 2 discusses the arguments from literature on parent-teacher relationships. Firstly, I discuss the role of the SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships Secondly; I discuss how the SGBs play their role in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. Thirdly, I discuss the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationship. Fourthly, I discuss the two theoretical frameworks, which support my study. I further discuss and explain how Epstein's (1987) Framework for parental involvement and Bronfenbrenner's (1993) Ecological Systems Theory work together to enhance this study. Lastly, I discuss the chapter summary.

Chapter 3 discusses the research paradigm, approach and methodology that I engaged with in this study in order to attain the research objectives. I then discuss the research site, the selection of participants, data generation and analysis methods that was used in my study. I also further discuss and explain how I deliberate the concept of trustworthiness in my study.

To conclude chapter 3, I discuss ethical considerations, the limitations of my study and the chapter summary.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and analysis of the study. The findings debate around the critical objectives, which are conferring to three focal themes; the role that SGBs play towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships, the manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. I draw conclusions relating to the causes for poor parent-teacher relationships due to poor communication and SGBs not doing enough to create effective parent-teacher relationships.

Chapter 5 presents the summary of the findings of the study, a set of recommendations generated from the objectives and the findings of this study, limitations of the study as well as the implications for further research.

1.12 Chapter summary

Amongst other things, this chapter has introduced the study. It has exposed the reality that although there is a lot of literature in school community partnerships, parent and teacher relationship, relationships and partnerships and parental involvement, there seem to have limited literature on the role of the SGBs in promoting parent-teacher relationships. The next chapter will utilise these critical questions further discuss literature on parent-teacher relationships.

CHAPTER 2

SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS AND THEORIES ON PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the School Governing Bodies (SGB) in promoting parent-teacher relationships. This chapter engages with literature from both national and international perspectives. Chapter 2 further examines the various roles of the SGBs, the benefits of a healthy parent-teacher relationship in regards to parents, school and most importantly to the learners. It also further discusses some of the challenges of the SGB in promoting working relationships. Finally, in this chapter I provide an explanation of two theoretical frameworks, which are Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence and Bronfenbrenner ecological theory. These two theories seek to provide lenses through which to view the nature of parent-teacher relationship to the benefit of the child.

2.2 The role of the SGB: Policy Framework

Although, there is an abundance of South African policies that support parent-teacher relationships and parental involvement. There is not much, which speaks about the role of the SGBs in promoting parent-teacher relationships. According to the SASSA (84 of 1996), parents play a crucial role within the education system (RSA, 1996). This Act emphasises that the children's parents ought to establish whether their children attend school. If the child has poor attendance, then the parents has to take full responsibility. Section 16 of SASSA, authorises parents to be more involved in the SGBs. Parents are accountable to make certain that learner attendance is good from the beginning of the year. Teachers on the other hand would have to investigate if learners' attendance is poor. It is imperative that parents must support teachers to carry out their professional duties (RSA, 1996). This policy empowers people to be a part of decision-making and to form relationships between parents and teachers. It also enables each stakeholder to understand their roles, accountabilities and duties that would contribute towards school and community partnerships.

The Education White Paper 2 (RSA, 1996) points out the prominence of parental involvement in education as well as the participation of parents in school governance as mentioned in Section 17. The policy guidelines suggest that parents and teachers need to compromise on decision-making on school matters. On the other hand, neighbouring

countries share same sentiments as South Africa. The United States of America's government emphasise the importance for parental involvement in school governance in a Parent Engagement Policy (Ontario, 2010). The SGB would have to train the parents, would have to develop their knowledge and enhance their skills for the benefit for the child.

The United States of America Department of Education (2002) mentions that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy was implemented to improve parental involvement. The policy enabled both parents and learners from poor backgrounds to have equal opportunity to a proper education and stand a fair chance to succeed in life regardless of his or her background. Parents need to collaborate with teachers, administrators and policymakers to ensure that learners are doing average and above average in good performing schools. Parental involvement is view as central to the NCLB for the sole reason that it ensures that there is parental involvement at every level of the child's learning process. In Australia, Education and Training (2001), parents are view as allies in the schooling policy. Parents, therefore play a vital part in the Australian governance schooling system. The policy realises that parents were the children's first teachers, thus giving the parents an opportunity to take part in their children's academic advancement.

In Botswana, it's the National Policy on Education, (Republic of Botswana, 1977a) that gives all stakeholders the opportunity to be a part of decision-making (Jotia & Pansiri, 2013). The policy further provides guidelines for parents who have children in the school, on how they can contribute and collaborate with the teachers. The Department of Secondary Education (2007:1) demonstrates that if there were power within local communities, then learner attainment would also improve. This will also increase in stakeholder performance. Literature both locally and internationally have diverse policies that support the relationship between parents and teachers. It is a legal mandate that schools support the alliance between the parents and teachers. The next segment presents scholarly claims on the motives for school-parent relationships.

2.3 The need for parent-teacher relationship

This segment presents scholarly contentions that argue for parent-teacher relationships. The intention of this section is to discuss the significance of the relationship between teachers and parents. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) reveal that an effective relationship between parents and teachers assists learners with their academic improvement. Jeynes (2011) and Lemmer (2009) remind us that establishing a firm groundwork for erudition involves communal

collaboration and contribution from both parents and teachers as well as the learners. Therefore, this partnership will be of assistance to learners at all echelons of erudition.

Crea, Reynolds and Degnan (2015) mention that parental aim for their children's academic attainment directed them to participate in their children's academic advancement. The authors further mention that when parents collaborate with teachers at school, it gives them the opportunity to talk to each other about the challenges faced with problematic behaviours among children. Therefore, parents are view to have greater dreams and involvement for their children's future and education than their children have for themselves. So the school is obligated to build hands-on tactics to induce parents to come into the school. When parents are being more hands-on from the first moment their child steps into a school at grade R level, it automatically reduces the discipline issues at schools. Meier and Lemmer (2015) rightly conclude that these alliances ought to be rooted in the school growth tactics, and stimulate effective two-way communication between parents and teachers.

Nonetheless, these relationships, interactions and alliances between parents and teachers are not effective at times due to some issues which the SGBs who find it challenging to uphold such relationships. I will present these issues in the latter segment.

2.4 The role that SGBs play towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

This previous segment dealt with the need for parent-teacher relationship. This segment however, debates the role, which the SGBs play towards effective parent-teacher relationships. I will discuss the following; the composition of the SGBs and ensuring that teachers reach out to parents.

2.4.1 The composition of the SGBs

Baffour (2010) mentions that when the community is more involved in decision-making in school governance level. This enables them to participate form the way in which the future leaders take shape in regards to education. The SGBs are establish solely on the correspondence of the parents and other community associates towards the assistance in the alteration of education (Lemmer, 2012). SASA (1996) points out the concern that school governors are elected by the community and are expected to act on behalf of the community. Baffour (2010) state that the elected members of the SGBs are; parents who are not teachers

but have children attending the school, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and students attending high school.

SASA (1996) of Sub-section 23 specifies SGBs may possibly nominate an associate or associates of the community towards upholding its obligations and roles. Nevertheless, the appointed associates are not able to vote on the SGBs. Therefore, it is necessary that the parent component is entitled to include one more member in the SGBs. It empowers parents to have the upper hand to regards of decision making at school. If at some point there is not one more than the joint total of members in regards to the voting rights, the SGBs are required to in the short term to co-opt parents with voting rights (Baffour, 2010).

Subsection 23 of SASA (1996) indicates that it is essential to give parents the opportunity to voice their opinions on operations of school matters in regards to their children and the community at large. The presumptions remain that the majority of the SGBs members are parents and are not able to make decisions that may negatively affect the children's education and future. The impression of appointing a few associates from the community and parents who will assist the SGBs to make better decisions to benefit the learners.

2.4.2 Ensuring that teachers reach out to parents

SGBs play a powerful part in the attitude of parents and teachers towards education. Christenson (2011) states that though SGBs promote programmes that creates relationships between parents and teachers, it is left entirely on the teachers to maintain such relationships. The SGBs are a part of a community and some of them are parents and teachers themselves, therefore they understand the importance of creating such relationships between parents and teachers in the benefit of the children. Acting as a middle agent, they need to strategise in fostering some relationships between parents and teachers. The next segment deals with the manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

2.5 The manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

This segment deals with the manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. It is divided into the following sub-sections; ways in which the SGBs can encourage parents and teachers to work collaboratively, two-way communication, creating programmes, getting parents to volunteer their services and involving parents in decision making.

2.5.1 Ways in which the SGBs can encourage parents and teachers to work collaboratively

Families work collaboratively with the school as partners in education of the children, allowing schools to provide those families with opportunities and support they require to become involved (Brownlee, 2015). The Michigan Department of Education (2001) highlight that parents require proper guidance and support so that they can become proactive in their children's academic advancement. Schools generally leave this responsibility to teachers. Therefore, teachers need to commit to encourage parents with their assistance largely, making their tasks less stressful.

Naicker (2013) mentions a few ways in which teachers can ensure that parents participate which are; encourage face to face meetings whenever possible, keep parents regularly informed about learners' progress, send learning material home, develop programmes to assist the learners with their homework in the various learning areas. There are other ways, that schools can use to encourage parent and teachers actively engage in conversation or participating in various tasks in regards to the benefit of the learners, which will be discuss further.

2.5.1.1 Two-way Communication

According to Loughran (2011), communication with parents is highly important. Teachers need to work with a diversity of caregivers from working parents to relatives. However, teachers were not train to handle parents. In order to develop a relationship of trust, the teacher must contact the parent during the first week of school to inform them about how their child is adjusting and what exactly they should expect of them. Regular parent teacher conferences should be arrange by the SGB to create opportunities for communication (Epstein, 2011).

Epstein (2011) suggests that teachers should visit the family at home as a form of better communication between parents and teacher. However, many teachers do not have the time and are afraid of the safety. Therefore, schools should alert the parents as soon as they sense that the child is problematic. If the teacher was unable to get a hold of the parent via phoning the parent then the teacher should write a note in the child's message book as a form of communication (Epstein, 2011). Therefore, communication about school programmes and learners' progress is necessary that will later create an effective parent-teacher relationship (Naicker, 2013).

2.5.1.2 Creating Programmes

Naicker (2013) states that schools should assist families to establish home environments that support children since parents are unaware of how to support their children during the various stages of development. Schools need to provide information on parenting to all parents in the communities for effective learning and teaching to take place. Epstein (2008) highlights that parents develop skills, knowledge and confidence about their parenting as the child grows. This support is provided by the school itself.

Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009) state that when the programmes is conducted, parents often meet with other children's parents of a similar age group and share knowledge. In their study, they stress about two particular programmes such as; Parents Assuring Student Success (P.A.S.S.) and Parents as Teacher of Children (P.A.T.C.H). The first programme actually assists parents in assisting their children in academic tasks such as reading and time management. The second programme however encourages parents to get more involved in academic tasks at home. It provides support contacts for both parents and staff to have meetings with the agenda to address concerns, which may arise. Parent involvement programmes ultimately share goals of increasing parent-school partnership in the instruction to stimulate the growth of the learners.

2.5.1.3 Getting parents to volunteer their services

Parents have the tendency to volunteer their services to the school and this is done to assist the teacher in the classroom, on excursions, activities, and discipline and ground duties. Naicker (2013) mention that schools observe parents who volunteers so that they could train them and build up resources. Schools and teachers therefore need to inform parents as to what tasks they need to involve themselves. Teachers should attempt to encourage and motivate as many parents to get more involved (Christenson, 2011). This forces parents to see that they are being a part of the task or team that will encourage them even further to get more involved (Sandler, 2011).

Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009) point out, volunteers is view as assistance and not as teacher substitutes. Volunteers are view as great assistance in being versatile in aspects of the school. Brennen (2011) states that parents should be encouraged to come to school and participate in projects, which the school initiates.

2.5.1.4 Involving parents in decision-making

Berger (2011) states that effective parent involvement means that parents are not simply informed of the results of school decision making, but rather given opportunities to engage in decisions that affect the school. The South African Schools Act (1996) has made it compulsory that every school has an active SGB that is involved in decision-making. Parents are treated as partners and not as clients if effective decisions are to be taken. According to Lemmer and Van Wyk (2009), parents are able to express their view in school will affect their children's education. Parents would gradually develop a sense of ownership and begin to share their own experiences with other families, which will result in better decision making in the interest of their children. The next segment deals with the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The next segment deals with enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

2.6 The enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

The previous segment conversed how SGBs played their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship. This segment however, debates the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs' towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. I will first discuss the enabling factors and thereafter I will discuss the challenging factors for the SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. In the literature review, I present the subsequent debates.

2.6.1 The enabling factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

These empowering aspects surrounds the following issues which are assisted by the SGBs at school; managing finance, the infrastructure and security at school and managing discipline.

2.6.1.1 Managing Finance

Managing the school's finance is imperative, simply because schools depend on finance solely when it comes to the operation of the school. The school finance is use in the areas of employing SGB teachers to teach certain learning areas and to buy teaching equipment. The misuse of school funds creates a negative impression on teaching and learning, especially on learner attainment. According to the SASA, (1996:37) school governance of public school

ought to create, sustain and manage school funds. It is also the duty of the SGB to create and sustain solitary funding account with the support of the Member of Executive Council (MEC) of education within the same province. SGBs can put in additional school finances into alternative accounts. The school funds and charitable donations are obligated to be transfer into the school finance account on the same day or before the weekend to prevent misplaced funds. Therefore, SGBs have authority over the school finances. The SGBs must be able to present an annual budget for the school and this will be discuss at a budget meeting with the parents and all stakeholders involved at school. The SGBs need to be aware that the annual budget must align itself with the guidelines, which the department has specified in regards to the income and expenditure for the school's next financial year. The parents have to attend the annual budget meeting because their opinions and vote counts the most. Therefore, it is crucial that the SGBs make sure that the schools financial books stay on par. The SGBs need to assure the parents that the school finances are utilised appropriately for educational purposes. This is utilised for obtaining stationery for the learners to enrich teaching and learning.

According to the SASA (1996), as the communal of parents implement the resolution, it is essential to specify the amount of school fees that has the expectation to be paid. Parents who are unable to pay school fees either receive partial or full exemption. To ensure that there is no embezzlement of school funds by the SGB, teachers or the school principal, the policy requires that the SGBs retain a record of all monies established as well as the monies distributed by the school. This includes the assets, accountabilities and economic relations. It is necessary for the SGBs to draft a financial report and employ an experienced accountant to balance the schoolbooks. Thereafter, the books would submit to an auditor and then he or she will audit the financial report, which will take at least six months after the close of the financial year (Baffour, 2010). There are no occurrences of embezzlement when the school finances are manage well according to proper guidelines by the governing body.

2.6.1.2 A well-functioning school created by the SGB is by ensuring proper infrastructure, security and the management of learner discipline

A well-function school is only effective if there is discipline amongst learners at the school. This is necessary because it enables teaching and learning to take place. It is compulsory that schools implement policies on learner discipline, safety and security. The policies suggest ways in which parents should act as members of the committees and support teachers in

sustaining a safe and well-disciplined school. The SGB is known as the heart of the school, due to them being the middleman between parents and teachers. This enable them to manage learner discipline at school. Discipline is much easier to manage when parents and the community assist the school. According to the SASA 84 of 1996, the SGB has to assist the school with learner discipline (RSA, 1996).

Du Plessis (2015) points out that when disciplining learners is share between parents and teachers, their relationships is reinforce between them. In contrast, Ramalepe (2015) demonstrates that actively involved parents who work hand in hand with teachers to improve discipline amongst learners' lifts the encumbrance off the teachers' shoulders. In agreement, I argue that learner discipline should be a shared responsibility between both parents and teacher, because I believe that both parents and teacher have been there for the child through his or her foundation of life, therefore if issues arise, they have the ability to resolve the issue. It is essential to have effective communication between parents and teachers because it is necessary for them to collaborate to enforce discipline, so that teaching and learning carries out effectively.

Millei and Petersen (2014) mention that when parents are actively involved in assisting teachers with discipline at schools, it actually reinforces parent-teacher relationships. The ill-disciplined learners cause teaching and learning time to be reduce. It causes disruption in the classroom, which makes it difficult for other learners to focus on their schoolwork (Millei & Petersen, 2014). Mestry and Khumalo (2012) mention that managing learner discipline is dependent on both teachers and parents and when they are dealing with learner discipline, they should not inflict corporal punishment. Du Plessis (2015) rightly concludes that schools need to consult with the parents and communities before implementing the Codes of Conduct for learners at their school. This is important because discipline of learners is share equally between parents and teachers. It is imperative that there is consistent communication between parents and teachers in regards to learner discipline because learners would take advantage if there were not consistent methods of disciplining them.

In summary, literature reveals that when parents and teachers distribute the responsibility of learner discipline, it not only reinforces their relationship but also debates about the challenges surrounding parents who have restricted knowledge of pertinent legislation supporting learners' code of conduct and the legal ideologies relating to discipline (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012). Both teachers and parents find it challenging to manage learner discipline,

therefore all stakeholders need to implement the proper school discipline according to the SASA. It assists tremendously with the culture of teaching and learning in the school environment. The next segment deals with the challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

2.6.2 The challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

The previous segment debated the enabling factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. This segment discusses the challenging factors for the SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. These debates relate to the poor mutual assistance, decision making and poor communication between parents and teachers. In the literature review, I present the subsequent debates.

2.6.2.1 Poor mutual assistance

Khuzwayo (2007) mentions that it is essential to note that decentralisation of the school governance resulted in the formation of combined SGBs, teachers and parents headed by the principal. Therefore, these structures are view as legitimate and have equal contribution towards the governance and managing schools in hoping that it would provide for a better relationship amongst all stakeholders. Chairperson have to motivate other governing body members, learners and members of the community to render voluntary services to the schools. Khuzwayo (2007) further mentions that principals on the other hand, have to assist the SGBs to help them to perform their functions as per provisions of the SASA.

The mutual assistance between the principal and the SGBs often can pose a serious challenge to the structure at school. This often requires a lot of responsibilities and clear understanding to perform their duties (Khuzwayo, 2007). Due to different personalities, trying to manage their responsibilities and duties will often lead to conflict. There is conflict that exists between the parent governors and teachers which results in arguing over the children (Xaba & Nhlapo, 2014). SGBs most often allow teachers to resolve issues that occurs between teachers and parents. This create a lot of chaos, which would draw a lot of the wrong media attention to the school.

2.6.2.2. Decision-making

According to Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) in order to create peace within schools, school governance decided to democratised education by enabling all stakeholders to participate in

decision-making at school. The core objective was to empower all those who belonged to a more disadvantaged and marginalised groups (Xaba & Nhlapo, 2014). The government therefore tried to create an environment where all people are equal and ensured that they were treated fairly. In doing so, it encourages people to voice their opinions and give rise to their inner thoughts about decisions made at schools. The School South African Act mandates the implementation of SGBs to be parents and educators as representatives (Xaba & Ngubane, 2010).

As the head of the school, it is only fitting that the school principal becomes automatically a part of the SGB. Although in its trying time of constructing the SGB, it is essential that all SGB members seek their helpfulness and functionality as a team to the benefit of the school. Unfortunately, this does not always occur. It is a widely held assumption that some members within the SGB have their own hidden agenda (Xaba & Ngubane, 2010). Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) speak about how the school principal sometimes strategically place people in positions so that he or she could secure his or her agendas. This may seem to be working for one side of the board, but in fact, it is a disadvantage to the school as a whole.

Instead of using innovating ideas for the improvement of the school, one can assume that the ideas generates from one person solely because of political motives. Xaba and Ngubane (2010) strongly agree with this by stating that the related governance challenges originate from principal's practices, which does not allow people to participate in decision-making equally. Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) mention that the practices conducted at school by the principal presents authoritative and are often unwilling to share power and influence. It is therefore an assumption that principals are reluctant to involve other governors, mainly parents.

They further mention that schools limit certain parents in decision-making due to poor literacy levels and restricted school governance practice. When parents remain in consideration in this manner, they easily influenced as well as dominated in the decision making process (Smit & Oosthuizen, 2011). I agree with Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) that the challenges exist within the SGB members. In the running of democratic school governance, decision-making grounded in alliances, immense teamwork, partnership, mutual trust and respect. However due to hidden agendas, often one would find that the tasks are not done diligently.

What may seem like mutual responsibility and partnership results in conflict due to the positioning of power within the SGBs? From my personal perspective, I have observed that if the dominant group is unable to gain anything from the subordinate group, then they are not treated the same. All stakeholders need to feel empowered otherwise they would feel that their opinions of key issues do not matter (Naicker, 2013). The set up within the SGB is due to the school's own political agendas. This leads lack of communication and understanding amongst SGB members, which results in hasty decisions. Due to this, it further leads to more conflict between parents and the school due to the distribution of power to parents serving in the school governing body (David, 2011).

According to the SASA, Section 16, the management of school is left upon the principal of the school. Mncube (2009) strongly agrees that parent participation should not be enforce due to the lack of necessary skills to delegate duties assigned to them. The ability of the parent component on the SGB requires the proper training and participation in decision-making. The abilities, which the SGBs require, are educational background knowledge, high literacy levels and strong influential skills (David, 2011).

2.6.2.3 Poor communication between parents and teachers

The second type of Epstein's parental involvement speaks about communication, which cannot work in favour of the other types without communication (Cheairs, 2015). A two-way communication between parents and teachers needs to be fluent in order to confirm effective relationships (Meier & Lemmer, 2015). Flowers (2015) points out that by having inadequate communication between parents and teachers will fashion an obstruction for any form of relationship. Parents would therefore need to specify that teachers should have hands-on procedures for communicating with parents so that relationships can develop.

Schools that create a two-way communication approach with the parents ought to make sure that there is constancy in communication between parents and teachers. The literature postulates that it is the duty of both parents and parents to ensure that there is constant communication between them and work collaboratively in the wellbeing and attainment of the learner. Even though schools may have their different tactics on how to communicate with learners' parents, it is necessary for parents to be more hands-on in participating with the school, which their child attends.

The literature presented many facets on the role of the SGBs, the benefits of parent- teacher relationships, and the challenges, which the SGBs encounter with in terms of parent-teacher

relationships. How SGBs act as agents to promote effective parent-teacher relationship remains unanswered, although it seems to be operational at schools. I now turn to the theoretical aspects of the study, which provide a framework to understand the role of the SGBs of promoting effective parent-relationships.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

In understanding the role of SGBs of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships, the study utilises two theoretical frameworks. The theoretical frameworks, which I will be using, are Epstein's (1995) theory of overlapping spheres of influence and Bronfenbrenner's (1997) ecological systems theory to understand the ways of which the relationship between parents and teachers are essential for the learners' academic advancement. Epstein (1995) suggests that parents can get more involved in their children's education, Bronfenbrenner (1997) concedes that a child belongs in his or her family first, before he or she is a learner at school. This therefore exposes the child to a larger community. I firstly describe Epstein's (1995) six types of parental involvement. I will then relate Bronfenbrenner's (1997) Ecological Systems theory to my study and lastly I would explain how these two theories relate to my study.

2.7.1 Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement

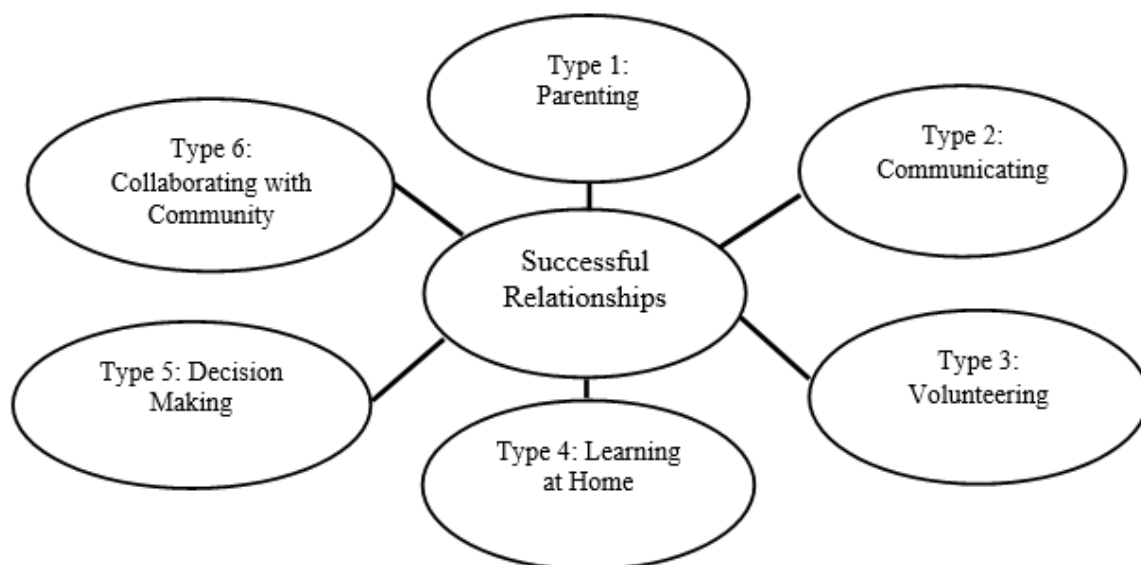


Figure 1: Epstein's six types of parental involvement.

Figure one outlines Epstein's (1987, 1995) ecological spheres of influence which refer to how family, school and community work collaboratively. It recognises, separate and combined

influences on learners who deem the main benefactors of school-community partnership. Lemmer (2012) reveals that this model does not only encourages parental involvement, but it also encourages parent-teacher relationships. In order for this model to be effective, there will have to be consistent communication between these all three partnerships (Lemmer, 2012). Epstein's theory laid the basis for her widely used model of six types of parental involvement. The six types, which she speaks about, are as follow; Parenting, Home-School Communication, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision-Making and Collaborating with the Community.

Parenting- Assisting families to establish home environments to become supportive towards learners. This type of parental involvement educates and trains the parents to be more aware of what they need to do. It operates with courses on literacy, health and nutrition issues and discipline.

Communicating- This is a more effective two-way exchange between the school and community about school-community programmes and learner progress. In other words, the school represents the teacher and the community represents the parents. Therefore, if both parent and teachers have effective communication, it will benefit the learner. These types of communications may include meetings, newsletters, notices, written messages in the learner's message book and other form of communications.

Volunteering- When recruiting and organising the community to assist at school or other locations. Parents also benefit when they volunteer their skills to the school. They not only learn about the environment in which their child is in, they learn more about themselves and about their child. They can also see how best they can change and use what they know and experience to benefit their child's well-being academically and socially.

Learning at home- Provides facts towards the community in the manner towards assisting the learners with their homework, study skills and curriculum information. The guidance, which the parents obtained, will assist the parents further on how to monitor homework and how to discuss schoolwork and activities at home. This also assists the parents to focus on key questions to stimulate their child's mind.

Decision- making- Ensures that parents from all backgrounds and different lifestyles will have equal opportunity to serve as representatives and leaders on different school committees. It is imperative that parents who are actively involved in decision-making understand the school's mission and have no hidden agendas. Parents have the power to elect

and support school governing bodies. SGBs are a part of a group that needs to be encouraged, delegating and conducting tasks for the reformation and improvement of the school.

Collaborating with the community- In identifying resources within the community to strengthen school programmes and community support for the improvement of learner achievement. School-community partnerships must actively facilitate interaction between schools and their communities in areas of health, social, sporting, cultural and learning activities. Usually schools allow teachers to head this collaboration. Subject heads or grade heads phone these organisations and set up various meetings for them to come to school and assist in whichever way they can.

Epstein's theory (1995) reveals that these six types of parental involvement requires a direct involvement of parent-teacher interaction to create an encouraging stimulus on the child's growth and academic attainment. Drawing from these six types, which is relevant for the involvement of parents because I believe that the education of a child can be of quality if these three spheres of influence (Community-School-Home) can work together effectively. These theories further assisted me to explain the partnerships between school, parents and community. The theories assisted me further explain how each of these stakeholders' influence each other at some level (Wu, 2015). Lemmer (2012) reminds us that effective communication embeds in all six types of Epstein's ecological theory.

Epstein (2011) mentions that communication establishes effective two-way exchanges between the school and the community about school community programmes and learner progress. This may include meetings, notices and other forms of communications. Epstein's perspective provides a clear understanding of how this partnership nurtures and strengthens consistent and open communication for the benefit of the child. In my study, I view the parent as representing the community and the teacher who represents the school. In order to keep an effective relationship between parent and school, the SGB acts as the mediator to ensure that this partnership benefits the child in his or her academic success. Further explanation on Epstein six types of parental involvement reveals when I will explain how it relates to this study. I will now discuss Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

2.7.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

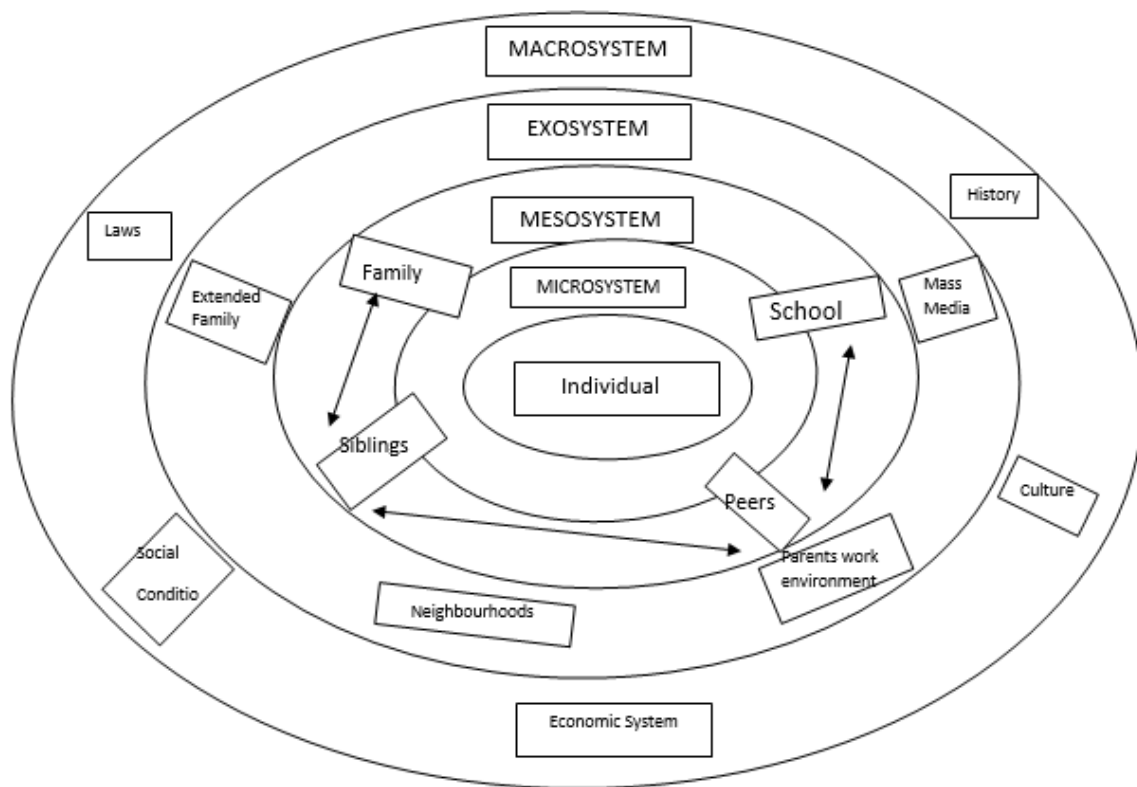


Figure 2: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

In figure 2, Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory (1997) has helped me to understand how children moulds according to his or her environment. They can easily adapt to their environment at the different levels of their lives. In Bronfenbrenner's model, four interacting dimensions is the central to this process such as; the individual aspects (e.g. the character of the child or parent), the procedure aspects (e.g. the methods of communication that occur in a family), settings (e.g. families, schools and communities) and time (e.g. changes over time in the child or the environment) (Bronfenbrenner; 1997).

He has shown that the relations that will take place face-to-face, long-term relationships are most significant in moulding permanent facets of growth (Bronfenbrenner; 1997). This relationship may be between a mother and a child, a teacher and student, or a child and a close friend. These are call proximal communications. However, in this study I am going to focus on the relationship between the parent and teacher and how such relationship can benefit the child. These people, process and context factors all change over the duration of time. The concept of proximal interaction assisted me to understand it in relation to the authority of shared impacts in families, peer groups, classrooms, schools and communities.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1997), happens within four nested systems which are as follow: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. All these systems interact with the chronosystem.

The microsystem- This involve systems, which children are meticulously involved in close relations with acquaintance, an example of this is the child's family. Microsystem is design to portray different roles, relations and forms of regular tasks that mould many aspects of intellectual, societal, emotional, moral and spiritual growth.

The mesosystem- As the second set of systems closest to the individual (child) it constantly cooperates with the microsystems. In other words, the family or peer group can easily stimulate the child to react in a certain way and vice-versa. If the child feels as if he or she lacks any support from his or family, then the child would resort support and understanding from his or her teacher, peer etc.

The exosystem- This level includes other systems in which a child is not directly involved, but which may influence the people who have proximal relationships with his or her microsystems. An example of this may be the child's parents' workplace, a sibling's peer group, or a teacher's involvement in a local community organisation.

The macrosystem- The macrosystem contains prevailing societal and monetary structures, philosophies and practices that affects all other social systems. An example of this is cultural value, which may include obeying authority and relating to senior members of the community. This value would then stimulate the relations in the child's intimate environment and perhaps his or her whole mesosystem as well. The macrosystem is comparable to what may denote to as two systems, the extensive community and the whole society.

The chronosystem- Lastly, the outer system allows growth, which creates an impact of the relations amongst these systems. This system includes major life transitions, environmental events that occur during the development stages of life. The specific incidents tend to change or transition how the child interests with all the rest. An example of this is a child moving to another city.

Bronfenbrenner's model emphasises the interconnectedness both within and between the various systems (Lemmer, 2012). Within the microsystem, parents and teachers develop intimate knowledge of the child or of children developed from their respective experiences within home and school. In the mesosystem, the parent and teacher interacts within the school

context in the interest of the child. Both parent and teacher use their relevant experience and expertise to strategise ways that will benefit the learner.

In the exosystem and macrosystem, the teacher and parent are influenced by the distant environments (as the demands of the work place), which may determine the time, the teacher and the parent can devote to the parent involvement. The implication of this interconnectedness for home-school communication, in particular are as follows: open bi-directional communication between the child's school setting and home and community setting. This further exercises an imperative positive influence on the child's social development and academic success.

2.7.3 The relations of these theories to the study

Lemmer (2012) mentions that both Bronfenbrenner and Epstein's perspectives provides a useful understanding of how home and school interconnect and how this connection should be nurtured and maintained by regular open and mutual communication in the interest of the child. In an overall view, this is still recognise by the school, however schools maintain the power to determine how and how often parents should be involved and how and when communication should occur (Lemmer, 2012).

In order for parent-teacher relationship to be effective, parents need to engage in all six types of parental involvement. Schools need to provide suitable activities that will assist and encourage parents to get more involved. Grant and Ray (2013) allude to the fact that when a child is born, his or her interaction would be with his or her own family first, thus creates an environment where communication is first exposed and actively engaged with, his or her own family. The link concerning the home (parents) and the school (teacher) is imperative, as it would assist both home and school to continue the progression of the child in the learning phase, which is in the microsystem. Bronfenbrenner's system theory claims that these structures are persuasive to the child and that the bi-directional stimulates between these structures serves as a great effect on the child (Lemmer, 2012).

Epstein 6 types of parental involvement are imperative in a child's growth; however, none of these 6 types of parental involvement would be able to function successfully without the key element of communication between home and school. Lemmer (2012) points out that communication is a more predominant form of involvement. In agreement, Horvatin argues that in order to create effective parent-teacher relationships, there must be two-way

communication. Therefore, SGBs need to plan ways in which the two-way communication can occur between parents and teachers.

Majola (2013) explains that it is the SGBs' duty to ensure that parents are given the opportunities to voice out their assistances, disquiets and prospects about their children to the teacher. However, if conflict between parents and teachers arises the SGB would have to step in and assist in whichever way possible to resolve the issues. Epstein (2011) notes with concern that communication infiltrates all other types of parental involvements. This study argues that communication is the groundwork of parent-teacher relationships. Meier and Lemmer (2015) rightly conclude that communication between home (the parents) and school (the teachers) ought to build on reciprocal reverence, understanding and awareness. In other words, communication reinforces relationships. The SGBs have the capacity to ensure that the two-way communication is effective between parents and teachers.

Daniel (2011) insists that Epstein and Bronfenbrenner's theories reveal that family-school relationships support a child's growth. Therefore, both theories proposed clarifications of what roles the school and family portray within the perspective of the relationship. Sanders (2008) mentions that Epstein's theory produces durable and supportable relationships with the learners' families when schools assimilate the six types of parental involvement. I agree with Sanders that durable and supportable relationships between schools and parents recognise when all six types of parental involvement which schools influence.

Semke and Sheridan (2012) insist that the involvement of parents enables parents to be more hands on with the school. It creates a workable relationship between parents and teachers, because teachers cannot work autonomously without the parents' input concerning the child. Lemmer (2012) notes with concern that bi-directional communication is only enforced when parents make it known that they are interested about the school their children attend. In an agreement, Semke and Sheridan (2012) argue that bi-directional communication asserts forms of open communication. It enables parents to display their concerns towards the teaching and learning for their children. I argue that when the SGBs create open communication, strong relationships form with reverence for diverse and collective power between teachers and parents. In the duration of any programme conducted at the school and parents' meetings, parents expect to respond positively because everything ultimately conducts in the interest of the child and no one else. As seen in figure 2, the child is placed with much importance in being the focus as to why all systems construct as such, thus

creating much engagement from the entire systems working collaboratively for the benefit of the child. Semke and Sheridan (2012) point out, children excel when teachers and parents have positive relationships.

Murray *et al.*, (2014) maintain that when parents actively participate with schools it enables them to be more clued up with education practices. The greatest thing a parent can ever do for their children is to invest in their education. By simply communicating to the school about their practices, they actually not only functioning with the school but also networking in representation of the school. This engagement also enables them to nurture academic and career orientated children. Breiseth and Lafond (2011) explain that there is a greater effect of the family portrayed on the child's confidence and triumph not only at school but also towards his or her life. As Lafond (2011) puts it, families tend to have high expectations of their children when they show support and quite relevantly do exceedingly beyond and above their expectations. Cheairs (2015) argues that relationships build confidence of individuals as well as groups. This indicates that the role of effective relationships is the core difference between extraordinary performing individual learners as compared to average performing individual learners and schools alike. A child has the ability to succeed beyond his or her parents' expectations when he or she know that they have a support structure from the people who are close to him or her and that is found in their microsystem. Lemmer (2012) supports this by arguing that it is necessary to have a framework for communication between parents and teachers in every school, in order to have effective parent-teacher relationships.

However, Bronfenbrenner's systems theory is design to stimulate the child's progression. The child is then view in the process from being a child to growing into an adult. The true essence of parental involvement evokes rapid growth both academically and socially if it starts when the child is young (Cordero, 2015). In agreement, Okeke (2014) argues that in an approachable atmosphere between school (teachers) and home (parents) creates an effective relationship, thus assisting learners to excel in best way possible. This brings about clear, constant and well thought form of communication between the parents and teachers (Cordero, 2015). When an effective form communication is develop between parents and teachers, a strong relationship is form.

Literature argues that the reduced number of children who leave or have left school when parents are actively involved in their education (Lemmer, 2012). However, when parents are not actively involved in their children's academic success are actually the same parents who

are unaware of what goes on in the school environment. They have poor or most often no communication at all with the teachers, thus resulting in children constantly failing in their grade (Flowers, 2015). Communication between the parents (home) and teacher (school) is therefore emphasised by Flowers (2015) as a vital tool used to create effective relationships between parents and teachers.

In agreement, Kraft and Rogers (2014) argue that parents have limitless forms of resources available to communicate with the teacher about their children's academic progress. This may include different forms of communication which can be conducted through the following; individually, familiar, approachable and suitable. Therefore, due to these methods of communication, learners are more attentive to their educational development and have the ability to distinguish the necessary methods to proceed in order to progress. Parents will become vigilant and determined to know more about the school policies, any school matters and are most often present for everything that occurs in the school for the benefit of their children. In the occurrence of miscellaneous communication tactics, it reinforces the relationship between the parents and teachers.

Hornby and Lafaele (2011) argue that because Bronfenbrenner's systems theory creates a notion that children come from miscellaneous families with miscellaneous values, schools then have the ability to offer constant and extensive relationships. The SGBs play the role to ensure that this occurs through effective communication. By adopting to this theory, the first relationship the child is expose to his or her immediate environment, which provides nurture to the child. The people who are responsible for this relationship fosters in the microsystem, which are the parents and teachers. They have the ability to have a great influence in the child's life. They use their lives as guidance to assist children to improve their lives, leading into adulthood. Epstein's typology of parental involvement helps make this possible. It is mandatory that schools and teachers construct an environment that welcomes and collaborates with families to benefit of the child. On the other hand, Bronfenbrenner's theory proposes that the child would not reconnoitre the other aspects of his or her surroundings in the other systems, when there is poor or no communication in his or her immediate structure.

Lemmer (2012) mentions that Epstein's six types of parental involvement has as much repercussions for the whole school community as compared to Bronfenbrenner's systems theory. Families become well respected and admired by teachers due to their efforts and attempts to assist their children irrespective of their background and financial status quo.

Parents have the ability to cooperate when they have open communication with the teachers. This makes it easier to dialogue about education programmes provided, together with their children's growth.

Epstein (2011) argues that parents display some kind of support when they volunteer their time to the school and teachers. It assists tremendously with the teaching and learning, not only in the duration of school time but also after school hours. Thus, volunteering of parents aids all stakeholders as they show support towards the learners at school. Parents begin to develop their skill set on volunteer work and are able to comprehend the teacher's job, whereas teachers expect to display enthusiasm to involve all families in diverse ways. Learners also benefit from this collaboration, because it makes them happy to see their parents at school. It makes it easier for the children to ask their parents to purchase goodies at the tuck-shop or to assist with urgent tasks. The relationship between the parents and teachers become stronger.

The fourth type of parental involvement as seen in figure 1 is learning at home. Parents are, attentive, responsive, compliment when needed, monitor closely and encourage discussion in regards to their children's schoolwork. Learners cultivate a positive attitude toward schoolwork and this enhances their academic performance when they have the full support from home (Lemmer, 2012). The relationship between parents and teachers reinforce the learning lengthens to the home; hence learners tend to improve their skill set, talents and improvement of grades and learning subjects.

Learners are more likely to excel academically when they feel they have support at home. Their self-confidence improves drastically all because they know that their families are supporting them. They would feel bad if they disappoint them in anyway, thus always wanting to excel in everything they do. Learners' parents are their first teachers and their home is view as a school structure where learning takes place consistently. Parents try their very best to reassure, support and assist learners at home as much as they can. Decision-making is Epstein's fifth type of parental involvement as seen in figure 1. It is not viewed as to who has authority over the other, but is building a relationship with common goals between parents and teachers. Botha (2013) demonstrates that parents who more involved serve a greater relationship with the school and this is in the form of the SGB. They have the opportunity to be a part of decision making at school. Both parents and teachers share the same sentiments that their voices matter greatly towards the school polices in regards to the

learners' education. When parents and teachers make decisions together, uppermost alliance is moulded. Parents are therefore, constantly a part of the decision-making organisation at school. This moulds their confidence in the school and the teachers are stronger, thus forming a greater alliance with the school.

The last type of parental involvement is the collaboration with the community as seen in figure 1. This type is view as the most powerful type because it stimulates their manoeuvres, influencing their knowledge and growth, attentive and pretentious by the eminence of education delivered in the school. In relations to this argument, Daniel (2011) writes that schools ought to assimilate their assets and facilities with the community to reinforce their programmes and student learning. Boatwright (2014) mentions that in the frame of the school (teachers) join forces with the community (parents), the parents have the ability to gain access to the school's assets and amenities because the community have a sense of ownership, due to having their own children attending the school. Hence, the relationship between the teachers and the parents are reinforce since both parents and teachers are members of the community.

Misinformed parents feel as if they do not have the capacity to contribute to school activities (Horvatin, 2014). However, effective parent-teacher relationship improves and there is an educational development of the child. In agreement, Mokhele (2013) argues that effective alliances between parents and teachers is the product of the improvement of learners in their academic achievement, irrespective of the parents' monetary prestige. If there were poor communication between parents and teachers, then there would be no effective relationship developed between the two. Therefore, parents in this study symbolises families and teachers symbolises schools, which is in the immediate environment of the child. Thus, environment is call the microsystem.

Kemp (2015) alludes two-way communication needs to be effective between parents and the teachers so that their relationships can be reinforced. Majola (2013) points out the role of SGBs as the agent of communication between the parents and teachers. I agree with the author that the relationships between parents and teachers are reliant on helpfulness of the SGBs. The author further claims that effective relationships established by the SGBs creates a safe and controlled environment for all stakeholders in education to communicate effectively and frequently, thus, making sure that the relationship between parents and teachers are reinforced.

Drawing from Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory, relationships between parents and teachers are effective. Both Epstein and Bronfenbrenner creates an understanding of the SGBs can act as a mediator to promote effective parent and teacher relationships. This further assist with learners' progression at school.

2.8 Chapter Summary

Establishing a good relationship between parents and teachers is important because it creates a healthy environment to communicate well in regards to the best interests of the child. It is therefore imperative, that parents inform the teachers about their children. By doing so, it makes the teacher to be aware that he or she acquires special learning styles or needs that may be relevant to the child's academic and social achievement. However, during this process, there can be many misunderstandings between parents and teachers, which can later lead to conflict. Even though the SGBs represent the parent component, they assist in resolving possible conflict and challenges quite fairly.

The theories therefore, provided a clear theoretical framework to understand how parent-teacher relationship should work. Both Bronfenbrenner's and Epstein's perceptions delivered a valuable understanding in regards to the linkage between the home and school and how this linkage should be fostered and sustained with a steady, two-way communication on the concerns of the child. The school, therefore sustain the authority to regulate the occurrence of communication and how often parents should be proactive at school. The parent and teachers must then come to an understanding that they need to not only trust each other but also support each other to improve the child's quality of education.

If the child does not view an effective relationship between parent and teacher, then he or she will not only not show an interest in his or her schoolwork but also show lack of interest in other aspects of his or her life. He or she will also have disrespect for either one if not both parent and teacher, leading the child to a rebellious nature. Unless both parent and teacher put aside their difference and work together, there will be no effective parent-teacher relationships.

CHAPTER 3

RELEVANT RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY FOR RESEARCHING PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the role of the SGBs, the benefits of healthy parent-teacher relationships in regards to parents, school and most importantly to the learners. It also further discussed some of the challenges of the SGB. It also provided an explanation of two theoretical frameworks, Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence and Bronfenbrenner theory. This chapter addresses the research design and methodology utilised in the study that investigated promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2010), research design is a plan of how the research will systematically collect and analyse the data that will be needed to answer the research questions.

Chapter 3 firstly, outlines the research design and justifies its selection. Secondly, it describes the respondents and the reason for their selection. Thirdly, it proceeds to examine the data collection methods as well as the data analysis procedures. Finally, it explains the trustworthiness as well as the ethical considerations and limitation to the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm enables the researcher to direct a certain field of study. A paradigm is a framework or it determines the way of thinking and doing things that involves expectations and rules (Shuttleworth, 2008). The interpretive paradigm used in a study to seek the actual reality in a specific situation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2012). The research falls under the interpretive paradigm, which supports that the world that is deliberated in its normal form as relatively compared to a well-ordered laboratory form experiment then with least interference by me (Bertram and Christiansen, 2010). This type of paradigm allows for post level one (PL1) educators, SGB members and parents freely express their views on the questions. PL1 educators, SGB members and parents are therefore free to express their perceptions and perspectives regarding promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and how the SGB act as a mediator in making this relationship as a success.

3.3 Qualitative Approach

The research methodology is the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena (Cohen *et al*, 2012). Bertram and Christiansen (2010) rightly conclude that research methodology is a study of methods by which knowledge is gain and aims to give the work plan of research. This study was position within the qualitative research approach. According to Cohen *et al*, (2012), the qualitative research used in the understanding of the process, the social and the cultural contexts, which underlie various behavioural patterns and mostly concerns with the “why” questions of research. Succinctly in this study, a qualitative research approach will be used in this study to assist the researcher to understand and explain how the SGB acts as a mediator between the parents and teachers to ensure learner academic success in primary schools.

3.4 A Case Study Methodology

The case study chosen as a research style to conduct this study. A case study enabled me to comprehend just how philosophies and intellectual ideologies synthesise (Cohen *et al*, 2011). Case studies can establish the reason and outcome as well as generate an in-depth understanding of and insights into a particular phenomenon by providing thick and rich descriptive events that might occur (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Cohen *et al*. (2011) mention that the case study approach is mainly appreciated when there is minimal control over proceedings, i.e. conduct cannot be influenced and controlled.

Yin (2009) mention that the best and most famous case studies have been both descriptive and exploratory. In agreement, Cohen *et al*. (2011) believe that substantially, case studies proposed in this study as a perception into the actual changing aspects of circumstances and individuals. This study did not make any generalisations but used to describe and explain promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and how the SGB act as a mediator in making this relationship work. There were two schools, which fell under one case. I had no relationship with these two schools, which made them to be special. There were poor relationships between parents and teachers at these schools.

3.5 The Research Setting

The study was conducted in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit in KwaZulu-Natal. The research objectives which were to investigate the role of the SGB in promoting effective relationships between parents and teachers, in examining the ways through which

SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship and to explore the enabling and challenging factors towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. My work in the area brought me into contact with these schools, which I then purposively sampled because I worked in two of the schools included in this study. I am well aware that schools had to have a good relationship with the community to benefit the children's social well-being and academic success. However, not many schools have a good relationship with the community.

3.6 Selection of Participants

In order to obtain the relevant data, it is crucial to select the participants that requires them to recall some of their personal experiences in regards to healthy parents-teacher relationship to influence learners' success. Therefore, it is most appropriate to use purposive sampling of participants for the interviews. This enabled me to elect a certain group that meets a particular criterion. In the research study I have selected either one seasoned or one novice, post level one (PL1) educators, one parent and one SGB chairpersons in each school.

3.7 Data Generation Methods

There are different types of interviews. Cohen, *et al.*, (2007) indicate that these various types of interviews differ according to their function for the study in which they employ. Having examined the various methods employed by qualitative researchers for phenomenological studies, I settled for semi-structured interviews to collect data for this study.

3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Given the nature of this study, semi- structured interviews use to generate data. Bertram and Christiansen (2010) points out that semi-structured interview mainly focus on the topic at hand without constraining them to a particular format. Therefore, semi-structured interviews was conducted with the SGB chairpersons, parents and educators on a face-to-face seating. Bertram and Christiansen (2010) mention that semi-structured interviews further allowed the researcher the ability to capture each individual's perception of the world and what are their experiences of the world. For me interviews were most suitable for this study in order to increase facts that requires all the participants to be aware that it takes a healthy relationship between parents and teacher to guarantee learner academic success (Bertram & Christiansen, 2010).

Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim (2006) assisted me to remember that the feedback they received from the participants is essential. I used a tape recorder when I conducted the interviews, which assisted me to remember what was mentioned during those interviews. However, I first explained to the participants what the interview is all about. I also used an interview schedule that consisted of a list of closed and open-ended questions and reassured the participants that their identity will be kept anonymous (Bertram & Christiansen: 2010).

3.8 Data Analysis

Once I have generated the data, I immediately transcribed and undertook preliminary data analysis. Analysis may be described as the attempt to organise, account for and providing explanations of data so that some kind of sense may be made of it in terms of participants' definitions of the circumstances, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Bertram & Christiansen, 2010). They further state that data analysis means a search for patterns in data-recurrent behaviours, objects, or a body of knowledge while De Vos (2010) states that qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. De Vos (2010) further states that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the quantities of data collected. This simply means that analysis involves making sense to the data that is gained.

Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 461) mention that '...qualitative data often focuses on smaller numbers of people than quantitative data, yet the data tend to be detailed and rich'. By collecting capacious data, it can be overwhelming therefore; the analysis of data should be done systematically so that there is some order in the process. In collecting data, I used transcripts, but in order to record the interviews I first received consent and written permission from all of the participants.

I used a voice recorder to record the interviews, which was transcribed immediately after each interview. According to Henning, Rensburg and Smit (2004), voice-recordings are transcribed immediately as this enabled the interviewer to focus mainly on the interview itself. By using a voice recording, it also allowed me to remind of what was mentioned in the duration of the separate interviews. It is also vital to backup all data that was collected. The data that was obtained from the interviews was put into a folder under separate files. After repeatedly reading the data, it was further organised into different categories according to its themes and patterns.

3.9 Trustworthiness

Qualitative research uses the concept of trustworthiness to uphold moral accountability standards and integrity of the study. To ensure trustworthiness of my study, I used the four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability as guided by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The section below provides a detailed account of trustworthiness as embraced by the study.

3.9.1 Credibility

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), credibility of the research must reflect the reality and lived experiences of the participants. The duration of the interviews, I was aware of the difficulties I would have in remembering everything that the participants would say, therefore it was essential to use an audio-recording device to record the interview sessions. By doing so, the transcripts would be more accurate than if I have to jot down notes during the interviews (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

I found that the participants were more likely to speak more honestly to me if they knew that their opinions and experiences about the study would not trace back to them when the research report was written. It was imperative that I do not reveal who the participants were and which schools were used in the reports that emerged from this research study. It is never my intention to victimise a school or the participants but rather understand their own knowledge and experiences surrounding this study. Therefore, it was mentioned at the beginning to the principal that the school and participants were anonymous. In order for the participants to gain my trust, I asked them to choose their own pseudonyms.

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability of research can increase if the research has done this, that is, the extent to which it would also apply to other situations with similar characteristics. It is essential that I am clear about the theoretical lens or perspective that was used to interpret the data and to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to back up their interpretation and do not make unsubstantiated claims. This is certainly something to look out for in concluding sections of the research paper (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

3.9.3 Dependability

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that dependability is when the researcher can account for why there may be variations in the study, for example between cases (the different schools). In an addition, I compared this study to previous studies in the field and explained key difference. For instance, one case study may show that there are poor relationships between parents and teachers and the other case may distribute an effective parent-teacher relationship. I would therefore explain why the relationships at each school differs. I did an audit trail, where the data collection and analysis processes were transparent, are critically discussed and I looked for places of possible bias or distortion.

Dependability involves the use of other members or devices to check if the information is accurately on record. To ensure dependability in my research study I used a tape recorder to record all interviews. Furthermore, I interviewed participants from both seasoned and novice post level one (PL1) teachers, SGB members and parents. To enhance neutrality, I was aware that the perspective from the participants might not be the same as mine. In this manner, the data generated from the participants' perceptions of what is the role of SGBs in promoting parent-teacher relationship that work for learner academic success. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) mention that an audit trail enables the data to be trace to its source and findings arrived through proper processes such as coding and categorising.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) mention that conformability can be improved by making the research more transparent, with enough details for the reader to check if they would have reached the same or a similar conclusion. In agreement, Yin (2012), states that it is vital for the researcher to re-check the consistency of the findings. After I analysed the data, I allowed my colleagues to reflect on my findings. This enabled me to make sense of the data, which I had collected. I felt that by gaining the perspective of my colleagues I would have not missed out the essences of the study.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The participants in this study were conversant of the purpose of this research study. It was made clear from the beginning as to what the study was going to be about and that their role as participants is appreciated in completing this study. Furthermore, participants were inform that data collected from the interviews was use in the dissertation, but all names would be

anonymous thereby offering a form of protection. According to Cohen *et al.*, (2011) researchers can only protect their participants by ensuring that what information transpired between them, remains confidential and stays between the researcher and the participants. In agreement with Cohen *et al.*, (2014) it was clear to me that I must not discuss the results of the interviews with anybody and this also included the principal and other participants. In addition, participants were aware that their contribution would be voluntary and might feel free to decline contributing to the research study.

Furthermore, the use of consent letters were handed out. I sent consent letters to the principal to kindly request permission to conduct my research study in the school. It was also crucial to gain consent from all participants when conducting interviews, because not many participants wanted to contribute to this research study. The consent forms outlined the principles of a reasonable consent form mentioned by Cohen *et al.*, (2011). It included a reasonable enlightenment of the basic procedures that has to be monitor, what the study entailed and gave a suggestion to respond to any inquiries regarding the procedures. Finally, it was vital to request permission from the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) and to the University ethical clearance board to carry out this research study. A letter was sent to both the University and DoE, which outlined the purpose of this research study and its importance to education.

3.11 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by the following factors:

One of the schools proposed in the study is the researcher's own school. Base on the fact that the researcher being known may have limited some of the participants. To cover this limitation, I also introduced two other schools. Within the two schools, I observed that there is no smooth relationship between the parents and teachers so I wanted to look at the SGBs as people who would facilitate this relationship. The third school displayed a strong relationship between parents and teachers. Therefore, my aim was to understand how the two schools that had no relationships between parents and teachers can learn from the school who does have a healthy relationship between parents and teachers.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter clarified the need for a qualitative approach and its relevance. It further deliberated the methodological approach, the data collection procedures and analysis process.

While it dealt with the qualitative trustworthy issues, it also elucidated the limitations to ensure credibility.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

The prior chapter defined and discussed the relevant research design and methodology for researching parent-teacher relationships. The study aimed of the investigating the role of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. It further sought to explain how SGB's play their role and the challenges encountered in this phenomenon. Therefore, this chapter further presents and discusses the findings of this study. The data was generated through semi-structured interviews of selected one SGB chairperson, one teacher and one parent from each of the three schools. I used direct quotes to present data from the participants. Generally, the findings discuss the role that SGBs play to promote effective parent-teacher relationship, how do the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

I have encountered many challenges in obtaining the interviews with different stakeholders due to the schools' busy academic schedules. Further, some of the participants declined from the interview process, because they felt as if they were not suitable enough to give me rich data. Other participants mentioned that they had either urgent school meetings during school hours and parents did not turn up due to other personal commitments. I eventually managed to meet all the participants from the three schools by appealing to them to meet with me after school hours at school and during the weekends. The respondents were thereafter very glad to have the opportunity and a more secure and stable place to discuss their input about this issue.

4.2. Participants

The fragment below presents the demographic data of the SGBs, teachers and parents who were participants in this study. Table 1 offers the demographic information of the nine participants. I have categorised them according to their schools and in the manner in which they were interview.

Table 1: Participants

School	A	B	C
Chairperson	Mr Singh	Mrs Naidoo	Mrs Thomas
Teacher	Mr Govender	Mrs Naidoo	Mrs Khan
Parent	Parent1	Parent2	Parent3

4.3 Results and Discussion

The aims of this research was to explore how the SGBs promote effective parent-teacher relationships. In order for me to confirm exactly what the SGBs are saying about their roles, I interviewed one parent and one teacher from each of the schools. This was conducted to solicit information from them about their perceptions on the role of the SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and understand the enabling and challenging factors, SGBs are faced with when promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

Therefore, in this study I used my research questions as my main themes to report the data. The three main themes are; the role that SGBs play to promote effective parent-teacher relationships; how do the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. Further to the main themes, emerging themes from the data used to report the findings. In line with the critical questions of the study, the findings presents according to the following main themes:

- I. The role, which the SGBs play in promoting effective relationship between parents and teachers.
- II. How do SGBs' play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships?
- III. The enabling and challenging factors for SGBs' towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

4.3.1 The role that SGBs play towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

The previous segment highlighted the results and discussion about the study. This segment assisted me to understand the roles of the SGBs. I present the subsequent debates.

4.3.1.1 Understanding the roles of the SGBs

The findings suggest what the SGBs perceive as their roles and functions at their current school. With many difficulties, I was still able to interview with SGB chairpersons. All three representatives know fully and understand the role of the SGB and the heart of the school, which are the children. They understood that they expected to render all necessary assistance to the full board of governance at their school to perform their functions effectively. In addition, to create an environment where parents are able to work hand-in-hand with the teacher to the benefit of their children. All three-teacher representative of the SGBs were asked what they understood by their governance role.

Two of the three of the SGB chairpersons indicated that their roles is to act as a mediator between the parents and teachers. On this note, Mr Singh from School A had this to say:

***Mr Singh of School A:** My role is to ensure that there is a smooth form of communication between parents and teachers. Therefore, I am the middleman in terms of communication between the two components which is the staff and the parent component which is the SGBs.*

Mrs Naidoo of School B. corroborated the comments made by Mr Singh of School A.

***Mrs Naidoo of School B:** I am there to serve the interest of the parents and to have good ties with the teachers, management and other SGB members.*

These responses indicated that the SGBs portray their functions clearly and that they are there for the people, both teachers and the parents. They also understand that they need to work effectively and collaboratively. I believe that when the community, especially the parents comprehend the realism of the way aspects are fashioned, they will further be well position to contribute and support the school principal and staff to improve in all areas where there may be dearth of information. Thus, through their engagement with the SGBs, parents are proactive in the democratic alteration of education regardless of status quo. In short, it is clear that growth and local engagement of democracy are always together and harmonising. To corroborate this, a teacher from School A, Mr Govender mentions that the SGBs from his school fully understand their roles and if there are, any issues arbitrated it is done effectively.

Mr Govender of School A: *If there are burning issues, if there are issues that need to be arbitrated or sorted out immediately, and then meeting is set up with all SGBs members. We have a meeting with the current SGB regarding certain issues, regarding governance, regarding how the SMTs (the School Management Teams) operate so we bring a quick closure to parent queries and at that meeting, various things were discuss from the SGBs.*

However, Parent 1 of School A mentions that there are issues, which arise amongst parents, some of these issues are resolved but not all. This is mostly because the SGBs do not meet with the parents as often as they should. These are the comments made by Parent of School A.

Parent1 of School A: *The SGBs do meet with the parents but not as often as I think they should. Because as a parent, sometimes I have issues with the fact that they maybe meet once a year and they take decisions based on many aspects on the school, for example: the decision that considers on schools is discuss in a budget meeting, which is then decided by the entire house. There are times when we ask questions and we cannot get answers, so what happens is that five people or six people that is representing the entire school they turn to children. Sometimes takes decisions without consulting the parents. That is a consequence for me. I think that there should be more than one meeting with the full parent body as such. There should not just be one or two for the year, it should be more. The issues that they usually discuss in that meeting they usually have is the budget meeting is the only one meeting I think that they usually have.*

However, Parent2 of School B mentioned that she did not know who the SGBs members are, therefore it makes it difficult for the parents to understand the roles of the SGBs and realise that there ought to be assisted by them wherever they can.

Parent2 of School B: *We never met the SGBs; we only get to see the teacher reps not the SGB. At the parents meeting, the SGBs are not there. We just see the teachers only because we have to go to the individual classes, the SGBs are not there. They do have budget meeting but most of the time they are not there so it gets cancelled most of the time. I never saw the SGB members at school, so I do*

not even know who they are. I never met them from the time my daughter has been in the school which is 4years now.

SGBs need to make it known whom they are and act out their roles to play as such, so that both parents and teachers at schools would fully understand why SGBs are place at schools and use them accordingly. Dibete (2015) mentions that the SGBs focus solely on the aspect of trust in the school and there is a relationship between the governing body and school. Therefore, the governing body and the school must promote democratic ideologies of directness, contribution and answerability. The notion remains that the SGBs is station where trust stands and to convey their responsibilities and roles as SGBs on behalf of the school and to be liable for its actions. The SGB members need to attend school meetings and events and make it known to the school staff and parents who they are. They also need to meet with the parents on a regular basis so that issues on school matters can be resolved effectively.

4.3.2 The manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

The previous segment debated how SGBs understood their roles of promoting effective parent and teacher relationships. This segment discusses the manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent and teacher relationships. These debates relate to; creating connections between school and community, the importance of ensuring effective parent-teacher relationships and parent-teacher meetings. I present the subsequent debates.

4.3.2.1 Creating connections between school and community

The findings suggest that it is essential for the SGBs to be more hands on to get the community more involved in school activities and in delegation of tasks. The SGBs from these three schools do get the community involve; however, it is very few people who get involved. Here are some of the comments made by the SGBs chairperson from the various schools.

***Mr Singh of School A:** The main reason is for any school to be effective and efficient especially in terms of progression, in terms infrastructure and the way forward in education. It is important for all role players especially in the community to get involved. It is the governing body's duty to be hands on, to get the*

community more involved in terms of getting the community involved within the school, in terms of projects, be it whatever they can do voluntarily.

Mr Singh further mentioned that:

Mr Singh of School A: *From my point of view, I have seen members of the community come on board in terms of sponsorships, financially but do help us in terms of items that the school requires for example, signboards etc. We have people from the community who are from these businesses that can bring it to school. Even if it does not cost the school anything. Therefore, it is a win-win situation for us because the community plays a very important role in terms of development and in assistance as well.*

However, Mrs Naidoo of School A mentioned that even though the school tries its level best to get the community more involved, the numbers are very few when workshops are conducted etc. This is what she said:

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *Now very few parents are involved at school. I guess because most of them are working as well. However, those who are at home; we are trying to reach out to more. Especially the mothers that are at home. We are trying to reach out to more parents to be involve. They need to own our school because; their children are a part of the school. Therefore, they must be interested. Not only in the school life, the academic life of the child but also in the surrounding of the child as well.*

The comments made by Mrs Thomas of School C corroborated with Mrs Naidoo of School B. This was the comment:

Mrs Thomas of School C: *It is important because you make them aware of the activities and the happenings of the school. In addition, it is more important for us to get our community more involved. After all, their children are attending the school. Moreover, they should be aware of the happenings of the school and probably they would be able to help us as a community to help us uplift the school.*

It is evident that families work collaboratively with the school as partners in education of the children; allowing schools to provide those families with opportunities and support they require to become involved (Brownlee, 2015). The Michigan Department of Education (2001) highlights that parents require proper guidance and support so that they can become involved in the education of their children. Therefore, teachers need to encourage parents with their assistance. This would make the teachers tasks less stressful. Naicker (2013) mentions a few ways in which teachers can ensure that parents participate which are; encourage face-to-face meetings whenever possible, keep parents regularly informed about learners' progress, send learning material home, develop programmes to assist the learners with their homework in the various learning areas.

The alliance between the school and the community contributes openly to reinforce the growth in respective of one and the other offering a stable groundwork for educational replenishment and community restoration. Chrzanowski, Rans and Thompson (2012) mention that to attain an imperative goal, ingenious education, ground-breaking community builders are obligated to conduct tasks collaboratively in discovering new ways to assemble the countless and diverse resources of local schools as crucial aspects of on-going community improvement. Fruitful communities come in all forms; all monetary levels, urban and rural and they possess many resources, which, once organised and connected, make community life opulent and vivacious. Schools need to therefore grab a hold of these opportunities and cultivate an effective relationship to support each other. However, in order to make this work, all stakeholders need to put their hands to the plough for the benefit of the child's education and not for his or her personal gain.

4.3.2.2 The importance of ensuring effective parent-teacher relationships

The findings suggest that teacher-parent relationship focus on the relationship between home and school. The findings determine how teachers and parents can work together to promote the social and academic development of learners. Therefore, the relationship between the parents and teachers creates a partnership between the two systems working towards a common goal. This is the comment made by Mr Singh of School A:

***Mr Singh of School A:** It is very important to have that good relationship between parents and teachers. Sometimes there are challenges that teachers and parents have, maybe they do not see eye-to-eye for example. In addition, this is where*

the SGB needs to steps in to create harmony, so everyone needs to get along for the sake of the learners and for the betterment of education. If the teacher and the parent does not get along or they don't have effective communication skills, the person who will suffer is the child. That is why it is important for the teacher and the parent to have a good relationship and it is important that the governing body ensure that this does carry on at schools.

It is evident that a positive relationship between the school and the home will create a positive impact on the child's development and learning achievements. Naicker (2013) mentions that the parents' role in the relationship depends on the country's legislation, culture and social traditions in which the school operates. Parents are view as co-educator as well. They have the ability to teach their children first at home.

Therefore, if parents understand the hardships teachers go through, they would want to form a better relationship with the teacher. This relationship is desire to make schools more efficient and effective and to improve the quality of education (Govender, 2011). The importance of an effective relationship between schools and parents is emphasised by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Parents are therefore, expected to actively participate in the government (public) schools with the objective of ensuring a secured teaching and learning environment.

Mrs Naidoo of School B corroborated this by mentioning that it is important to foster a good relationship between parent and teacher because it benefits the child. This was the comment made by Mrs Naidoo.

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *If the parents, school and child all work together, then the child benefits in the end. Because that is what we are here for. Therefore, the SGB has made the efforts in that concern because we have besides academic work we have tried different ways to ensure effective relationships between parents and teachers, for example, we conducted our fete program. We tried to get parents involved in that. Then we have parent meetings where we had a workshop. We had a nutrition agent to enlighten parents on what types of food they should be giving their learners because their parents feel that if they give their child like a R10 for spending, that is fine because they do not have time to make lunch in the morning. Therefore, we found that it that it was necessary for*

us to enlightening them or to inform them on the types of food that they should be eating and stuff because we actually gave them scenarios about how it affects us or the children in the class.

The school governing body has to therefore make sure that parents actively engage in school tasks; the principal, teachers, non-teaching staff, learners and appointed members in the governance of public schools in South Africa. Activities such as raising funds, supporting educators through speculative and extra mural tasks conduct voluntarily and parents must be encouraged and skilled to contribute vigorously. It was hope that involving parents in education would provide them with insight into their children's progress and encourage them to partake in decision-making at schools and to make them critical of information on educational issues.

Lekli and Kaloti (2015) mention that schools are shape because parents no longer felt fully competent to perform their educative task. Therefore, as education at school enhances, parents are prone to get more involved. They share the responsibilities of educating their children at school with the teacher. Lekli and Kaloti (2015) further mention that the successful education of children demands an effective relationship between home and school. The school represents the teacher and the home represents the parent. The act of teaching the child is inseparable and cannot separate the home and school. It is essential that both work hand-in-hand, knowing that it is possible that there would be some damage to the child is societal, expressive and intellectual growth. Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) argue that by parents teaching their children at home assists the teacher to mould children's fundamentals for their future.

Mrs Thomas of School C corroborate this when she made this comment:

Mrs Thomas of School C: *It is important for us to work together at any given time between a parent and teacher, it is important for us to work together because we will always be working together for the best interest of our learners. Anything that we do at any given time will be in the interest of our learners. And it works well. Parents are very cooperative.*

It is evident that neither the parent nor the teacher alone can fulfil the educative task completely but being in an effective relationship from School C, they actually supplement

each other (Meyer, Mann & Becker, 2011). Therefore, there should be collaborations between the parent and teacher in order to create and maintain an effective relationship. Lekli and Kaloti (2015) reveal that parents are view as the primary educators of the child whereas; the teacher is view as the secondary educator. This creates a state of mutual interdependence, a relationship that has to be developed, or even better, a relationship, which has to evolve.

The more responsible parents consider the education of their children as very important. They want a daily update of their child's progress at school by getting more involved in their children's education (Lekli & Kaloti, 2015). Therefore, parents also need to be more interested in other kinds of information concerning the school. Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) point out that research has found that the improvement of home-school relations are dependent on the quality of parent-teacher partnership and is significantly related to the improvement of the learners' academic achievement, better school attendance, improved learner behaviour etc. Tveit (2009) shows that if by anything, true parent-teacher relationship; reveals that various ways of cooperation in the relationship and that no one way is superior but that they simply accomplish different purposes. In turn, schools, parents and students continuously profit from a pleasant parent and teacher relationship.

4.3.2.3 Parent-teacher meetings

The findings suggest that it is essential that parent-teacher meetings work to reinforce the learners' performance and discipline at school. In addition, to inform the parents regarding areas of concern and the matter is consider further by having one-on-one meetings with the child present. Mr Singh of School A said:

Mr Singh of School A: Well after every examination, it is from my point of view compulsory to have a parents meeting to work our way forward in terms of how the learners have progress in that term. To keep the parents updated, from there we iron out areas of concern also as I said, their strengths as well. It is very important that we have these parent-teacher meetings, but remember once a term is not good enough especially for learners who are lacking. The learners who are excelling and doing quite well, we need to phone the parents at least once a term and let them know, re-ensuring that their child is on track and everything is running smoothly, and everything is fine.

Mrs Naidoo of school B who commented that corroborated the comments made by Mr Naidoo of School A:

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *When we have our parent-teacher meetings, we generally have it on a one-one basis. At the beginning of the year we have, a general meeting where parents come and each teacher gives them an outline of what is going to happen throughout the year. Once the report cards are distributed, we expect to meet with the parents and discuss student's progress on an individual basis. We invite the parents to come in and speak to us, they work because the parents do not know what goes on at school, and we do not know what goes on at home. So if we do speak to the parents individually you get a better understanding of the child and the background of where the child is coming from and you get a better understanding of how and why the child is performing the way he or she in the class.*

Havard (2011) mentions that it is essential for parent-teacher meetings to take place on a regular basis. However, the response from participants, parent-teacher meeting occurs only twice in a year. Moreover, when these meetings do occur, there is no supervision or the presence of the SGB at these meetings. It makes it very difficult for teachers to deal with parents who want to cause conflict with a teacher. It is essential that these meetings are honest and clear, therefore teachers should not sugar coat things too much to avoid confrontation or being too blunt that causes offence.

Parents need the accurate information about their child's performance and behaviour at school, which makes it a bit challenging because the teacher would have to be careful on what exactly they tell the parents and not to criticise the parents parenting skills. After all the children are viewed as the client and the parent's acts on behalf of the children. If the parents are not happy with the school or teacher, they could possibly take the matter up further or just simply leave the school. A parent from School A said that:

Parent 1 of School A: *The SGBs does meet with the parents but not as often as I think they should. Because as a parent, sometimes I have issues with the fact that they maybe meet once a year and they take decisions based on many aspects on the school, for example: staffing, they take the decision on school fees but that they have a budget meeting which is decided by the entire house. Moreover, there are*

times when we ask questions and we cannot get answers, so what happens is that five people or six people that is representing the entire school they turn to children. Sometimes takes decisions without consulting the parents. That is a cause of concern for me.

Both parents from School B and School C mentioned that SGBs are never present for these meetings and those they only see the teachers at these meetings. This is what they said:

Parent 2 of School B: *We never met the SGB; we only get to see the teachers not the SGBs. At the parents meeting, the SGBs are not there. We just see the teachers only because we have to go to the individual classes, the SGBs are not there. They do have budget meeting but most of the time they are not there so it gets cancelled most of the time. I never saw the SGB members at school, so I do not even know who they are. I never met them from the time my daughter has been in the school which is 4years now.*

Parent 3 of School C: *They do not usually attend; I have not seen them. The principal and teachers are at these meetings so I am not sure if they discuss our issues with SGBs, but I am sure that, they do. The parents are definitely not happy with certain things but at the end of the year, there is some compromise made.*

The teacher representative at that School C. corroborated the assertion made by the parents. This is what Mrs Thomas said:

Mrs Thomas of School C: *If there are any issues that come up, we follow protocol, like in our department in the senior primary if someone has to come to me, they would have to see my HOD and from the HOD then it goes to the principal. We follow protocol and then we take it up to the office. We sit and discuss it, where my HOD is call in with the parent, the principal and me. We try our best to solve the issues. SGBs do not involve unless it is a more serious matter.*

However, Mrs Naidoo of School B mentioned that parents' meetings work well when it is on a one-on-one basis. Parents have the tendency to be open and honest about what is happening at home during these meetings. This type of information aid teachers to understand children much better.

***Mrs Naidoo of School B:** we invite the parents to come in and speak to us, they work because the parents do not know what goes on at school, and we do not know what goes on at home. So if we do speak to the parents individually you get a better understanding of the child and the background of where the child is coming from and you get a better understanding of how and why the child is performing the way he or she is in the class. However, we cannot expect miracles of certain children and other children we know that there are no problems at home. Therefore, we need push them. It let us understand the child better if we speak to the parents individually.*

Some parents prefer meeting with the teacher on a one-on-one meeting. Simply because both teacher and parents are given the space to express their views about the child without any interference or disturbances. In addition, the parents feel that it is better because they can talk to the subject teachers individually, find out their child's weaknesses and strengths, work on their weakness, and find ways together to move forward. The nature deals utmost concealment and engages with the debate of data explicitly towards students in a precise subject. The disadvantage of the nature is that the meetings are difficult to schedule for the reason that they involve various time slots and venues (Harvard, 2010).

4.3.3 The enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

The previous segment debated the manner in which the SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. This segment discusses the enabling and challenging factors towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. I have divided this segment into sub sections. I will discuss the enabling factors for SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. Thereafter, I will discuss the challenging factors for SGBs towards parent-teacher relationships. I present the subsequent debates.

4.3.3.1 Enabling factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

These debates relate to; assisting with financial aid, assisting with discipline at school and allocating security at school. I present the subsequent debates.

4.3.3.1.1 Assisting with financial aid

The finding suggest that SGBs are willing to assist the children, from the poorer area, to meet their basic needs. This includes school's fees. Mrs. Naidoo of School B mentioned the following:

***Mrs. Naidoo of School B:** We get about 30%-40% of our entire school population to pay school fees for the year. In addition, they are left with deficit of 60% and where that money comes from. Therefore, at the end of the day we have to do fund-raising. Many of the parents are not committed to pay school fees.*

Mrs Thomas of School C corroborate this by mentioning that they get sponsors to assist parents in regards to paying the children's school fees. Mrs Thomas mentioned the following:

***Mrs Thomas of School C:** We live in a wealthy community therefore we are able to get outside sponsors. From temples, churches and many outside sponsorships.*

In agreement, Parent1 of School A mentions that when they do meet with the SGBs they do discuss the budget and mention why they set the school fees at a certain amount and discuss the best way to make payment towards paying the school fees. Parent 1 of School A mentioned the following:

***Parent 1 of School A:** The issues that they usually discuss in that meeting they usually have is the budget meeting is the only one meeting I think that they usually have. It involves the aspects of the fund raising, of what they have to do and why they are setting the school fees at a certain amount. Usually they give us a break down of what they are doing with the school fees.*

SGBs try their very best to assist parents the best way that they can financially. It is done through fund raise or sponsorships. According to Mestry (2013), an individual or individuals control the management of school finance. This simply means that the finances are not manage incorrectly even if there is good intention for the finances. Thwala (2010) mentions that managing school finance might be said to be a procedure compromising numerous tasks which may include the following aspects proper documentation, capacity, build-up, scrutiny, grounding, clarification and communication of facts, both financially and working.

Selesho and Mxuma (2012) point out that managing school finance involves retaining petty cash in the face of ever-changing settings of income and expenditure. These authors further point out that managing finance at schools has the ability to maximise its financial assets whereby the intake and output is at its minimal. Hence, managing the school finance is develop by the fund raising events that is embark by the stakeholders to attain a mutual goal together with the schools.

4.3.3.1.2 Assisting with discipline at school

The findings suggest that SGBs do not get involve unless the matter is serious and there is conflict amongst learners at school. It also suggests that SGBs are not seen physically at schools assisting with discipline at school, however when issues concerning discipline are dealt with, management notify the teachers that the SGBs have taken up some measure concerning this. Mr Govender of School A said the following:

Mr Govender of School A: You see as professionals we need to remember that the classroom teaching and governance, there is a very fine line between it. Discipline from the perspective of the classroom is the teacher's prerogative. They will find creative ways of dealing with discipline issues within the class. They will correct children who will have discipline issues. School governing body comes in when there are serious issues and conflict, for example, a child brought a knife to school and he intended to or poked another child that is when a tribunal is set up or a meeting is set up calling the parents of the affected parties. School governing body, school management will sit in and arbitrate the matter. There is acknowledgement of the fact that they were irresponsible, they showed a lack of discipline. That is the only time we involve the SGB is when a child after a repeated effort is made, still continues doing what he does then the school governing body is called in together with the parents and we sit down and try to help that child become a better person.

Dhlamini (2014) points out that without proper discipline no learning can take place in a school environment. Therefore, the school has the duty to regulate its learners to ensure effective teaching and learning. With the South African Schools Act of 1996, schools have to gather guidelines and rules for the learners to adopt by the SGB as the Code of Conduct for the school. Schools ought to make discipline as a significance, because no matter how

effective the teacher or the teaching strategy is, without discipline, no effective learning can take place at school (Department of Education, 2000). Discipline will forever remain as an issue at schools across the world; therefore, it is imperative for all stakeholders to work hand-in-hand to correct learners in regards to errant behaviour.

Mrs Khan of School C corroborated this by mentioning that SGBs do assist the school concerning discipline but teachers have not seen them physically at school and dealing with such matters, Mrs Khan of School C said the following:

Mrs Khan of School C: *We do have teachers on the SGBs that represent the staff but I am being honest to my knowledge, I am taking personally... maybe I am not aware, or informed or whatever I have not heard of the SGBs assisting with discipline in fact teachers are left out in the cold. There were no issues, that occur when the school invited the public (the parents) to an event hosted at the school. However, if issues did occur I am sure that the SGBs' would deal with the discipline. There are other matters that occur at the school where the learners were caught smoking and they were in the position of drugs. I am not sure if they were smoking but it was in their possession and the principal did report to us that the matter, dealt by the SGB. However, on a one to one, I do not know what they have physically done but I am sure if there are any incidents at school they would lend a helping hand, I am sure.*

Even though teachers are not sure that the SGBs assist the school with discipline, they are inform by the management that they do. However, Mrs Naidoo of School B mentions that the SGBs does not assist the school with discipline. Mrs Naidoo mentioned the following:

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *My Point Of View, the SGB does not. For one if SGB did assert themselves in disciplining learners, I think schools would be much better especially in the classrooms and the educators would much better control it. For now, I have not seen much, no discipline instructed by the SGB; the teachers, principal and parents instruct it.*

The SGBs of all schools are obligated to make sure that there are suitable guidelines and procedures are in position to administrate school assets. Therefore, SGBs must also have proper structures to monitor and estimate the correct application of such guidelines and

procedures (Dibete, 2015). SGBs need proper training to assist the school in managing discipline of learners. Therefore, they will be able to come up with innovative ideas as a collective to deal with discipline amongst learners at school. Usually discipline dealt through corporal punishment. The SGBs are considered as parents first. Children generally respect other children's parents. When the SGBs have that kind of authority over the children at school, it makes it a lot easier to handle discipline.

4.3.3.1.3 Allocating security at school

The findings suggest that there are a lot of theft and vandalism conducted at school and SGBs are not getting involved. The finding also suggests that theft also occurs outside school premises regarding school finances. It is apparent when finance officers from school make deposits at the ATM, there were people who followed her all the way to the ATM and stole the money. Mr Govender of School A mentions the following:

Mr Govender of School A: Burglary and theft takes place at school, learner to learner.

However, in terms of the school resources, there was an incident where a few boys got into our school P.E. stock room and took some equipment. The sports coordinator, our swimming coach together with the teachers called the parents. The parents acknowledge the fact that their children were not disciplined and therefore decided to replace those items. The school governing body did, not get involved because we could deal with it. The one incident I can remember where the children took away school resources otherwise it is not heard of in our school. Theft does exist, a child will take away another child's money or he will take away another child's pencil case. It happens but then we call the child, if the child is persistent then we call the parents in and the parents discipline the child. Nevertheless, we are blessed at our school that we have discipline issues but not as bad as it can get and therefore, we can deal with it.

However, Mrs Thomas of School C mentioned that when theft occurs at their school, the SGBs implement innovative ideas to tighten security in regards to school matters. Mrs Thomas further mentions that one of the SGB representatives from the parent component actually belong to the police department. They have hired a trained security guard to manage the gates as well as checking all the visitors to the school. Mrs Khan of School C made the following comment:

Mrs Khan of School C: In the past, I am talking about many years ago where we had burglary there. We had a previous principal who has passed on and there was an amount of money, was remove from our school savings. At that stage, I do not know what they could have done. I do know that the police were call in and not much was done. I know that we had another problem where a SGB member which wasn't too long ago was depositing money for us at the standard bank in Umhlanga and the money was stolen off the person and they had cameras on the premises where everything was recorded that was out of the school. However, there is maybe petty theft at school like the one you would expect at any other school. Like obviously, if I left my phone on the desk someone might steal it. Other than that, I have not heard any major burglary. Like cars being broken into or offices being broken into. There was not, any major things. I also know that one of the SGB members have a high ranking on the police force, I am sure that he does a lot. We have a safety and security policy as well that we are updating all the time, so when we see a need to change or update then we will.

Every school needs to be able to apply constructive teaching and learning in a safe and secure environment. Incidents such as stealing finance occurs everywhere, therefore it is imperative that the SGBs take extra measure to ensure that the school is safe and secured. Ozmen (2010) concurs by stating, it is vital that both learners and teachers feel safe and protected at school as well as going to and coming from school. Jaarsveld (2011) mentions that security measures taken at school reduces the personal risk that may occur at schools. Safety and security is view as a crucial concern. Schools, which are safe, have the ability to reassure that both teaching and learning would take place. Each of the schools were supposed to offer a safe and secure environment but instead it created an environment where there is theft resulting to learners' not discipline. School C needs to be more vigilant when dealing with finances and rather have parents work with EFTs instead.

4.3.3.2 Challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships

These debates relate to; contestant parents, time constraints and poor communication. I present the subsequent debates.

4.3.3.2.1 Critical parents

The findings suggest that SGBs are finding it challenging with parents who always want to contest everything that is mention and done at the school. It also suggests that SGBs experience very challenging parents who question everything and if things are not implement instantly then there is some sort of compromise made at the end of the day. They also feel that time is a challenge, whereby they are working far from school and unable to attend school meetings resulting in parents and teachers not knowing who they are and just assuming that the SGBs have a don't care attitudes towards some of their concerns any issues. Mr Singh from School A said:

Mr Singh of School A: *The challenges you get sadly you do get parents who want to challenge things, sometimes even the educators themselves, they would challenge the mark, the projects itself. The mark that the teacher gave the child because they do not see the criteria that we use to score the child. They just come in and they give a negative attitude, which is demotivating for the teacher. Where, they want to dictate to the teacher as to how the teacher must do the job. Therefore, that is a challenge, which we do have often in the school.*

Mrs Naidoo of School B corroborates this by mentioning that when parents are call at school they do not attend but most often come to school when they have issues with other teachers. Mrs Naidoo of School B said:

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *We send for parents; they do not come. I feel that maybe it is because they are not interested.*

Naicker (2011) supports this by mentioning that there are three types of parents, who dictated to the teacher. The three types of parents are as follow the politician, the career maker and the tormentor. The politician type of parents is very critical towards the teachers. They are very precise, optimistic and persuasive. According to Smith (2010), this type of parent has a desire to use influence and to be a part of the decision making process at the school and easily influence the school to demote a teacher if he or she wants. He or she is an active participant in the choice of the school and is fussy who falls into the low to medium level of salary (Naicker, 2011).

The career maker is the type of parents who fall under the category of working class to the elite. These parents earn a lot of money and have the mind-set and attitude of a businessperson. They believe that the teacher is answerable for the child's academic advancement. The parent is aloof and does not have time for school related matters so instead of the parents attending the school meetings they would send someone else like the grandmother (Naicker, 2011). According to Brownlee (2015), tormentor is the type of parents who are even more difficult to deal with. These parents feel offended and misunderstood and because of schools' attitude and own educational experiences.

The teacher is constantly criticised by the parent for everything they do. These parents like blaming the teacher by looking at possible errors and is only truly satisfied when the teacher recoils and take responsibility for their functioning. Parents are aggressive and believe that he or she know it all and if things do not go their way, they would report the school to the Department of Education (Naicker, 2011). In addition, most cases the SGBs would either leave the teacher to defend his or her self or rather side with the parent.

4.3.3.2.2 Time constraints

The finding suggest that time restrict SGBs to promote effective parent and teacher relationships. Most of the SGBs have other jobs that are often not near to the school. Some of them work double shifts while others may have personal issues, so that this may restrict SGBs to be at school to assist in sorting out school matters. Due to these factors, SGBs would not even have a proper working relationship with some of the parents and teachers as well. Mr Govender of school A shed some light on this matter.

***Mr Govender of School A:** In terms of the challenges faced by the SGBs to promote effective parent-teacher relationship, you have to remember that they are elected by the parents and because of that, they have the mandate to make decisions. Sometimes their decisions may not be in keeping with all the parents so parents will call them and tell them for example, 'we paid you school fees yet you want another R40 for a road trip which was supposed to be included in the school fees'.*

Due to time constraints, SGBs often find it difficult to get to know the parents and teachers on a one-on-one basis. Thus, disabling them to make decisions based on the needs of both

teachers and parents. Both Mrs Naidoo of School B and Mrs Khan of School C corroborate this. This is what they mentioned.

***Mrs Naidoo of School B:** Most of the parents on the SGB work so they have to have SGB meetings always towards the afternoon. As I said before, if you are a member of the SGB you attend and if it is school function, it depends on which teachers are a part of that group will attend not everybody.*

***Mrs Khan of School C:** I think the fact that they are working whilst we are teaching that maybe that would be one of the challenges. Maybe they would want to be here more often and on the other hand, I think the teachers would not want them to be here more often because sometimes their routine and the way they handle their profession and the way maybe parents see it. It may be overwhelmed maybe they would feel that parents are spying on them, maybe they are not doing that. They feel as if their space is being invading...*

Teachers generally feel inadequate to teach when someone is monitoring them. The teachers in School C felt it overwhelming when parents invade their space by watching them while they are teaching. They feel as if parents have no respect for time constraints, and feel that the school needs to include this in the school policy. The SGBs have to address the parents on such issues and come up with possible solutions to such matters.

4.3.3.2.3 Poor communication

The findings suggest that SGBs experience that there is a break of communication between parents and teachers. Parents expect teachers to work miracles with children at school but do not properly communicate with their child's teachers in this regard. They do not look at aspects to assist the teacher in whichever way they can but rather demand the ways things are done within a specific period. With that comes a lot lack of communication or lack of informing each other in regards to the child's work. On that note, teacher 1 from School A expressed his views concerning this matter.

***Teacher 1 of School A:** If there were a break in communication between parents, teachers and SGBs then more problems would result. Most often because of the lack of information and communication, parents become angry and would want*

to complain but as soon as they have all the information in regards to an activity or a teacher's performance at school, then they are happy to what is being done.

The majority of parents of School B do not consider a vigorous concern in the children's academic success and it is evident by the turnout at the parents meeting or by the parents not attending the meetings with the school called, for various issues in regards to their children's behaviour and academic progress. It would seem as if parents have abandoned their duty of their children's academic advancement and conduct at the school. This is corroborated by McGrath (2010) who insist that schools focus more on working with parents that reported that they found it difficult to engage parents in behaviour management, education activities and policy making.

In supporting this, Mrs Naidoo of School B commented:

Mrs Naidoo of School B: *The challenging factors are; parents are sometimes pathetic like they are not interested. Some of the parents do not have time. Therefore, that is a challenge that we are experiencing. When we send for parents, they do not come. I feel that maybe it is not they are not interested. It could be that they are working late. Therefore, their social background and their work commitments may be an issue as to why they are not coming. Therefore, that is a challenge. In addition, when we have our awards day or any functions at school, we have to have it suitable for the teachers. Because sometimes the teachers come from far, just for a parent meeting. In most cases, there are only 30-40 parents' pitch. It is challenging. The work commitment, empathy on the part of the parents and non-commitment to their children's schoolwork.*

Naicker (2011) mentions that this type of parent is generally absent from the child's education. He or she is a loner, quitter and not friendly at all. This parent experiences problems communicating with the school and with the teacher. He or she has difficulty in dealing with the cultural gap, which is clearly not suited to contribute but only engage in participation when asked. This is generally when the learner gets into a lot of trouble and has exhausted all protocols and results in the calling the parents to school to discuss the child's behaviour. Therefore, these parents do not have much interest in the education of their children and leaves the decision entirely up to the teacher to deal with.

4.4 Chapter summary

SGBs ought to support and encourage parental involvement at school. As I conversed with the SGBs, teachers and parents, I realised that school-community partnerships have a great influence on enriching parent-teacher relationships. Therefore, schools are view as communities within communities and both parents and teachers play that role of being within a community. They are both mindful of the prominence of effective relationships with each other. It is evident that their relationship is not that effective due to poor communication. Nevertheless, effective relationships are promising. It is vital for parents and teachers to have consistent communication for learners' academic attainment. An effective parent-teacher relationship is nurture by sharing common goals. The following chapter presents a summary of the findings, recommendations stemming from the study as well as the implications of the study.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The prior chapter dealt with data presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings obtained from the interviews. After careful consideration of the data, certain clear conclusions emerged in terms of the critical questions formulated in the introductory chapter. Based on the findings outlined in chapter four and the conclusions of this study, relevant recommendations is done.

5.2 Summary of the findings and conclusions

The summary of the findings is present under each question, which the study responded. The literature and data inform the summary of the findings. The rationale behind the approach is to ensure that the summary, recommendations and implications is evaluate based on the findings from the literature and the data.

Critical question 1: What role do the SGBs play in promoting effective relationship between parents and teachers?

The literature identified that although there is an abundance of policies that support parent-teacher relationships. There is not much literature that speaks about the role of SGBs of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. SGBs however, get the community more involved at schools and empower them to be a part of decision-making at school (Baffour, 2010). Literature also argues that SGBs play an imperative role in the attitude of both parents and teachers (Christenson, 2011). By doing so, they create various programmes that would allow parents and teachers to work together. These relationships are essential because it would benefit the child both socially and academically.

Iheoma, Iruka, Winn, Kingsley and Orthodox (2011) argue that both parents and teachers play a promising role in children's success. The SGBs have to ensure that this partnership runs smoothly. Christenson, (2011) mentions that this relationship is only fully functional when programmes are place. Parents are more involved when they are fully aware of their assistance to the school.

The findings of the study reveal that the SGBs know and understand their role as an SGB and the heart of the school. They are aware that they need to create an environment where parents

are able to work hand-in-hand for the benefit of the children. However, parent2 of school B mentioned that she does not know who the SGBs are because they are never at school meetings. She also mentioned that when issues occur at school, they are never there to solve it. Parent1 of School A revealed that the SGBs do not meet the parents as often as they should. Due to this, the SGBs take up most of the decisions without consulting the parents. This creates a lot of conflict at school.

Critical question 2: How do SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships?

The literature identified the manner in which SGBs play their role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships by encouraging parents and teachers to work collaboratively. SGBs also introduced two-way communication, creating programmes, getting parents to volunteer their services and involving parents with decision-making. Brownlee (2015) mentions that when families work collaboratively with the school, they create a partnership. This partnership provides families with the opportunity and support which they require to be more involved. Parents become active participants when they have face-to-face meetings with the teachers (Naicker, 2013).

Loughran (2011) point out that communication plays an important role to promote effective parent-teacher relationships. However, in order to have effective relationships between parents and teachers, trust needs to be earned. This is gained by parents meeting the teachers on a regular basis. The regular parent-teacher meetings should be arranged by the SGBs (Epstein, 2011). These meetings are not always successful due to time constraints. The working class parents are unable to make it for some of these important meetings. Therefore, the teacher would contact the parent through other forms of communication, for example: Phoning the parents or by simply writing a note in the child's message book. Naicker (2013) mentions that schools need to provide the necessary information on parenting to all parents in the communities for effective teaching and learning to take place. Parents develop skills, knowledge and gain confidence about their parenting as the child grows and school governance itself (Epstein, 2008) provides this support.

Literature also mentions that parents are willing to volunteer their services at the school, which their child is in. SGBs notice those parents who assist the school and in turn, SGBs would train these parents and help them build their resources (Naicker, 2013). Parents need to be encouraged to assist the school and be a part of school projects (Brennen, 2011). Parents

who are actively involved at the school gain power to be a part of decision-making (Berger, 2011). They also would have the opportunity to make better decisions in the interest of their children.

The findings of the study reveal three aspects: creating connections between school and community, the importance of ensuring effective parent-teacher relationships and parent-teacher meetings. The SGBs understand that it is their duty to create positive relationships between parents and teachers. It is evident that a positive relationship between parents and teachers would create a positive impact on children development and learning achievements. Therefore, if parents understand the challenges teachers go through, they would foster a better relationship with the teacher. SGBs need to ensure the relationships between parents and teachers is well maintain. The findings of the study also revealed that parent-teacher meetings work to reinforce the learners' performance and discipline at school. However, when there is conflict between parents and teachers' relationship does occur, the SGBs are not present. This makes it difficult for teachers to deal with conflict situation if arose.

Critical question 3: What are the enabling and challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships?

The literature identified two main enabling factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationship: managing finance and a well-functioning school created by the SGB is by ensuring proper infrastructure, security and management of learner discipline. It is necessary for SGBs to draft a financial report and employ a professional accountant to manage their financial books (Baffour, 2010). This carry out, so that there is no embezzlement at school in regards to school finances. SGBs do try their best to ensure that the teaching and learning environment is secure and that there is proper infrastructure in place. SGBs are unable to manage learner discipline alone, therefore, they involve both parents and teachers to manage learner discipline.

Literature reveals that when parents and teachers distribute the responsibility of learner discipline, it not only reinforces their relationship but also debates about the challenges surrounding parents who have restricted knowledge about what measures to take when disciplining children (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012). Literature identified three main challenges, which the SGBs faced with towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships: poor mutual assistance, decision-making and poor communication between parents and teachers. SGBs most often allow teachers to resolve issues that occurs between parents and teachers

(Xaba & Nhlapo, 2014). There is no assistance from the SGBs in regards to this matter. Xaba & Ngubane (2010) mention that parents are not allowed to participate with decision-making equally. This is due to poor literacy level and restricted school governance practice. Parents are therefore, easily influenced and dominated with the decision-making process. Literature also reveal that there is poor communication between parents and teachers, which causes an obstruction of any form of relationship between them.

The findings of the study is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the enabling factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The next section deal with the challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The SGBs try their level best to assist parents with finance. This is done through sponsorships. Mestry (2013) reveals that even though SGBs are using the school finance to assist parents financially, they still need someone to manage the school finance. The study also reveal that SGBs assist the school with learner discipline. The SGBs usually meet with the SMTs to discuss the ways forward to deal with these issues. They assist with school policies to deal with such issues. The study also reveal that the SGBs ensure that the school has proper security so that constructive teaching and learning takes place. Both teachers and learners need to feel safe and secure at school.

The findings revealed that some of the challenging factors for SGBs towards promoting effective parent-teacher relationships is unceasing parents, time constrains and poor communication. SGBs find it most challenging when parents are constant. They want to challenge everything that is mention and done at school. Teachers are constantly criticised by the parents. SGBs are unable to deal with such issues immediately because they are not at the school on a regular basis. The findings also revealed that time restricts SGBs to promote effective parent-teacher relationships. Most of the SGBs have other jobs, which are unfortunately not close to the school. Due to this fact, SGBs do not have a proper working relationship with most teachers and parents.

The findings further reveal SGBs experience a break of communication between parents and teachers. Parents expect teachers to do their very best to assist the learners to do well, but are unable to communicate properly with the teacher. However, there are some parents who want to communicate with the teacher but do not know how to due to poor literacy level.

5.3 Recommendations

The previous segment discussed the summary of the findings with its conclusion. This segment however, deals with the recommendations of the study. I present the subsequent recommendations.

5.3.1 Preparing the SGBs in understanding their roles as school governors

It is known that SGBs are placed at schools to assist and support the improvement of the school. Nevertheless, in the duration of conducting the interviews it became obvious that the tasks of the SGBs is demanding and difficult. They have to make sure that the values of learning and teaching is execute in the appropriate manner. They have make sure that the school finance is manage well. The majority of parents and some teachers who are not a part of the SGB know very little of current SGBs and their functions. Therefore, they are unable to approach their various issues and resolve it, but rather turning to the principal to resolve issues.

The task of the SGB members is not solitary but is also challenging towards them. Even though certain SGB members are assign to certain tasks, they need to overlap with each other. In other words, they need to assist each other in wherever they can. It is essential for the school experts and the Department of Education to assist the SGBs through regular workshops. The delivery of consistent training may perhaps assist them to become very skilful and well-organise in clearing their responsibilities to the schools. They should be trained in; basic bookkeeping, raising finance, making financial arrangements, resolving conflict, corporate plan tendering and conference procedures. This may perhaps go a long way in improving the functioning of SGBs. They also need to inform the parents and all teaching staff who they are.

5.3.2 Building community-school relationships

The schools and the community are required to work hand in hand to attain common goals. Schools need to therefore offer further support for learners, families and both teaching and non-teaching staff when they are a fundamental part of the community. In contrast, agencies can make facilities more available to learners and families by connecting with schools. They can connect better with parents and have an impact on hard to reach clients. Clients here are consider as the parent, and the school is run like a business, in which the school needs to always keep the clients (parents) happy so that they will send their children to their school.

Cooperation and being a part of a team remains as a significant aspect to the growth of the community, learning and family self-sufficiency. This alliance contains the use of school or neighbourhood amenities and equipment, distribution of other assets, co-operative raising finance and grant applications, volunteer their support, mentoring and training from expert and others with superior skills and knowledge, notify sharing and dissemination, networking, recognition and public relations. It also requires both parties to share the responsibility for planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes and services, expanding opportunities for internships, jobs recreation and building a sense of community.

School A has tried their best to get the community more involved and that is great because the outcome is excellent, but just need to be aware that the involvement should not be a take-over, which can cause problems due to conflict of interest. School B also try their best, however the parents within the community are not all getting involved. Therefore, School B needs to be more creative in marketing their needs. People are more interested when they know exactly what the need is and are able to assistance financially. School C seem to have no problem; they work in harmony.

Therefore, school-community partnerships have the ability to improve communities that support all youth and their families. This improve schools; reinforce neighbourhoods and leads to obvious lessening in learner difficulty. Constructing these partnerships needs visioning, tactical development innovative leadership and new multifaceted roles for professionals who work in schools and communities.

5.3.3 Assisting teachers and parents fostering a positive relationship

The SGBs need to break the barriers by nurturing two-way communication between teachers and parents. This enables families to engage with each other that will lead to improved outcomes for students. Parents need to engage with their children's school. This simply means that the parents need to attend the school more regularly and have better social skills. As soon as families, teachers and schools discover methods to work collaboratively, learner attainment increases, teacher morale increases together with the improvement of two-way communication between family, school and community. Both parents and teachers want what is best for their children because both know very well that the performance of the child, both academically and socially reflects on them as individuals.

Therefore, the more the teachers and parent's dialogue with each other and having the SGBs facilitating in case of any conflict that might occur. Both parties need to work together and

make sure that the child is the centre focus and not them. When the child is the centre focus, then the child will become more fruitful. The following points would assist the teacher and the parents to foster a positive relationship. The parents need to talk to the teacher about what they think are the most significant challenges facing schools in their community and what strengths the specific school and community have to meet those challenges. Parents need to communicate with their child's teacher as premature and frequently as possible. Emails should be sent or use their child's message book to communicate with each other.

If the parent or teacher prefers direct contact, then either one should call and set up an appointment to discuss the child's performance academically and socially. If something happened at home that may affect the child's performance at school, the parent needs to inform the teacher immediately.

5.3.4 Parent-teacher meetings

Firstly, the SGBs need to make it known who exactly the SGB Chairperson is and who exactly are on the SGB. Parents and teachers often get confused because the SGB members are almost never there. The SGB need to ensure that both teachers and parents need to actively engage and participate in parent-teacher meetings. Both parties need to be fully prepared in regards to a set of queries, remarks and essential concerns to be address. The SGBs need to ensure that everything runs smoothly, is a compromise for their issues, and amends the adjustments within the term or the couple of months that suits everyone.

5.3.5 Overcoming the challenges

The SGBs need to probe parents about the suitable form of communication approaches, which they can use. The school should not make assumptions that all parents are alike. The SGBs need to make communication between parents and teachers much easier. They must be able to permit and receive information without difficulty. Other old approaches are still valid today, for example, sending letters and phoning home. This form of communication may restrict time for some parents, even though it may work in favour of other parents. In addition, other ways can work as well. The use of email is more convenient for some parents; the SGBs can also text, twitter or a classroom blog to provide a range of options. Parents also need to work hand-in-hand with the teacher, for it only benefits the child. The SGBs also need to consider that time plays a vital role in anyone's life, especially the working parents. They need to arrange their meetings either after working hours or over the weekend.

5.4 Limitations of the study

Based on the recommendation section 5.5 presents the limitations of this study:

Due to the participants' busy schedules, I was powerless to conduct the interviews on time, which delayed me to present and discuss data by a few weeks later. The first set of participants were the SGB chairpersons and unfortunately, due to their busy schedules I was unable to conduct the interviews on time.

The second set of participants were the teachers and they were spilt between novice and seasoned teachers. Some of the novice teachers who initially agreed to conduct the interviews but latter felt uncomfortable when they realised that the actual interview had to be on record. However, it was mention in the letter and I further told them verbally that the interview would be on record but their real names will not be identify. For some reason on the day of conducting the interview, they declined the interview because they felt as if their jobs would be in jeopardy. Therefore, the result of the interviews were conducted with seasoned teachers after school hours. However, the seasoned teachers were happy and willing to conduct the interviews after school, this allowed no disturbances and interruptions during the interviews and the participants were able to respond whole-heartedly to the questions. This limited me to understand the perspective of seasoned teachers about the SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships.

In this regard, the third set of participants were the parents. I chose to interview the parents who lived near to the schools because they frequently visited the school. Whether it was just to drop and pick up their child from school or simply assisting the school in taking care of a class. I felt that they would know more about the SGBs and it seemed at the time to be convenient. However, these parents did not want to me to conduct the interviews at school but rather at their homes where they felt most comfortable to voice their opinions freely on this phenomenon.

Although it created an environment to speak freely, time was limited due to them being a mum and a wife. They had many tasks to conduct at home. Some parents did not even know who the SGB chairperson was because the parents felt as if they were not inform whom the chairperson are at the beginning of the school year. This limited the questions that were conducted during the interviews because they were unable to answer most questions. In this regard, I commonly found that they felt that school management dealt with all issues

concerning school rather than the SGBs. Thus, leading the SGBs incomplete their duty to promote effective parent-teacher relationships.

The research study was limited to primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The findings could not be generalised to other primary or secondary schools in other Circuits in the wider population. These limitations notify the following implications.

5.5 The implications for further study

Grounded by the limitations of this study, I recommend additional investigation on parent-teacher relationships in primary schools. Therefore, I recommend that the topic of parent-teacher relationships should extend to high schools as well private schools. It will enable me to explore further. I would investigate SGBs who have an abundance of resource available to them. This will also move the notion of gaining the perspectives of how SGBs play their role from teachers and parents who are culturally and socioeconomically inclined. I could use triangulation to gain possible representation of the social reality of the given context, thus enabling the study to generalise on an extensive population.

5.6 Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate on the role of the SGBs in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships in the primary school contexts. To attain this purpose, the study questioned the following facets; what is the role of the SGBs? How they play their roles? What enabling and challenging factors do the SGBs have towards this phenomenon? This study further used a qualitative approach to comprehend its aims. I felt that it was most appropriate for me to use purposive sampling of participants for the interviews. As it enabled me to elect a certain group of participants that met a particular criterion. In this research study, I selected a combination of three seasoned and novice, post level one (PL1) educators, three parents and three SGB chairpersons.

Given the nature of this study, I used semi-structured interviews to generate data, which was analysed through inductive content analysis. The study revealed that one of the three schools, the parents had no idea who were the members of the SGB and the teachers made it known that they hardly see the SGB members at school. They further revealed that the only people who see and talk to the SGBs are the teacher representatives at the SGB meetings. Thus, making it challenging for all teachers and parents to communicate with each other without

hindrance, due to no assistance from the SGB who meant to act as the mediator in making this relationship effective between parents and teachers.

The chapter has provided a summary of the study and the conclusions. It was further base on the findings with its conclusions for this study. I believe that the relevant recommendations made would assist the SGBs in knowing what their roles are and how to play their roles in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. This can only be effective if all stakeholders work collaboratively to the benefit of the child.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

26 Royal Manor

Trenance Manor

Phoenix

4068

15 March 2016

Attention: The Head of Department

Department of Basic Education

Province of KwaZulu- Natal

Private Bag X9137

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am Miss Tenisha Chetty a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of the requirements towards the completion of the Master's programme is the presentation of a research dissertation in the field of education. As a result, I request permission to conduct research in the following primary schools under your jurisdiction in Pinetown District.

The schools where the research shall be conducted: School A, School B and School C.

The title of my research project is: *Invaluable allies: A case study of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit.*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles of SGBs of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships. The study will use semi-structured interviews to collect data. Participants will be interviewed at a convenient time and each interview will be voice-recorded.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of their actual names. Participants will be contacted well in advance for interviews and they have been purposively selected to participate in this study. Participation will always remain voluntary which means that participants may withdraw from this study for any reason, anytime if they so wish without incurring any penalties.

This study is supervised by Dr P.E Myende at Tel. 0312062054, Cell: 073 9912 392, E-mail: myende@ukzn.ac.za.

Should you have any concern in regards of my research study, please feel free to contact Miss T. Chetty at Tel: 0315055915, Cell: 0839498712, E-mail: 209513811@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

OR

You may also contact the Research Office through: Mr P. Mohun, HSSREC Research Office, Tel. 031 206 4557, E-mail: Mncubev@ukzn.ac.za.

Your positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance

Yours Faithfully

Miss. T. Chetty

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

26 Royal Manor

Trenance Manor

Phoenix

4068

15 November 2016

Attention: Prospective Participant

Primary School

Dear Sir/ Madam

Permission to conduct research in your school

My name is Tenisha Chetty and I am currently in the process of completing a Masters degree in Education at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. As part of the Masters programme I am required to complete a research dissertation.

I am investigating *the role of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships*.

I request permission to conduct research at your school by way of interviews with staff members, SGB members and parents. I have already sought and am awaiting the necessary permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct this research.

Participation is voluntary and I will approach your staff members, SGB members and parents at their convenience and not to disrupt the normal time table of your school programme. No finance benefits will accrue to the participants as a result of their participation in this research.

As I am bound by the ethics governing research, I assure you that the interviews and data derived therefore will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will only be used for

research purposes. The names of educators, SGB members, parents and school will not be identified in the dissertation.

For further information on this project, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr P. E. Myende can be contacted at Tel. 0312062054, Cell: 073 9912 392, E-mail: myende@ukzn.ac.za.

OR

You may also contact the Research Office through: Mr P. Mohun, HSSREC Research Office, Tel: 031 206 4557, E-mail: Mncubev@ukzn.ac.za.

OR

My contact details are: Tenisha Chetty, Cell: 0622824807, E-mail: tchetty240790@gmail.com. / 209513811@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

Your assistance in the above matter will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Miss. T. Chetty

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS

26 Royal Manor

Trenance Manor

Phoenix

4068

17 June 2016

Attention: Prospective Participant

Primary School

Dear Sir/ Madam

Consent to Participate in Research Study

My name is Tenisha Chetty and I am currently in the process of completing a Masters degree in Education at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. As part of the Masters programme I am required to complete a research dissertation.

I am investigating *the role of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in promoting effective parent-teacher relationships*.

I request permission to interview you to obtain your opinions, feelings, observations, understandings and experiences with respect to my topic. The interviews shall be voice-recorded to assist me in concentrating on the actual interview.

I have obtained permission from your principal. I have also obtained permission from the Research Office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education to conduct this research.

Your participation is voluntary and I will make arrangements at your convenience and not disrupt the normal time table of your school programme. No finance benefits will accrue to the participants as a result of their participation in this research.

As I am bound by the ethics governing research, I assure you that the interviews and data derived therefore will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will only be used for research purposes. The names of educators, SGB members, parents and school will not be identified in the dissertation.

For further information on this project, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr P. E. Myende can be contacted at Tel. 0312062054, Cell: 073 9912 392, E-mail: myende@ukzn.ac.za.

OR

You may also contact the Research Office through: Mr P. Mohun, HSSREC Research Office, Tel: 031 206 4557, E-mail: Mncubev@ukzn.ac.za.

OR

My contact details are: Tenisha Chetty, Cell: 0622824807, E-mail: tchetty240790@gmail.com. / 209513811@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

Your assistance in the above matter will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Miss. T. Chetty

**APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANT INFORMED
CONSENT DOCUMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Declaration for Participant

Title of study: *Invaluable allies: A case study of promoting effective parent-teacher relationship in three primary schools in the Phoenix-West Circuit.*

I hereby confirm that I understood the contents of this document and the nature of this study, and so, consent to being interviewed.

I hereby give consent for the interview to be audio-taped, and for the data to be used for research and dissemination of the research findings. I understand that:

- I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should I so desire.
- I will have access to all transcripts and right to change, revise or withdraw aspects of data that I have given.
- My identity will not be divulged.
- My participation is voluntary.
- There is no payment for participation.

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

School Governing Body (SGB) interview schedule

1. What role do you play as a SGB chairperson at your school?
2. Do you think that it is important for the SGB to create connections between the community and the school? If yes, why do you think that it is important?
3. Do you think that it is important for the SGB to ensure effective relationships between teachers and parents? If yes, why do you think that it is important?
4. Why do you think parent-teacher meetings work?
5. What are some of the enabling/ challenging factors in performing the role of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships and why do you regard them as enabling and challenging factors?

Teacher interview schedule

1. Do the SGB members ever meet with the teachers? What issues are usually on the agenda?
2. How do the teachers accept criticism from the parents regarding their work?
3. In what way do the SGB members help in promoting discipline amongst learners, so that the teachers work is not interrupted unnecessarily?
4. How is the level of burglary and theft of the school resources? How do the SGB members help to deal with such issues?
5. How does the SGB help in promoting a good relationship between teachers and parents?
6. How do the SGB help in promoting communication between parents and teachers? Is it helpful?
7. What challenges do you think they come across? How do they deal with these challenges?
8. How is the level of attendance for the parent at parent's meetings? How does the SGB deal with this? (If poor attendance)

Parent interview schedule

1. Does the SGB ever meet with the general body of parents? What issues are usually on the agenda?
2. How does the SGB promote good relationships between parents and teachers?
3. How do the SGB members help in promoting good communication between parents and teacher? Is it helpful?
4. What are some of the challenges do you think the SGB come across in promoting parent and teacher relationship? How do you think they deal with it?

APPENDIX F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL



28 April 2016

Ms Tonisha Chetty 209613911
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Chetty

Protocol reference number: HSS/0325/01614

Project Title: Invaluable allies? A case study of promoting effective parent-teacher relationships in three primary schools

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 04 April 2016, 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 Shonuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Phumlan Myende
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

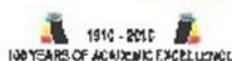
Dr Shonuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X64331 Durban 4006

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 9567/03544007 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: shonuka@ukzn.ac.za / myrnam@ukzn.ac.za / tyzert@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Learning Centres:  Edgewood  Howard College  Ladysmith School  Mkandaweni  Westville

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1904

Ref: 2/4/6/750

Miss T Chetty
24 Royal Manor
Trenance Manor
Phoenix
4068

Dear Miss Chetty

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "INVALUABLE ALLIES? A CASE STUDY OF PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS IN THREE PRIMARY SCHOOLS", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 31 March 2016 to 30 June 2017.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehlogile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Pinetown District

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 31 March 2016

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1304 beyond the call of duty
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehlogile.connie@kzn.gov.za / Phindile.Duma@kzn.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 686 363, Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: www.kznedu.gov.za

APPENDIX H: TURNITIN REPORT

INVALUABLE ALLIES: A CASE STUDY OF PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP IN THREE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE PHOENIX WEST CIRCUIT.

ORIGINALITY REPORT

% 12	% 12	% 2	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	%4
2	196.21.83.35 Internet Source	%2
3	sajournalofeducation.co.za Internet Source	%1
4	lancaster.unl.edu Internet Source	%1
5	www.learningfirst.org Internet Source	<%1
6	www.childtrends.org Internet Source	<%1
7	uzspace.uzulu.ac.za Internet Source	<%1
8	dspace.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	<%1
9	www.classesonline4u.com Internet Source	<%1

APPENDIX I: LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

Phone 031 – 7075912
0823757722
Fax 031 - 7110458
E-mail:
dr1govender@telkomsa.net
sathsagovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

14 JANUARY 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

INVALUABLE ALLIES: A CASE STUDY OF PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP IN THREE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE PHOENIX-WEST CIRCUIT by Tenisha Chetty.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used is satisfactory.

Yours faithfully



DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.