The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town

by

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for

the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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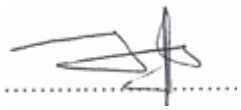
DECEMBER 2025

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this research dissertation, entitled ***The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town***, is my own work. The dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MEd (Education Management) degree in the College of Education at the University of South Africa. I further declare that I obtained the required authorisation and consent to carry out this research.



19 December 2025

Student Signature DATE



19 December 2025

Supervisor Signature DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All the honour and glory belong to God for guiding me and giving me the wisdom and strength to complete the research.

I would like to extend special word of gratitude towards the following individuals:

- Dr T.A. Ogina (supervisor), for her commitment, guidance, and support throughout the process.
- My parents (late mother, Shirley Jappie) and my supportive siblings.
- Jerome Lesch, Adrian Strydom, and Danell Muller for their continuous support and positive encouragement throughout.
- Ms C. Jansen for editing my work professionally.
- All other role-players, who supported, prayed, encouraged, and made this possible.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late mother, Shirley Jappie, who passed on during COVID-19. She always supported me in whatever I did, throughout my life, and with this research, and now she will not be able to see me graduate. She was a constant, present, pillar of strength, my prayer warrior, and my biggest supporter. I will always love and miss you. Rest in peace, Mom.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the management team at a primary school in Cape Town promoted parental involvement. The primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town was chosen deliberately due to the prevalence of socio-economically disadvantaged schools in the area. The researcher used a small sample of four SMT members, three teachers, and three parents from one school, which was the case under study. The study employed a qualitative case study design. Epstein's (2018) model of overlapping spheres of influence served as the conceptual framework for the study. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted to elicit data from the participants. The findings of the study show that parental involvement is perceived in different ways, ranging from committed participation to complete disinterest. Management of parental involvement in this study reflected aspects of Epstein's six types of involvement, with a primary focus on communication and basic governance. The findings show that the SMT must exercise strong leadership and collaboration to foster relationships between the school community and parents, thereby improving student outcomes and creating a more welcoming learning environment. The SMTs, teachers, and parents reported significant logistical communication failures, a pervasive inferiority complex, and hostile attitudinal barriers from parents, as well as chronic socio-economic hardships that limited parental time to be involved in school matters. Strategies such as diversifying communication channels, establishing parent liaison officers, and offering capacity-building workshops were recommended to cope with non or limited parental involvement.

Key words: parental involvement, School Management Team (SMT), leadership, communication, collaboration, socio-economic barriers, attitudinal Barriers, home-school partnership.

LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

SMT	School Management Team
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
HODs	Heads of Departments
OBE	Outcome-Based Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SA	South Africa
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
RQs	Research Questions
IQs	Interview Questions
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Public education system in South Africa has undergone significant transformations since 1921, but one factor, parental involvement, remains critical to learner accomplishment (Jacobs,2024). Ongoing research shows that parental participation in schooling increases learner performance, reduces absenteeism, and strengthens parents' trust in education for their children (Jacobs,2024). While Epstein (2018) emphasises the necessity for educational institutions to establish strong connections and collaborations with families, illustrating the beneficial effects of family-school partnerships on student success and overall well-being. Parents have the strongest and enduring influence on children's and youth's mindset, actions, and academic performance (Epstein, 2018). Involving parents in their children's education offers numerous opportunities for success. Epstein (2018) further asserts that the lives of highly successful people usually begin with their mothers' or fathers' involvement in their educational achievement. Epstein (2018) also suggests that parental involvement in learning is a post-modern phenomenon, although a modernistic view of the school is not balanced, since pupils are not adequately educated and sufficiently prepared to meet the needs of the 21st century without the support of parents.

Parental engagement, or its absence, is often regarded as a significant factor in the learning process. It has been well-documented that both parental involvement and parenting styles are crucial in the early stages of child development (Triegaardt & Van Diermen, 2021). The benefits of parental involvement in their children's education include improved social skills, improved grades and test scores, and altered behaviour (Mpatane & Madalambana, 2025). The research shows that parental involvement is most impactful when parents have direct, firsthand experiences within the school setting, thereby improving their understanding and participation (Epstein, 2018). Depending exclusively on circulars or meetings may restrict parents' perceptions and insights into the true conditions of the school, which could diminish their capacity to support their children effectively (García & De Caso, 2019). Consequently, offering

parents the chance to observe and engage with the actual school environment can promote deeper engagement and collaboration (Bray & Major, 2018). Epstein (2018) asserted that is essential to bridge the divide between educational institutions and the surrounding communities, ensuring that communication flows freely in both directions. Schools need to be clear about their tasks and manage them well to support effective teaching and learning. Furthermore, parents create a common sense of identity and intent in which educators, parents, and learners speak about "our school" (Epstein, 2018). Based on the above literature, parental involvement can benefit children, households, and education if educational institutions and parents persist in advocating for and facilitating children's learning and growth.

Parental support in education is critical; without it, children's progress might be negatively affected. Epstein (2018) suggests that the world's best education, services, and educators will be of no use until the stakeholders (parents) are explicitly seen as the reason for the entire process. In effect, parental engagement fosters a constructive attitude towards the school among students. Hill, Witherson and Bartz (2018) highlighted the establishment of family-school partnerships and parental involvement in learning to close generational disparities in the comprehensive achievement and enhance the ability of learners in our country to become productive adults. Waterford.org (2018) suggests that it is more than common courtesy to promote parental involvement. In fact, it is one of the best ways to create a supportive learning environment for each learner. Teachers who focus on parental involvement often see considerable changes in their classrooms. The more parents are involved in their children's education, the greater their contribution, actions, and grades become for their entire class.

The apartheid government in South Africa (SA) had a detrimental impact on parental participation in education since it restricted educational possibilities for most people and led to high rates of illiteracy and unequal access to quality education. Significant attempts have been undertaken to change the educational system and encourage broad involvement in education since democracy was established in 1994. Parents are encouraged to actively support student accomplishment and school development

by the Department of Basic Education, which acknowledges them as essential participants in the educational process.

The significance of parental involvement in schools is emphasized by the legislative framework controlling education in South Africa. By establishing School Governing Bodies (SGBs), the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 created a democratic system of school governance and gave parents official opportunities to participate in school decision-making processes (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996). SASA and related education laws were significantly amended more recently by the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act 32 of 2024, which strengthened learner rights, accountability, inclusion, and parts of school governance in the basic education sector (RSA, 2024). The BELA Act highlights the ongoing significance of cooperative partnerships among schools, parents, and communities in fostering learner success and reaffirms the government’s commitment to raising educational standards. It also clarifies governance responsibilities between provincial education departments and SGBs.

In this situation, parents are required to actively participate in school governance and educational activities in addition to supporting their children's learning at home. Creating a nurturing learning environment and supporting learners' academic, social, and emotional growth are two aspects of parental participation (Epstein, 2018). The idea that meaningful collaboration between educators, parents, and communities is necessary for good education is reflected in the emerging legislative framework.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the School Management Team (SMT) in a primary school in Cape Town's Northern Suburbs promotes parental involvement. It is anticipated that the SMT, which is made up of the principal, deputy principal, and department heads, will be crucial in promoting positive interactions between the school and parents. According to Jeynes (2016), schools, parents, and communities must acknowledge their interdependence, create a common vision, and comprehend their complementary roles in assisting students in order to achieve meaningful parental involvement. SMTs must actively promote family involvement, cooperation, and collaboration in school matters to guarantee that every child has the

resources and assistance required for academic achievement. The role of school leadership in fostering parental participation has grown in significance within the present policy framework created by both SASA and the BELA Act to promote effective governance and enhance educational performance.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Through my participation in the SMT across different schools in Cape Town, I recognised a shared problem across all these educational establishments: a lack of parental involvement in various school activities. I consequently chose to explore the function of the SMT in promoting parents to engage with schools. I am very intrigued to find out why there is little to no parental involvement in school activities. Parents' participation in their children's education showed similar trends across the three schools where I had taught. The education system has undergone numerous transformations, from the apartheid period to the present-day democratic South Africa. These transformations encompass the establishment of schools for every child without consideration of race or gender, the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), and the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) (Sayed & Motala, 2019; Department of Basic Education, 2018). However, there has been little progress in promoting parental participation in schools across South Africa because parents often favour mobile communication methods such as online student portals and are less likely to attend parent-teacher sessions (Waterford.org, 2018). Although digital tools will help families stay informed, if parents do not donate their time and support, learners will lose out (Waterford.org, 2018).

Through my background as a high school teacher and now as a primary school teacher, I have found that too few parents play an active role in their children's education, and that SMTs are not doing enough to promote parental involvement. My concern about the lack of commitment to parental involvement motivated my decision to investigate this topic, especially given the differences and impacts of parental involvement on learners' academic performance.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Education is a collective practice, not an individual task, that ensures that parents and schools build solid alliances and relationships. The presence of parents affect the quality of education positively. Smith and Johnson (2016) highlight that although it is crucial to cultivate strong relationships among parents, educators, and students, the effectiveness of SMTs in sustaining parental involvement is still constrained. This highlights the need for specific strategies to involve parents actively in the educational process. The SMTs in this study were unable to engage parents effectively in the education process (Smith & Johnson, 2016). Therefore, this study examines the function of SMT in enhancing the involvement of parents in the educational process.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (RSA, 1996) declared that, for many years, parents in South Africa have voluntarily participated in school-related activities. Their role has now become more pronounced, as indicated in the SASA (RSA, 1996). Yet many parents remain reluctant to become involved in schools. As stated by Triegaardt and Van Diermen (2021), there is growing concern in South Africa about inadequate parental participation in their children's development. One of the most significant challenges public schools are currently facing is low parental engagement. Conversations with fellow educators revealed that the level of parental participation in some schools is declining at a concerning rate and attention should be given to reduce the pace at which parents ignore their responsibility regarding the education of their children. The research conducted by Epstein (2018) highlighted that teachers are finding it challenging to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's education because some schools are seeing a decline in the number of dedicated, diligent learners. Attendance among such learners is low, despite school leaders sending circulars and letters of concern to parents.

Regarding leadership and parental involvement, Leithwood and Kantz (2015) found that the attributes associated with idealised influence were more commonly present in high-performing schools, bolstering the argument that transformational leadership as the most successful role of readership and parental involvement, Leithwood and Kantz

(2015) found that the attributes associated with idealised influence were more commonly present in high-performing schools, bolstering the argument that transformational leadership is the most effective leadership style. They also found that transformative leadership is closely linked to teachers' strong assessments of the atmosphere for creativity and parental involvement in their schools. Naidoo (2019) believes that teachers' perceptions of a principal's leadership style had a beneficial impact on the school environment and interactions with stakeholders. Aldrige and Fraser (2018), on the other hand, discovered that poor employee morale might contribute to inefficiency and a weak school culture, including parental involvement.

It is therefore essential that the SMTs understand their role and effective ways of involving parents at school. Against this backdrop, the SMT's position in promoting parental involvement in schools needs to be investigated.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

The key question for the intent of this study was:

- What is the role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town?

The study investigated the following sub-questions:

- What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?
- Which strategies do the SMTs adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?
- Which challenges do the SMTs encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?
- How do the SMTs resolve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to accomplish the following goal in light of the above research problem:

- To investigate the role of the SMT in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town.

Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- to explore the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children.
- to establish the strategies that can be employed to ensure successful management of parental involvement
- to identify the challenges that the SMT encounter when trying to involve parents in the education of their learners
- to establish possible solutions for the identified challenges

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Different viewpoints on parental engagement and school-family ties set different frameworks apart. The level of cooperation between the home and the school is influenced by the attitudes and views of parents, educators, and school administrators. Parental involvement and student achievement are therefore impacted by how much these stakeholders see themselves as partners in education (Khumalo, 2023). Parental participation is a major factor in children's academic success and overall educational development, according to numerous studies (Hanif & Alwi, 2019). Parents who actively engage in their children's education, communicate with teachers, and support school projects foster a shared responsibility for student achievement.

Sanders (2018) listed several community involvement strategies that can be applied separately or in tandem. The functional approach and the social capital approach are two methods that are very pertinent to this research. The complementary duties and

responsibilities of parents and teachers in promoting student achievement are highlighted by the functional approach. The social capital method emphasizes the value of relationships, networks, shared norms, and trust between families and schools. Both strategies emphasize the importance of cooperation and support for one another in fostering successful educational



outcomes.

Figure 1.1: Epstein’s Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence

(Source: Epstein, 2001)

The main theoretical framework for this investigation is Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence. The theory, which was developed in the 1980s, asserts that learner development and academic achievement are influenced by the overlapping realms in which schools, families, and communities operate (Epstein, 2018). According to the notion, successful education happens when these three domains cooperate to achieve shared objectives and share accountability for the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of students (Myende, 2019). Parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, making decisions, and working with the community are the six categories of parental participation, according to Epstein (2018). These types of participation give schools useful methods to improve school-family relationships.

By highlighting the growth of mutual relationships and trust between families and schools, the social capital approach enhances Epstein's paradigm. This strategy is predicated on the idea that close relationships between parents, teachers, and school administrators build support systems that help students succeed (Khumalo, 2023).

Therefore, it is crucial for School Management Teams (SMTs) to cultivate these connections and provide an atmosphere that promotes significant parental involvement.

Because it emphasizes on parental participation and offers a thorough description of how schools, families, and communities all work together to support student success, Epstein's model was chosen as the main theoretical framework. The nature, forms, and processes of parental engagement—the main phenomenon being studied in this study—are directly addressed by Epstein's model, in contrast to more general educational leadership theories that focus mainly on leadership practices, organizational change, or school effectiveness. Additionally, the framework provides well-defined aspects of parental involvement that are relevant to South African school environments and closely correspond with the goal of the study, which is to investigate how the SMT fosters parental involvement.

Additionally, the model was chosen because its six forms of involvement offer a useful framework for analyzing school-based parent engagement tactics. This made it possible for the researcher to investigate how parental involvement was encouraged and maintained through communication, involvement in governance, volunteer opportunities, learning support, and school-community partnership, in addition to whether it actually happened. Because Epstein's theory directly addresses the interaction between schools and parents, which is at the center of this study, it was deemed more acceptable than alternative leadership or community engagement theories.

The study's design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation were all influenced by Epstein's model. First, Epstein's six categories of involvement were taken into consideration while creating the interview schedules for parents, teachers, and SMT members. Inquiries focused on how the school interacted with parents, promoted involvement in school operations and governance, facilitated learning at home, and formed alliances with the larger community.

Second, the framework guided the data's coding and thematic analysis. Participants' answers were analyzed in light of Epstein's model's concepts, specifically

communication, decision-making, volunteering, and cooperation between the school and parents. To ascertain how parental involvement was seen and encouraged within the school setting, themes that surfaced from the interviews were contrasted with the six involvement categories.

Lastly, the interpretation of the results was guided by Epstein's approach. With evidence of family involvement in school decision-making and interactions between the SMT and parents, the results showed that communication and governance systems played a major role in promoting parental involvement. The researcher was able to evaluate the degree to which cooperation between the community, parents, and school helped to create a helpful learning environment by interpreting these results through the lens of the overlapping spheres of influence. Thus, the framework functioned as an analytical instrument that influenced the research process from data collection to result interpretation, rather than just providing a conceptual backdrop.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research paradigm in this study was interpretivism. The researcher used a qualitative research approach, embedded in a case study design (Wilson, 2017). For this research, qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to make sense of the participants, values, attitudes, and experience (Pacho, 2015:44). The researcher in this study aimed at investigating and gaining an understanding of the role of the SMT in promoting parental involvement in the education of children to enhance learners' overall progress.

The population in this study comprised SMT members, parents, and teachers at a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town. The researcher used a small sample of four SMT members, three teachers, and three parents from one school, which was the case under study. Creswell and Creswell (2018) characterise sampling as the process of selecting a segment of the population to be examined in research. In this study, a non-probability sampling technique was used to select the participants. Non-probability sampling requires purposive collection. Purposive sampling was used to identify and select individuals or groups who are particularly familiar with the phenomenon of interest (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016), thereby encouraging parent

participation in their children's education. The qualitative methodology employed in this research necessitated the use of appropriate data-gathering techniques, including comprehensive semi-structured individual interviews and focus-group interviews with participants at the research location. The data was obtained from the SMT members, teachers, and parents of the selected primary school.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The motivation behind this study is that, in my experience, parental involvement is lacking in some schools, and the SMT plays an essential role in promoting it. The researcher has noted a deficiency in parental engagement in educational activities, and the literature indicates that parental involvement significantly impacts learners' overall success in education. The significance of this study is the knowledge gained from the SMT's experiences in this case study, which could inform a better understanding of the challenges/barriers to parental involvement, as well as the exploration of possible solutions and strategies to promote parental involvement at school. The SMT may also reflect on their role in promoting and managing parental participation in their schools.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

SMT - This refers to the school's management team. The principal, one or more deputy principals, and department heads make up the formal leadership structure of a school, known as the School Management Team (SMT). Together, they provide strategic leadership and manage teaching, learning, staff development, policy implementation, and stakeholder engagement (Bush, 2020; Department of Basic Education, 2019). In the context of this study, the SMT is seen as the leadership body responsible for originating, coordinating, and sustaining measures that promote parental involvement and strengthen home–school partnerships.

SGB – School Governing Bodies. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 established a legally recognized governance framework called a School Governing Body (SGB) to encourage democratic involvement in public school governance. In secondary schools, elected parent representatives, teachers, non-teaching staff, and

student representatives usually make up an SGB. The SGB is in charge of things like school growth, financial supervision, policy, and building community and school connections. SGBs continue to play a crucial role in school governance notwithstanding the BELA Act 32 of 2024's modifications, operating within more robust frameworks for accountability and engagement. The SGB is a crucial tool for parental involvement in school governance and decision-making in the context of this study.

PAM - Personnel Administrative Measures (2016). The regulatory framework that governs the roles, responsibilities, terms of employment, performance standards, and administrative tasks of teachers and school-based managers working in South African public schools is known as Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). PAM is important in this study since it outlines the management and leadership duties of the School Management Team (SMT) members. These duties include establishing a supportive school environment, encouraging good communication between the school and parents, encouraging cooperative relationships among stakeholders, and making sure that school activities enhance student progress. As a result, SMT members are expected to promote and enable parental involvement as part of efficient school management and leadership practices within the administrative and professional framework provided by the policy.

SASA – South African Schools Act. The main piece of legislation controlling public education in South Africa is the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996. Because it outlines the stakeholder responsibilities and governance frameworks that encourage parental involvement in schools, SASA is especially pertinent to this study. The Act mandates school administration, especially the School Management Team (SMT), to cultivate cooperative relationships with parents and the larger school community and gives parents the ability to participate in school governance through SGBs. The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act 32 of 2024's revisions emphasize the ongoing significance of parental involvement in educational decision-making by strengthening accountability, consultation, and stakeholder participation in school governance.

SACE - South African Council of Educators. The statutory professional organization in charge of overseeing, advancing, and developing the teaching profession in South Africa is the South African Council for Educators (SACE). SACE is pertinent to this study because it offers the professional and ethical framework that educators and members of the School Management Team (SMT) employ when interacting with parents and the larger school community. Teachers and school administrators must build courteous, open, and cooperative relationships with parents and other stakeholders in accordance with the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. The study's focus on how SMT members encourage parental involvement, cultivate strong school-community relationships, and establish an atmosphere that encourages learner achievement and welfare is in line with these professional obligations.

Illiteracy - Uneducated, unaware of reading and writing. The incapacity to read, write, comprehend, and use written knowledge in daily life is referred to as illiteracy. Because it may affect the degree and type of parental involvement in a child's education, illiteracy is especially pertinent to this study. It may be difficult for parents with low reading abilities to help with schoolwork, comprehend school messages, participate in governance events, or interact with teachers and school administration in a confident manner. To accommodate parents with different reading levels, school administrators and members of the School Management Team (SMT) must implement inclusive communication techniques and supportive engagement practices.

Parental involvement - According to Epstein et al. (2019), parental involvement encompasses the different ways in which parents actively participate in and support their children's education, both at home and at school. These methods include communication with educators, participation in school activities, help with learning, participation in decision-making processes, and cooperation with the school to improve learner development and achievement.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The study will be structured as follows:

Chapter 1

This section begins with the study's introduction and background. It also provides an overview of the research problem and the rationale for the study, as well as the intent and logic, the research question and sub-questions, the aims and objectives, and the theoretical framework. It concludes with the research methodology and research significance.

Chapter 2

This chapter will provide the study's literature review. The related literature and the character of the other researchers will be discussed for the same subject. It also discusses specific ideas and mechanisms relevant to parental involvement with their children's education. It will discuss the reasons for non-involvement and the consequences of non-involvement. How can the non-involvement issues be tackled?

Chapter 3

The layout of the work will be discussed in this chapter. The research procedure definition is given, and the accompanying analysis procedures are also provided. This also describes the data compilation and evaluation.

Chapter 4

The data collected will be discussed and evaluated in this section.

Chapter 5

This section outlines the research results and discusses how the SMT should encourage and enhance parental involvement in their children's education.

1.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this section, I provide the context, reasons for the study, the main problem, research inquiries, goals and purposes, the conceptual framework, research methodologies, and the significance of the research. The structure of the chapter is also included. In the next section, the literature review is shared,

exploring the idea of parent engagement in their children's education. This review also examines the advantages, reasons for lack of involvement, effects of non-involvement, and leadership in parental engagement.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter offered an introduction and a summary of the research. This chapter delivers the evaluations of the related literature on parental involvement in the education of their children and the role of the SMT in promoting parental involvement. Devlin (2020) notes, “There is a need for all authors to conduct a literature review that involves recording, documenting, and reviewing research-related documents.” Therefore, this section examines how the SMT encourages parents to be involved. It explores aspects such as the impact of parental engagement, identifies factors that contribute to some parents' lack of participation in their children's educational activities, the resulting consequences, the SMT's responsibilities regarding parental involvement, and potential methods to enhance parental participation. This literature review concentrates on the significance of encouraging parental involvement.

2.2 THE CONCEPT ‘PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT’

It is commonly acknowledged that parental involvement is essential to learner achievement and efficient school functioning. Parental involvement is generally understood to include parents' active participation in their children's education both at home and at school, even though different scholars have varied definitions. Supporting educational activities, keeping in touch with teachers, taking part in school programs, and participating in decision-making processes that impact learners' educational experiences are all examples of this kind of involvement.

The collaborative nature of parental involvement is consistently emphasized in the literature. Parental involvement is seen by academics like Jeynes (2016), Coleman (2018), and Smith and Oosthuizen (2017) as a collaboration in which parents and schools share accountability for fostering learner accomplishment. According to this viewpoint, parental involvement encompasses meaningful engagement that promotes teaching and learning in addition to attending school functions. Together, these

studies contend that learners are more likely to have favorable academic results and better school adjustment when parents and teachers collaborate.

A second theme that emerges from the research is the connection between learner achievement and parental involvement. While Coleman (2018) emphasizes that successful learning is boosted when teachers and parents collaborate, Jeynes (2016) finds that parental involvement is a strong predictor of academic achievement. While the focus of these studies varies, they are all predicated on the idea that parents have resources, expertise, and power to favorably impact learners' educational experiences. As a result, the literature portrays parental involvement as a strategic element that enhances educational achievements rather than just a nice habit.

The research does, however, also draw attention to issues that restrict parental involvement. According to Otto and Karbach (2020), a lot of schools don't foster environments that promote significant parental involvement. This viewpoint focuses on the role of schools in promoting involvement rather than only the obligations of parents. Jeynes (2016), on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of encouraging parents to participate. When taken as a whole, these perspectives imply that low levels of parental involvement may be caused by organizational characteristics that discourage participation, communication hurdles, or school policies rather than just parents' lack of interest.

Much of the literature is based on the crucial premise that parental involvement, in whatever form it takes, is beneficial to learners. This presumption, however, has come under fire for ignoring contextual elements like socioeconomic circumstances, parents' educational backgrounds, work obligations, and schools' ability to foster cooperative connections. As a result, the structures and leadership techniques put in place inside schools may have an impact on how successful parental involvement is in addition to parents' willingness to participate.

In the context of this study, parental involvement is defined as parents' active and cooperative participation in activities at home and at school that promote academic success and learner development. This conceptualization recognizes that intentional efforts from parents and schools are necessary for effective parental involvement. It

also implies that School Management Teams (SMTs) are essential in establishing channels of communication, policies, and opportunities that motivate parents to be involved in their children's education. As a result, parental participation is seen as a shared duty that can improve teaching and learning in primary schools.

2.3 WHY SHOULD PARENTS BECOME INVOLVED IN EDUCATION?

Parental involvement is widely seen in the literature as a significant factor in learners' academic, social, and emotional development. Current research conceptualizes parental involvement as a wide collaboration between the home and the school that produces settings conducive to learner achievement, rather than concentrating only on parents' participation in school activities. This collaboration encompasses both home-based and school-based activities, such as helping with homework, keeping track of progress, and cultivating a positive attitude toward learning (Epstein, 2020).

The idea that parental involvement improves academic achievement and learner engagement is a recurring theme in the research. According to research by Coleman (2018), Fan and Chan (2019), and Epstein (2020), learners do better academically when their parents are involved in their education. Although these researchers look at various types of involvement, they all agree that parental involvement increases learners' dedication to their schooling, motivates them to do their homework, and fosters positive learning behaviors. The literature varies, nevertheless, in how much emphasis it places on the processes that lead to these results. While some studies highlight the emotional and motivational advantages of parental involvement, others place more focus on direct academic help. Notwithstanding these variations, there is widespread consensus that consistent communication between the home and the school leads to better learning results.

The impact of parental involvement on learners' psychosocial development is a second area of convergence in the literature. Researchers contend that parental involvement helps learners develop resilience, self-worth, motivation, and confidence (Sivertsen, 2015; Munje & Mncube, 2018). According to these studies, learners are more likely to acquire favorable attitudes toward education and better self-confidence when they believe their parents are interested in their education. Additionally, parental

support offers emotional stability, which helps learners deal with social and academic difficulties. In this sense, parental involvement is seen as a protective element that enhances learners' general wellbeing in addition to being an educational resource.

Additionally, research links parental involvement to more general school-related outcomes, such as better learner behavior, lower dropout rates, and safer school settings (Munje & Mncube, 2018; Epstein, 2018). According to academics, parental involvement fosters discipline and accountability by reinforcing behavioral norms between the home and the school. The degree to which these studies take environmental variables into account varies, even though they regularly indicate positive relationships. While some authors suggest that parental involvement alone can solve a lot of educational issues, others recognize that socioeconomic circumstances, leadership styles, and school efficacy may affect how much parental involvement results in favorable outcomes.

A large portion of this literature is predicated on the idea that parental involvement is intrinsically advantageous and appropriate in all situations. This viewpoint assumes that every parent has the time, means, opportunity, and abilities needed to support their kids' education. These presumptions, however, have been criticised for overlooking barriers such as poverty, low literacy rates, hectic work schedules, and restricted educational options. Because environmental and organizational factors frequently influence the effectiveness of involvement, the relationship between parental involvement and learner success may not be clear-cut.

For the goals of this study, parental involvement is significant not only because it may improve learner performance but also because it can improve family-school cooperation. According to the literature, when schools actively provide opportunities for parental involvement, these benefits are more likely to be realized. In order to facilitate meaningful parental involvement in primary schools, School Management Teams (SMTs) play a crucial role in building inclusive practices, efficient communication systems, and supportive partnerships.

2.4 THE STATE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Many parents make a significant contribution to school activities beyond the educator's experience, becoming specialists because of a specific professional background and area of concern (Epstein, 2018). Coleman (2018) offers the following explanation for the value of parental involvement: children enter a particular religious and cultural setting with distinct practices, beliefs, and values. Parents need to make sure that these cultural and spiritual ideas are respected by the school. As the saying suggests, "charity starts at home," parents who are the main and natural teachers want their children to thrive; thus, they must set a good example. Ultimately, the talents of teachers and parents support each other, so learners can benefit from working together rather than practising in isolation. It is essential to acknowledge that, under the law, the parent serves as the child's foremost educator and is responsible for providing ongoing support and focusing on the child's education (Epstein, 2018). The parent is the first and most important teacher of the child (Triegaardt & Diermen, 2021).

Hanif and Alwi (2019) state that parents have the desire to engage with the school when there is mutual relationship with the educators and the principal. Many SMTs claim that encouraging parents in school activities means could lead to giving parents to take over school management, but that is not true. In another study, Hornby and Blackwell (2018) concluded that the collaborative relationship established between parents and school management is likely to encourage information sharing which could lead to better partnership between home and school. The findings of the study by Hornby and Blackwell (2018) implies that parental involvement in school activities can instil a sense of value and confidence in their children as they develop aspirations and abilities that they may not have recognised in themselves earlier. Empowered stakeholders within the school community and districts can engage in and contribute to the development of policies. Hanif and Alwi (2019) urge parents and educators to communicate more regularly, not only through circulars sent to households, but also through official contact and in informal meetings.

2.5 CAUSES OF PARENTS NOT BEING INVOLVED IN EDUCATION

Low levels of participation are rarely the sole consequence of parental indifference, according to research on parental involvement. Instead, researchers are beginning to see parental non-involvement as the result of interrelated socioeconomic, educational, structural, and school-related variables. Particularly in historically disadvantaged areas, these obstacles frequently interact to restrict parents' capacity to interact meaningfully with schools. Therefore, in order to comprehend parental non-involvement, it is necessary to look beyond deficiency explanations that depict parents as unwilling participants and instead consider the larger contexts in which families and schools' function.

2.5.1 Poverty, problems with transport, and resource shortages

The impact of socioeconomic level on parental involvement is a recurring issue in the literature. Researchers contend that parents' involvement in school activities is severely hampered by poverty, unemployment, transportation issues, and restricted access to resources (Akpo et al., 2020; Spaull, 2019; Equal Education, 2021). Rich parents frequently have the financial, social, and cultural means to actively support their kids' education and the growth of their schools. On the other hand, parents in township and low-income neighborhoods sometimes have conflicting financial obligations that restrict their ability to routinely interact with schools, support fundraising efforts, or attend meetings.

Many academics connect these differences to more general trends of educational inequality. While historically disadvantaged schools still face resource limitations, Spaull and Jansen (2019) and Böhmer and Murru (2025) contend that schools serving wealthier communities gain from increased parental contributions and social capital. While the focus of these studies varies, they are all predicated on the idea that parental involvement in their children's education is influenced by their access to cultural and financial resources. This presumption, however, may overlook the reality that many low-income parents continue to be dedicated to their kids' education in spite of their financial limitations. As a result, material contributions or attendance at school functions alone should not be used to measure parental involvement.

2.5.2 Low level of literacy at home

The educational attainment and literacy skills of parents are another characteristic that is often linked to inadequate parental involvement. According to research, parents with less formal education frequently lack the confidence to assist school-based learning, especially academic activities and homework (Taylor, 2019). They could therefore feel left out of educational procedures that seem to call for specialized knowledge.

Nonetheless, academics contest the notion that low literacy is equivalent to inadequate educational assistance. Regardless of their official education levels, Mncube and Makhasane (2017) assert that parents have important understanding of their children's needs, experiences, and circumstances. In a similar vein, UNICEF South Africa (2020) emphasizes the significance of the home environment in influencing learners' growth. These viewpoints point to a conflict in the literature: whereas some research subtly link parental effectiveness to educational attainment, others contend that parents provide significant social, emotional, and cultural support that goes beyond academic help. This suggests that the potential contributions of parents with little formal education may be undervalued by schools.

2.5.3 School and home communications

Inadequate communication is another major barrier to parental involvement, according to the literature. Due to information not reaching them or being shared in ways that are inaccessible, parents are frequently left out of school events (Mncube, 2019). Conventional communication techniques, including written notices, assume that learners would consistently communicate information between home and school and that parents are literate.

Research suggests that these presumptions appear to be problematic. According to Mncube (2019), communication problems could lead to schools ignoring parents who have important knowledge about their kids' education. As a result, the literature draws attention to a discrepancy between the communication practices of schools and the realities of many families, especially those that struggle with reading. This viewpoint

emphasizes the need for schools to use more inclusive and accessible communication tactics and moves accountability away from parents alone.

2.5.4 Single-parenting and Grandparents

Changing family structures and caregiving arrangements are another reason for the low level of parental involvement. Research shows that social and economic factors frequently limit opportunities for school attendance in single-parent households, child-headed households, and grandparent-led families (UNICEF SA, 2020; Statistics SA, 2024). There is often limited time for single parents to attend school meetings or assist with school-related activities since they must juggle work, domestic duties, and childcare obligations (Mncube & Makhasane, 2017).

In a similar vein, Hall and Sambu (2022) observe that grandparents frequently take on caregiving duties, especially in underprivileged areas where parents work far from home. Even though grandparents frequently play a significant role in helping learners, their involvement in school matters may be limited due to considerations including age, health issues, and low literacy. There is consensus among these research that parents' ability to interact with schools is impacted by family circumstances. Nonetheless, the literature occasionally assumes that non-involvement is due to incompetence rather than a lack of opportunities or adaptable engagement mechanisms offered by schools.

2.5.5 School Climate and Organisational Barriers

The focus of more recent research is shifting from factors connected to families to obstacles associated to schools. According to researchers, some schools inadvertently hinder parental involvement by creating hostile environments, using poor leadership techniques, or having unfavorable attitudes toward parents (Myende, 2025; Mafu et al., 2024). Low-income parents may consider schools as scary places where their opinions and experiences are not respected. As a result, even if they want to support their kids' education, they may withdraw from participating.

Similarly, Somo and Msezane (2026) contend that some school leaders have limited perspectives on parental involvement, emphasizing attendance at meetings and

fundraising activities while ignoring other types of family assistance. These studies challange the notion that schools are impartial establishments that merely await parental involvement. Rather, they contend that the degree to which parents feel valued and involved, as well as the nature of the tie's schools build with families, have an impact on parental involvement. As a result, rather than being the exclusive responsibility of parents, schools and families should share responsibilities for promoting parental involvement.

According to the literature, a complex interplay of socioeconomic conditions, literacy difficulties, family situations, communication impediments, and school-related issues shapes parental non-involvement. More current research highlights organizational and structural hurdles that restrict involvement, whereas earlier studies frequently concentrated on parental deficits. Most of the literature is predicated on the idea that parents who are not physically present at school are not involved in their children's education. Evidence, however, indicates that many parents continue to encourage their kids' education despite significant obstacles.

The literature for this study emphasizes how crucial it is to see parental involvement as a shared responsibility. When School Management Teams (SMTs) adopt inclusive practices that remove participation obstacles and acknowledge the varied realities of families, meaningful involvement is more likely to take place. According to Ndwandwe (2023), effective parental involvement necessitates thoughtful preparation, encouraging systems, and ongoing cooperation between families and schools. SMTs are therefore essential to establishing school environments that allow all parents, regardless of their circumstances, to effectively participate in their children's education from the perspective of educational management.

2.6 IMPLICATIONS OF NON-PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Parental participation has been shown to have a positive impact on learners' academic, behavioral, and social development. As a result, a variety of negative educational outcomes are frequently linked to the lack of significant parental involvement. On the degree to which parents alone are responsible for these challenges, researchers do not agree. Some studies emphasize the relevance of

school-home relationships and shared responsibility for learner achievement, while others emphasize the role of family support and supervision. This implies that a more comprehensive ecological framework encompassing both family and school impacts should be used to comprehend the consequences of non-parental engagement.

2.6.1 Lack of efficient communication

A recurrent theme in the research is that communication between families and schools is weakened by low parental involvement. Collaboration between parents and educators is essential for effective education, especially when it comes to meeting the academic, behavioural, and emotional requirements of learners (Malatji, 2020). There may be fewer opportunities to recognize and resolve learner difficulties when parents are not involved in school events or communication procedures.2.6.2 Bad school attendance in relation to high failure and dropout rates.

Researchers' interpretations of this communication gap, however, vary. Limited parental involvement is seen by some educators as proof that parents don't care about their children's education. On the other hand, Hornby and Blackwell (2018) contend that a lot of parents have different expectations about the home-school interaction since they think that teachers are primarily responsible for education. This comparison draws attention to a key premise in the literature: that parents and educators have a similar conception of their roles in education. Conflicting views of accountability can impede cooperative attempts to support learners and lead to communication breakdowns.

From a critical perspective, inadequate communication shouldn't be exclusively attributed to parental absence. It can also reflect schools' inability to develop inclusive communication plans that consider the various family situations. Therefore, rather than being a problem specific to one stakeholder group, poor communication becomes a shared concern.

2.6.2 Bad school attendance in relation to high failure and dropout rates

The possible impact of low parental involvement on learner achievement, attendance, and school completion rates is another significant worry. Research continuously

shows that learners who have parents that keep an eye on their attendance, stay in touch with teachers, and encourage learning activities typically do better academically than learners whose parents are less involved (Jeynes, 2018; Garcia & Weiss, 2018). Active parental involvement, according to researchers, encourages favorable attitudes about education, inspires learners, and strengthens accountability.

While the advantages of parental involvement are widely acknowledged, experts provide varying explanations for poor academic performance. While Garcia and Weiss (2018) focus more on the wider socioeconomic disadvantages that impact educational attainment, Jeynes (2018) emphasizes parental supervision and support as critical elements determining learner success. According to these viewpoints, parental involvement might not be enough to address educational disparities. Instead, it seems that socioeconomic circumstances, school quality, and family support interact to influence academic performance.

This body of literature frequently assumes that inadequate parental involvement is a direct cause of low learner performance and dropout. This viewpoint, though, might oversimplify a complicated connection. Numerous factors, such as poverty, insufficient school resources, neighbourhood conditions, and structural inequalities, frequently impact learners' educational achievements. Therefore, rather than it being the only explanation for academic failure, non-parental involvement should be seen as one contributing element.

2.6.3 Teenage pregnancy

Increased learner vulnerability, including exposure to early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy, is one of the most important societal repercussions linked to low parental involvement. Research indicates that by assisting teenagers in navigating social pressures and making wise decisions, parental supervision, advice, and open communication might lessen risky behaviour (Chinyakata et al., 2022). Learners may be more vulnerable to harmful influences and poor decision-making in situations when such assistance is scarce.

However, the literature presents varying perspectives on the reasons behind teenage pregnancy. While some writers highlight insufficient parental communication and supervision, others highlight broader socioeconomic factors such poverty, peer pressure, media exposure, and restricted access to reproductive health education (Mchunu & Sibiya, 2017). These contrasting viewpoints suggest that parental disengagement is not the only explanation for teenage pregnancy.

An underlying presumption that parents are primarily responsible for preventing risky behaviour in adolescents is revealed by a critical analysis of the literature. Such an assumption ignores the larger social and structural elements that influence young people's experiences, even though parental assistance is still crucial. Therefore, rather than relying solely on parents, successful interventions necessitate cooperation across families, schools, communities, and pertinent support systems. The literature also connects learner behavioural issues to low parental involvement. Researchers contend that the development of responsible behaviour and sound decision-making is greatly aided by parental supervision, advice, and emotional support (Chinyakata et al., 2022). Learners may be more vulnerable to negative peer pressure, risk-taking behaviors, and disciplinary issues when parental involvement is low.

On the other hand, there are contrasting perspectives on the causes of learner misconduct. According to some research, behavioural issues are mostly caused by insufficient parental guidance and support, suggesting that learner behaviour is primarily determined by family conditions (Chinyakata et al., 2022). On the other hand, more general educational research indicates that a variety of interrelated factors, such as school atmosphere, peer interactions, neighbourhood conditions, and socioeconomic problems, influence behaviour. This comparison highlights a propensity in certain publications to undervalue the impact of institutional and contextual factors while placing an excessive amount of responsibility on families.

Therefore, it is important to exercise caution when assuming that learner behaviour just reflects parenting approaches. Although there is no denying the importance of parental involvement, complicated social situations outside of the house influence behavioural outcomes. According to the literature, low academic achievement, poor

attendance, behavioural issues, reduced communication, and greater learner susceptibility are all linked to non-parental involvement. But modern research increasingly warns against oversimplified theories that blame these results only on parental failings. Rather, family circumstances, school methods, socioeconomic situations, and community influences interact to produce educational outcomes.

Much of the research is predicated on the fundamental tenet that more parental involvement will inevitably address scholastic difficulties. Although research shows that parental involvement improves learner achievement, the degree to which schools establish inclusive and encouraging relationships with families determines how effective this strategy is. School Management Teams (SMTs) are therefore essential in reducing the consequences of parental non-involvement. SMTs can foster more meaningful parental involvement and strengthen school-family ties by implementing inclusive school practices, parent-support programs, and efficient communication methods.

Therefore, in the context of this study, the consequences of non-parental involvement are not only learner-related issues but also educational management challenges that call for SMT leadership and intentional intervention.

2.7 LEADERSHIP IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Bureaucratic systems characterized the South African pre-democratic education system. Decisions made by top leadership were enforced without any scope for constitutional dialogue, so little attention was paid to parents concerns at school level as allies in a collective effort to improve the academic achievement (Motshega, 2015:62). This led to a climate of non-involvement and developed into situations where we still see most parents reluctant to contribute to or behave in detachment from education to promote educational success for their children.

New regulations have been introduced in conjunction with the updated framework that requires parents to play an active part in their children's education; this involvement by parents is crucial for sharing educational duties, particularly in collaboration with

senior school management teams (Motshega, 2015:62). The structure of the SMT is explained in the paragraph that follows.

2.7.1 The School Management Team structure

The School Management Team (SMT) consists of the principal, the deputy principal, and the various department heads. The head of the SMT is the school's principal. According to the Government Gazette No. 396684 (RSA, 2016) of the Revised Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), the principal shall ensure that the school is run satisfactorily and conforms with the applicable personnel administrative measures. To ensure that learners' education is adequately supported and in accordance with accepted policies. Essentially, the principal is responsible for promoting school engagement for parents and the public. The Deputy Principal will support the principal in managing the school properly, supporting learners' learning, and maintaining full knowledge of operational processes across the full range of the class's activities and. functions. The HODs will participate in classroom teaching, be accountable for the department's successful operation, and coordinate relevant/related extracurricular activities to ensure proper promotion of the subject or grade, and learners' education. Together, they form the management team, and one of their typical responsibilities is meeting parents to discuss their children's progress and behaviour.

2.7.2 The SMT's role in promoting parental involvement

The SMT's role in school is to bridge the gap between school and home. In South African schools, the SMT occupies a crucial management position. The SMT should have a policy on parental involvement. As research shows, the critical role played by SMTs, and more precisely by the school's policies on parental involvement, is essential to a successful relationship among home, school, and community. School management teams are required to develop an all-inclusive database that includes the contact details of all parents of students enrolled in their schools, including both their home and work information (Radebe, 2024). This will facilitate communication with parents when deemed necessary.

The SMT should engage parents in the process of change and innovation, transforming their previous disinterest in their children's education into active cooperation. Radebe (2024) advocates for SMTs to ensure that they collaborate with parents and encourage the parents to be involve in decision making processes of the school for the purpose of uplifting academic performance of learners. Parents should consider modifications made at school if they are actively involved in implementing the change by the SMT. Ultimately, SMTs are responsible for managing the entire parental involvement programme. SMTs are accountable for establishing an organisational structure to initiate, coordinate, and review programmes for parental involvement. When school management teams involve parents, students are likely to refrain from inappropriate conduct, which may lead to beneficial outcomes for the academic performance of students. According to the Revised Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), Government Gazette No. 396684 (2016), the SMT shall provide daily instructions to ensure the effective functioning of the school for educators. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), a crucial element in raising academic achievement is school leaders' readiness to create and execute an active framework for parental involvement. Students are more likely to get academic, social, and emotional benefits when parents, teachers, and school administration work together to support each child's development.

SMTs should also reach out to the (school) community to promote parental involvement. The community should help parents and families regarding their children's learning, social growth, and well-being. Educational institutions should not operate independently; instead, they ought to work in partnership with parents and community leaders to guide students in becoming accountable members of society and future citizens of the nation. Okeke (2014:1) asserts that, “There is ample evidence that parents involved in the education of their children can make a remarkable difference to the educational achievement of their children.” Education is thus a social benefit that must be respected not only by the community but also by both promoting and securing it to guarantee a prosperous life for all. Education involves a partnership between schools and families. According to Mncube and Mafora (2019), SMTs that foster good relationships with parents and encourage them

to share their children's goals are essential in assisting families in realizing those goals. Furthermore, schools that lack strong parental involvement and SMT direction frequently struggle with low teacher motivation, high absenteeism, poor instructional time management, and bad discipline, all of which lead to students' unsatisfactory academic results. Consequently, school leaders need to assume a pivotal role in fostering an environment characterized by transformative leadership within their institutions (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Educational policies provide parents with crucial, non-transferable rights that allow them to engage in their children's education to improve their academic achievements (Department of Basic Education, 2017). SMTs will educate and inspire parents with academic laws, as they are educational supporters, so that they know their rights and recognise that it is very necessary to invest in learner learning to increase achievement. Hill and Tyson (2023) contend that when parents actively promote learning and uphold significant relationships with schools, children's educational engagement and achievement are increased. Therefore, SMTs must make sure that parents are acknowledged as essential collaborators in advancing their children's education and academic performance.

2.8 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR INCREASED PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

A growing body of research indicates that inviting parents to participate in school events is not enough to increase parental involvement. Instead, when schools establish systems, connections, and opportunities that allow families to engage as important partners in education, meaningful parental involvement arises. As a result, parental involvement is now seen as a shared responsibility among schools, families, and communities rather than just a parental duty. Three interconnected strategies—parental empowerment, acknowledging parents as learning partners, and enhancing relationships and communication between schools and families—emerge as crucial for boosting parental participation across the literature.

2.8.1 Parental empowerment

A recurring theme in the research is that when parents are equipped with the information, abilities, and opportunities needed to interact with schools, they are more likely to engage in education in a meaningful way. According to academics, parents should actively participate in decisions that impact learners and schools rather than just attending school events (Goodall, 2023; Epstein & Sheldon, 2022). This viewpoint is consistent with the democratic ideals included in the South African Schools Act (SASA), which acknowledges parents as rightful participants in school administration and instructional procedures (RSA, 1996).

Although parental empowerment is generally supported by the evidence, researchers' explanations for poor engagement vary. While some studies contend that schools frequently fail to provide meaningful opportunities for participation, others contend that parents lack confidence because they are unfamiliar with school procedures and expectations. These divergent opinions imply that parental disengagement can be more indicative of a lack of support or inclusion than a lack of interest. Some studies make the underlying premise that parents will naturally become involved once they are given information. This, however, ignores contextual obstacles including poverty, work obligations, and prior bad educational experiences. As a result, inclusive practices that recognize the many realities of families must go hand in hand with empowering programs.

From the perspective of educational management, parental empowerment necessitates that School Management Teams (SMTs) provide supportive frameworks that increase parents' self-assurance and ability to interact with schools as equal participants in their kids' education.

2.8.2 Parents as learning allies

Reconceptualizing parents as learning partners rather than incidental participants in education is a second theme that emerges from the literature. Researchers repeatedly contend that when communities, educators, and parents collaborate to support learner development, successful education is strengthened (SACE, 2022; Epstein & Sheldon,

2022). By acknowledging that learning takes place in a variety of settings, such as the family, school, and community, this viewpoint goes beyond conventional ideas of parental involvement.

According to a number of research, parental involvement enhances learner motivation, academic success, behavioral development, and emotional health (Kim & Hill, 2021; Goodall, 2023). Regarding the kind of involvement that have the biggest effects, however, academics disagree. While some emphasize at-home learning support, others place more emphasis on family involvement in school governance and decision-making processes. Despite these variations, most people agree that when parents are seen as active participants in their children's education rather than as passive information consumers, learners gain.

The tendency of some schools to view parental involvement as an optional activity rather than a crucial element of academic success is a crucial topic brought up in the literature. This method assumes that parents have a secondary role and that teachers have the primary knowledge needed for learning. On the other hand, current research contends that parents have a special understanding of their children's needs, interests, and situations that schools are unable to duplicate. Therefore, in order for parental involvement to be effective, schools must acknowledge and value the variety of family contributions, including those that take place outside of official school settings.

The idea of parents as learning partners in this study emphasizes how crucial it is for SMTs to provide school environments where parents are valued as co-educators who support learners' academic and personal growth.

2.8.3 Improving parent-educator contact

Effective communication is the cornerstone of successful parental participation, according to the literature. Researchers frequently contend that regular, two-way communication between families and schools is the foundation of successful collaborations (Epstein & Sheldon, 2022; Hill & Tyson, 2023). When parents and

teachers communicate well, they may discuss learner progress, work together to overcome obstacles, and set shared learning objectives.

While most academics concur that communication is crucial, many disagree over the reasons behind communication breakdowns. While some research stress institutional impediments such inaccessible communication methods, unwelcoming school climates, and restricted possibilities for discourse, others emphasize parents' unwillingness to interact with educators (Goodall, 2023). These contrasting viewpoints imply that communication difficulties are influenced by the caliber of relationships schools build with families rather than being exclusively the fault of parents.

The advantages of solid school-family ties are also highlighted in the literature. Increased parental confidence, better community and school trust, more learner support, and higher teacher morale are all linked to positive interactions (Smith & Jones, 2021; Smith et al., 2020). Crucially, these advantages go beyond scholastic performance by fostering greater social cohesiveness and a shared dedication to learner success.

Some research clearly make the fundamental assumption that communication inevitably results in cooperation. However, if conversations are one-sided or fail to acknowledge parents' viewpoints, communication on its own is inadequate. Respect for one another, shared decision-making, and opportunities for significant involvement are all necessary for successful relationships. As a result, communication should be viewed as a process of developing relationships rather than just exchanging information.

2.8.4 The Leadership Role of School Management Teams

The consensus in the literature is that school leadership has a major role in the success of parental involvement. According to researchers, SMTs are essential in establishing environments that promote family involvement, trust, and cooperative problem-solving (Hill & Tyson, 2023; Epstein & Sheldon, 2022). SMTs must facilitate collaborations between schools, families, and communities as part of this duty, which goes beyond administrative duties.

The conventional belief that parental involvement grows organically is called into question by recent research. Instead, they contend that intentional planning, inclusive policies, and ongoing intervention are necessary for effective involvement. Parental involvement is more likely to rise in settings where SMTs actively encourage communication, acknowledge parents' contributions, and provide easily accessible chances for involvement. On the other hand, parental involvement frequently stays low when schools use passive strategies, especially with marginalized families.

The literature for this study indicates that promoting parental involvement is essentially a management issue in education. The ability of SMTs to establish friendly school settings, empower parents, improve communication, and foster collaborations that enhance teaching and learning is crucial to the success of parental participation programs. Therefore, rather than focusing only on parents, increasing parental involvement calls for a strategic and inclusive leadership approach.

Research indicates that a change from deficit-based perspectives of parents to partnership-oriented methods is necessary to increase parental participation. Most academics concur that good communication, parental empowerment, and acknowledging parents as learning partners are essential for meaningful involvement. The literature does, however, also show a propensity to believe that parents will take part if given the chance. These presumptions ignore the structural, socioeconomic, and cultural hurdles that could limit involvement. As a result, the degree to which SMTs foster inclusive, encouraging, and cooperative environments that allow all families to participate in their children's education is just as important to the success of parental involvement as the willingness of parents to participate.

2.9 GAPS IN LITERATURE

Despite a body of literature on the importance of paternal participation throughout education, studies have shown that paternal intervention remains limited, and there is little research on specific circumstances and school contexts that enable or discourage parental involvement in school activities. This research was conducted in a less developed area to examine parents’ participation in the school-parent relationship and its impact on children's education. The objective of this study was

to investigate the fundamental reasons for parental engagement or the lack of it in the context of schools thoroughly in less developed areas. The study further identifies potential solutions to address parents in a disadvantaged school context and improve their involvement. The findings of this study may contribute to the literature on reducing strain on the teacher-parent relationship and bridging the gap between teachers and parents.

2.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, I have emphasised various concerns related to the role of parents in education. The existence of school governance within the analysed schools does not necessarily indicate that parents are entirely involved in school activities. The reviewed literature emphasizes the need for parental involvement and the disadvantages of the lack of parental support. Some of the factors that inhibit parental involvement are also discussed. The next chapter explores the research methods employed in this study.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed the literature on parents' engagement in their children's educational experiences. This section delineates the research methodologies employed in this investigation. The discourse encompasses the research framework, research approach, research design, participant selection, methods of data collection, techniques for data analysis, and ethical considerations about the study. The quest for data was motivated by the subsequent research questions: The subsequent sub-questions will be explored in the research:

- What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?
- Which strategies do the SMTs adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?
- What challenges do the SMT encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?
- How do the SMT resolve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The interpretivist paradigm, which aims to comprehend how people create and interpret their social reality, provided the context for this study. Because the study's objective was to investigate participants' opinions of the role of School Management Teams (SMTs) in promoting parental involvement rather than to assess predefined variables, interpretivism was applicable. The study was predicated on the idea that parental involvement experiences are socially formed and influenced by the interactions between parents, teachers, and SMT members. The researcher was able to explore the meanings that participants associated with school leadership, school-family partnerships, and parental involvement by taking an interpretivist approach. The study acknowledged that various participant groups may have varied and even

contradictory perceptions of the SMT's function in promoting parental involvement rather than attempting to find a single objective reality. As a result, the paradigm encouraged a thorough investigation of these many realities in the setting of a primary school.

The researcher's combined status as an educator and an SMT member was a crucial factor in this study. This insider position gave me important contextual knowledge about parent-school relationships, leadership styles, and school procedures. It made it possible for the researcher to comprehend organizational procedures and analyze participant experiences in relation to the larger framework of school management. However, there were risks associated with this position as well. Teachers might have changed their answers to avoid criticizing SMT practices because they thought the researcher was also an educator or a member of a school management. Similarly, data interpretation may have been impacted by the researcher's personal and professional views toward parental involvement.

Throughout the study, the researcher used a reflexive approach to reduce these risks. Participants were given the assurance that their answers would be kept confidential and would not have an impact on their professional connections inside the education setting. The interview questions were created to enable participants to share both positive and negative experiences. To make sure that results represented participants' viewpoints rather than preconceived notions, the researcher constantly considered personal presumptions during data processing and contrasted new interpretations with the actual data.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

To explore the experiences of the participants and their opinion about SMTs' role in promoting parental involvement in education, this study used a qualitative research approach. Because the study aimed to comprehend how participants perceived parental involvement and relationships between families and schools, a qualitative approach was appropriate. Qualitative approach allowed the researcher to get detailed, situation-specific accounts from parents, teachers, and SMT members. Participants were able to express their experiences, difficulties, and suggestions in

their own words through focus groups and individual interviews. Compared to quantitative measurements, this offered a deeper understanding of parental involvement. Instead of aiming for statistical generalization, the study seeks to produce contextual insights that could help SMTs understand and promote parental involvement practices in similar educational settings.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design outlines the steps involved in carrying out the investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The researcher chose a case study as the research design. Yin (2018) describes a case study as a research technique requiring an observational analysis of a specific contemporary trend utilising various sources of evidence in its real-life sense (Yin, 2018:17). A case study is further described by Yin (2018) as a research design with set boundaries in a real-life context and where the research has minimum influence on the participants experiences. According to Yin (2018), a case study uses "how" and "why" probes for data that speak to the phenomenon. This study is a case study of how SMT members promote parental involvement in the selected school.

In the case studies, the participants were able to offer a variety of explanations for a common experience and to understand its implications. Furthermore, case studies enabled the researcher to demonstrate the complexity of social life and to investigate additional meanings and interpretations. Because data from case studies are closely related to people's experiences, they can be more persuasive and easier to obtain; this is why the researcher chose a case study design. Case studies offer numerous opportunities in research. Firstly, they allow researchers to delve deeply into specific instances, enabling participants to offer innumerable explanations for a shared experience and providing a comprehensive understanding of its implications. Furthermore, case studies serve as an effective tool for showcasing the complexity of social life, uncovering additional meanings, and interpreting diverse perspectives within a given context. This is precisely why the researcher chose a case study design, as it permits a nuanced exploration of the dynamics of the selected phenomenon.

However, case study research also has inherent limitations. One disadvantage is its limited generalisability. Because case studies are based on particular experiences or contexts, their findings cannot always be generalised to broader populations or different settings, limiting the external validity of the research. Another challenge lies in the subjectivity that can be introduced into the study process. Researchers may also inadvertently introduce bias when selecting instances or interpreting data, raising concerns about the trustworthiness of the findings.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

- **Population:**

Shalabh (2018) describes a population as a group of items or people that share certain qualities. Creswell (2017) further defines a population as the complete set of people or items that fit the specified requirements for being part of a research project. The population in this study is the SMT, parents, and teachers at a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town.

- **Sampling:**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) define sampling as the process of selecting participants from an identified population and who will be required to participate in the study. Creswell and Creswell (2018) further identify different data collection methods in qualitative research, such as non-probability or purposive sampling. Probability sampling includes random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling. Qualitative research frequently employs convenient, purposeful, and snowball sampling methods. Patton (2015) and De Vos *et al.* (2016) argue that in qualitative enquiry, there are no sample size laws. Still, it depends on the intent of the enquiry, what is at risk, what will be valuable, what will be accurate, and what can be achieved within the time and resources available. The researcher in this study used purposive sampling to select the participants. Purposive sampling involves the intentional selection of individuals or a small group who are exceptionally knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon of interest to gain an in-depth understanding (Patton, 2015). Furthermore, purposive sampling involves

identifying and selecting individuals or groups who are particularly familiar with the phenomenon of interest, thereby improving parental involvement in education. Thus, the primary goal of purposive sampling is to concentrate on traits of a population of interest, enabling the researcher to choose cases with a wealth of information that most effectively answer the study question (Palinkas, Lawrence A. et al., 2018). In this study, the chosen sample included the SMT members of the school, teachers, parents from the SGB, and other Grade 4-7 parents. The sample comprised four (4) SMT members (principal, deputy principal, Departmental Heads (2)), three (3) teachers, and three (3) parents, for a total of ten (10) participants.

The SMT was selected because, as the school's management team, they possessed valuable insights and had substantial experience in interacting and collaborating with parents. The participants, who were SMT members, were selected because they could add value to the research. Three (3) teachers were selected. One (1) from the Foundation Phase, because the reality is that parent involvement is better in this phase than in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. One (1) teacher was selected from the Intermediate Phase and one (1) from the Senior Phase. The selected teachers were those with more than five (5) years of teaching experience because they had experience with the problem and were able to share rich information that would answer the research questions. Parents were selected based on how long they had been involved with the school and their children's learning experiences. I selected those parents who seemed to provide the most valuable insights and were easy to reach, based on recommendations from the principal and the management team. Three (3) parents were selected. Parents were selected based on referrals from the SMT. My experience of parental involvement in education led me to focus on parents in the Intermediate and Senior Phases (Grade 7 The issue of limited parental engagement appears less pronounced in the Foundational Phase (Grades R–3), where many parents remain relatively involved. However, parental participation tends to decline as learners progress into the Intermediate and Senior Phases.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews were used to collect data. The researcher was able to compare regions of convergence and divergence in participants' experiences and gather viewpoints from various stakeholder groups by utilizing a variety of data sources.

3.6.1 Individual interviews

Three parents and three teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. This approach was chosen because it gave participants the freedom to comment on topics they deemed significant while still offering enough structure to answer the study objectives. The interview questions were used to create an interview guide that was modified for every participant group. Perceptions of parental involvement, barriers to participation, and the role of SMTs in promoting school-family partnerships were all covered in the questions. To go deeper into participants' answers and learn more about their experiences, follow-up questions were employed.

Depending on participant preference, interviews were conducted either in-person or over the phone at times that worked for them. Interviews were audio recorded with participants' permission and then verbatim transcribed. During the interview process, recording allowed the researcher to concentrate on listening and probing while ensuring that participants' responses were accurately recorded.

3.6.2 Focus group interviews

The principal, deputy principal, and departmental heads were among the SMT members who participated in a focus group interview. The focus group's objective was to investigate common viewpoints about SMTs' leadership role in promoting parental involvement. Participants were able to engage, build on each other's answers, and talk about shared experiences enabled by the group structure. This revealed areas of agreement and disagreement within the SMT and produced insights into shared understandings of parental involvement. Together with the data from the individual interviews, the focus group conversation was audio recorded, transcribed, and analysed.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-phase framework. Because the process was inductive, themes did not have to be imposed prior to analysis; rather, they evolved from the data. The following steps were taken in the analysis to improve transparency and rigor:

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the Data

To become fully immersed in the data, the researcher listened to the recordings and read the transcripts of the focus groups and interviews several times. A research journal was used to document preliminary findings and thoughtful comments.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

Line-by-line analysis of the transcripts was done, and descriptive codes were applied to text passages that were pertinent to the research issues. Initial codes comprised the following examples:

- Absence of parental presence
- Work-related obligations
- Ineffective communication
- Strategies for SMT support
- Financial obstacles
- Collaboration between educators and parents
- Parental consciousness

At this point, these codes did not seek to interpret broader meanings; instead, they captured significant thoughts that participants conveyed.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

After that, the codes were compared and categorized based on recurrent themes. Broader groups were created by grouping related codes together. For instance:

Initial Codes	Category
Financial constraints, transportation issues, and work obligations	Socioeconomic obstacles
Communication gaps, ineffective alerts, and a lack of information	Communication difficulties
Workshops, home visits, parent meetings	SMT engagement techniques

Preliminary themes were developed based on these categories.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

To ascertain whether the preliminary themes appropriately reflected participant replies, they were compared to the entire dataset. To maintain consistency and uniqueness, some topics were combined, improved, or divided as needed.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

Each topic was precisely defined and given a name that reflected its central idea after it had been refined. Among the latter themes were:

- Obstacles to parental involvement
- The role of communication as an engagement trigger
- SMT's leadership in promoting parental involvement
- Establishing cooperative school-family relationships

Phase 6: Producing the Report

Interpreting the themes in light of the research questions and relevant literature was the last step. In order to demonstrate the results and guarantee that the analysis was rooted in the experiences of the participants, participant quotations were incorporated.

Reflexivity During Data Analysis

Reflexivity received special consideration during analysis because the researcher was a member of an SMT. Throughout the coding and theme-development process, a reflexive log was kept in order to record new interpretations and identify any biases. The researcher consistently questioned how personal presumptions about parental involvement and school leadership would influence analytical choices.

Instead of assuming that SMT projects were successful, the analysis purposefully looked for information that both validated and refuted current procedures. This procedure guaranteed that the opinions of the participants remained crucial to the analysis of the data and enhanced the validity of the conclusions.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Research is associated with the moral development of valid and reliable data (Jones & Lee, 2018). They highlight the significance of upholding integrity, confidentiality, and informed consent during research activities. Therefore, the study's findings must be trustworthy. Trustworthiness refers to the extent to which the evidence gathered and observations conducted accurately reflect the truth from the respondents' perspectives (Creswell, 2017). In qualitative research, trustworthiness is established by ensuring credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the degree of trust in the results of a study, as well as to whether the outcomes genuinely represent reliable evidence derived from authentic data provided by participants (Shanton, 2020). Shanton (2020) goes on to state that establishing credibility requires thorough data collection and analytical methods that accurately reflect participants' viewpoints, thereby improving the reliability of the research findings. Credibility requires the researcher to connect the results to facts explicitly and demonstrate the truth of the findings. Credibility in this study was established using contrasting and triangulating the research findings. Shanton (2020) suggests that qualitative research maintains the depth of the study through the

use of these credibility techniques: extended and varied field observations, duration assessment, personal reflection, triangulation, investigator oversight, peer review, interview methods, establishing expertise, and ensuring systematic uniformity, along with understanding the participant's initial perspectives. In this research, both personal interviews and focus group interviews were conducted to collect data, which were triangulated to ensure the credibility of the results. The researcher took time to communicate with participants in this study and to follow up with questions to provide clarity and depth. The researcher's supervisor also monitored and reviews the findings to ensure that they were credible.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which the findings of qualitative research can be applied generally or to different contexts or settings. It is referred to as transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). To achieve transferability in this study, we employed a purposive sampling strategy to select participants with relevant and diverse perspectives on the research topic. By providing comprehensive details on the research environment, techniques used, and methods of data collection, the study aimed to improve the reader's understanding of its setting and approaches. From a qualitative perspective, the generaliser bears the primary obligation to ensure transferability. Korstjens and Moser (2018) highlight the importance of researchers providing a "thick description" of the research context, participants, and methodologies, which enables readers to evaluate the similarities and differences with their own situations. This comprehensive contextual information allows others to make informed decisions about the relevance and applicability of the research outcomes across diverse environments (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study, transferability was ensured by gathering in-depth descriptive data so that readers could assess its applicability to their unique environment (Moon *et al*., 2016).

3.8.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to how well research findings can be verified or corroborated by other researchers, ensuring that the conclusions are rooted in the data rather than influenced by the researcher's biases (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). It highlights the

importance of transparency and auditability in qualitative research, enabling others to verify the findings' precision and reliability. To ensure confirmability in this study, rigorous data management and analysis procedures were employed, including a systematic coding process and peer debriefing. The coding process involves multiple researchers independently coding the data, reducing the potential for individual bias. Regular peer debriefing sessions are conducted to discuss findings, interpretations, and any potential researcher biases, enhancing the trustworthiness of the conclusions. Furthermore, a detailed record of the research procedures, encompassing data gathering, coding, and analysis, will be preserved to ensure the research's confirmability. Throughout the study, the researcher can record the steps taken to verify and double-check the data. A data audit can be carried out after the study to evaluate the data collection and analysis processes and assess the likelihood of bias or distortion (Maree, 2016). The replies from various individuals and data from multiple sources are used to support the study's conclusions.

3.8.4 Dependability

Here, the question of whether the same outcomes would occur if the same things were observed twice is at stake. Dependability emphasises the importance of the researcher considering the ever-evolving environment in which their research takes place. The researcher must clarify how environmental alterations influenced the conduct of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this research, the investigator conducted personal interviews and focus group interviews to collect information for the study. The reliability of the research is enhanced by gathering thorough data and detailing the methodology employed (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). Dependability in this study is ensured by establishing a transparent, well-documented research process. The study maintains detailed records of our research design, data collection, and analysis procedures to facilitate transparency and reproducibility. Additionally, an external audit of the research, conducted by a qualified expert, will verify the consistency of the methods and findings. This rigorous approach to documenting and external validation enhances the dependability of the study, ensuring that the results are reliable and can be trusted for future reference.

3.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

The emphasis of research ethics is to determine what is ethically right and wrong when engaging with participants or obtaining historical information. Ethical problems in research inform the reader about how participants will be treated during the study and about any actions the researcher should or should not take in their interactions with respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). The researcher approached UNISA's Ethics Committee to obtain ethical approval for this study. Before approaching the selected schools to seek authorisation to conduct research, consent was initially secured from the Western Cape Education Department and the district and circuit authorities. After formally seeking permission from the UNISA Committee for Ethical Clearance, the Western Cape Education Department, the District Office, the school principal, and the SGB through letters, the researcher was granted access to interview participants and collect information from them. Direct consent from participants was also requested. Before any data could be gathered, participants were asked to sign consent forms willingly.

The following rules or standard ethical procedures were applied in this study:

- **Informed consent**

The idea behind informed consent is that participants should be provided with sufficient information and assurances about the study's risks and benefits before deciding whether to participate. This is done without being under any duress or coercion (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). In this study, all participants received consent forms from the researcher that detailed the study's objectives, provided them with the option to withdraw at any time without incurring any fees, and fully disclosed any potential risks. Given that the subjects would have been informed of the study's objectives and what was expected of them, informed consent means they had a choice about whether to participate. The individuals involved in this research included members of the SMT, educators, and parents.

- **Voluntary participation**

Individuals involved in the research were made aware of their voluntary choice to participate in the study. According to the regulations, there was no obligation to initiate the research without their permission. Involvement in this study was entirely based on the participant's own desire. They were also informed that they had the right to leave the study at any time if their situation necessitated it (Smith & Jones, 2017).

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

The guidelines guarantee that the respect for individuals involved is upheld and not compromised. The individuals involved in this research were made aware of both the procedures and the objectives of the study. They were assured that their involvement would be secure (trust) and that their identities would be kept confidential (privacy); also, their identities would not be part of the research, including details such as their sex, gender, position, or email address from their institution (Sharma & Kaur, 2018). Code names or pseudonyms would be used to identify the different participants in the study.

- **Securing data and the right to privacy**

Respondents were informed that the details gathered from evaluations and questionnaires would not be disclosed recklessly, thereby violating the respondents' confidentiality. In other words, the author would not relate the subjects' names or schools to the study findings (Sharma & Kaur, 2018).

3.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter covered the research paradigm, approach, design, sample, data collection, and data analysis; ethical considerations; and the study's trustworthiness. The data collection methods included individual and focus group interviews. The limitations and delimitations of the research are also examined. The following chapter reveals the results of this investigation.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology used in this study, comprising the research paradigm, approach, design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. Trustworthiness and ethical considerations are also discussed. Building on the research methodology outlined in the previous chapter, this chapter presents the findings and discusses the data collected in this study, structured around the research questions. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks and literature studied in earlier chapters, this chapter presents and analyses data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions. This study involved conducting interviews with the SMT, three teachers, and three parents from a primary school in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. The main objective of this chapter is to present the data in a structured and rational way, emphasising the significant themes, trends, and connections that emerged from the data analysis.

The tables below present the participants' personal information, as the specifics of the participants significantly impact the data-gathering procedure.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

This section summarises the biographical information of the study participants.

Table 4.1: Biographical data – Teacher participants

Participant	Gender	Teaching Grade	Teaching subject	Years of experience	Qualification
Teacher 1	Female	Grade 1	All Foundation Phase subjects	5 Years	BEd degree Foundation Phase
Teacher 2	Female	Grade 4	Mathematics, English, and Additional Language	9 Years	BEd degree Intermediate & Senior Phase
Teacher 3	Male	Grade 5 & Grade 7	English, Additional	6 Years	BEd degree Intermediate &

Participant	Gender	Teaching Grade	Teaching subject	Years of experience	Qualification
			Language, Technology, History, and Life Skills		Senior Phase

Table 4.2: Biographical data – Parent participants

Participant	Gender	Number of children in the school	Grade of the learner
Parent 1	Female	2 learners	Grades 4 & 7
Parent 2	Male	1 learner	Grade 6
Parent 3	Female	2 learners	Grades 1 & 4

Table 4.3: Biographical data - SMT member participant

Participant	Designation	Gender	Years of teaching experience
SMT 1	Principal	Male	31 years
SMT 2	Deputy principal	Female	22 years
SMT 3	Departmental Head	Female	33 years
SMT 4	Departmental Head	Male	12 years

4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The research questions and interview questions are summarised here.

Table 4.4: Research questions and interview questions

Research Questions (RQs)	Interview Questions (IQs)
RQ1. What are the roles of the SMTs regarding the promotion of parental involvement?	• IQ1: What do you understand by the term “parental involvement in children’s education?” • IQ2: Which roles do you think parents should play in supporting their children in education? IQ2 (Parents) / IQ3 (Teachers/SMT): What is the role of the SMT to improve and manage parental involvement in education? • IQ3 (Parents) / IQ4 (Teachers/SMT): Are you aware of any governmental

Research Questions (RQs)	Interview Questions (IQs)
	policy/law relating to Parental Involvement? If so, what does it say?
RQ2. What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	• IQ5 (SMT/Teachers) & IQ6 (Parents): Kindly identify the barriers that you are aware of that prevent parental involvement. • IQ6 (SMT/Teachers): In what ways can you say parents create barriers to their own involvement in children's education?
RQ3. What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	• IQ7 (SMT/Parents) & IQ8 (Teachers): What are the consequences of non-involvement of parents in their children's education? • IQ8 (SMT), IQ9 (Teachers), & IQ8 (Parents): Are parents meaningfully involved in their children's education? Motivate your answer.
RQ4. What strategies do the SMT adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?	• IQ9 (SMT), IQ10 (Teachers), & IQ11 (Parents): What does the SMT at this school do to encourage parental involvement in education? • IQ10 (SMT), IQ11 (Teachers), & IQ9 (Parents): What strategies can be used to enhance effective parental involvement? • IQ11 (SMT), IQ12 (Teachers), & IQ10 (Parents): On which aspects does this school often involve parents in their children's education?
RQ5. What are the challenges experienced in involving parents in the education of their children?	• IQ 12 (SMT/Parents) & IQ 13 (Teachers): Which challenges experienced when attempting to involve/improve parental involvement in the education of their children?
RQ6. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents regarding their involvement in children's education?	IQ13 (SMT), IQ14 (Teachers), & IQ13 (Parents): How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents regarding their involvement in children's education?
RQ 7 How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to	• IQ 14 (SMT/Parents) & IQ 15 (Teachers): What are the benefits of

Research Questions (RQs)	Interview Questions (IQs)
involve parents?	parental involvement in education? • IQ 15 (SMT/Parents) & IQ 16 (Teachers): Describe the strategies that SMTs could use to overcome the challenges experienced about parental involvement in education.

4.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, THEMES, AND SUB-THEMES

Table 4.5: Research questions, themes, and sub-themes

RQ1. What are the roles of the SMTs regarding promoting parental involvement?	**Theme 1: The Role of SMTs in Promoting Parental Involvement** *Sub-theme 1: Understanding of Parental Involvement* *Sub-theme 2: Perceptions of the Role Parents Play* *Sub-theme 3: The Role of the SMT in Promoting Involvement* *Sub-theme 4: Awareness of Policy and Legal Frameworks*
RQ2. What are the causes of parental non-involvement in the education of their children?	**Theme 2: Causes of Parental Non-involvement** *Sub-theme 1: Barriers to parental involvement* *Sub-theme 2: Barriers created by parents themselves regarding their involvement in the education of their children*
RQ3. What are the consequences of parental non-involvement in the education of their children?	**Theme 3: Consequences of Parental Non-involvement** *Sub-theme 1: The consequences of parental non-participation in the education of their children* *Sub-theme 2: Perceptions of the Current*

	State of Parental Involvement
RQ4. What strategies are implemented to encourage parental involvement in the education of their children?	**Theme 4: Strategies used by SMTs to encourage parental involvement** *Sub-theme 1: How SMTs encourage parental involvement* *Sub-theme 2: Proposed strategies for enhancing parental involvement* *Sub-theme 3: Aspects of parental involvement*
RQ5. What are the challenges experienced regarding the improvement of parental involvement?	**Theme 5: Challenges experienced in parental involvement in the education of their children** *Sub-Theme 1: Communication and logistical challenges* Sub-theme 2: *Challenges experienced by SMTs that relate to parents, which hurt involvement* *Sub-theme 3: Challenges experienced by parents that are related to teachers*
RQ6. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents regarding their involvement in children's education?	**Theme 6: Perceptions of the participants on the attitude of parents towards parental involvement** *Sub-theme 1: Negative attitude of parents* *Sub-theme 2: Inferiority complex of parents* *Sub-theme 3: Lack of interest from the parents*

	Theme 7: Solutions and strategies used to overcome challenges experienced in parental involvement
RQ7. How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents?	*Sub-Theme 1: Perceived benefits of parental involvement* *Sub-Theme 2: Proposed strategies to enhance management of parental involvement*

4.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents the detailed findings from the qualitative interviews, organised into seven overarching themes that emerged from the data analysis. Each theme is broken down into sub-themes, supported by direct quotations from participants. The findings are then interpreted in a commentary and linked to existing academic literature, providing a comprehensive discussion of the results.

4.5.1 Theme 1: The role of SMTs in promoting parental involvement

Table 4.6: Research question 1, theme 1, and sub-themes

Research question (RQ)1 What are the roles of the SMTs regarding promoting parental involvement? Interview question (IQ)1 What do you understand by the term parental involvement in children's education?	**Theme 1: The role of SMTs in improving parental involvement** *Sub-theme 1.1: SMTs' understanding of parental involvement in the education of their children*
(IQ)2 Which roles do you think parents should play in supporting their children in education?	
(IQ)3 What is the role of the SMT to improve and manage parental involvement in education?	*Sub-theme 1.2: The role played by parents in supporting their children*

(IQ)4 Are you aware of any governmental policy/law relating to Parental Involvement? If so, what does it say?	*Sub-theme 1.3: The role played by SMTs in improving and managing parental involvement* *Sub-theme 1.4: Awareness of governmental policy and laws relating to parental*

The first theme explores participants' understanding of parental involvement, the roles they believe parents should play, the SMT's specific role in fostering this relationship, and their awareness of the legal framework governing this involvement. A key finding is the consistent view across all groups that parental involvement is a collaborative and holistic effort.

4.5.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Understanding of parental involvement

Those involved in the SMT, along with teachers and parents, possess a comprehensive and integrated perspective on the concept of 'parental engagement.' They regard it as a collaborative effort that goes beyond educational achievement, encompassing a child's complete development and welfare.

My perspective on the role of parents in a child's life is that they are the foundation; they form the basis for a child's growth. So, it goes broader than just the education, the academics within the classroom… (Teacher 3).

I will say that, for me, parental involvement will be more about a parent taking responsibility for their children's education. They must take responsibility. It is also about forming a partnership with the school in developing their child (SMT 4).

Parental engagement means that, as a parent, you should actively participate in your child's learning and be directly involved in it. Be hands-on with your child's schoolwork, homework, and other tasks (Parent 1).

This finding implies that parental involvement is not limited to attending meetings or helping with homework. Instead, it is perceived as a fundamental, collaborative role in

which parents are expected to be active participants in a child's entire educational journey. The concept of ‘partnership’ is central to this understanding, suggesting shared responsibility between the home and the school.

This finding aligns with the central tenets of Epstein's (2018) work, which highlights that parental involvement is not merely a modern phenomenon but a crucial partnership in preparing a child for the 21st century. The sentiment that parents are the "root" of a child's development supports Epstein’s (2018) view that parents have the strongest and most enduring influence on a child's mindset and actions. The data also resonates with the "overlapping spheres of influence" theory (Epstein, 2001; Myende, 2019), as participants express a shared goal for children's success that requires both home and school to work together.

4.5.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Perceptions of the role parents play in the education of their children

In addressing the inquiry into the influence of parents on their children's education, the individuals involved in this research recognised the parents' role as a supportive framework that bolsters academic instruction, instils discipline, and serves as both a protector and a mentor.

The parent should take it further. Is it homework, is it tasks... that's the role of the parent about the school (Teacher 2).

The parents’ role is more that of a guardian and a guide to the importance of education, rather than that of a teacher (Teacher 1).

The other role I would say is discipline, a disciplinarian role...They also need to play a supervisory role as a parent (SMT 1).

The discovery regarding how parents view their involvement in supporting their children emphasises that parents are not merely onlookers but are actively engaged in strengthening their children's education at home. The emphasis on discipline and supervision indicates that participants view parents as the primary source of moral and

behavioural guidance, a role that complements and supports the school's academic function.

This finding is consistent with the literature that emphasises the long-term impact of parental influence on a child's development and academic success (Epstein, 2018; García & Thornton, 2014). Triegaardt and Van Diermen (2021) assert that parenting styles are crucial in the early stages of child development, as reflected in participants' views that parents should be the primary disciplinarians and guides. The observation that parents take up an extra niche appeals to the literature of supporting and cooperation with parents at home to enhance the education and well-being of a child (Epstein, 2018). This finding highlights the crucial idea that education is a shared responsibility, not a task to be delegated. When parents embrace their role as primary disciplinarians and guides, they create a powerful partnership that extends learning beyond the classroom.

4.5.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: The role played by SMTs in improving and managing parental involvement

The findings on what SMTs do to improve and manage parental involvement show that the SMT value communication and collaboration as the key promoters of parental involvement. Effective communication and collaboration are perceived by the SMTs as ingredients for creating a welcoming environment and systems that facilitate and promote parental involvement.

The SMT plays an important role in managing parental involvement, by creating an inviting environment for parents. They can organize parent meetings, workshops, and events to inform parents about their child's progress… (Parent 2).

I will say communication is key. The SMT needs to communicate from a management side. Communicate the school's expectations towards parents (SMT 2).

Perhaps set up a network basis. Having members of the SMT and SGB share the information with other parents, sharing responsibility (SMT 3).

The participants' responses suggest that the SMT is not just an administrative body but acts as a crucial bridge between the school and the parent community. The SMT's role is perceived as proactive, focusing on building trust and creating structured opportunities for collaboration and information sharing. This addresses the need directly for effective SMT strategies in promoting parental involvement. The results also indicate that the School Management Teams appreciate the involvement of parent representatives in the decision-making process regarding their children's education and in the execution of tasks. The SMTs further regard the parent representatives as partners and mediators between the SMTs and other parents.

The above finding directly supports Jeynes' (2016) assertion that for the goal of parental involvement to be achieved, schools, guardians, and the community must collaborate and recognise their interdependence. The call for the SMT to create an "inviting environment" is a critical step in reducing the "gap between schools and the communities" as described by Epstein (2018). Furthermore, the SMT's desire to establish networks and share responsibility aligns with the "social capital approach" to community engagement, which, according to Khumalo (2023), requires school management to communicate values and build trust to reinforce mutual goals.

4.5.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: Awareness of policy and legal frameworks

This sub-theme aims to evaluate participants' understanding of policy and legal structures related to parents' involvement in their children's education. The study found a clear hierarchy of awareness regarding the legal and policy frameworks for parental involvement. While the SMT demonstrates professional knowledge of specific laws, this awareness diminishes at the teacher level and is largely absent among parents.

Yes, we are. The South African Schools Act is the main one. It outlines the establishment of the School Governing Body (SGB) and gives parents the right to participate in their children's education (SMT 1).

I know that parents are part of the School Governing Body, so that's the main way they get involved. I'm not sure of the specific law's name, though (Teacher 2).

I don't know about any law. I know that as a parent, I'm supposed to be involved with the school and support my children (Parent 1).

We know that parents are supposed to be part of the school, but to be honest, I'm not sure of the exact name of the law. We operate on the principle that parental involvement is crucial (SMT 3).

This finding indicates that although a legal framework for parental involvement exists, the information is not effectively cascading from top management down to all stakeholders. The SMT's professional knowledge of the legal framework that guides parental involvement does not seem to translate into a shared understanding across the school community, particularly among parents, to guide their involvement, which seems to be based on general expectations rather than a specific legal or policy mandate. This finding reveals a significant gap in the communication and implementation of official policy expectations on parental involvement.

This finding is critical in the South African context. While the SASA (1996) explicitly encourages parents to play a pivotal role in their children's education and governance through SGBs, the findings of the current study show a disconnect between policy and practice. The lack of awareness among parents reinforces the idea that the policy alone is insufficient; as Khumalo (2023) suggests, effective implementation requires the school management to actively communicate values and build trust among the different stakeholders. This gap highlights a key area where the SMT must work to empower parents with the knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as stipulated by the policy, which is the legal framework.

4.5.2 Theme 2: Causes of parental non-involvement

Table 4.7: Research question 2, theme 2 and sub-themes

RQ2. What are the causes of parental non-involvement in the education of their children? (IQ) 5 Kindly identify barriers that you know of that prevents parental involvement	**Theme 2: Causes of Parental Non-involvement** *Sub-theme 2.1: Barriers to parental involvement*

(IQ**)** 6 In which ways can you say parents create barriers to their own involvement in children's education?	*Sub-theme 2.2: Barriers created by parents themselves regarding their involvement in the education of their children*

This theme explores the multifaceted reasons behind the non-involvement of parents in their children's education. The insights gathered from SMT, teachers, and parents themselves reveal a complex web of barriers, ranging from personal circumstances and logistical challenges to attitudinal and relational issues.

4.5.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Barriers to parental involvement

The primary causes of parental non-involvement stem from a variety of barriers, including socio-economic constraints, family dynamics, and a lack of interest, which is sometimes linked to age and educational background.

Also, the level of education of the parents... when a child gets mathematics homework, or something like that and then parents tend to say, when I was in school, we never did this (SMT 4).

Firstly, it can be the conflict between the two parents, the mother and father. Also, the single parents that can't get to everything, maybe working overtime (SMT 2).

My circumstances, working, single mom...and no transport. So, I'm unable to be there. I would love to be at the school more often (Parent 1).

I will say it's a big thing is that parents are quite young...And then the grandparents...they are not techno smart...a lack of information on how to assist their children (Teacher 2).

There is also a lack of interest among some parents. They just don't care (SMT 3).

The findings suggest that a lack of parental involvement is often not a matter of choice but is the result of genuine and formidable external obstacles. It appears that parents may possess a desire to be involved, but their efforts are thwarted by demanding work schedules, a lack of transportation, or challenging family dynamics. Additionally, a lack

of knowledge or confidence due to personal educational deficits and a generational gap can serve as a barrier, leaving parents feeling ill-equipped to help their children. This implies that effective strategies for increasing parental involvement must be sensitive to and accommodating of these socio-economic and personal realities.

These findings on socio-economic barriers are consistent with the South African context, where the apartheid regime's legacy of limiting educational opportunities has led to high rates of illiteracy (Triegaardt & Van Diermen, 2021). In South Africa, Misheck Ndebele found that lower socioeconomic status significantly reduces parental involvement in homework. In contrast, parents with higher income and status are more engaged (Ndebele, 2015). A study in rural Pakistan identified poverty, illiteracy, and socioeconomic instability as significant barriers to cooperation between parents and schools (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021). A qualitative study in a low-income Western Cape school similarly showed that poverty and poor parental education obstruct meaningful involvement. Participants were willing to engage but lacked the resources and environment to do so effectively (Ikechukwu, 2017). The challenges of unemployment and poverty are pervasive and impact a parent's capacity to be involved directly. Furthermore, the issue of "young parents" who "don't have that sense of responsibility" and grandparents who are "not techno smart" highlights the family dynamics that Triegaardt and Van Diermen (2021) identify as crucial in early child development. These factors represent a significant, non-attitudinal barrier to parental engagement.

4.5.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Barriers created by parents themselves regarding their involvement in the education of their children

The primary causes of parental non-involvement are barriers created by the parents themselves. These barriers include communication breakdowns, undermining of teachers, and misguided perceptions about responsibility and prejudice.

A simple phone number. We are looking at the simple thing: asking parents to send their phone numbers to the school. But then the parents don't send the phone number (SMT 1).

A constant covering up for their children... Disrespect from the parent towards the school and teachers (SMT 4)

The fact that they don't want to be involved... Perceptions of the parents, for example, if the teacher is black, they perhaps think that the teacher won't be able to communicate with them (SMT 2).

Parents place that responsibility solely on us... the parents' mindset is like, "discipline must be done at school, not at home" (SMT 1).

The data show that parental non-involvement is not just a matter of external factors, such as work schedules or time constraints. Instead, the findings point to a deep-seated attitudinal problem. The failure to provide basic contact information, the public undermining of teachers, and the outright rejection of shared responsibility reveal a fundamental disengagement. The implication is that improving involvement requires more than just creating opportunities; it necessitates a shift in the parental mindset. The findings suggest a need for a re-education of parents on the importance of partnership and the damaging effects of their own actions.

This finding reflects the "psychological attitude" that Khumalo (2023) identifies as shaping the success of home–school partnerships. When parents see education as solely the school's responsibility, it reflects a disconnect in Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence, which stresses that the most effective outcomes emerge when families and schools share goals and work collaboratively. Such attitudes also weaken the functional approach, which depends on parents and teachers fulfilling complementary roles to support learner achievement. Instead of mutual reinforcement, parents' disengagement shifts the full burden onto schools, leading to imbalance and reduced learner support.

This dynamic can foster what Aldridge and Fraser (2018) call a "polluted school culture", in which low morale and lack of trust discourage collaboration. As the findings reveal, poor communication practices - such as reliance on circulars or incomplete parent contact details (Waterford.org, 2018) - further erode the social capital approach, which depends on reciprocal relationships, trust, and information exchange

between families and schools. In this context, even when the SMT seeks to bridge the gap, its efforts are undermined by structural and attitudinal barriers. Moreover, the disrespectful or defensive attitudes of some parents exemplify how weak social capital and divergent expectations can reinforce negative cycles, preventing the shared responsibility for learner success that Epstein (2018) and Khumalo (2023) argue is essential.

4.5.3 Theme 3: Consequences of Parental Non-involvement

Table 4.8: Research question 3, theme 3, and sub-themes

RQ2. What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children? (IQ)7 What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in their children's education? (IQ)8 Are parents meaningfully involved in their children's education? Motivate your answer.	**Theme 3: Consequences of parental non-involvement** *Sub-theme 3.1: The consequences of parental non-participation in the education of their children* *Sub-theme 3.2: Perceptions of the current state of parental involvement*

This theme explores the adverse outcomes that participants believe result from a lack of parental involvement, focusing on the impact on learners' academic performance, psychological well-being, and behaviour.

4.5.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: The consequences of parental non-participation in the education of their children

The findings consistently demonstrate that parental non-involvement leads to a wide range of adverse outcomes for learners, including poor academic performance, disciplinary issues, and psychological and social-behavioural problems.

With non-involvement, you see low-performance rates in our children because they know for a fact that I'm only being taught in class and I can't go home to ask for any

assistance, because there's nobody there to help… You also see discipline problems not because the child wants to misbehave, but because they are attention-seeking (Teacher 1).

We experience learner neglect: low self-esteem and learner withdrawal. The child tends to become a problem, bullying other learners (SMT 2).

It can also lead to children abusing substances (Parent 1).

…demotivated, regularly absent from school… Learners make wrong decisions, bad friends, and get in trouble (Parent 2).

The findings suggest that parental non-involvement creates a vacuum of support at home that manifests in a holistic negative impact on the child. It appears that when a child lacks a supportive, structured home environment, they are prone to academic struggles because they cannot receive the reinforcement needed for learning. This absence of support also seems to lead to attention-seeking or a lack of discipline, as the child may be seeking guidance or boundaries not provided at home. The data on neglect and substance abuse further suggests that the consequences extend beyond the classroom, impacting a child's self-esteem and future life choices. This implies that parental presence is a crucial protective factor against a range of adverse outcomes.

The findings confirm the well-documented positive effects of parental involvement. Research by Hill and Tyson (2019) demonstrates that parental participation promotes student performance and decreases absenteeism, which is directly contrasted by the low performance and frequent absences reported in this study. Similarly, Hill, Witherson and Bartz (2018) found that the lack of support directly counteracts the benefits and emphasised that strong family-school partnerships can enhance learners' abilities and close achievement gaps.

Furthermore, the findings of this study on the consequences of a lack of parental involvement align with Epstein’s (2018) assertion that parental involvement benefits a child's overall well-being. The negative behaviour, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal reported by participants in the current study are the inverse of the benefits, such as higher grades, better social skills, and improved conduct, that Hill and Tyson

(2019) associate with parental support. This finding strongly reinforces the idea that parental involvement is an emotional necessity for a child's healthy development, not just an academic one. Furthermore, the findings of this study on the consequences of a lack of parental involvement align with Epstein's (2018) assertion that parental involvement benefits a child's overall well-being. The negative behaviour, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal reported by the participants in the current study are the inverse of the benefits, such as higher grades, better social skills, and improved conduct, that Hill and Tyson (2019) associate with parental support. This finding strongly reinforces the idea that parental involvement is an emotional necessity for a child's healthy development, not just an academic one.

4.5.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Perceptions of the current state of parental involvement

Participants across all three groups, such as SMTs, teachers, and parents, shared a consistent perception that meaningful parental involvement is largely absent, limited, or superficial. While a small number of actively involved parents are acknowledged, the general view is that most parents are only engaged at a basic level, if at all.

Many parents are not involved (Teacher 1).

Most of our parents are not meaningfully involved; their involvement is limited. They ensure the basics are in place... but that is where it stops (SMT 1).

No, I do not think so. Most parents are not interested, or they don't have the time to get involved (Parent 2).

I would say about 50/50. The 50 who are meaningfully involved are pushing their children, and the other 50 are just doing the basic things (Teacher 3).

The consistency of these perceptions across all groups suggests a shared understanding of the problem. It appears that while communication channels like WhatsApp groups might exist, they do not necessarily translate into active, meaningful participation. This finding reveals a significant disconnect between the ideal of parental involvement as a partnership and the lived reality. Participants attribute this lack of involvement to various reasons, from a lack of interest and time to a superficial

understanding of what involvement truly means. This implies that improving parental engagement is not just a matter of creating more opportunities, but of addressing the fundamental reasons for this widespread disengagement.

This perception of limited involvement directly reflects the "growing concern" in South Africa regarding insufficient parental involvement noted by Triegaardt and Van Diermen (2021). The finding that parents and SMTs are not effectively building strong relationships, despite the recognised need, corroborates Smith and Johnson's (2016) point that SMTs' effectiveness in sustaining parental involvement is constrained. Lack of effective collaboration between families and schools undermines the "overlapping spheres of influence" paradigm, which requires the home and school spheres to operate in coordinated and mutually beneficial ways (Epstein & Sheldon, 2022). This finding indicates that responsibility for disengagement lies not solely with parents but also with systemic issues affecting the entire home-school partnership.

4.5.4 Theme 4: Strategies used by the SMTs to Encourage Parental Involvement

Table 4.9: Research question 4, theme 4, and sub-themes

RQ4. What strategies do the SMT adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?	**Theme 4: Strategies used by SMTs to encourage parental involvement**
(IQ)9 What does the SMT at this school do to encourage parental involvement in education?	*Sub-theme 4.1: How SMTs encourage parental involvement*
(IQ)10 What strategies can be used to enhance effective parental involvement?	*Sub-Theme 4.2: Proposed strategies for enhancing parental involvement*
(IQ)11 In which aspects does this school often involve parents in their children's education?	*Sub-Theme 4.3: Aspects of parental involvement*

This theme highlights the current and suggested approaches to promote parental engagement, as recognised by the respondents. The data reveal a reliance on

traditional communication methods and a desire for more innovative, engaging, and collaborative approaches.

4.5.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Strategies used by SMTs to encourage parental involvement

The SMT primarily relies on multi-channel communication and event-based involvement to engage parents. Current practices include newsletters, WhatsApp groups, formal meetings, and parent involvement in fundraising or celebratory events.

The school is very consistent with the communication (Teacher 3).

They do make use of newsletters, WhatsApp groups, and parent meetings (Teacher 1).

We are contacted via the WhatsApp group (Parent 1).

…informing us and sending us newsletters and text messages (Parent 2).

We regularly communicate with parents via newsletters, WhatsApp groups, and phone calls… (SMT 3).

We also involve parents in various events, fundraising activities, excursions, and sports (SMT 4).

We also award learners for their achievements, and we invite parents (SMT 2).

The findings on the strategies used by SMTs in this study suggest that the school's approach to parental involvement is mainly administrative and event driven. While the use of different communication platforms helps reach more parents, its impact is limited by challenges such as limited technology access and low parent responsiveness. Event-based involvement, such as fundraising or award ceremonies, creates opportunities for parent participation but may restrict engagement to specific occasions rather than fostering continuous collaboration.

The finding reported above aligns with García and De Caso (2019), who argue that depending exclusively on circulars or school meetings can restrict parents' perceptions of the school. Similarly, Waterford.org (2018) notes that although parents favour digital communication, it does not guarantee active participation in learning

activities. Epstein's (2018) theory of overlapping spheres of influence also suggests that communication should be two-way, fostering partnerships rather than being purely informational. The findings confirm that while the SMT has made efforts to maintain regular communication, the strategies remain limited in their ability to build deep, collaborative parental engagement.

4.5.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Proposed strategies of enhancing parental involvement

Participants in this study proposed strategies that emphasise greater personalization, collaborative planning, and social community-building. Teachers, parents, and SMT members suggested new approaches, including fun days, workshops, using parents' talents, ambassador programmes, and more direct forms of communication.

So, for me, a fun day, like a family fun day, would be needed (Teacher 1).

You can use parents' talents… some parents are great at baking, others at reading, and so on (Teacher 2).

We could encourage parents to serve as ambassadors for our school, representing it in the community (SMT 1).

Arrange sessions to guide parents on how they can assist their children's learning (Parent 2). The data indicate a desire to move beyond administrative forms of engagement towards personal, informal, and empowering strategies. Participants recognise the value of parents' skills and social roles, suggesting that tapping into these resources could foster a stronger school–community relationship. The proposals also highlight the importance of flexible communication systems, recognising that some parents lack access to phones or digital platforms. These recommendations collectively reflect a demand for a more collaborative, inclusive model of parental involvement.

The proposed strategy of enhancing parental involvement aligns with transformational leadership theory (Leithwood & Kantz, 2015), which emphasises creativity, collaboration, and empowering stakeholders in decision-making. Mahlangu (2018:45) emphasises that effective stakeholder relationships in schools depend on innovation

and mutual respect. By introducing parent ambassador roles, social events, and talent-based contributions, the SMT can create opportunities that build trust and foster a sense of ownership among parents. This reflects Epstein's (2018) model of partnership, which promotes inclusive, diverse participation that extends beyond official gatherings to foster significant teamwork.

4.5.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Aspects of parental involvement

Parental involvement at this school is most often linked to formal governance structures, fundraising activities, disciplinary meetings, and extra-curricular events. Parents are called upon mainly when the school requires administrative support, financial contributions, or attendance at academic review sessions.

Fundraising, on the SGB and sport days (SMT 3).

I would say one-on-one parent meetings and disciplinary hearings (Teacher 2).

With functions and school concerts (Parent 3).

This finding shows that parental involvement is often reactive and event-based, rather than being an integrated, ongoing process. Engagement is frequently limited to moments of crisis (discipline hearings), financial contributions (fundraising), or formal governance (SGB participation). Such forms of involvement, while necessary, may contribute to a perception among parents that their participation is only required when the school needs support, rather than as active partners in education.

This resonates with Epstein (2018), who argues that parental involvement should extend beyond formal events into everyday learning and emotional support. The findings echo concerns raised by Smith and Johnson (2016), who found that SMTs often struggle to move beyond traditional, formal mechanisms of engagement. The limited and usually transactional nature of current involvement prevents the development of meaningful partnerships. This highlights the importance of shifting toward a more proactive and integrative approach, where parents are seen as co-educators and contributors to holistic learner development, not just as attendees or financial supporters.

4.5.5 Theme 5: Challenges experienced in parental involvement in the education of their children

Table 4.10: Research question 5, theme 5, and sub-themes

RQ5. What are the challenges experienced regarding the improvement of parental involvement? IQ(12) What are the challenges experienced when attempting to involve/improve parental involvement at school?	**Theme 5: Challenges experienced in parental involvement in the education of their children** *Sub-Theme 1: Communication and logistical challenges* *Sub-theme 2: Challenges experienced by SMTs that relate to parents that have a negative effect on involvement* *Sub-theme 3: Challenges experienced by parents that are related to teachers*

The theme addressed here is the obstacles and gaps the SMT faces in its attempts to engage parents. The results point to a combination of logistical problems, socioeconomic backgrounds, and negative parental attitudes.

4.5.5.1 Sub-theme 5.1: Communication and logistical challenges

A significant challenge identified by participants is a breakdown in communication, both in reaching parents and in receiving feedback from them.

Learners are not giving out the letters to parents. That is the biggest challenge...We don't receive feedback from the parents (SMT 3).

Communication is a big problem. There are wrong numbers. The letters are not delivered... (Teacher 1).

The SMT is so busy...there is no time to sit with the parents to discuss things. (Parent 1).

This finding shows that logistical issues and a lack of parental responsiveness often undermine the school's efforts to communicate with parents. Such challenges are not one-sided; parents also feel that the SMT's time constraints and a lack of feedback from the school pose an obstacle to their engagement.

The communication breakdown described is a persistent problem in school-parent relationships. The findings of this study suggest that communication issues are directly related to challenges experienced by SMTs to improve parental involvement. Epstein (2018) noted that it is essential to bridge the divide between educational institutions and surrounding communities by fostering open, ongoing interaction among academic institutions, households, instructors, and guardians. When learners do not deliver letters or when the contact information is incorrect, it reinforces the school's reliance on flawed communication channels and highlights the need for SMTs to proactively seek better, more reliable ways of connecting with families, rather than depending on traditional methods of giving learners to deliver letters from schools (García & De Caso, 2019; Waterford.org, 2018)

4.5.5.2 Sub-theme 5.2: Challenges experienced by SMTs that relate to parents' involvement

Participants from the SMT and teacher group discussions reported that negative parental attitudes and behaviours are a significant challenge to fostering involvement.

Non-compliance...parents delaying the meetings. (Teacher 2).

There's a lot of ignorance from parents. (SMT 1).

The above findings imply that some parents' negative attitudes create an emotionally charged and uncooperative environment, making it difficult for the school to engage with them constructively. The data highlights feelings of inadequacy, defensiveness, and a tendency to externalize blame as key psychological barriers.

This finding is a powerful example of how stakeholders' "psychological attitude" can impact the success of home-school partnerships, a key concept in Khumalo (2023). When parents feel "not good enough" or are "hostile," it creates an environment of low trust and collaboration. This also relates to Aldridge and Fraser's (2018) finding that

poor morale can lead to a "polluted school culture," which, in this case, extends beyond the school staff to include the parent community. The evidence unequivocally shows that attitudinal resistance from some parents is a major, active impediment to improving involvement. This resistance manifests as defensiveness, hostility, blame-shifting, and a lack of accountability, particularly during reactive involvement (e.g., disciplinary meetings). This attitudinal challenge not only validates the existence of psychological barriers but also directly obstructs the SMT's mandate to foster a collaborative and welcoming environment, leading to a polluted school culture where trust and social capital cannot be cultivated.

4.5.5.3 Sub-theme 3: Challenges experienced by parents that are related to teachers

Participants noted that systemic issues such as poverty and unemployment, as well as unique family dynamics, present significant barriers to parental involvement. Here is what they said:

The SMT is so busy...there is no time to sit with the parents to discuss things (Parent 1).

We don't get feedback from the school (Parent 2).

…not enough events to get involved (Parent 3).

This finding reinforces that the school is operating within a complex socio-economic context. Parental non-involvement is not always a choice but can be a direct result of the financial, personal, and developmental struggles parents face.

The challenges identified here are endemic to the post-apartheid South African context, where, despite the SASA (1996) encouraging involvement, many parents still face significant barriers. The findings support the rationale of this study, which states that parental involvement in South Africa was negatively affected by the apartheid regime, and that little has changed for many. This indicated that the schools' provision of support and opportunities is inadequate and non-accommodating of the parents' socio-economic realities. The SMT's failure to offer a diverse range of flexible and

proactive involvement events, instead focusing on a reactive model (e.g., fundraising or discipline), prevents parents from overcoming their circumstantial barriers. This gap reinforces the perception that parental involvement is superficial and highlights a crucial area where the SMT must proactively adjust its strategies to genuinely support the ideal of a holistic partnership.

4.5.6 Theme 6: Perceptions of the participants on the attitude of parents towards parental involvement

Table 4.11: Research question 6, theme 6, and sub-themes

RQ6. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents regarding their involvement in children's education? (IQ)13 How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents regarding their involvement in children's education?	**Theme 6: Perceptions of the participants on the attitude of parents towards parental involvement** *Sub-theme 1: Negative attitude of parents* *Sub-theme 2: Inferiority complex of parents* *Sub-theme 3: Lack of interest from the parents*

This theme explores parents' personal psychological feelings about their involvement in education, a critical precursor to attitudinal barriers and determined challenges. The findings reveal a complex mix of negative emotional responses, feelings of inadequacy, and a fundamental misalignment of responsibility that directly impedes the goal of a holistic home-school partnership.

4.5.6.1 Sub-theme 6.1: Negative attitude of parents

Participants from all discussion groups emphasised that the primary motivation for improving parental involvement is the significant and wide-ranging benefits it offers children.

A lot of parents are very negative and are very defensive. They have a lot of disrespect (Teacher 3).

Parents often believe that they lack sufficient time. The attitude is that it's the school's responsibility (SMT 1).

The attitude is that parents are very hostile (SMT 2).

The ongoing recognition of the advantages of parental participation offers a compelling argument for addressing issues related to non-participation. The results of this research indicate that increasing parental involvement is perceived as the most effective way to boost a child's academic performance, behavior, and general health.

These results strongly support the extensive research on the advantages of parental involvement. Hill and Tyson (2019) and Epstein (2018) both assert that parental participation increases learner performance and strengthens parental trust, which is the very foundation of the "support system" described by the SMT in this study.

4.5.6.2 Sub-theme 2: Inferiority complex of parents

Participants noted that a pervasive attitude among many parents is a sense of insecurity and inadequacy, indicating a limited belief in their capacity to make valuable contributions to their children's educational experiences.

Parents feel they are not good enough...They think they are not important enough to get involved (SMT 4).

They don't want to get involved (Parent 3). The finding that parents harbour an "inferiority complex" adds a critical psychological layer to the circumstantial barriers identified as contributing to non-involvement, such as low educational attainment. The data suggest that non-involvement is not always a choice driven by apathy but is often a result of parents' low self-esteem and a lack of confidence in their ability to support their child's learning. This self-perception that they are "not good enough" actively prevents involvement even when logistical opportunities are present.

This reluctance to engage directly contradicts the holistic partnership ideal (Theme 1), as parents remove themselves from the "overlapping spheres of influence" (Epstein, 2018). Crucially, by failing to engage, parents deprive the learner of the essential support network needed to foster increased self-esteem and emotional stability, which,

when present, helps children overcome challenges more effectively (Epstein, 2018; Sivertsen, 2015). This highlights that the psychological barrier of an inferiority complex prevents parents from establishing the positive academic habits and supportive bonds required to ensure their child's success, irrespective of the family's social or educational history (Munje & Mncube, 2018). Therefore, the study concludes that overcoming this inferiority complex is essential; the SMT must shift its approach from simply inviting participation to proactively building parental self-efficacy by validating their existing value and demonstrating that simple home-based activities constitute critical and practical involvement (Epstein, 2020), thus making progress toward the holistic partnership goal.

4.5.6.3 Lack of interest from the parents

Participants noted that a persistent issue is the limited enthusiasm some parents show for school events and their children's learning. This disengagement often translates into low attendance at meetings, minimal support for learners at home, and reluctance to collaborate with teachers and SMTs. The participants said:

Some parents are just not interested (Parent 1).

Some parents are not supportive (Parent 2). The lack of parental interest presents a significant barrier to strengthening home–school partnerships. While some of this disinterest may stem from external pressures such as work commitments or socio-economic stressors, participants noted that it also reflects an undervaluation of parental roles in education.

These findings is in line with research on parental disengagement. For instance, a recent study by Jacobs (2024) highlighted that parents' choices to get active are influenced by broader socio-cultural and economic conditions that affect involvement in addition to their role construction and perceptions of their efficacy in supporting schooling. If parents perceive their involvement as unimportant or unnecessary, disinterest becomes the default attitude. This apathy highlights the urgent need for the SMT to employ motivational strategies, such as explicitly demonstrating the benefits of involvement, to shift this passive mindset toward a proactive one.

4.5.7 Theme 7: Solutions and strategies used to overcome challenges experienced in parental involvement

Table 4.12: Research question 7, theme 7, and sub-themes

RQ 7: How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents? (IQ)14 What are the benefits of parental involvement in education? (IQ)15 Describe the strategies that SMTs could use to overcome the challenges experienced with parental involvement in education.	**Theme 7: Solutions and strategies used to overcome challenges experienced in parental involvement** *Sub-Theme 1: Perceived benefits of parental involvement* *Sub-Theme 2: Proposed strategies to enhance management of parental involvement*

This theme explores the proactive and restorative measures proposed by participants to enhance parental involvement by addressing the multifaceted challenges encountered by the SMT. The findings detail the perceived benefits of effective partnership and outline a set of practical and relational strategies designed to overcome logistical, socio-economic, and attitudinal barriers, ultimately moving the school from superficial involvement toward a genuine collaborative model.

4.5.7.1 Sub-theme 7.1: Perceived benefits of parental involvement

Participants emphasised that one of the most effective ways to address challenges of parental disengagement is to communicate and demonstrate the benefits of involvement continuously. SMTs and teachers noted that when parents see the positive impact on learners' academic performance, discipline, and overall well-being, they are more likely to recognise the value of participation.

The learner's behaviour at school improves (SMT 4).

The child is happier...better grades (Teacher 2).

It creates a support system for the child, making educators' jobs easier (SMT 1).

The child is motivated; they get good grades (Parent 1).

Discipline and the child will listen more (Parent 2.)

The consistent reference to perceived benefits underscores that schools view awareness and persuasion as key strategies to overcome resistance. By showing parents the direct link between their involvement and learner success, SMTs aim to counter negative attitudes and apathy.

These findings strongly align with the literature emphasising the positive outcomes of parental involvement. Epstein (2018) and García and Thornton (2014) argue that highlighting benefits such as improved academic outcomes, learner confidence, and stronger teacher–parent trust reinforces the importance of collaboration. The consensus among all participant groups (SMT, teachers, and parents) that involvement directly leads to improved academics, behaviour, and self-esteem provides the SMT with a clear, evidence-based leverage point to directly challenge the attitudinal barrier of parental disinterest and responsibility-shifting.

4.5.7.2 Sub-theme 7.2: Proposed strategies to enhance management of parental involvement

Participants also noted effective approaches aimed at improving the management of parental engagement. These strategies included strengthening communication channels, organising flexible meeting times, offering parent workshops, and building stronger relationships with families. SMTs highlighted the significance of fostering an inviting school atmosphere in which parents are appreciated, honoured, and motivated to take part.

Family fun days, social events (Teacher 1).

Having more informal parent-teacher meetings (Teacher 2).

Partner with ABET facilities, sponsors from NGOs for parents skills training (SMT 1).

The school can have more of a personal approach (Parent 1.)

These strategies mentioned in the above quotations represent a proactive and collaborative approach to overcoming challenges. Rather than viewing parental

involvement as an administrative obligation, SMTs are shifting toward a more flexible and inclusive model. By diversifying communication methods, offering training opportunities, and acknowledging parents' constraints, schools aim to foster trust and encourage consistent participation. This approach not only addresses practical barriers such as time and confidence It also reconceptualizes engagement as a collaborative duty that involves both parents and educational institutions.

The suggested strategies align with Epstein's (2018) six categories of participation, which emphasise communication, parenting support, and decision-making as essential pillars for effective partnerships. Khumalo (2023) similarly highlights that empowerment and relational trust are central to building sustainable parental involvement, while García and De Caso (2019) advocate for more informal and flexible communication to increase participation. The emphasis on utilizing community partnerships (e.g., ABET, NGOs) is particularly critical as it signals a strategic commitment to directly address the systemic socio-economic and educational barriers that schools alone cannot resolve, thereby laying the groundwork for a truly empowered and sustained home-school partnership.

4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter outlined the research results through seven key themes. The first theme emphasised SMTs' vital role in promoting parental involvement, though limited by heavy workloads and scarce resources, followed by the theme that identified causes of non-involvement, such as socio-economic challenges, logistical barriers, and psychological issues. The third theme showed that disengagement negatively affected learners' performance, discipline, and motivation, leaving teachers and SMTs unsupported. The strategies proposed in the fourth theme included workshops, personal communication, and informal engagements to build trust between teachers and parents. The challenges experienced, as narrated in the fifth theme, were poor communication, resistant attitudes, and systemic constraints. Theme 6 revealed that parents' disinterest and feelings of inadequacy hindered participation, stressing the need for confidence-building and a relational school approach. While the last theme provided possible solutions for the challenges experienced, these are: focusing on

showcasing the benefits of involvement, diversifying communication, and fostering community partnerships. The next chapter summarises the research findings, concludes the study, and makes recommendations.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter wraps up the research, drawing on the detailed presentation and analysis of the empirical data shared in Chapter 4. This chapter integrates the research procedures, outlining the primary results that emerged throughout the investigation and drawing definitive conclusions regarding the function of School Management Teams (SMTs) in promoting parental engagement in a primary school based in Cape Town. The chapter begins by detailing the research procedures at a reflective level, along with a structured summary of the outcomes derived from the seven primary themes explored during the analytical process. Lastly, the chapter presents a set of specific recommendations for generating knowledge and practice that can be directed at the SMT, the teachers, and policymakers, and recommends future research possibilities.

5.2 REFLECTIONS OF THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

Conducting this qualitative study was a demanding intellectual task as well as a significant personal experience, was also an exercise in academic rigor and self-reflexivity. After receiving ethical approval, the researcher was able to analyse the data. This analysis enabled in-depth exploration of the many aspects of home–school partnerships in the South African context.

The proposal phase was comprehensive, requiring the research questions to be formulated and addressed carefully, the choice of research paradigm (interpretivism) to be justified, and the methodological decisions (a qualitative case study) to be detailed. The research background was essential in guiding the ethical submission process and in obtaining the necessary institutional support. The development of Chapters 1 and 2 relied on a concentrated selection of academic literature, with particular emphasis on Epstein’s models, to establish the theoretical framework and contextual grounding for the research on socio-economic barriers. The development of Chapters 1 and 2 drew on a focused body of academic literature, with particular

emphasis on Epstein's models, to establish the theoretical framework and contextual grounding for the study on socio-economic barriers.

The data collection and analysis phase emerged as the most dynamic component of the study. The use of focus groups and semi-structured interviews generated rich insights that would not have surfaced through a quantitative survey, particularly in relation to psychological barriers such as inferiority complexes and parental hostility. Triangulating the perspectives of the SMT, teachers, and parents was crucial for validating the findings, including the widely shared perception of limited and superficial parental involvement. However, the fieldwork also presented notable logistical challenges. Considerable flexibility and patience were required when scheduling interviews with parents, given their socioeconomic constraints and demanding work schedules. Additionally, the risk of social desirability bias had to be managed throughout the process, necessitating careful follow-up questioning and cross-referencing to ensure the credibility of the data.

On a personal level, this study underscored the considerable impact of socioeconomic disadvantage on educational participation. Observing parents' sincere willingness to be involved—consistently constrained by time and poverty—shifted the researcher's understanding of parental non-involvement from a matter of choice to a structural barrier. Ethical considerations required continuous attention to the safety and confidentiality of all participants. Given the sensitivity of topics such as learner discipline and negative parental attitudes, the researcher had to maintain strict neutrality and suspend judgment in order to build trust and encourage honest responses. The integration of Chapter 4's findings into Chapter 5 required careful attention to ensure that all conclusions and recommendations were firmly grounded in the empirical evidence. This process led to the realisation that research involves more than simply being methodologically competent; it also requires developing deep empathy and cultural sensitivity. Ultimately, the study affirmed that educational leadership, especially at the SMT level, should be grounded in strong relationships and remain highly sensitive to the broader context of the school community.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section provides an overview of the main research results and offers a thematic summary of the primary research questions. Drawing on the empirical information discussed in Chapter 4 and analysed through the lens of Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence, the Social Capital Approach, and the Functional Approach, this section summarises the information obtained by studying the SMTs, teachers, and the parent participants. It highlights the key findings on the SMT's role, the multifaceted nature of non-involvement, and the strategic changes needed to foster meaningful, collaborative home-school relationships.

5.3.1 The role of SMTS in promoting parental involvement

The study found that SMTs see themselves as central actors in driving parental involvement and are tasked with actively facilitating the home-school relationship. The participants indicated that engaging parents is regarded as a cooperative and complex concept, encompassing not only academic support but also a child's holistic development. The specific role played by parents is viewed primarily as supportive and supervisory. At the same time, the SMT is responsible for modelling leadership, setting clear expectations, and creating structures through effective communication, a welcoming environment, and collaborative networks. These findings correspond with Epstein’s (2018) Model of Overlapping Spheres of Influence, which emphasises the school’s duty to foster active connections with parents. Crucially, the findings also reveal a significant gap in the awareness of the legal framework for parental involvement. While SMT members appeared familiar with the official policies governing parental involvement, parents seemed largely unaware that such a legal framework even existed. This suggests a shared understanding of what constitutes ideal involvement, but a notable lack of parental knowledge of the official statutes intended to support their right and responsibility to participate.

5.3.2 Causes of parental non-involvement

The study showed that parental non-involvement arises from several complex causes, with the data highlighting two distinct categories of barriers:

- Attitudinal barriers: These relate to parents' mindsets and include communication difficulties, disrespect, lack of interest, and negative attitudes such as feelings of inferiority or hostility, as well as the tendency to shift responsibility onto the school.

- Attitudinal barriers: These relate to parents' mindsets and include communication difficulties, disrespect, lack of interest, and negative attitudes such as feelings of inferiority or hostility, as well as the tendency to shift responsibility onto the school.

- Circumstantial barriers: These are external and are mostly beyond the direct control of the parent, like socio-economic status, lack of education opportunities, and absence of time/socio-economic hardship

Although most parents are sincerely interested in being more engaged, they are also constrained by specific factors, and much of the non-involvement stems from a lack of real connection between the school's expectations of parental involvement and parents' expectations. This implies the need to establish strategies to enhance parental participation to tackle not only current issues but also ingrained parents' mindsets, striking a balance that enables parents to engage in the educational matters concerning their children. Findings that are corroborated by existing scholarly literature (Lin & Yang, 2025; Munje & Mncube, 2018) show that parents' beliefs about their efficacy and role-building directly influence their readiness to do so.

5.3.3 Consequences of parental non-involvement

Parental non-involvement has far-reaching consequences, adversely affecting learners' behavioural, academic, and social development. The results of this research show that poor educational outcomes, a lack of discipline, and neglected feelings among learners are common when parents are not involved. These effects extend to psychological and emotional difficulties, including withdrawal and low self-esteem, and may contribute to risky behaviours such as substance abuse and association with negative peer groups, ultimately jeopardising learners' future prospects. This concern is reinforced by teachers and SMT members, who reported increased workloads and

reduced effectiveness because of parental non-involvement. Motshusi et al. (2021) similarly emphasise that the impact of parental non-involvement on learners' academic achievement and behavioural outcomes is both significant and long-term

The data insights derived from this research indicated that the current parental engagement is infrequent and is often not sincere. Participation is mostly reactive and is generally associated with serious events such as fundraising or disciplinary hearings, and is not an active, sustained relationship. Such a non-permanent engagement is indicative of a lack of connection between the Overlapping Spheres of Influence of Epstein and undermines the possible values of cooperation, as the idea itself is at the core of Epstein's theory (Mocho *et al.,* 2025). Such low and sporadic participation undermines the capacity of teachers and parents to perform their respective roles (the Functional Approach) and implies that the social capital between them, the shared values and mutual trust, has not been tapped in which the overall well-being of learners will have adverse effects.

5.3.4 Strategies used by the SMTs to encourage parental involvement

This research revealed that the existing approaches employed by the School Management Teams concerning parental involvement, which rely on newsletters, basic communication, and formal meetings, are often reactive and limited to administrative matters (e.g., fundraising and governance). Participants strongly advocated for a transformative shift towards more inclusive, relational, and creative approaches. The proposed strategies by the participants include:

- Relational initiatives: Implementing parent ambassadors, social events, workshops, and family-oriented gatherings.
- Empowerment: Leveraging parental talents and skills and using recognition to motivate parents.

This finding indicates a clear desire to move from bureaucratic, limited engagement to a proactive, integrated partnership. These proposed strategies align closely with Epstein's (2018) model, which emphasises continuous communication, parenting support, and collaboration as key to sustainable involvement.

5.3.5 Challenges experienced in parental involvement in the education of their children

The SMT faces a multi-faceted array of challenges that complicate efforts to involve parents. These barriers are both logistical (e.g., communication failures, outdated contacts, failure to attend meetings) and structural (e.g., socio-economic struggles, poverty, and unemployment). Most notably, the challenges are exacerbated by negative parental attitudes characterised by hostility, blame-shifting, and a general sense of inadequacy. These difficulties create a challenging environment in which the school's efforts are frequently met with resistance or communication breakdowns. The findings confirm that social trust and capital are often eroded in disadvantaged contexts (Khumalo, 2023), imposing structural limitations that cannot be solved by the school alone.

5.3.6 Perceptions of the participants on the attitude of parents towards parental involvement

According to the participants in this research, parents' participation has been severely inhibited by three broad negative psychological orientations: a defensiveness/hostility complex, an inferiority complex/low self-efficacy complex, and an overall lack of interest/apathy complex. It is these psychological factors that underpin most attitudinal barriers and the difficulties associated with hostile behaviour towards the SMT. The most important conclusion is that such entrenched attitudes discourage the achievement of the recorded positive outcomes of parental support (Liu & Gao, 2022). Thus, to adequately overcome these obstacles to engagement, the school should acknowledge its central role in establishing the trust and validation needed to break through these psychological barriers and advance toward the partnership ideal of collaboration and holism.

5.3.7 Solutions and strategies used to overcome challenges experienced in parental involvement

The results indicate that SMTs promote tangible benefits and adhere to active, adaptable strategies as the key to overcoming the challenge of parental involvement. Solutions include:

- Practical Implementation: It is possible to use flexible communication, provide skills development workshops, and emphasise relationship-building efforts.
- Highlighting benefits: Continuously demonstrating how parents' involvement directly benefits learners.

By implementing these steps, the schools are drawn towards a more inclusive, collaborative engagement model (Herath & Herath, 2024). These initiatives resonate with transformational leadership principles (Wilson Heenan *et al.,* 2024), which indicate that schools must lean more towards empowering, inclusive, and vision-driven strategies that, at their most extreme, aim to extract the maximum community involvement.

5.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitations refer to the intentional boundaries set by the researcher to ensure that the study remains focused, manageable, and methodologically sound. These parameters were applied systematically in line with the philosophical requirements of rigorous inquiry, designed to narrow the scope in order to deepen, rather than merely extend, the investigation. Accordingly, this study concentrated on a single school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town. The site was not selected randomly; instead, the case study approach enabled an in-depth examination of the issue within a single socio-cultural context, allowing a detailed analysis of the specific relationships, challenges, and policies shaping parental involvement. This method was found to be better than a multi-site comparative study, which would have been more generalisable, because the deep, context-based information that can be gathered might be diluted by the need to understand the intricate nature of parental involvement.

Qualitative interpretivism was the research approach and paradigm employed in the study. The study design chosen was a case study in which focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were used to produce information. This approach was chosen deliberately instead of a quantitative survey, which would have produced broad statistical generalisations but lacked the depth needed to explain complex psychological barriers—such as inferiority complexes—and the attitudinal factors underlying parents' non-involvement in their children's education

5.5 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Several limitations were acknowledged, representing factors that were generally out of the researcher's control and may affect the transferability of the findings:

Small Sample Size and Generalisability: The small sample size inherent in the qualitative approach limits the breadth of perspectives. Findings may not be directly generalised to all schools or parental contexts across South Africa.

Subjectivity and Social Desirability Bias: The qualitative approach used in this study depended heavily on participant narratives, which may be influenced by subjectivity or social desirability bias, particularly when SMTs and teachers described ideal practice rather than lived reality.

Limited Transferability: The specific socio-economic and cultural context of the single school under study may differ significantly from other South African schools, limiting the direct transferability of the findings, although the observed themes offer analytical insights for similar contexts

5.6 CONCLUSION

The findings showed that SMTs actively work to promote cooperation between the home and the school and acknowledge the value of parental involvement. Despite these attempts, parental involvement is still mostly episodic, reactive, and focused on governance, fundraising, and disciplinary issues rather than continuous educational support. The survey also discovered that many parents face obstacles that limit their capacity and motivation to interact meaningfully with the school, including poverty,

unemployment, a lack of educational possibilities, poor self-efficacy, inferiority complexes, and mistrust of school systems. A noteworthy discovery is that parental non-involvement is impacted by the type of relationship that is built between the school and parents in addition to parental attitudes and circumstances. Therefore, the ability of SMTs to establish a welcoming, trustworthy, and encouraging environment where parents feel appreciated, respected, and competent of contributing to their children's education is essential for effective parental engagement.

By showing that meaningful parental involvement happens when schools actively generate opportunities for connection between the family, school, and community, the findings corroborate Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence. However, the study expands the applicability of this theory by demonstrating that intentional relational leadership strategies that address both structural barriers and the psychological challenges faced by parents are necessary to develop these connections in disadvantaged school communities. This study supposes that in order to increase parental involvement, SMTs must shift from typical administrative approaches to relationship-centred leadership practices that foster communication, trust, parent empowerment, and cooperative problem-solving. By using this approach, schools can encourage learner accomplishment and holistic development while meeting the requirements of the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act and the South African Schools Act (SASA).

5.6.1 Contribution of the study to knowledge, practice and policy

By offering a thorough analysis of how SMTs promote parental involvement in a disadvantaged South African primary school setting, this study adds to the body of knowledge already available on the subject. This study offers a more nuanced understanding of parental non-involvement by repositioning it as a leadership-mediated relational challenge rather than just a parental deficit, even though prior research has extensively documented the advantages of parental involvement and the challenges that prevent participation.

The study highlights the important role psychological barriers—specifically, parental inferiority, hostility, defensiveness, and low self-efficacy—play is a vital conceptual

addition. Although socioeconomic limitations are often highlighted in the literature, the results indicate that psychological and relational factors may also have an equal impact on involvement. Therefore, by emphasizing the significance of trust-building, validation, and relational engagement as leadership responsibilities within the school setting, the study broadens current understandings of parental involvement.

By showing how Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence can be operationalized in a low-income school environment, the study advances theory. The results show that effective parental involvement calls on SMTs to actively promote encounters that lessen social distance between parents and the school, in addition to offering opportunities for participation. By demonstrating how leadership techniques can enhance the overlap between the home, school, and community domains in situations of social and economic hardship, the study expands on Epstein's approach.

The study contributes from the perspective of professional practice by highlighting relational leadership as a crucial tactic for raising parental involvement. According to the findings, SMTs can enhance parental involvement through community partnerships, flexible communication systems, parent empowerment programs, informal engagement opportunities, and tactics meant to boost parental self-efficacy and confidence.

The report emphasizes the necessity for schools to transition from compliance-based methods to parental involvement from a policy perspective. Despite the fact that laws like the BELA Act and SASA promote parental involvement, the findings show that parents are frequently unaware of their rights and obligations within these frameworks. Therefore, in vulnerable areas, the study emphasizes the significance of policies and implementation techniques that give priority to parent education, communication, and relationship-building.

As a result, the study advances knowledge, practice, and policy by showing that sustainable parental involvement depends not only on socioeconomic conditions and parental willingness but also on SMTs' ability to build cooperative, trustworthy, and supportive partnerships that facilitate meaningful parental involvement.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINDINGS

The following recommendations, which are based on the findings of this study are meant to increase parental involvement through leadership behaviour that foster communication, inclusion, trust, and parent empowerment.

5.7.1 Recommendations from the findings on the roles of the SMTs regarding the promotion of parental involvement

SMT Actions

From the findings of this study, I suggest that a Parent Liaison Officer (PLO) or the SMT of the schools involved in the study should oversee home-school partnerships between parents and teachers. The SMTs of the involved schools can create an organized framework for parental involvement. Additionally, SMTs should support parent education initiatives that emphasize leadership, communication, dispute resolution, and the rights and obligations of parents under the BELA Act and SASA.

Teacher action

The teachers in the schools that were involved in this study should assist the PLO in its work by pointing parents in the direction of suitable support systems and helping to spread information about school policies and opportunities for parental involvement.

Parent Actions

In order to improve home-school relationships, parents should actively interact with school structures, familiarise themselves with relevant laws and school rules, and take part in initiatives.

5.7.2 Recommendations regarding causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children

SMT Actions

By utilizing platforms like WhatsApp groups, SMS notifications, and community-based communication systems, SMTs should broaden their communication strategies. To

accommodate working parents and caregivers, meeting schedules should also be flexible.

Teacher action

Teachers should report communication difficulties to SMTs and routinely check parental contact information.

Parent Actions

In addition to making reasonable attempts to stay up to date on school events and student development, parents should make sure that schools have up-to-date contact information.

5.7.3 Recommendations to address the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children

SMT Action

SMTs should put in place structured learner-support programs that give parents regular behavioural and academic feedback and give them useful tools for promoting learning at home.

Teacher Actions

To foster closer ties with parents, educators should frequently share both constructive and constructive criticism.

Parent Actions

Regular routines, emotional support, and an active interest in their children's academic progress are all ways that parents can create supportive home-learning settings.

5.7.4 Recommendations on the strategies that SMTs need to adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children

SMT Actions

In order to encourage parents to share their knowledge with the school community, SMTs should create inclusive engagement opportunities including family days, parent workshops, cultural events, and skill-sharing programs.

Teacher Actions

Teachers should find ways for parents to actively engage in co-curricular and classroom activities.

Parent Actions

When it is feasible, parents should offer their time, expertise, and skills to assist school activities and learner growth.

5.7.5 Recommendations regarding the challenges experienced by SMTs in involving parents in the education of their children

SMT Actions

To overcome obstacles related to poverty, literacy, and family well-being, SMTs should increase their partnerships with community organizations, non-governmental organizations, adult education facilities, and social assistance organizations. Teachers and SMT members should also receive training in relationship-building and conflict resolution.

Teacher Actions

Teachers should continue to communicate with parents in a courteous, sympathetic, and solution-focused manner.

Parent Actions

Parents should positively participate in cooperative problem-solving procedures and interact constructively with teachers.

5.7.6 Recommendations on the perceptions of the attitude of parents regarding their involvement in children's education

SMT Actions

SMTs should put in place parent empowerment programs that emphasize boosting self-esteem, acknowledging parental contributions, and showing how all parents, regardless of educational background, can promote learning.

Teacher Actions

Teachers should constantly emphasize the importance of parental involvement and acknowledge the work and contributions of parents.

Parent Actions

Parents should take advantage of empowering possibilities and understand that active support for their children is more important for meaningful involvement than formal education levels.

.5.7.7 Recommendations on how the SMT should solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents

SMT Actions

A thorough framework for parental participation that is in line with Epstein's six categories of involvement should be created and institutionalized by SMTs. Clear objectives, execution strategies, monitoring protocols, and yearly review methods should all be included in the framework.

Teacher Actions

The framework should be included into regular classroom procedures and communication methods.

Parent Actions

The implementation, assessment, and ongoing development of the parental participation framework should involve parents.

5.7.8 Recommendations for future research

- **Conduct Comparative Studies**: Future investigations ought to build upon the objectives outlined in this research by including multiple schools across diverse socio-economic contexts to provide comparative insights.
- **Employ a Mixed-Methods Approach**: Researchers should consider using a mixed-methods design in exploring the topic of parental involvement by combining the depth of qualitative narratives with a quantitative survey to measure the prevalence of identified attitudes across a wider sample.
- **Investigate Long-Term Impact:** Other researchers should conduct longitudinal studies on parental involvement to evaluate the long-term efficacy of the recommended strategies on measurable learner outcomes and community-school trust.

5.8 A FINAL WORD

The research indicates that parents play a crucial role in students' achievements, but that this alliance is even more delicate in most South African schools. The conclusions lead to a paradigm shift from an administrative and compliance-focused model to relationship-based, humanistic engagement. The development of trust, parents' empowerment, and inclusive collaboration can be identified as key factors in changing relationships between the school and the community. Finally, educational outcomes are only as successful as teachers and SMTs are committed to, or demand, the involvement and participation of parents in their children's educational process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNISA university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2022/11/09

Ref: **2022/11/09/53402235/34/AM**
Name: Mr JL Jappie
Student No.:53402235

Dear Mr JL Jappie

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2022/11/09 to 2025/11/09

Researcher(s): Name: Mr JL Jappie
E-mail address: 53402235@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 0796933116

Supervisor(s): Name: Dr. T.A Ogina
E-mail address: oginateresa8@gmail.com
Telephone: 082 374 9618

Title of research:

The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town

Qualification: MEd Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2022/11/09 to 2025/11/09.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2022/11/09 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2025/11/09**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2022/11/09/53402235/34/AM** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof Mpine Makoe
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
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APPENDIX B: INFORMED PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za
Tel: +27 021 467 2350
Fax: 086 590 2282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 16375E04C000022-20230119
ENQUIRIES: Mr M Kanzi

Mrs Jardine Jappie
86 Drostdy Street
Cape Town
7570

Dear Jardine Jappie,

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN PROMOTING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CAPE TOWN.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **25 May 2023 till 30 September 2023.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Mr M Kanzi at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,
Meshack Kanzi
Directorate: Research
DATE: 25 May 2023



APPENDIX C: LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT

APPENDIX C: Requesting permission from the Circuit Manager to conduct research

Request for permission to conduct research in the circuit at AME Primary School

The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town

13 January 2023

MR. T. Manganeng (Circuit Manager)

WCED, Metro East District

Dear Mr. T. Manganeng

I, Mr. Jardine Jappie, am doing research under the supervision of Dr. T.A. Ogina, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education, towards a M.Ed. (master's degree) at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town.

The aim of the study is to investigate the role of the management team, especially regarding the promotion of parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town. Parental involvement in education is crucial in the lives of children, parents, and the

school. This research could benefit other stakeholders and the Department of Education as well. The topic is relevant and has a positive influence on all stakeholders, I therefore would like to request permission to conduct research at a school within the Metro East district (within your circuit).

The school has been selected, as many of our schools' face challenges, especially with regard to the involvement of parents, and the aim of this study is to provide knowledge that could inform the SMT in addressing the issue of lack of or inadequate parental involvement. The study will entail focus group interviews with the School Management Team, interviews with selected teachers and parents about the improvement of parental involvement at school.

The benefits of this study are that knowledge will be generated on the challenges as well as the strategies that could be used to encourage and improve parental involvement. The study will also provide an opportunity for the stakeholders involved in the study to reflect on issues of parental involvement. The study does not involve people under 18 years of age. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. Participation will be voluntary. Feedback procedure will entail giving participants a copy of the summary of the research findings and recommendations.

Yours sincerely

. Jappie

Researcher

APPENDIX D: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL AND SGB





APPENDIX D: Requesting permission from the SGB to conduct research

Request for permission to conduct research at AME Primary School

The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town

03 October 2022

SGB Chairperson

AME Primary School

021 988 1204, dougieoor@gmail.com

Dear SGB chairperson

I, Mr. Jardine Jappie, am doing research under the supervision of Dr. T.A. Ogina, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education, towards a M.Ed. (master's degree) at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: The role of the School Management Team in the improvement of parental involvement in a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town

The aim of the study is to investigate the role of the management team, especially regarding the promotion of parental involvement in a primary school in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town.

Your school has been selected, as many of our schools' face challenges, especially with regard to the involvement of parents, and the aim of this study is to provide knowledge that could inform the SMT in addressing the issue of lack of or inadequate parental involvement. The study will entail focus group interviews with the School Management Team and interviews with selected teachers and parents regarding the improvement of parental involvement at school.

The benefits of this study are that knowledge will be generated about the challenges and strategies that could be used to encourage and improve parental involvement. The study will also provide an opportunity for the stakeholders involved in the study to reflect on issues of parental involvement. The study does not involve people under 18 years of age. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. Participation will be voluntary. The feedback procedure will entail giving participants a copy of the summary of the research findings and recommendations.

Yours sincerely

J. Jappie

Researcher

APPENDIX E: CONSENT/ASSENT FORM





APPENDIX F: CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

(Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to be interviewed and recorded without any incentives.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

_____ _____

Participant Signature Date

Researcher’s Name & Surname (please print) _____ Researcher’s signature_____ Date_____

APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT





I_____ grant consent that the information I share during the focus group may be used by Jardine Jappie for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to disclose any information shared in the group discussions to anyone outside the group to maintain confidentiality.

Participant ‘s Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher’s Name: (Please print): _____

Researcher’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS)

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR FOCUS GROUP

Category	Research question	Questions
Focus Group interview	**Biographical data**	What is your position in the SMT? Experience Qualification Gender etc
	1. What are the roles of the school management team, especially with regard to the promotion of parental involvement?	1. What do you understand by the term parental involvement in children's education? 2. What roles do you think parents should play in supporting their children in education? Explain 3. What is the role of the SMT to improve and manage parental involvement in education? 4. Are you aware of any governmental policy/law relating to Parental involvement? If so, what does it say?
	2. What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	5. In the context of your experience kindly identify barriers that you know of that prevents parental involvement (causes of non-involvement). 6. In what ways can you say parents create barriers to their own involvement in children's education?
	3. What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	7. What are the consequences of non-involvement of parents in their children's education? 8. Are parent meaningfully involved in their children's education? Motivate your answer.
	4. What strategies do the SMT adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?	9. What does the SMT at this school do to encourage parental involvement in education? 10. What strategies can be used to enhance effective parental involvement in their children's education? 11. On which aspects does this school often involve parents in their children's education?
	5. What challenges do the SMT encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	12. What challenges does the SMT of this school experience when attempting to involve / improve parental involvement at school? 13. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents with involvement in children's education?
	6. How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	14. What are the benefits of parental involvement in education? Explain 15. Describe the strategies that this SMT use to overcome the challenges experienced with regards to parental involvement in education. 16. Describe possible strategies that the SMT can use to improve and manage parental involvement.
		Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about parental involvement

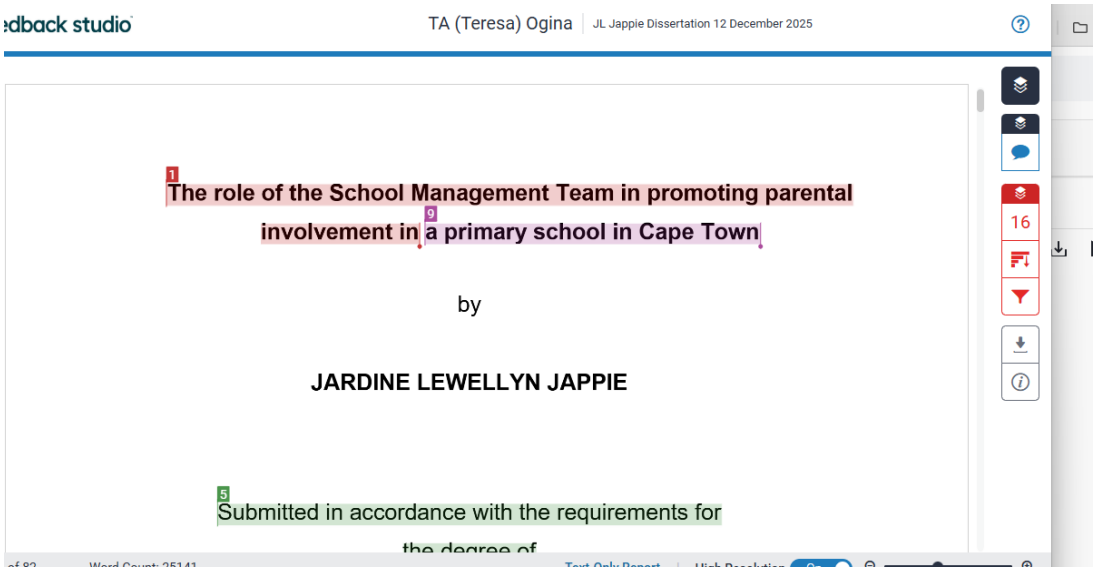
DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR TEACHERS

Teachers interview	**Biographical data**	What grades and subjects do you teach? Experience Qualification Gender etc
	1. What are the roles of the school management team, especially with regard to the promotion of parental involvement?	1. What do you understand by the term parental involvement in children's education? 2. What roles do you think parents should play in supporting their children in education? Explain 3. What is the role of the SMT to improve and manage parental involvement in education? 4. Are you aware of any governmental policy/law relating to Parental Involvement? If so, what does it say? 5. Do you think that parents know that they should meaningfully involve themselves in their children's education? Motivate
	2. What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	6. In the context of your experience kindly identify barriers that you know of that prevents parental involvement (causes of non-involvement). 7. In what ways can you say parents create barriers to their own involvement in children's education?
	3. What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	8. What are the consequences of non-involvement of parents in their children's education? 9. Are parent meaningfully involved in their children's education? Motivate your answer.
	4. What strategies do the SMT adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?	10. What does the SMT at this school do to encourage parental involvement in education? 11. What strategies can be used to enhance effective parental involvement in their children's education? 12. On which aspects does this school often involve parents in their children's education?
	5. What challenges do the SMT encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	13. What challenges does the SMT of this school experience when attempting to involve / improve parental involvement at school? 14. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents with involvement in children's education?
	6. How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	15. What are the benefits of parental involvement in education? Explain 16. Describe the strategies that this SMT use to overcome the challenges experienced with regards to parental involvement in education. 17. Describe possible strategies that the SMT can use to improve and manage parental involvement.
		Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about parental involvement

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR PARENTS

Parents interview	**Biographical data**	How many learners at this school Grade/s of learners Gender etc
	1. What are the roles of the school management team, especially with regard to the promotion of parental involvement??	1. What do you understand by the term parental involvement in children's education? 2. What is the role of the SMT to improve and manage parental involvement in education? 3. Are you aware of any governmental policy/law relating to Parental Involvement? If so, what does it say? 4. Do you think that parents know that they should meaningfully involve themselves in their children's education? Motivate
	2. What are the causes of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	5. Do you encounter any barriers with regard to your involvement in your children's education at school? Explain (6. Why are some parents not involved in their children's education? What are the barriers that prevent parents from being involved? Explain
	3. What are the consequences of the non-involvement of parents in the education of their children?	7. What are the consequences of non-involvement of parents in their children's education? 8. Are parent meaningfully involved in their children's education? Motivate your answer.
	4. What strategies do the SMT adopt in trying to encourage parents to take part in the education of their children?	9. What strategies can be used to enhance effective parental involvement in their children's education? 10. On which aspects does this school often involve parents in their children's education? 11. Describe some efforts made by the SMT & SGB to get you involved.
	5. What challenges do the SMT encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	12. What challenges does the SMT of this school experience when attempting to involve / improve parental involvement at school? 13. How can you describe the attitudes and perceptions of this school's parents with involvement in children's education?
	6. How do the SMT solve the challenges they encounter in trying to involve parents in the education of their children?	14. What are the benefits of parental involvement in education? Explain 15. What should be done to make you as well as other parents participate more actively in your children's education and make it more effective?
		Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about parental involvement

APPENDIX H: TII ONE PAGE REPORT



JL Jappie Dissertation 12 December 2025

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3	Letswalo, Valesa Moshibudi. "The Experiences of Teachers on Parental Involvement in the Primary Schools of Lebowakgomo Circuit, Limpopo Province", University of South Africa (South Africa) Publication	1%
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APPENDIX I: PROOF OF EDITING



CAROL JANSEN LANGUAGE EDITING SERVICES

P.O.Box 428
BRONKHORSTSPRUIT
1020
19 December 2025

To whom it may concern

Certification of language editing done.

I hereby declare that I have edited the article dissertation entitled: "The role of the School Management Team in promoting parental involvement in a primary school in Cape Town" by JARDINE LEWELLYN JAPPIE Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION in the subject EDUCATION MANAGEMENT at the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor: Dr T.A. Ogina
I am an experienced language practitioner who has edited many theses and dissertations for Unisa, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), and the University of Pretoria.

Carol Jansen

Language practitioner

Cell no: 082 9200312

MA (Linguistics Stellenbosch University)

BEd (Unisa)

BBibl (Hons) (Unisa)

HEd (Unisa)

HDipl(Bibl) (Unisa)

BA (AfrIII & Eng111) (Unisa)