

**Dr Paul Nwati Munje**  
SANRAL Chair, Faculty of  
Education, University of the  
Free State, Email: Munjepaul@  
gmail.com

**Prof Vusi Mncube**  
School of Further and  
Continuing Education,  
University of Fort Hare,  
Email: VMncube@ufh.ac.za

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v36i1.6>

ISSN 0258-2236

e-ISSN 2519-593X

*Perspectives in Education*

2018 36(1): 80-93

© UV/UFS



---

---

# The lack of parent involvement as hindrance in selected public primary schools in South Africa: The voices of educators

---

---

## Abstract

*Although parent involvement is fundamental for school functioning, the nature and extent of such involvement is debatable and contested amongst stakeholders. A qualitative based study underpinned by the interpretive paradigm was undertaken to explore the voices of educators regarding parent non-involvement and its implications for learner experiences and performance in a disadvantaged community in South Africa. Data was gathered through individual and focus group interviews, involving 3 principals and 12 teachers respectively. The paper is buttressed by Epstein's model of school-family-community partnerships that advocates for genuine collaboration between stakeholders. The findings show that educators' perceptions concerning parent non-involvement do not take into consideration the contextual realities that restrict involvement, and this serves to alienate parents further. The paper also reveals the gap that exist between policy and practice in terms of school-parent relationships. Existing relations, especially in disadvantaged communities emphasizes the need for schools to initiate and implement strategies that are context friendly, taking into consideration challenges experienced by parents. In this regard, empowering teachers on school-parent relationships is a vital ingredient to ensure the initiation and implementation strategies towards a sustainable parent involvement.*

**Keywords:** learner performance; parental involvement; disadvantage communities; poor schools

## 1. Introduction

Researchers around the world acknowledge the importance of parent involvement in their children's education (Bakker, Denessen & Brus-Laven, 2007; Chowa, Ansong & Osei-Akoto, 2012; Johnson & Hull, 2014; Luxomo & Motala, 2012; McDowall & Schaughency, 2017; Mncube, 2010), and the desire to ensure that these children succeed in school (Kemal, 2011). Parents' participation in learners' education, both formally and informally, can have social and emotional benefits (Bakker *et al.*, 2007; Bhengu, 2003; McDowall & Schaughency, 2017), but globally, certain contextual challenges negatively affect the achievement of sustainable parental engagement (Humphrey-Taylor, 2015). This influences stakeholder perceptions and

definitions of effective parental involvement, thus perpetuating misunderstandings amongst this cohort (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Herrell, 2011; Jafarov, 2015; Shen, Washington, Palmer, & Xia, 2014). In the view of Epstein (2018), this is orchestrated by the fact that teachers are increasingly not having adequate knowledge about the varied characteristics of parents, what Lemmer (2007) suggests is caused by the lack of training on parent-school relationships.

Educators in schools serving disadvantaged communities are more likely to have a negative perception of parental involvement; often classifying it as less encouraging and less rewarding in terms of advancing children's learning (Koutrouba, Antonopoulou, Tsitsas & Zenakou, 2009; Luxomo & Motala, 2012; McDowall & Schaughency, 2017), while ignoring the potentials of parents to supervise learners and partake in school activities (Edwards, 2004). This clearly indicates that teacher education curricula and teacher training institutions do not specifically prepare educators to specifically deal with issues related to family-school-community partnerships (Epstein, 2018; Jacobs, 2008; Lemmer, 2007). Teacher training is relevant because significant emphasis is placed on the importance of parental involvement for both learner outcomes and the life of the schools that their children attend (Epstein, 1995, 2018; Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017). Epstein (2018) notes that very few teacher while starting their profession have knowledge of what they need to do to initiate and implement partnership programmes that will inform and involve parents in a way that will keep them active in their children's education during the entire academic year.

The South African Schools Act (SASA), 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996), cognisant of the importance of parental involvement (for both learners and schools, given the growing need to change the face of South African education), put in place systems aimed at facilitating meaningful school-parent relationships (Msila, 2012). Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi (2017: 78) argue that such partnerships require that role players "work together to achieve every learner's right to education". These provisions mandate the inclusion and participation of parents in school governing bodies (SGBs) (Mncube, 2009). In the local context, however, policy promulgations are yet to align fully with teacher education curricula. As Lemmer (2007) notes, this gap emanates from the fact that the only formal opportunity for educators to acquire knowledge on parental involvement is through a distance certificate course offered by the University of South Africa. This practically limits access to such information by teachers. Clearly, individual schools do not have the capacity to provide educators with the necessary skills and strategies to engage with parents effectively, despite evidence showing that acquiring such knowledge is cost effective for the schools involved (Epstein, 2018).

Despite attempts to encourage parental involvement in this country, progress is being hampered by factors such as poverty, single-parent households, unemployment and a lack of supportive familial structures (Abrahams, 2013; Karibayeva & Bögar, 2014; Van Loggenberg, 2013). Luxomo and Motala (2012) add that in poverty-stricken areas, an over-reliance on social grants contributes to parental antipathy: the monies parents receive barely cater for basic household essentials, hence under these circumstances they cannot be held solely responsible for their failure to participate fully in their children's education (Abrahams, 2013).

That said, parental involvement should not be construed as only pertaining to financial involvement (albeit that monetary contributions are important): parents ought to be directly involved in the academic, social and emotional needs of their children. As such, parents from poor backgrounds have different ways of participating in learner education (Anderson &

Minke, 2007). Shearer (2006) argues that parental non-involvement is exacerbated by an overarching worldwide phenomenon, whereby schools are unable to clearly delineate parental roles from those of the school, thus introducing conflict where there ought to be collaboration. Therefore, the inability of parents in impoverished communities to enhance learners' learning abilities positively is aggravated by the failure of schools to effectively cooperate with these stakeholders (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004; Van Loggenberg, 2013). Irrespective of the circumstances, the history of education in South Africa requires parents to play a leading role in enhancing learner success, especially in previously disadvantaged communities (Singh *et al.*, 2004). Parental involvement thus needs to extend beyond theorisation – especially at home, where educational inequality is deemed to originate (Harris & Robinson, 2016).

Furthermore, schools are seemingly not initiating or/and implementing appropriate strategies that are genuinely inclusive, welcoming or encouraging, and are thereby preventing parents from volunteering on a regular basis (Msila, 2012; Van Loggenberg, 2013). Smith (2006) and Msila (2012) argue that schools can overcome parental disengagement by following robust, inclusive approaches with the capacity to unlock parents' existing potentials and enhance their meaningful participation (Park & Holloway, 2017). Therefore, the need to empower teachers with family and community involvement skills to enable them have the capacity to identify the potentials of parents and exploit them for the benefit of the learners and the schools is becoming more relevant (Epstein, 2018).

Broader social contexts also impede the establishment of strong relationships between parents and schools, with the former often feeling excluded (Walker & Berthelsen, 2010). Parents thus become increasingly disconnected from what they ought to be doing, and may be alienated from gaining knowledge that could spur them to get involved (in diverse school programmes relating to their children's education) (Van Loggenberg, 2013). For Donkor (2010) there is a concomitant non-negotiable, urgent need to change parents' perceptions of education and improve their participation.

Clearly, parents – irrespective of context – can only help to guarantee a positive educational future for their children by working hand-in-glove with schools (Msila, 2012). Since educators are also likely to reap the benefits of parental involvement in the form of improved teaching and learning, they need to spearhead engagements that are aimed at enhancing such participation (Jacobs, 2008). Undoubtedly, when parents and educators come together and work holistically towards learners' education, by focusing on the academic, social and emotional needs of the latter, success is bound to happen naturally (Epstein, 1995; Epstein, 2018) – this, while recognising all children's rights to quality basic education (Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017).

## **1.1 Research aims and objectives**

The research on which this article is based, investigated the relevance of parental involvement, educators' perceptions of parental non-involvement in learner education, factors influencing parental non-involvement, as well as the implications parental disengagement had for learner experiences and performance in a selected disadvantaged community. The paper also explored ways and means of enhancing parental involvement in disadvantaged communities in South Africa and beyond.

### **1.1.2 Research questions**

The following research questions were formulated: (i) Why is parental involvement necessary, and what factors obstruct parental involvement in the education of their children? (ii) How do

educators perceive parental involvement as it relates to both learners and the school? (iii) What effects does parental non-involvement have on learners and the schools? and (iv) How can parental participation be enhanced, to benefit all stakeholders?

## 2. Theoretical framework

The paper is underpinned by Epstein's school-family-community partnerships model that focuses on stakeholder relationships, which is dominated by internal and external overlapping spheres of influence with either negative or positive implications on learner experiences and performance (Epstein, 1995, 2018). Since stakeholders have similar educational goals, maintaining school-parent-community partnerships, and harnessing untapped parent resources guarantees learner achievement (Atkins, Bastiani & Goode, 1989; Epstein, 1996; Epstein, 2018). Since parents know their children's educational aspirations and how to drive them to success, schools can decide to make choices that are either positive or negative to school functioning, by either drawing them together or not (Epstein, 1995; Kemal, 2011). According to Epstein's model, learners are instrumental in sustaining relationships between schools and parents, in terms of maintaining communication by way of delivering summons, reports and memos (Epstein, 1995). As such, schools have to cater for both their learners and their parents by involving them in school activities (Epstein, 1995, 2018). Since stakeholder involvement affects learner attendance and performance, the model also suggest that schools should understand community's context and parent backgrounds, and embrace them despite varying ideologies, perceptions and challenges (Epstein, 1987; 1995; 2018; Sheldon, 2002). Presumably, parents in disadvantaged communities thinly participate in learner education based on their level of education, lack of empowerment, lack of vision, poverty and employment dynamics, familial structures, teacher attitude and exclusion (Lemmer, 2007).

## 3. Research design and methods

This is a qualitative study located within the interpretivist paradigm, due to the integration of human interests (Yin, 2018). The approach provides an opportunity to explore participants' wealth of experience, their intentions, beliefs, values and reasons for doing what they do, and making meaning from them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004; Merriam, 1998). In understanding perceptions towards parent participation in the education of their children, participants were engaged by way of individual and focus group interviews.

### 3.1 Case study design

The research design is a multiple case study exploring educators' perceptions of parental involvement in three disadvantaged primary schools in Cape Town. The schools were chosen based on ongoing discourses on substandard learner performance, and contestations and debates around disadvantaged primary schools. A case study was used (as opposed to surveys and experimental research) because such research is carried out in natural settings and investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 2018).

### 3.2 Research population sample

The data was gathered from 15 participants (12 teachers and 3 principals). Four teachers were randomly selected from each of the schools with the assistance of the participating principals (Teddie & Yu, 2007). For clarity purposes, the schools are coded as schools A, B and C, principals as principal A1, B1 and C1 and teachers in each school as teacher 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Circuit Managers from the Metro South Education District (MSED) in Cape Town assisted in choosing the schools, based on the objectives of the study and their knowledge of the schools holistically. All three schools located in the same informal settlement are classified as poor (quintile 1) (Hall & Giese, 2009), purportedly receive comparable support from government, and have learners with similar backgrounds and experiences (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014).

### 3.3 Individual and focus-group interviews

Data emerged largely from individual and focus group interviews. Principals participated in individual interviews while teachers participated in separate focus-group interviews in their individual schools (Morgan, 1997). Focus-group discussions were meant to understand how participants interact amongst themselves and tolerate others ideas (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2007). Semistructured interviews were designed to allow participants express themselves openly and freely, and to define the world from their own perspectives, not solely from the standpoint of the researcher (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). It is within this context that educators were able to express their minds freely regarding parental involvement in the education of their children. The data from individual interviews with principals was cross-examined with that obtained from focus-group interviews with teachers to ensure validity and reliability.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Data emerging from individual and focus group interviews were captured using audio recording (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2002). The transcribed data was crosschecked and compared to ensure validity and reliability (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2014). The data were analysed using the thematic approach (Boyatzis, 1998; Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). Major themes that emerged during the coding process included parental involvement, and particularly the voices of educators.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations

Permission for the study was obtained from the Western Cape Department of Education (WCDE) and participants signed consent forms (Merriam, 1998; Silverman, 2000). Effort was made to ensure voluntary participation, void of coercion, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw without prior notification (Swann & Pratt, 2003). Acronyms were used to conceal the identities of participants and research locations, to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

## 4. Discussion of findings

Parental involvement in the education of learners in South Africa is an ongoing discourse, especially in poor schools where learners are in dire need of support to improve persistently low levels of performance (Coetzee, 2014). Ongoing low levels of parent participation despite the existence of policies encouraging parent-school relationships (RSA, 1996), calls for the cross-examination of the nature of such involvement in a selected community to understand the reasons for this, by focusing on the perceptions of educators, who are expected to work in partnership with parents (Epstein, 1995, 2018). To begin with, principal B1 in an unequivocal manner described the complexities of parental non-involvement when she said:

*Some of these challenges concerning parental none-involvement are just too difficult to diagnose and understand, leaving school authorities at [a] crossroad, and making all our*

---

---

*efforts at intervention just a long shot in the dark. Our struggle to make parents active participants has been challenging. It seems the reasons for non-involvement are deeper than what we see (Principal B1)*

To explore the concerns of principal B1 further, the findings of the present study are categorised under the following headings: family structure, parent's job dynamics, poverty imperatives, and a lack of vision and commitment.

#### **4.1 Family structure**

Although parents are expected to play a significant role in the cognitive, social and emotional development of learners (Bakker *et al.*, 2007; Bhengu, 2003), the participating educators argued that certain family dynamics adversely affect learner performance. It was reported that many learners resided with extended family members or grandparents who for varied reasons did not invest in their education, with negative repercussions (Luxomo & Motala, 2012). Within this strand, Jæger (2012: 918), in a study conducted in the United States, noted the effects of extended family on learner educational success, which varies based on the distribution of a family's socioeconomic status (SES) and the quality of familial relations: "extended family members', especially grandparents', socio-economic characteristics matter more for children's educational success in low-SES families than in high-SES families".

Likewise, teacher C1 explained that although extended family members (especially grannies) provided a solid structure for many children in the absence of their biological mothers (Mtshali, 2015), they were either incapable of assisting or unwilling to assist learners with their schooling, especially when it came to homework when he said: "When these children are with grannies they do not take things seriously, because grannies do not follow up on them, which has negative implications [for] their abilities to perform."

Clearly, participants concurred that most grandparents were not involved in the learners' education, because they attached less value to schooling and in some instances gave them unreasonable and physically tiring household chores which used up the children's energy and time, and distracted them from their schoolwork (Hillman & Jenkner, 2004; Obeng, 2002: 108). The perception was that, excessive household chores took up potential homework time and often contributed to learner homework being either incomplete or shabbily done, due to time constraints and a lack of guidance (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Clearly, overtired learners lacked motivation, concentrated less in class, lacked a sense of belonging, and/or become psychologically and emotionally challenged, all of which resulted to poor performance.

Additionally, principal C1 described how the passivity of extended family members and their demoralising words and actions induced animosity in the home. This created unstable environments that eroded the much-needed love and support learners required to adequately focus on their schoolwork (Smith, Connell, Wright, Sizer, Norman, Hurley & Walker, 1997). Educators concurred that learners that resided under such conditions are unlikely to pay attention to their schoolwork. Principal B1 emphasized that home circumstances predetermine learners' attitudes towards schoolwork, and this increases their chances of not performing well:

*Most of our learners reside with extended families, mostly grandparents. In most cases, these learners need parental love which they cannot get from these relatives. Sometimes their attitude and behaviour towards these learners traumatizes them to an extent that they do not see any reason to go to school. At times they are made to regard the assistance rendered to them as a favour, and not an obligation. They are regularly informed that their biological parents are incapable to take care of them, often resulting to*

*behavioural problems that hamper their ability to learn, and consequently perform. Many of them are absent minded, often secluded, prefer to be alone and sad, and do not share their problems with others in the classroom (Principal B1)*

In agreement, principal C1 noted that the interrelationship between family structures and learner performance remained a sensitive issue that most people preferred not to talk about, despite its visible implications on learner performance. The category of learners described above came to school needing more attention and assistance than was the norm (Navsaria, Pascoe & Kathard, 2011).

## 4.2 Job dynamics

Generally, parents in disadvantaged communities have jobs that obstruct their involvement in learner education (Jensen, 2009). According to the participating educators, most parents are either unemployed or engage in informal or casual employment (e.g. cleaners, petrol attendants, domestic servants, and farm/general labourers) that is time and energy consuming (Page, 2016). The occasional weekend shifts associated with these kinds of jobs leave them with very limited time to spend at home with the family, and they are therefore unable to check on their children's school progress or supervise their homework. Evidently, many parents in disadvantaged communities are not at home when learners return from school, which leaves the youths free to misbehave (Abrahams, 2013; Manilal, 2014).

Likewise, low-paying jobs limit parents' ability to provide the necessary educational resources for their children (Anderson & Minke, 2007). According to Gardiner (2017), the living conditions in a community have a direct impact on the nature of teaching and learning in its schools, and this naturally has an impact on teaching and learning. Participants reported attempting to sensitise parents on the importance of being involved in their children's education, and the various ways they can engage despite their job constraints, but they seldom met with success. In this regard, teacher A1 recounted how his fruitless struggles to persuade parents to prioritise their children's education were met with stiff resistance, as parents complained of demanding work schedules, thus placing more emphasis on their jobs at the detriment of learner education. Although not all educators were able to see reason in the complaints of parents, research indicates that low-income families often engage in jobs that are low paying but involve long working hours, with damaging effects on the family (Fields, 2011). Similarly, teacher C4 elaborated own efforts that were equally unsuccessful:

*Yes, we try with the parent meeting, to ask them to please help us to see that the homework is done, but...they also complain that they must work. [Also], the school makes an effort to provide parents with cover letters to prove that they were delayed by the school to resolve issues concerning their children; they [still] complain that they must work. They are not serious (Teacher C4)*

Educators argued that the inability of parents to cooperate despite attempts made by the schools forced them to send learners who misbehaved out of the classroom as a last resort, as a way of coercing parents to respond to their summons – an action that contravenes school policy (WCED, 2007). Although this approach forces some parents to come to school to assist teachers in resolving outstanding issues concerning specific learners, being out of class already excludes them from the teaching and learning process, thus exacerbating already existing challenges. This was worsened by the fact that, lessons are never repeated to enable those learners sent out of class to catch up, irrespective of the number of days for which they are barred from the classroom, and this eventually contributes to them failing the grade. In the

view of educators, such passivity results in them battling with numerous unresolved cases of poor learner performance, resulting to staff demotivation.

### 4.3 Poverty imperatives

Participants identified poverty as a factor preventing parents from actively participating in their children's education. Although extended family members and grannies are considered to be pillars of support for these children (Mtshali, 2015), participants revealed that the kind of care they were able to give was (in some instances) compromised by a lack of financial resources. Clearly, poverty compels many parents to cater only for household essentials, while ignoring the educational needs of the learners, because most carers were unemployed and/or dependent on minimal social grants which barely sustained the family's needs. Ferreira (2017) notes that while social grants generally help to lift many disadvantaged households out of the poorest quintile and improve school attendance they have little effect in terms of alleviating poverty holistically.

Clearly, the poverty conditions of parents have an overall impact on learners who, due to the lack of certain learning materials, feel excluded. Such learners view schooling from a negative perspective, which undermines their motivation to learn, especially in class (Humble & Dixon, 2017). The research participants concurred that it was not uncommon to see learners who are absentminded in class, secluded, alone and sad, and unwilling to share their problems with classmates. In the view of educators, circumstances such as these, which emanated from dire poverty, had serious implications for teaching and learning, especially if parents opted not to attend meetings to discuss what the learners were experiencing.

### 4.4 Parents' level of education

Even though research shows that the level of parent education has a significant impact on a learner's ability to learn at home, and influences the way s/he interacts, learns and performs in class (Affuso, Bacchini & Miranda, 2017; Koutrouba *et al.*, 2009), narratives from research participants varied. While a majority of educators argued that parents' lack of education genuinely contributed to limiting their involvement, others considered education as a convenient cover-up used by parents to avoid doing their duty. Based on the former cohort, teacher B3 contemplated the impact of parental education on their level of involvement:

*They just send the kids to come school, which is where their own contribution starts and ends. They don't do any follow-ups, say for example check on their books when they come back from school daily to see what was done, and maybe to assist them with homework where necessary...This is also because, maybe they don't know the work, and how to assist the learners...Some say they are not educated, and as such do not know how to help the learners study at home, or do their homework (Teacher B3)*

In corroboration, teacher A2 narrated the reactions of a mother summoned to school to discuss her child's low performance, when she detailed:

*I don't want to lie to you, I don't do anything about this, in fact, and I don't know how to assist my child...I just ask her to look at her books, but I don't have any means to help her...I didn't go to school (teacher A2)*

Similarly, principal A1 observed that grannies do not know much about homework and cannot figure out what the children did in school or whether they were at school (Ogina, 2007; Page, 2016). Principal B1 agreed that the level of education contributed to parents' inability to



read letters sent to them by the schools requesting that they attend meetings/briefings, thus excluding them from participating in crucial decisions concerning their children's education.

However, teacher A1 who was sceptical of the role the level of parental education plays in influencing their involvement in learner's education approached the discourse from a different perspective. He concluded that some parents choose to deliberately distance themselves, not necessarily because they are uneducated, but as a smokescreen to avoid fully engaging in educational matters, including assisting learners with their homework. He lamented that parental laxity contributed to waywardness among learners, unruly behaviour, poor responses in class, thus, exacerbating substandard performance when he said:

*I want to disagree with that...if we look at the children that are in school now in Grade 7, their parents were born late 70s, and beyond. During this period education was serious, and many parents went to school to a certain level, and can read and write. What about the help for the children? I say that they are negligent, not uneducated, yes I will always stand by my point, and I always tell my colleagues about this stance. Education to these parents is an excuse whenever we confront them on why they don't do their best to assist the learners at home (Principal A1)*

However, this school of thought may hold true for some biological parents and not for grannies, many of whom are truly illiterate and therefore cannot assist the learners with their homework (Audu, 2016). Despite these conflicting views, it was clear that a continuous lack of support and motivation at home, irrespective of the reasons, resulted in learners being distracted and losing focus on their schoolwork.

#### **4.5 Lack of vision and commitment**

Furthermore, parental non-involvement was attributed to misguided priorities, in what principal A1 coined as "a genuine lack of vision and commitment". She argued that even the biological parents did not care about the educational needs of their children, because they were unable to grasp the purpose of schooling. Principal A1 further explained that many parents in the community under study exhibited an uncaring attitude towards education and sent children to school not to learn, but to liberate themselves from the burden and responsibility of having the youngsters around them all the time. Teacher C4 thus wondered whether parents indeed do have an educational vision, since many regard learning as a pastime, not a means of gaining the required academic competencies for future employment and social mobility.

### **5. Conclusion**

Although factors constraining parent participation in the education of their children are context related, the diverse views of educators further alienate parents from participating, with implications on learner performance. Clearly, educators seem to have a better understanding of why parents are not participating, but the schools are seeming not taking appropriate actions to overcome such challenges and ensure sustainable parent participation. This inaction potentially emanates from the unpreparedness of teachers to effectively initiate and implement sustainable school, family, and community partnerships (Epstein, 2018; Lemmer, 2007). This paper therefore reiterates the existing gap between the promulgations of the South African Schools Act (SASA), 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996) that emphasizes sustainable parent-school relationships as a cornerstone for school functionality and what currently manifests, especially in disadvantaged schools. Considering that parents are important mediators between the school and the learners, with an undeniable impact on performance, schools ought to

initiate strategies that are genuinely inclusive, welcoming and encouraging (Msila, 2012; Van Loggenberg, 2013) with the intention to enhance sustainable parent participation, rather than engaging in a blame game. This reemphasizes the need to empower educators on school, family, and community partnerships (Epstein, 2018). This could be reinforced by ongoing trainings that endow teachers with capabilities to initiate and implement sustainable parent-school-community relationships for the benefit of the schools and the learners (Epstein, 2018; Jacobs, 2008; Mansfield-Barry & Stwayi, 2017; Park & Holloway, 2017).

## References

- Abrahams, R.A. 2013. Challenges to parental involvement in homework assignment of learners in a historically disadvantaged primary school in Cape Town. MEd dissertation. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.
- Affuso, G., Bacchini, D. & Miranda, M.C. 2017. The contribution of school-related parental monitoring, self-determination and self-efficacy to academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 110(5), 565–574. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2016.1149795>
- Anderson, K.J. & Minke, K.M. 2007. Parent involvement in education: Toward an understanding of parents' decision making. *Journal of Educational Research*, 100(5), 311–323. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3200/JOER.100.5.311-323>
- Atkin, J. Bastini, J. & Goode, J. 1989. Listening to parents: An approach to the improvement of home-school relations. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 37(3), 309–311. DOI: 10.2307/3121293
- Audu, J.U. 2016. An exploration of school leadership conceptualisations of homework: Practices, affordances and constraints. MEd dissertation. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
- Bakker, J., Denessen, E. & Brus-Laven, M. 2007. Socio-economic background, parental involvement and teacher perceptions of these in relation to pupil achievement. *Educational Studies*, 33(2), 177–192. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03055690601068345>
- Bhengu, T.B. 2003. Accountable parental involvement in primary school. MEd dissertation. Durban: University of Zululand.
- Bloor, M., Frankland, F., Thomas, M. & Robson, K. 2002. *Focus groups in social research*. London: Sage.
- Boyatzis, R.E. 1998. *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Chowa, G., Ansong, D. & Osei-Akoto, I. 2012. *Parental involvement and academic performance in Ghana*. YouSave research brief. Available at <http://preview.newamerica.org/downloads/RB12-42.pdf> [Accessed 27 June 2017].
- Coetzee, M. 2014. School quality and the performance of disadvantaged learners in South Africa. *Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers*: 22/14.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2011 (Eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. London: Sage.
- Desforges, C. & Abouchaar, A. 2003. *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: A literature review*. UK: DfES.

Available at [https://www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk/sites/default/files/the\\_impact\\_of\\_parental\\_involvement.pdf](https://www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk/sites/default/files/the_impact_of_parental_involvement.pdf) [Accessed 6 April 2017].

Donkor, A.K. 2010. Parental involvement in education in Ghana: The case of a private elementary school. *International Journal about Parents in Education*, 4(1), 23–38.

Edwards, P.A. 2004. *Children's literacy development: Making it happen through school family and community involvement*. Boston: Pearson.

Epstein, J.L. 2018. *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429494673>

Epstein, J.L. 1995. School family community partnership: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701–712. <http://doi/pdf/10.1177/003172171009200326>

Epstein, J.L. 1996. Perceptive and previews on research and policy for schools, family and community partners. In: J.L. Epstein, L. Coates, K.C. Salinas, M.C. Sanders & B.S. Simon (Eds.). *Schooling, Family and Community Partnership: Your handbook for action*. California: Corwin.

Epstein, J.L. 1987. Parent involvement: What research says to administrators? *Education and Urban Society*, 19(2), 119–136. <http://doi/pdf/10.1177/0013124587019002002>

Epstein, J.L. & Sheldon, S.B. 2002. Present and accounted for: Improving student attendance through family and community involvement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 95(5), 308–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220670209596604>

Ferreira, L. 2017. *Factsheet: Social grants in South Africa – separating myth from reality*. Available at <https://africacheck.org/factsheets/separating-myth-from-reality-a-guide-to-social-grants-in-south-africa/> [Accessed 27 May 2017].

Fields, G. 2011. *Poverty and low earnings in the developing world*. Cornell University Working papers. Available at <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.co.za/&httpsredir=1&article=1151&context=workingpapers>. [Accessed 11 June 2018].

Gardiner, M. 2017. Education in rural areas. *Issues in Education Policy* 4. Braamfontein: Centre for Education Policy and Development.

Guest, G., MacQueen, K.M. & Namey, E.E. 2012. *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483384436>

Hall, K. & Giese, S. 2009. Addressing quality through school fees and school funding. In S. Pendlebury, L. Lake & C. Smith (Eds.). *South African child gauge 2008/2009*, pp.35–40. Cape Town: UCT Children's Institute.

Hancock, B., Ockleford, E. & Windridge, K. 2007. *An introduction to qualitative research*. UK: National Instituted for Health Research. Available at [https://www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/5\\_Introduction-to-qualitative-research-2009.pdf](https://www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/5_Introduction-to-qualitative-research-2009.pdf) [Accessed 6 May 2017].

Hancock, D.R. & Algozzine, B. 2017. *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

Harris, A. & Robinson, K. 2016. A new framework for understanding parental involvement: Setting the stage for academic success. *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2(5), 186–201. <https://doi/full/10.7758/RSF.2016.2.5.09>

- Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. 2004. *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Herrell, P.O. 2011. Parental involvement: Parent perceptions and teacher perceptions. PhD thesis. East Tennessee: East Tennessee State University.
- Hillman, A. & Jenkner, E. 2004. Educating children in poor countries. *Economic Issues* 33. Report of the International Monetary Fund. Available at <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/issues/issues33/> [Accessed 5 May 2017].
- Humble, S. & Dixon, P. 2017. The effects of schooling, family and poverty on children's attainment, potential and confidence—Evidence from Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 83, 94-106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.03.001>
- Humphrey-Taylor, H. 2015. Barriers to parental involvement in their children's education. *Journal of Initial Teacher Inquiry*, 1, 68–70.
- Jacobs, B.A. 2008. Perspectives on parent involvement: How elementary teachers use relations with parents to improve their practice. PhD thesis. Maryland: University of Maryland.
- Jæger, M.M. 2012. The extended family and children's educational success. *American Sociological Review*, 77(6), 903–922. <http://doi/pdf/10.1177/0003122412464040>
- Jafarov, J. 2015. Factors affecting parental involvement in education: The analysis of literature. *Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 18(4), 35–44.
- Jensen, E. 2009. *Teaching with poverty in mind: What being poor does to kids' brains and what schools can do about it*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Johnson, U.Y. & Hull, D.M. 2014. Parent involvement and science achievement: A cross-classified multilevel latent growth curve analysis. *Journal of Educational Research*, 107(5), 399–409. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2013.807488>
- Karibayeva, A. & Bögar, Y. 2014. To what extent does parents' involvement in middle school influence children's educational progress? *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 152, 529–533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.222>
- Kemal, A.K. 2011. Parental involvement revisited: Background, theories and models. *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies*, 11(1), 1–13.
- Koutrouba, K., Antonopoulou, E., Tsitsas, G. & Zenakou, E. 2009. An investigation of Greek teachers' views on parental involvement in education. *School Psychology International*, 30(3), 311–328. <http://doi/abs/10.1177/0143034309106497>
- Lemmer, E.M. 2007. Parent involvement in teacher education in South Africa. *International Journal about Parents in Education*, 1, 218–229.
- Luxomo, G. & Motala, S. 2012. The return home: Parental involvement in children's education. In: S Motala, V Dieltiens & Y Sayed (Eds.). *Finding place and keeping pace: Exploring meaningful and equitable learning in South African schools*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 135–150.
- Manilal, R. 2014. Parental involvement in education: A comparison between a privileged and an underprivileged school. MEd dissertation. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- Mansfield-Barry, S. & Stwayi, L. 2017. School Governance. In: F. Veriava, A. Thom & T.F. Hodgson (Eds.). *Basic education rights handbook: Education rights in South Africa*. South Africa: Section 27, 74–88.
- McDowall, P.S. & Schaughency, E. 2017. Elementary school–parent engagements: Relations with education perceptions and school characteristics. *Journal of Educational Research*, 110(4), 348–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2015.1103687>
- Merriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mestry, R. & Ndhlovu, R. 2014. The implications of the national norms and standards for school funding policy on equity in South African public schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(3), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.15700/201409161042>
- Mtshali, M.N.G. 2015. The relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren in the black families in South Africa. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 46(1), 75–83. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43613101>
- Mncube, V. 2009. The perceptions of parents of their role in the democratic governance of schools in South Africa: Are they on board? *South African Journal of Education*, 29(1), 83–103. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0256-01002009000100006>
- Mncube, V. 2010. Parental involvement in school activities in South Africa to the mutual benefit of the school and the community. *Education as Change*, 14(2), 233–246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2010.522061>
- Morgan, D.L. 1997. *Focus groups as qualitative research: Qualitative research methods series*, 2nd ed. United Kingdom: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984287>
- Msila, V.T. 2012. Black parental involvement in South African rural schools: Will parents ever help in enhancing effective school management? *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2(2), 303–313. Doi: 10.5901/jesr.2012.v2n2.303
- Navsaria, I., Pascoe, M. & Kathard, H. 2011. 'It's not just the learner, it's the system!' Teachers' perspectives on written language difficulties: Implications for speech-language therapy. *South African Journal of Communication Disorders*, 58(2), 95–104. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajcd.v58i2.31>
- Obeng, C.S. 2002. *House was uncomfortable, school was hell: A confessionalist-ethnographic account of belief systems and socio-educational crisis in the schooling of Ghanaian rural girls*. New York: Nova Science.
- Ogina, T.A. 2007. Redefining the role of educators in managing the needs of orphaned learners. PhD thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Page, R.D. 2016. The role that parents play in their children's academic progress at a previously disadvantaged primary school in Cape Town. MEd thesis. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.
- Park, S. & Holloway, S.D. 2017. The effects of school-based parental involvement on academic achievement at the child and elementary school level: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Educational Research*, 110(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2015.1016600>
- Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1996. *The South African Schools Act (SASA), 84 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers. Available at <https://www.elrc.org.za/sites/default/files/documents/sa%20schools%20act.pdf> [Accessed 5 April 2017].

- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. & Ormston, R. 2014. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Shearer, K. 2006. Parental involvement: Teachers and parents' voices. PhD thesis. Orlando, FL: University of Central Florida.
- Shen, J., Washington, A.L., Palmer, L.B. & Xia, J. 2014. Effects of traditional and non-traditional forms of parental involvement on school-level achievement outcome: An HLM study using SASS 2007–2008. *Journal of Educational Research*, 107(4), 326–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2013.823368>
- Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing qualitative research: A practical guide*. London: Sage.
- Singh, P., Mbokodi, S.M. & Msila, V.T. 2004. Black parental involvement in education. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(4), 301–307.
- Smith, J.G. 2006. Parental involvement in education among low-income families: A case study. *School Community Journal*, 16(1), 43–56.
- Smith, E.P., Connell, C., Wright, G., Sizer, M., Norman, J.M., Hurley, A. & Walker, S.N. 1997. An ecological model of home, school, and community partnerships: Implications for research and practice. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 8(4), 339–360. [https://doi/pdf/10.1207/s1532768xjepc0804\\_2](https://doi/pdf/10.1207/s1532768xjepc0804_2)
- Swann, J. & Pratt, J. 2003. *Educational research in practice: Making sense of methodology*. New York: Continuum.
- Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. 2010. *Handbook of mixed methods in social sciences & behavioral research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506335193>
- Teddlie, C. & Yu, F. 2007. Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1, 77–100. <http://doi/pdf/10.1177/2345678906292430>
- Van Loggenberg, V.N. 2013. Parental involvement in learning at rural multi-grade schools in South Africa: A school, community and family partnership programme. PhD thesis. Cape Town: Cape Peninsula University of Technology.
- Walker, S. & Berthelsen, D. 2010. Social inequalities and parent involvement in children's education in the early years of school. In: V Green & S Cherrington (Eds.). *Delving into diversity: An international exploration of issues of diversity in education*. Wellington: Nova Science, 139-149.
- Western Cape Education Department (WCED). 2007. *Learner discipline and school management: A practical guide to understanding and managing learner behaviour within school context*. Cape Town: Provincial Government of the Western Cape. Available at [https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/documents/LearnerDiscipline/Learner\\_Discipline\\_and\\_School\\_Management.pdf](https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/documents/LearnerDiscipline/Learner_Discipline_and_School_Management.pdf) [Accessed 5 April 2017].
- Yin, R.K. 2018. *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*, 6th ed. Los Angeles: Sage.