

**The Role of Parents in the Restoration of the Culture of
Teaching and Learning**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Tshigodime Azwitamisi Petrus, hereby declare that this thesis hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Masters has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at any other university; that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

AZWITAMISIPETRUS TSHIGODIME

DATE

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late son "LINGULULANI" born on the 18th of March 1994 and on the 20th of March 1994 was kissing this mother earth Bye Bye. People who claim to know this family know it as the family of six whereas in actual fact is a family of seven.

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KEY WORDS

1. Restoration
2. Role of Parents
3. Culture of teaching and learning
4. Primary Schools
5. Aids victims
6. Barriers to home – school relations
7. Confidentiality
8. Discipline
9. Education Policy in the 1990s
10. In-depth interview
11. Network
12. Parents as first teachers
13. Parents as partners in education
14. Parental expertise

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABET = Adult Basic Education and Training

CEA = Conservative Education Act

CTC = City Technology Colleges

FAS = Funding Agency for Schools

GM = Grant Maintained

GMS = Grant Maintained Schools

HAS = Home-School Associations

LMS = Local Management of Schools

PTA = Parents Teachers Association

RISE = Research and Information on State Education

RSA = Royal Society of Arts

SGB = School Governing Body

UK = United Kingdom

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE no

SECTION A

4.4.1.4.1 Details on gender of respondents	85
4.4.1.4.2 Details on age of respondents	86
4.4.1.4.3 Details on respondents' highest academic qualification	86
4.4.1.4.4 Details on respondents' employment	87
4.4.1.4.5 Details on respondents' marital status	87
4.4.1.4.6 Details on culture of teaching and learning in schools	87
4.4.1.4.7 Details on the school's involvement in education	88

SECTION B

4.4.1.5.1 Details on gender of respondents	89
4.4.1.5.2 Details on age of respondents	89
4.4.1.5.3 Details on highest academic qualification respondents	90
4.4.1.5.4 Details regarding partnership in education	90
4.4.1.5.5 Details on teaching experience of respondents	91
4.4.1.5.6 Details on the culture of teaching and learning in schools	91
4.4.1.5.7 Details on age of respondents	92
4.4.1.5.8 Details on home-school based relationships	92

SECTION C

4.4.1.6.1 Details on gender of respondents	93
4.4.1.6.2 Details on age of respondents	93
4.4.1.6.3 Details on grades of respondents	94
4.4.1.6.4 Details on whether the respondents enjoy the culture of learning	94
4.4.1.6.5 Details on whom the respondents stay with	95
4.4.1.6.6 Details on teaching and learning aids used	95
4.4.1.6.7 Details on views of respondents on the culture of learning and teaching	96
4.4.1.6.8 Details on whether respondents will pass	96
4.4.1.6.9 Details on whether the parents visit schools	97

SECTION D

4.4.1.7.1 Details on gender of respondents	98
4.4.1.7.2 Details on age of respondents	98
4.4.1.7.3 Details on highest academic qualification respondents	99
4.4.1.7.4 Details on highest professional qualification respondents	99
4.4.1.7.5 Details on the culture of teaching and learning in schools	100
4.4.1.7.6 Details about department of education	100
4.4.1.7.7 Details on whether respondents view parents as partners	101
4.4.1.7.8 Details on whether respondents believe in extra lessons	101

ABSTRACT

The researcher would like to investigate the role played by parents in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching. Parental involvement is the co-responsibility that the parent must bear in the management, performance and support of the fundamental issues of their children.

Fundamental issues of education embrace the functional (teaching) and the management and supportive tasks that the parents may be involved in, for example cooperation, participation and partnership.

Parents have a vital role to play with regard to influence on the quality of restoring the culture of teaching and learning.

Without cooperation between parents and educators, a child cannot be properly educated. The parent and the educator each play a special and crucial role in the education of the child.

The successful education restoration of the culture of teaching and learning depends entirely on cooperation, communication and understanding between educators and parents. Educators must be able to communicate with all parents and be able to include them in school based and home based activities. This, however, requires a shift away from the traditional view of parental involvement, which revolves around co-opting parents to assist with general school activities such as fundraising. Effective parental involvement, however also needs to be managed, it cannot be left to chance.

The researcher claims that the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning will lead to the improvement of learners in their academic achievement.

The method to be used is qualitative; data will be collected through interviews and questionnaires. Major steps in conducting interviews will involve direct interaction between individuals.

After thorough researching the researcher has realized the following:

- Parents do not feel part of their children's education and they tend to leave everything on the hands of the educators.
- Educators tend to ignore parents.
- The culture of teaching and learning can be improved by actively involving parents in their children's education.
- The culture of effective teaching and learning will only be restored when parents are totally involved in the operation of the school.

Parents must be fully integrated into the organization. It must be noted that those parents' responses are the base line criterion in every decision making process and those parents are physically incorporated into activities. It is better to involve parents at the outset than to decide, consult and then have to change.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE	
CHAPTER ONE		
INTRODUCTION		
1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	6
1.3	THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	8
1.4	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	8
1.5	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	9
1.6	DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS	11
1.6.1	Role of parents	11
1.6.2	Restoration	12
1.6.3	Culture of teaching and learning	12
1.6.4	Primary school	13
1.7	MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH	14
1.8	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	15
1.9	THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME	16
1.10	CONCLUSION	17

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	INTRODUCTION	18
2.2	PARENTS AND THE NATURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	20
2.2.1	The South African perspective	20
2.2.2	The role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning	21
2.2.3	The American perspective	22
2.2.4	Implicit standards of educators	24
2.2.5	Social resources and parent involvement	28
2.2.6	Costs	32
2.3	PARENTS AS FIRST EDUCATORS	33
2.4	PARENTS AS PARTNERS WITH SCHOOLS	34
2.5	WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS TO PLAY A ROLE?	35
2.6	THE EFFECTS OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS	35
2.7	WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO SUPPORT EDUCATION RESTORATION?	36
2.8	PARTNERSHIP	38
2.9	THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS ON LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT	39
2.10	THE EFFECTS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS ON LEARNERS' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS	41
2.11	LIAISING WITH PARENTS	43

2.12	PARENTS IN THE CLASSROOM	46
2.13	PARENTS AS CONSUMERS	46
2.14	INDEPENDENT PARENTS	50
2.15	PARENTS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE 1990s	52
2.16	PARENT GOVERNORS	52
2.17	GRANT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS	53
2.18	CITY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGES	53
2.19	PARENTS AS PARTICIPANTS	54
2.20	THE NEW RIGHT'S EDUCATION PROJECT - THE PARENT AS CONSUMER	57
2.20.1	Education Policy in the 1980s	57
2.20.2	Education Policy in the 1990s	60
2.21	PARENTS AND THE CURRICULUM	63
2.22	THE EFFECTS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS IN THE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE	63
2.23	CONCLUSION	65

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	INTRODUCTION	66
3.2	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	66
3.2.1	Mode of inquiry	66
3.3	CASE STUDY DESIGN	71
3.4	THE RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE	72
3.4.1	Population	72

3.4.2	Sample	73
3.4.2.1	Networking sampling	74
3.4.2.2	Convenience sampling	74
3.5	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES	75
3.5.1	In-depth interviews	76
3.6	DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES	77
3.7	DATA ANALYSIS	80
3.8	VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY	81
3.8.1	Validity	81
3.8.2	Reliability	81
3.9	CONSIDERING ETHICAL ISSUES	82
3.10	THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY	83
3.11	CONFIDENTIALITY	83
3.12	CONCLUSION	84

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1	INTRODUCTION	85
4.2	DATA ANALYSIS	85
4.2.1	PREPARING DATA IN TRANSCRIPT FORM	86
4.2.2	CHOOSING A METHOD OF ANALYSIS	86
4.2.3	REPORTING	87
4.3	METHOD OF INTERPRETATION	87
4.4	DATA COLLECTION	87
4.4.1	Interviews	87
4.4.1.1	Need for interviews	88

4.4.1.2	Constructive interviews	88
4.4.1.3	Conducting interviews	88
4.4.1.4	Interview for parents	88
4.4.1.5	Interview for educators	92
4.4.1.6	Interview for learners	96
4.4.1.7	Interview for principals	101
4.5	CONCLUSION	105

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1	INTRODUCTION	106
5.2	FINDINGS	107
5.2.1	Findings pertaining to parents	107
5.2.2	Findings pertaining to educators	108
5.2.3	Findings pertaining to learners	108
5.2.4	Findings pertaining to principals	109
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	110
5.3.1	Recommendations to parents	110
5.3.2	Recommendations to educators	111
5.3.3	Recommendations to learners	111
5.3.4	Recommendations to principals	112
5.4	CONCLUSION	113

	BIBLIOGRAPHY	115
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	APPENDIX A	125
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A P P E N D I X B	1 2 6
A P P E N D I X C	1 2 7
A P P E N D I X D	1 2 8
A P P E N D I X E	1 3 0
A P P E N D I X F	1 3 2
A P P E N D I X G	1 3 4

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa's democratic government that came into power in 1994 inherited a divided and unequal system of education. Before 1994 the education system prepared learners in different ways for positions they were expected to occupy in social, economic and political life under apartheid. The curriculum played a powerful role in reinforcing inequality. The Bantu education system which was designed for Black South Africans, had no space for parents to give inputs in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning. This resulted in gross inequalities and inconsistencies in provision between the previous racially segregated government and provincial departments, as the apartheid era categorized and officially classified people in terms of race (Donald, 1996; Du Toit, 1996; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

The birth of democracy paved a way for parents to play their roles when it comes to the creation of atmospheres conducive for effective teaching and learning. According to Mnisi and Shilubane (1998:15), parents as primary educators of their children and educators as secondary educators are in a state of mutual interdependence, a relationship that has to develop or even better involved. A constructive partnership can be forged between the educators and parents. Parents must collaborate with educators and give them unqualified support. On other hand, educators must be aware that they are dealing with the

most precious materials of them all, more precious than gold, the minds of learners.

A quick glance at current literature reveals an array of factors. Among other, Brandt (1989:25) distinguishes various ways in which parents can play a role in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching. These range from creating conditions that foster education in the home to being involved in the school's management activities. Each of the ways in which parents are involved in education will require a unique strategy on the part of the school.

Van Schalkwyk (1990:35-39) describes the role of parents as the co-responsibility that the parent must bear in the management, performance and support of the fundamental issues of education of their children. According to Van Schalkwyk (1990:37), the fundamental issues of education embrace the functional (teaching) and the management and supportive tasks those parents may play a role in, in different ways.

Dekker (1993:4) identifies the following three ways in which parents can play a role:

Cooperation> Involves working together for a common goal which is the creation of a healthy atmosphere suitable for effective teaching and learning.

Participation> It is when parents are getting involved in the way in which the education of their children is organized.

Partnership> In this context it would mean cooperation between the parents and the school community for the common purpose that is the creation of atmosphere conducive for effective teaching and learning.

Two conclusions can be drawn from the above brief description of the nature of the role played by parents.

Parents can play a role on a scale ranging from involvement entailing support at home to involvement in the management of the school. The role played by parents occurs in different ways depending on the nature and capabilities of parents hence the need for the school to deal with it accordingly.

Three kinds of role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning at home are consistently associated with higher student achievement: actively organizing and monitoring a child's time, helping them with homework and discussing school matters.

Worral (1994:23) is of the idea that parents are responsible for keeping the promise made at the christening of a child and are primary educators of their children. The authority of parents regarding educational matters, for instance jointly determines the spirit and direction of a school. Parents also make financial contributions to the school and have the right to demand accountability regarding the spending of the school funds.

It is against this background that the birth of democracy in South Africa in 1994 had brought a drastic change in the role of parents when it comes to the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning.

The research has taken place in Vhembe District, region 3 of Limpopo Province.

In Vhembe district, focus of the dissertation was directed to primary schools within Nzhelele East Circuit.

The villages within the jurisdiction of Nzhelele East Circuit are poverty stricken areas. The majority of parents in these deep rural areas are illiterate and unemployed.

One of the most important issues that face education in South African schools today is the restoration of a sound culture of learning and teaching. The majority of schools continue to reflect characteristics of a poor culture of learning and teaching. The central role that a principal plays in all the programs of a school, and the impact that he has on the development of a tone and ethos that are conducive to learning and teaching, are crucial to the process of building a sound culture of learning and teaching in a school.

The aim of this research is to investigate the role parents play in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning. The researcher is of the idea that by conducting this research, the research will forge a lasting mutual understanding and cooperation between parents as partners in education and discipline will be maintained in our schools.

The principles of outcomes-based education were encoded in Curriculum 2005 (C 2005), a set of national curriculum guidelines to be fully implemented at both compulsory and secondary levels of schooling by that year. In practice, official documents do not clearly distinguish between Outcomes Based Education (O B E) and Curriculum 2005 (C 2005), and South African educators often use the terms interchangeably.

The South African Constitution of 1996 was the basis for curriculum transformation and development.

Curriculum 2005 was the start, and Outcomes-based Education (O B E) is the foundation of the Curriculum. The new Revised Curriculum keeps the main elements of the O B E Curriculum 2005; Critical and development outcomes and the eight learning areas. It also adds learning outcomes and assessment standards.

O B E is designed in such a way that educators can develop their learners' knowledge, as well as their skills, values as well as a result of their experience of learning Pilbeam E, (2005:2)

Partnerships amongst the parents, educators and learners play a significant role to enable the curriculum to create life long learners who are knowledgeable, confident, multi-skilled and compassionate.

The new government with its O B E approach only managed to change the name from School Committee to School Governing Body (S G B), but in

principle, the parent component remained being characterized by illiterate parents. In pen and paper the role of parents seems to be that of professionals but in reality they are not knowledgeable Jansen & Christie (1999:102).

Although the revised Curriculum 2005 is still in the early stages of implementation, some general conclusions can be drawn about the impact of post-1994 curriculum reform on democracy and equity in education in South Africa. Given the political imperatives facing curriculum developers in the mid-1990s, outcomes-based education was a reasonable approach to take. In practice, however, its complexity undermined some of the democratic and egalitarian ideals that it sought to promote.

OBE clearly sent out strong signals that the dawn of democracy in South Africa had ushered in a new educational order. The authoritarian values and top-down pedagogical approaches of apartheid-era education were out-replaced by new values and teaching methods that emphasized democratic participation and the potential of every child to succeed. The power of these signals should not be underestimated, especially given the fact that the most enthusiastic support for OBE comes from African educators and others who were the most direct victims of the inequities of the old order and who, as a group, faced the most difficulty implementing it in their classrooms Jansen, J and Christie, P. (1999).

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The birth of new democratic South Africa in 1994 to date had resulted into a new education system that replaced the apartheid education (Nkomo 1985).

The South African School act of 1996 laid the way for parents to be involved in the governance of their children's education as the members of the School Governing Body and overmore the Outcomes-Based Education approach encourages educators to link what is learnt at school with what learners learn at home.

One of the most important issues that faces education is South African schools today is the restoration of a sound culture of teaching and learning. The majority of schools continue to reflect characteristics of a poor culture of teaching and learning. (Van der Merwe H.M , Prinsloo I.J & Steinman C.F:3)

Educators are blaming learners that they don't have desire to learn and that they are uncontrollable. They complain that learners do not come to school regularly, if they come, they come very late and left the school during breaks. Learners also complain that educators do not honor their teaching periods, are usually doing their assignments in staffrooms, always attending union meetings and sometimes leaves them and go for their industrial wage actions and caring less about their future.

The parents on the other hand also complain about the poor culture of teaching and learning at schools. They complain that both the educators and learners at schools are to be blamed for the unacceptable situation at schools.

It is against this background that the research question has been formulated as **“How can parents help to restore the culture of teaching and learning?”**

SUB -QUESTIONS

- What are the causes that forced the culture of teaching and learning to collapse?
- How can educators be helped to involve parents effectively?
- What are the specific roles, responsibilities of both parents and teachers in partnership?
- How can we eliminate obstacles, which render this partnership to be dysfunctional?
- Why have parents become less involved in the education of their children?
- What does parents' involvement entails?

1.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant in that it:

- Reveals causes, which led to the collapse of a sound atmosphere conducive for teaching and learning.
- Parents can make meaningful contributions to the school activities which fall outside the expertise of the educators.
- Shows the significance of parents-teachers partnership in the molding learners' achievements.
- Educators will enjoy maximum opportunity to teach, and learners' maximum opportunity to learn.
- The school will become a safe and good place in which to teach and to learn.

- Learners can communicate with educators, and therefore their expectations and morale will be high.
- Encourages parents to have a high level of commitment in their children's education.
- Thoroughly thrashes out all stumbling blocks which may hinder the partnership to be effective.
- The performance and results at schools will be improved.

1.4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of the problem statement formulated by the researcher, the general aim and objective of the study embrace the following:

- Restore the culture of teaching and learning in schools.
- Define the role of parents in education.
- Forge a lasting, mutual understanding and co-operation between the parents, teachers and learners.
- Make teachers aware that parents have rights to participate fully in their children's education and that they are equal partners in education.
- Make recommendations based on the findings about the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning.

1.5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The design of a research study includes the overall approach to be taken and detailed information about how the study will be carried out with whom and where. A concise statement about the overarching research design is often

missing or hard to discern in published reports of qualitative research. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985)

There are several components that should be included in the methods section of a qualitative research approach. Among others sampling strategy and the people or setting that will make up the sample, data collection procedures and procedures for data analysis.

There are two different approaches to research (Mc Millan and Schumacher 1993:14) as cited by Thobejane H.R. Qualitative research which usually based on what is called a logical positive philosophy, which assumes there are social facts with a single object reality, separated from the feelings and beliefs of individuals. Qualitative research is based more on what is called a naturalistic phenomenological philosophy, which assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions of the situation.

The researcher has opted to use the **qualitative research design and method** in this study as he wanted to get into the crux of the matter when it comes to how parents can play a role in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning.

Qualitative methods help us to learn about concepts such as beauty, pain, suffering, faith, frustration and love whose essence is lost through other research approaches (White 2003:15). People are studied in the context of their past and their present. In contrast to quantitative research which takes apart a phenomenon to examine component parts.

Overmore, through qualitative research, the researcher will be able to experience that parents can provide to the school community that will bring back the lost conducive culture of teaching and learning.

The aim of this research is to use qualitative mode of inquiry to gather information from parents, teachers, learners and principals of schools about their experiences in the poor culture of teaching and learning and what these experiences mean to them.

1.6. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.6.1. Role of parents

As the primary educator of the child, the parent has a role to play in giving continuing attention to and to be involved with educational training (Weeto 1997:17).

According to Weeto's research (1997:5), this duty also has the following consideration:

- A child is born into a certain religious and cultural milieu, which is characterized by particular practices, values and norms. The transmission of religion and culture to the child takes place through the influence of the parent on the life of the child. The parent therefore has to keep a watchful eye on the child's school life to ensure that the child is not exposed to, for example, destructive and contradictory religious and cultural influences.

- In today's world, many children have parents who both work outside the home. In addition, many families have single parents, or are "blended" families with step parents. Due to these changes, there are no longer any distinct parental roles. More men and women share in the responsibility of parenthood. Parents working together do the best job of raising their children, whether or not they are living in the same household. (Hil File PARE3189.rf VRS 7747 Data version 7.0)

1.6.2. Restoration

It is a process of trying to bring back a healthy atmosphere conducive for effective teaching and learning. A poor culture of teaching and learning in a school which needs to be restored is characterized by the following: Weak or poor attendance of both educators and learners, educators do not have desire to teach, tension between rival educators unions, vandalism, rape, drug abuse, high drop-out rate, poor school results, weak leadership, management and administration, general feelings of hopeless, apathy among educators, demotivation and low morale and the poor state of buildings, facilities and resources. At the base of all these features lies the lack of a sound philosophy, values and norms pertaining to the organizational culture of the school (Chisholm and Vally 1996:1).

1.6.3. Culture of teaching and learning

The concept of a culture of teaching and learning is widely used in the context of education in South Africa. In general it refers to an attitude of all the role players towards teaching and learning, and the presence of quality teaching

and learning processes in schools. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:43) identify the following aspects of a sound culture of teaching and learning:

- All role players value the processes of teaching and learning.
- Practices reflect a commitment to teaching and learning.
- The resources needed to facilitate these processes are available.
- The school is structured to facilitate this process.

A whole-school approach to improvement, which includes all elements of learning environment, is the most effective approach to improving the school culture and learner achievement. The national policy on whole-school evaluation identifies nine focus areas for evaluating the performance of a school with regard to each of these aspects contribute to a sound culture of teaching and learning (South Africa, 2001:7).

1.6.4. Primary School

A Primary School is an institution where children receive the first stage of compulsory education known as primary or elementary education. Primary School is the preferred term in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand and in most publications of the United Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In some countries and especially in North America, the term Elementary school is preferred. Children generally attend Primary School from around the age of four or five until the age of eleven or twelve. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_school).

In the United States the term Primary School is used in a general way to describe the primary grades, usually meaning kindergarten (ages five to six) to

second grade (ages seven to eight), but sometimes extending to third grade (ages eight to nine). The term is also sometimes used to describe a school which provides the first three or four years of elementary or primary education. Very few schools in the United States actually use the term Primary School as part of their school name and such schools are generally private schools. (Britannica online: <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9061377>)

The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 describes Primary School as a public or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R (Reception) to grade 7.

The admission age in Primary School:

- i. Grade R is age four turning five by the 30th of June in the year of admission.
- ii. Grade 1 is age five turning six by the 30th of June in the year of admission.

The Primary Schools have three phases, namely the Foundation phase (Grade R -Grade 3), Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6) and Senior Phase (Grade 7 to 9).

In South African Primary Schools only Grade 7 is accommodated in Primary Schools although is part of the senior phase in Secondary Schools.

1.7. MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

“The study will confine itself to interviews”

- The researcher was motivated to conduct a research on “How can parents help to restore the culture of teaching and learning” as a way of wanting to expand from what other scholars have written about the similar topic. The researcher wants to come up with something totally new and hoping that this will in turn be contributing to the total wealth of human knowledge. The researcher also wants to master the material that he is now studying more than he had mastered any other form of work.

The researcher also believes that as we are living in the “Information Age” our society increasingly needs critical and analytical thinkers who can look at research results and then pose their own questions and found their own answers.

The researcher agrees with scholars like Tomlinson, S (1991) who emphasizes that the lost desire to teach and to learn can only be restored if and if parents are incorporated at the organizational set up of the school.

The researcher is deeply touched and wants to interrogate efforts made by the school to engage parents of disadvantaged learners, who stand to benefit the most from parents’ participation in their learning, but those parents are often reluctant to become involved.

The research will try to come up with mechanisms that can thoroughly thrash out all obstacles, which hinder partnership to be active. The research will also benefit the school community, as they will end up having disciplined learners at schools.

1.8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

There are a few problems as the research is being conducted. They are as follows:

- There was a problem of time constraints as the researcher is a full-time government employee and had to find time between work and study.
- Parents' participants may choose not to respond because of lack of knowledge on that aspect.
- The researcher may have problems with costs as the researcher has limited finances to run the costs.
- Poor management systems in schools also affected the smooth running of the project.

1.9. THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

This research project consists of five chapters. The researcher shows what is displayed by the first chapter up until the last chapter.

Chapter one focuses on introduction, the problem statement, significance of the study, aims and objectives of the study, research design and methodology,

definition of concepts, motivation for the research, limitation of the study and the research programme.

Chapter two is devoted to literature review; on the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning.

Chapter three will focus on research design and methodology. It starts with the introduction and mode of inquiry, case study design, data collection techniques, sampling and sampling strategies. All these steps lead to data analysis and presentation of conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter four involves data analysis. Data was collected through the use of interviews and observations.

Chapter five focuses on the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

1.10 CONCLUSION

- The chapter was an introduction into the study. It devoted itself to the issues like the research question (How can parents help to restore the culture of teaching and learning), the significance of the study, aims and objectives, definition of concepts, motivation for the research, limitation of the study and the research programme.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Arkava & Lane (1983 in De Vos, 200:65), literature review is a contributor to shape the researcher's frame of reference and forms an integral part of the research. A thorough literature study demonstrates that the researcher is duly knowledgeable about related research and the intellectual traditions that surround support the study. Literature study contributes to a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified.

Certain functions of a literature review are:

- It may disclose that somebody else has already performed essentially the same research. In such a case the researcher may decide to choose another topic and start afresh or to replicate the study (duplicate or repeat the same research in a new setting.)
- It provides a substantially better insight into the dimensions and complexity of the problem. It has to be taken into consideration that research is a source for building a knowledge base and learning about previous thinking on the topic is an essential step.
- A literature review equips the researcher with a complete and thorough justification for the subsequent steps as well as with a realization of the importance of the undertaking.

According to Welman & Kruger, (2000,36), two types of sources can be distinguished namely primary and secondary sources.

Literature review is usually a critique of the status of knowledge of carefully defined topic. The literature review enables a reader to gain further insights from the topic.

In this research, the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning is all about how do parents restore the culture of teaching and learning in schools in a global context with reference to various countries including South Africa.

The culture of teaching and learning can only be restored if parents are involved in the education of their children. He argued that circumstances of each school determine how parents' involvement should be planned and managed in that school. There is therefore no single ideal parent's approach of restoring the culture plan to serve as a model for all schools. However, different existing plans can be adapted according to a school's individual circumstances and needs (Kruger, 1995(6):16-20).

The researcher agrees with Educamus, August (1984:4) as it says that parents can restore the culture of teaching and learning in the form of the widened and extended power they have and can alleviate under performance and down morale as it is high time that they should stand up and boldly register their concern through active participation in the newly created organizational management of the schools.

2.2 PARENTS AND THE NATURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

2.2.1 The South African Perspective

The concept of learning and teaching is widely used in the context of education in South Africa. In general, it refers to an attitude of all the role players towards teaching and learning and the presence of quality teaching and learning processes in schools. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:43) identify the following aspects of a sound culture of learning and teaching:

All role players value the processes of teaching and learning.

Practices reflect a commitment to teaching and learning.

The resources needed to facilitate this process are available.

The school is structured to facilitate these processes.

It is no wonder that the role of parents in parental environment with the schools has become a major educational issue in the 1980s. This is an era of increasing concern about the quality of education in this country. States are taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards. Communities are ever more watchful of the expense of public education. Local schools are concerned about continuing to provide high-quality teaching and other services with dwindling resources. Parents want assurance that their children will receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives.

Is the role played by parents in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching a valuable, if largely untapped, resource for schools struggling to provide state-of-the-art instruction with diminishing funds- a way to instill

pride and interest in schooling, increase student achievement, and enhance a sense of community and commitment? Or is it one more responsibility to add to overburdened teachers and administrators-or even a threat to the autonomy and professionalism of the schools?

This review of the literature on the role played by parents examines these issues, focusing, in particular on the following areas:

Does the role played by parents in learning and teaching have positive effects on student achievement? If so, what type of the role works best? What are the effects of the role played by parents in learning and teaching on other student outcomes, such as attitude, self-concept, classroom behaviour, and attendance? Is the role played by parents in education useful beyond the preschool and early elementary grades-in middle school and high school/ if so, what form should it take? What is known about the uses of the role of parents in education in predominantly minority and/or lower income communities? What, if any, effects on children's schooling can be attributed to the role of parents in education in the governance of schools?

2.2.2 The Role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning

The role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning includes several different forms of participation in education and within the schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (parent-teacher conferences,

for example). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork, providing encouragement, arranging appropriate study time and space, modelling desired behaviour (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home.

Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help out with school activities or work in the classroom. Or they can take an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children. (Epstein, 1995:229)

2.2.3 The American Perspective

A Dissenting View

Annette Lareau

It should be noted that her comments in this topic are critical of the notion of partnership so positively espoused in the volume. There is no doubt, in her view, that participating in family-school partnerships can be a valuable experience for children, parents and educators. But she found much of the policy debate to be overly simplistic, indeed, to be inaccurate and misconceived.

The researcher has disclosed that scholars and educators have looked at the evidence regarding the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning selectively, concentrating almost exclusively on the benefits of such involvement. As a result, it is widely perceived among

education commentators that parent involvement is an overwhelmingly positive good that should be embraced as broadly and as promptly as possible (Epstein, 1987a). This research suggests otherwise. There are three points the researcher want to focus on: First, the researcher believe there are implicit standards in teachers' requests for parent involvement. Many teachers want a limited form of parent involvement in schooling (Lorty, 1977); notably positive and deferential parent involvement; anger from and criticism by parents are looked upon less favourably. The standards teachers have in the minds for parental involvement in generally not well articulated in the literature.

Secondly, many educators see the role of parents as reflecting parents' "concern" for education. The fact that parents' social resources affect their ability to comply with educators' standards is not widely recognized. Working-class and lower-class parents, who generally have only high school education, often do not believe that they are knowledgeable enough to assist their children with school related work (Lareau, 1986b). Parents who are college graduates rarely express such doubts. Similarly, the legacy of racial discrimination, for example, makes it more difficult for African parents to be "positive" in their approach to school.

Compared to most white parents, many African parents are much more suspicious about schools' agenda and more anxious about the possibility that their children will encounter institutional discrimination. Thus parents' social location by social class and race, rather than their relative level of concern, can make it more or less difficult for them to comply with teachers' requests.

Thirdly, in addition to examining the implicit standards in educators' requests and the role of social resources in helping parents comply with teachers' requests. The researcher wants to discuss some of the social and psychological costs of parent involvement programs for children, parents and educators. Parents' efforts to be involved in schooling, while well intentioned, can discourage school achievement, disrupt family life, and create difficulties for teachers and principals.

These conclusions are drawn from a body of collected research using classroom observations undertaken intermittently over several years and across several geographical locations (Lareau, 1989a, 1989b, 1993). During this period the researcher also carried out two hour, private interviews with mothers, fathers and guardians of the children the researcher observed. Educational personnel, ranging from school secretaries to principals, were interviewed separately. This intensive qualitative research approach necessarily leads to quite small samples. The purpose, however, has not been to measure how common various parental or school practices are. Instead, the researcher has been, and continues to be, focused on identifying critical issues whose significance is frequently overlooked in our educational debates.

2.2.4 Implicit standards of educators

Many educators are interested in the role played by parents and express the opinion that they run their classrooms and using an open door policy. The type of parent involvement they typically have in mind, however, is quite limited in scope. As the principal of a small Mid-Western elementary school district put it:

“I’d use words such as positive, encouraging, (and) supportive rather than being so defensive, trying to find out exactly what the circumstances were in the situation, trying to ask questions in on what the problem is.”

The importance of parents being ‘supportive’ was also stressed by one of the third grade teachers. When asked about the qualities of an ideal parent, she noted that:

There are so many parents that automatically say that you are wrong and my child is right. The parents that the researcher enjoyed working with the most were the ones who would listen to how the child is and what they needed to work on and didn’t criticize you.

Educators repeatedly praised parents who, in turn, had praised the educators, as will be shown shortly, were less pleased when parents made criticisms, particularly those offered in a hostile and angry fashion. Most teachers were also interested in having parents different to their professional expertise. Teachers appreciated parents who concurred with their assessment of a child, as this next comment makes clear:

‘Jim Hughes’ mother had a reasonable, rational, good understanding of her child’s talents, strengths. and weaknesses. She did precisely what I said.’

In their communications with parents, teachers frequently gave mixed messages. On one hand, teachers asked parents to be heavily involved in education. On the other hand, key aspects of schooling were defined by

educators as within their exclusive control. The implicit limitations on parents' control usually did not become explicit until conflicts arose. For example, educators rejected parents' suggestions that educators be fired, that children be admitted to the gifted program even though they did not qualify, and that the curriculum be oriented less around work sheets. (Chapman, 1995:335).

Not only did teachers require that parent involvement be positive and deferential, but they minimized the teaching skills parents needed in order to be effectively involved in their children's schooling. Teachers often did not tell parents in advance how to handle common homework difficulties, such as basic reading problems involving stumbling over words in a book or challenging parents' answer as incorrect, but then criticized the actions the parent took when faced with these dilemmas. One working-class mother told a Grade 2 educator in a parent-educator conference that she forced her son to sound out words he could not readily pronounce on his own. The educator dismissed that approach without discussion and instructed the mother to simply tell her son the proper pronunciation.

In downplaying their own considerable teaching skill, the teachers forgot that even allegedly simple tasks, such as selecting a book for a child, could be a complex undertaking for some parents. Consider this scenario, recounted by a Grade 1 educator: a mother came to the school book fair to buy for her daughter Jill. At the end of Grade 1, Jill had the reading skills of a child entering Grade 1.

“She brought it to the room and asked if it would be all right for Jill. The book was at the end of second grade level or third; it was above Jill’s abilities. I didn’t want to hurt her feelings, but I remember telling her that Jill would feel more competent if she could start it. She really did not have her pinpointed in terms of her abilities. (Lareau, 1989b:138)

Thus helping children with school work involved pedagogical skills parents often lacked. Although upper middle-class parents generally had more information about educational matters than working-class parents, even the upper middle-class parents were sometimes stumped by the work their children brought home from school. For example, one mother, who was a Grade 4 teacher, was bewildered by her grade 3 daughter’s mathematics homework. She told her daughter, “Go see Daddy, Mom doesn’t do geometry”.

Furthermore, there is considerable ambiguity about how much help parents should provide. By Grade 3, teachers expected children to show signs of responsibility regarding their own homework. They did not want the parent to take over responsibility for making sure it was completed. Parents’ roles here were ambiguous. How much help would be considered too much help? Neither these areas of ambiguity nor the fact that some parents lack the skills necessary to help their children with schoolwork were commonly acknowledged.

Indeed, educators’ discussions about parent involvement are exceedingly narrow regarding, what constitutes involvement. Teachers often have in mind

that parents will attend conferences, help with homework, volunteer in the classroom, and do fundraising for the school. Other contributions often go unrecognized. In some parents' eyes, simply getting their children up, dressed, fed and off to school in a timely fashion is a major contribution to their schooling. The disruptions to parents' schedules occasioned by early dismissals, snow days, and daytime-only parent-teacher conferences are generally ignored by school personnel.

To summarize, the researcher's first point is that schools have standards that are generally unarticulated but essentially focus on a narrow range of positive and supportive parental behaviours. Educators often miss actions that parents consider to be a legitimate part of their involvement in schooling. The narrow character of teachers' expectations and standards has not been considered in our policy discussions.

2.2.5 Social resources and parent involvement

The existing standards for parent involvement in schooling are such that some parents are able to comply with teachers' expectations much more easily than other parents. For example, recent national surveys reveal considerable distrust on the part of Americans of Whites and white-dominated institutions. One survey (Smith, 1994: 113) found that 40 percent of African Americans believe that "On the whole most white people want to keep African Americans down". In a similar vein, only 7 percent of African Americans in another study reported that they feel they can trust most white people. These and other measures of "African American alienation" from white society do not vary according to education and family income.

In addition, many today's American parents began their own schooling in segregated schools or in very recently integrated ones. Most of the American grandparents of children in schools today experienced legalized racial segregation ranging from restrooms to employment. This legacy of racial distrust has important consequences for parent involvement in schooling. Educators desire parents who are positive and supportive, but some American parents approach schools with apprehension. One American mother the researcher interviewed, Mrs. Mason, felt that "a wave of prejudice" was sweeping the country and the community:

"It's the school system as a whole. Every now and then there is a wave of prejudice. It's almost like the law in America is now. You find an African American man might get off in a year and half or he might get off with probation. So that's the state of law in America. That's a thing that we have to live with and we are living with it right now."

During the school year, Mrs. Mason objected to her daughter's placement in a reading group below grade level. She asked the teacher repeatedly to move the girl up. The educator, who felt that the child's vocabulary was inadequate for a higher group, had her tested again, and then refused to change her reading group. Mrs. Mason also felt her daughter wasn't being called on enough during class. She was concerned about uneven distribution of punishment and felt that African American boys were being singled out for punishment.

Mrs. Mason shared her concerns with the educator and the principal. Using an angry and confrontational style, she told the educators that they were treating

African American children differently than white children. This expression of her concerns damaged her relationship with her child's educator. The educator resented Mrs. Mason's refusal to defer to her professional assessment of the child's reading skills, and she believed the mother lacked good understanding of her daughter's educational needs. She also felt that Mrs. Mason and her husband were too critical of everyone, including their daughter, with the result that the child was "insecure."

By the middle of the school year, the teacher, Mrs. Erickson, avoided interacting with the Masons. At the end of the year, Mrs. Erickson "boosted" the child's English grade a few points because, as she put it, "I just didn't want to have a scene". She found the Masons among the "most upsetting" parents in her teaching career, was upset especially by their habit of raising their voices in conversation and "Just out and out yelling."

Mr. and Mrs. Mason's very real interest and concern for their daughter's education was defined as intrusive and singularly unhelpful. The principals' assessment differed little from the educator's. She saw only that parents did "damage."

There is no question in the researcher's mind that the Masons were unusually angry and race-conscious compared with others in the school community. Their suspicions of racial discrimination, however, are widely shared by African Americans across the country (Smith, 1994:113). This legacy of racial discrimination means that, in general, it is more difficult for African American parents to approach the school in a positive and supportive fashion than for white parents. Because educators' standards call for parents not simply to be

involved, but to be involved in a positive and supportive fashion, it is probably more difficult for African American parents than for white parents to build what educators define as a successful relationship.

Parents' social class also influenced their skills and confidence in their ability to help their children educationally (Lareau, 1989b). Upper middle-class parents generally saw interconnectedness between home and school and believed they had the right, and the responsibility, to supervise their children's schooling. As college graduates, most also had full confidence in their own ability to assist their children with school work. By contrast, working-class parents were likely to invoke a separation between home and school. They did not see themselves as integral to the educational process. One parent, who was a high school graduate, explained her role this way:

“I prepared them to go to school. That was my place. They had to learn, maybe, like you could say, basic structure. Behavior. You know, you don't throw things all over and you did what you were told, and things like that. That was my job. And her job, (the educator's) job, is to really teach them. She had gone to school to learn the best way to teach reading, mathematics, science, things like that. I don't know that (Lareau, 1989b:49).”

Given what was usually a limited educational background, some working class mothers preferred to turn over responsibility to teachers:

“An educator goes to school for a long time. They know a lot more than a regular person. I don't consider myself stupid, but I'm not extremely smart or intelligent. I could not go into a classroom and teach a class and expect them

to come out knowing as much as the educator teaches them. So I rely on the teacher's opinion a lot more than my own opinion (Lareau, 1989b:110,).

Working class parents expressed anxiety about their visits to schools; they could not always understand the teachers:

“If they start using big words you think, “Oh God, what does that mean?” You know, it's just like going to the doctors. And it makes you feel a little superior to them. Because I don't have the education they have. You know, I just don't (Lareau, 1989b:108).”

Thus even when their children were in primary grades, some parents did not feel capable of correctly helping their children with their schooling. Although disheartening, it is important to remember that an estimated 15 percent of adults are functionally illiterate (DNE, 1996:79). Thus my second point is that social resources, in this case, race and social class position, may facilitate or impede parents' willingness and ability to comply with educators' requests for their involvement in educational matters.

2.2.6 Costs

Thirdly, although family-school partnerships are overwhelmingly defined as helpful for children, there is clear evidence that parents' actions can have unintended, negative consequences (Lareau, 1989b). In some schools, teachers routinely complained about parents acting in unhelpful ways that put too much pressure on their children. One principal noted that they were seeing more and more children with nervous problems, including aches, bedwetting, and

stealing. In some instances, the educators linked children's behaviour to their parents being involved in negative ways. The case of a first-grade low-achiever named Emily is instructive. During classroom observations, the educator noticed that Emily developed stomach aches, sometimes twice or thrice a week, during the reading period (Lareau, 1989b: 149-150). Her mother was aware of the problem.

2.3 PARENTS AS FIRST EDUCATORS

Increased parental involvement of parents may well be the hope of every educator. However, many educators report little of any constructive parental involvement in the education of the learners in their classrooms. This paper reflects on the growing need for parents to increase their involvement with their children in the home as well as become more avid proponents of their child's education. Stronger networking and cooperation between the school and family could better support and environment of enriched learning and character development for the child.

"The American family is the rock on which a solid education can be built. I have seen examples all over this nation where two-parent families, single parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles are providing strong families support for their children to learn. If families teach the love of learning, it can make all the difference in the world to their children." Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education.

On August 11, 2003, Johnny X is born. By the time Johnny X turns one, his parents will have 8750 hours to provide supervision and care for Johnny.

When Johnny is ready to start school at the age of five, his parents will have accumulated 43,800 hours of time for his development and growth. With all of these hours available to them, how will these parents engage this child to learn? Will they discover that it is easy to teach the child that the green is green and the sky is blue and the difference between right and wrong, or will they decide that teaching such things is the job of a teacher?.

2.4 PARENTS AS PARTNERS WITH SCHOOLS

A USA Department of Education (1994) confirms the obvious, active parental involvement improve student morale, attitude and academic achievement; thus, by taking on an active role, parents reduce their child's risk of failure academically and reduce the chances of dropping out before graduation. This release also states that when parents are proactive with their child's school, the student's behaviour and social adjustment improve dramatically. The Child Trends Databank (1999) reaffirms these findings in its' report, and they take a step further by stating that students who have parental involvement have less destructive behaviours in school, including being less likely involved in drugs, violence or teen sex. President Bush agrees so strongly with the findings of this release and report that he has instituted the "No Child Left Behind" Act. In this Act President Bush takes the position that with a more active role played by parents, student academic success will increase when working closely with the students' schools and educators.

Even with the "No Child Behind" Act, some parents are not choosing to up their participation in their child's learning, so with a lack of parental involvement in a students' education, how many students go further in their

education? In the same study by the Child Trends Databank, 88 percent of the students completing high school with either a diploma or equivalent stated they had strong parental involvement, 93 percent of students that went on to a vocational school or technical school stated that their parents were strongly engaged in their academic growth, and 97 percent of students with a bachelor's degree and 97 percent of students going on to graduate or a professional school stated they had strong parental involvement in their academic progress.

2.5 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS TO PLAY A ROLE?

The results of recent research are very clear. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, they do better in school. The academic level of the parents, their socio economic level, and their ethnic or racial origin are not determining factor for academic success. It is essential for parents to have a positive attitude regarding education, and to demonstrate trust that their children can do well.

2.6 THE EFFECTS OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

When parents become involved, both students and school benefit:

- Grades and tests results are higher;
- Students' attitudes and behaviour are more positive;
- Academic programs are more successful' and
- A school, as a whole, is more effective.

The participation of all parents, including those with limited knowledge of English, is important to the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning. Such participation has many positive consequences for the family, the school, and especially for the young adolescent:

The family has a chance to understand the school system better. The teachers can understand students who come from other cultures more easily. The students receive support from adults in order to confront the problems of adolescent particularly where these problems are accentuated by the conflicting cultures of home, friends, and school. This school can become the natural extension of the home, aiding in the preservation of families' cultures and values.

2.7 WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO SUPPORT EDUCATION RESTORATION?

There are many ways that parents can demonstrate to their children that they are interested in academic success and that they are available to offer support and protection when there are problems.

Talk with your child about what happens at school everyday. Ask often if there are messages from the school. Spend some relaxed time with your children. Share a meal or a snack. Tell them often what you like about them, Listen to and share worries. Support what you believe to be good about the school and offer your help to change any school practices that you believe could be harmful to your child, Avoid scolding and arguments when your teenagers bring bad news home. Listen to their reasons and offer your help to

improve the situation. It helps if your children know you believe they will be successful. Value their education by encouraging homework and reading. Help your children choose a good time and place to do their assignments and special projects. Provide the necessary materials and give them your unconditional support. Get to know several teachers, not just one. Don't wait for a problem to talk to them, keep in touch with the guidance counsellors. They generally know all of the students in the school, and they can keep you informed regarding the progress and behaviour of your child. Read all information on school policies and curriculum carefully. Normally, school sends this information at the beginning of the year.

Review your child's school records each year. It is your right, and you should know what information is in the file, keep informed about your child's grades and test results, especially in any subjects in which he or she has problems. Ask for help if it is needed, Request periodic meetings with the teachers. If you don't speak or understand English, ask for a translator or bring a bilingual friend or family member with you. Request information concerning programs that the school offers for students with limited English proficiency. Be sure your child is placed in the program that best meets his or her needs, Get to know other parents and form support groups to work on problems and issues of mutual interest, Answer notes and other correspondence the schools ends. If you do not understand these messages due to language problems, ask the principal to send them to you in the language you understand.

2.8 PARTNERSHIP

“If we prepare today’s children to meet the unprecedented challenges they face, if we help them begin to lay the foundations for a partnership world, then tomorrow’s children will have the potential to create a new era of evolution.”
(Riane Eisler 23 May 1989 Tomorrow’s Children)

Partnership Education offers a new integrative approach that puts the joy back into education for teachers and students alike. Based on the concepts outlined by Riane Eisler in Tomorrow’s Children. Partnership education helps young people achieve their highest potentials both academically and personally.

CPS supports the implementation of Partnership Education by working with educators, parents, and policy makers to transform educational process, content and structure to help young people acquire the skills and knowledge essential for fulfilling and productive lives and a sustainable, equitable and peaceful future.

Individual schools cannot rekindle the culture of learning and teaching. Schools need help and partnership from parents to ensure effective teaching and learning. According to Mnisi and Shilubane (1998:15), without partnership, the restoration of a culture of learning and teaching will remain just another unfulfilled dream.

Principals and all staff members as professionals should create an inviting school climate, which should convey warmth and sincerity and parents should feel welcomed and comfortable when visiting the school.

2.9 THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS ON LEARNER'S ACHIEVEMENT

The research hopes that when parents are involved the culture of teaching and learning will be positive and the situation can lead to better achievement. Further, the researcher is of the idea that the more intensively parents play a role in their children's learning; the more beneficial are the achievement effects. This holds true for all types of parent involvement in learners' learning and for all types and ages of learners.

Looking more closely at the research, there are strong indications that the most effective forms of parent involvement are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities in the home. Programs which involve parents in reading with their children, supporting their work on homework assignments, or tutoring them using materials and instructions provided by educators, show particularly impressive results. (Epstein, 1995)

Along similar lines, researchers have found that more active forms of parent involvement produce greater achievement benefits than the passive ones. That is, if parents receive phone calls, read and sign written communications from the school, and perhaps attends and listens during parent educator conferences, greater achievement benefits accrue than would be in the case with no parent involvement at all. However, considerably greater achievement benefits are noted when parent involvement is active, when parents work with their children at home, certainly, but also when they attend and actively support

school activities and when they help out in classroom or in field trips and so on.

The research also shows that the earlier in a child's educational process parent's role begin, the more powerful the effects will be. Educators frequently point out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining children's school success, and it appears that the earlier this influence is "harnessed", the greater the likelihood of higher student achievement. Early childhood education programs with strong parent involvement components have simply demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach.

What about orientation and training for parents who wish to become more involved in their children's learning? Those research studies which have compared role played by parent programs that includes orientation/training components with those that do not indicate that providing orientation and training enhances the effectiveness of role played by parent. Research in this area indicates that parents generally want and need direction to participate with maximum effectiveness. Orientation /training takes many forms, from providing written directions with a send-home instructional packet, to providing "make-and-take" workshops where parents construct, see demonstrations of, and practice using instructional games; to programs in which parents receive extensive training and ongoing supervision by school personnel. (Coulombe, 1995)

A word of caution about training activities for parents: While research indicated that orientation/training activities are beneficial, those researchers

who have looked at the extent of training have found that a little is better than a lot. That is, programs with extensive parent training components do not produce higher student achievements than those with only basic training, and they sometimes experience considerable attrition- presumably because their time and effort requirements overtax the willingness of parents to stay involved.

The researcher has also found that the schools with the most successful parent involvement programs are those which offer a variety of ways parents can participate. Recognizing that parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability, and available time for involvement in school activities, these schools provide a continuum of options for parent participation.

2.10 THE EFFECTS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS ON LEARNERS' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS.

Sixteen of the documents on which this report is based address the relationships between parent involvement and achievement and then also look at the effects of parent involvement on student outcomes other than achievement. These include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self concept, classroom behaviour, time spent on homework, expectations for one's future, absenteeism, motivation and retention.

While not as extensively researched as the parent involvement-student achievement relationship, the relationship between parent involvement and these affective outcomes appears to be both strong and positive. All the research studies which address these areas found that parent involvement has

positive effects on student attitudes and social behaviour (Van Der Merwe H.M., Prinsloo I.J & Steinman C.P: 9).

As might be expected, the pattern of the role played by parents shown to confer the most positive effects on students' achievement as also the most beneficial with respect to these other student outcomes. In general, active role played by parent is more beneficial than passive involvement, but passive forms of involvement are better than no involvement at all. As for which specific kinds of involvement in children's learning have the greatest effective benefits, no clear answer emerges from the research. Whereas direct parent involvement in instruction seems to be the single most powerful approach for fostering achievement benefits, all of the active forms of the role played by parents seem more or less equally effective in bringing about improvements in students' attitudes and behaviour.

Although the main focus of this report is the effects of the role played by parents on student outcomes, it is certainly worth noting that the research reveals many benefits for school systems and for parents themselves when parents become more involved in their children's learning. School personnel benefit from the improved reports that generally accompany increased willingness to support schools with their labour and resources during fundraising activities or special projects. And certainly, the many ways in which the role played by parents benefits students' achievement, attitudes, and behaviour have a positive impact on school staff, Simon & Epstein (2001:21)

The research also reveals that improved parent attitudes towards the school and improved parent self-concepts characteristically result when parents

become involved in their children's learning. Parents often begins their participation doubting that their roles can make much difference, and they are generally gratified to discover what an important contribution they are able to make. In this connection, it is important for school community and parents to be aware that the role played by the parents supports learners' learning, behaviour, and attitudes regardless of factors such as parents' income, educational level, and whether or not parents are employed. According to Frederickson & Cline 2002:4,15), the role played by parents who are well educated, well-to-do, or have larger amounts of time to be involved has not been shown to be more beneficial than the involvement of less advantaged parents. All the roles played by parents' work and works well.

2.11 LIAISING WITH PARENTS

A problem that emerges time and again in the area of parent liaison is that of identifying the most appropriate form of communication with parents in dealing with specific issues, in the Thomas Report (1985) there was confirmation that many parents simply did not know what standards to apply in appraising their own children's progress in relation to reports from the school. This was further complicated by many parents not understanding the methods of instruction either, so that they had no idea what educational outcomes were expected.

Many learners pass through both primary and early stages of their secondary education with such little precise information about their particular individual strengths and weaknesses that is only when examinations or option choice points are reached that parents are suddenly confronted with the school's view

that their child is either average or below and will not in the future take a primarily academic course of study. Goacher and red (1983) have noted that the parents' need for accurate information that makes sense to them e in reports is overwhelming. Further more, these researchers noted that many parents feel that schools let them down in reporting because there is no enough information about their child's classroom performance and behaviour, and there is no advice from schools on how they could help their child at home.

Many local authorities are fully committed to various forms of profiling learner progress, including sections on self-monitoring, but again the full impetus of this form of reporting could be lost if the principles of profiling are not fully explained and worked though with parents. Evident discrepancies in parents' and teachers' views abound and could lead to misunderstanding about what the functions of these reports are. Many parents expect class grading and replacement of their children in relation to other learners in the class (Goacher and Red, 1983) and, when they do not receive these, are unable to use any other criteria for understanding what the reports may mean for their children.

The issue is that if the curriculum aims and objectives have not been explained or discussed with parents, then almost certainly forms of reporting pupil progress will not be understood by parents either.

W ithin the prim ary school domain, assessment and recording of progress may have a different focus profiling in the secondary school because of the notion of the whole child, which was identified earlier as a significant part of the prim ary ethos. M ost of the records already in use in the prim ary school are concerned with what might be called general development of the child in

terms of physical, personal, social and emotional factors as well as curricula aspects, such as language and communication, technical skills, mathematics, creativity and the whole area of humanity. Where appropriate, children can contribute to the record of profiling themselves and of course pupils and parents should be given opportunities to discuss between and among themselves and with teachers the implications of the record.

The development of children's learning across the boundaries of class has been sparsely researched. The clear political aim of research projects from Haringey, Coventry and Oxfordshire, for example, is equal opportunity, the medium is one of which seeks to promote and formalize a very old and tried procedure. Parents, educators and learners working together in an agreed framework can create cheap, effective and pleasurable partnerships.

The most fertile ground co-operation is in the primary school; it is through intervention with infant learners, and in junior schools, that efforts seem to have been most successfully sustained. It can be reasonably assumed that all, or most, of the learners in these schools are in the early stages of formal learning and that priorities in the curriculum are more clearly determined and more readily agreed. Parents come to collect primary age children at the school gate and so appear to show a greater interest in involvement than with older children. The tradition of the primary sector has been more welcoming towards them.

2.12 PARENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

A parental role within the classroom represents considerable changes in professional attitude since the almost total exclusion common in the 1980s (Tizard et al., 1981). However, such arrangements are often fairly ad hoc and left to an individual teacher's discretion (Jowett et al., 1991). Parental involvement in the classroom usually has two main aims. Thus to allow the teacher freedom from mundane practical tasks, and to make the parents more aware of the opportunities and constraints offered by the classroom environment. Thus parents become familiar with the rationale behind the teacher's working methods, and able to appreciate the difficulties and complexities of the job. However, traditionally teaching is an autonomous task, and having parents in the classroom is not welcomed by all teachers, as the following quotation explains.

“The principal issue for teachers... relates to their status as professionals... Several (teachers) were clear that whilst help was acceptable with secretarial and office work, and in providing extra help of trips, they did not want parents in the classroom or having any part in the planning and implementing of the curriculum. (Mayall, 1990:51 and also Atkin, Bastiani and Goode, 1988).”

2.13 PARENTS AS CONSUMERS

The Parents, Charter-“rights... .. responsibilities and choices” (DES, 1991,p.i)

The Parents Charter (1991, updated 1994) claims to provide governments guidelines to regulate home-school relations in 1990-s. when it first appeared,

there was also speculation that it was intended to enhance parents' positions in education system with the specific expectation that they would support the government's attempts to return to a more formal style of education. The Charter allocates parents the status of consumers, which sits uneasily with their more traditional roles as supporter.

The core of the Charter is the promise of 'five key documents' which will enable parents to monitor their children's progress and to compare all local schools. These includes individual reports of the National Curriculum test results, regular reports from an independent inspectorate, performance tables of all local schools, a school handbook; and an annual report from the school governors.

The next section of the Charter, headlined, "A School Place for Your Child" (ibid) sets out different types of school from which parents can apparently choose. 'Self-governing' schools, selective school and independent fee-paying schools are all mentioned alongside the majority, the latter being distinguished as 'local council' schools. The 1991 Charter stated, 'A school cannot make its own decision on the basis of your child's academic ability unless it is a selective grammar school. By 1994, however, this had disappeared, and selective schools are now included in the general list of institutions. The Charter also gives parents direction in acting as responsible consumers. On this point, Bowe, Gewirtz and Ball (1994) note.

In the Charter, the rights of individuals to choose and the responsibility that rests upon parents to undertake their choosing in an effective way is given considerable emphasis... choice is powerfully promoted as a personal matter,

a question of individual future. Parents are not, however, guaranteed a clearly defined or influential role once their children are at school. Whilst, the Charter details parents' consumer rights of 'entry' and 'exit' from a school, and the right to information from the chosen school, their rights to respond to that information and enter into a dialogue with the institution are less clear. As Roger Hancock (1993) argues

“The main thrust of central government's interpretation of the role played by parents has been to stress parents' rights to information about school performance and children's progress. Clearly, schools need to give such information but an over-concentration on this has served to set up a climate of 'information-giving' from schools to parents; a one-way accountability exercise in which parents passively listen to what schools are doing rather than engage with teachers to support and influence the content of education.”

This is borne out by the section of the Charter stating 'you have a right to good education for your child'. However, it remains the case that parents have no 'right' to challenge the government's view that the National Curriculum constitutes a major part of a 'good' education. The Charter continues by talking about how parents can influence their child's school. The possibility of becoming a parent governor is mentioned briefly, as are annual parents' meetings. However, the most space is given over to the third 'right'; voting on grant-maintained status, an option favoured by the conservation government. However, in this scenario, the parents 'voice' lasts only for a moment, the role played by parents does not continue after the ballot, and research indicates that

they are usually enacting the wishes of the head teacher and governing body (Fitz, Halpin and Power, 1993).

Therefore the possibility of the role played by parent in the daily life of the school is marginalized (Hughes, Wiskeley and Nash, 1994). Although parents can elect parent governors, this position involves only a tiny minority of the parent body, and, as noted in chapter, governors in general, are encouraged to see themselves as integral parts of the governing body, rather than representatives of particular interest groups (Hatcher, Troyna and Gewirtz, 1993, Deem, Brehony and Heath, 1995).

It is clear that the expectation embedded in the Parents' Charter is that parents are to be concerned only with their children's progress, rather than, say, the conditions his/her class works in the Charter does not tackle such questions such as minimum guarantees of books, materials or teacher-pupil ratios. Parental duties include providing a good example for their children get to school on time, attending school events, supporting the school's policy on homework and behaviour, and giving their older children space to do their homework. Otherwise, they may trespass into daily school life only on specific occasions, to allow them to learn from professionals.

In summary, the parents' Charter is helpful in clearly specifying what information parents should receive from schools, and thus ending any irregularities in what schools actually provide- although the quality and the tone of the information can still vary greatly. The Charter also highlights the concepts of parents' right in relation to schooling: embedding the idea in the collective mind of the teaching profession and the wider public. However,

information and participation are not concepts that can be elided, nor does nothing to support those parents who for various reasons find it difficult to approach the school. Nor does it create a more equal relationship between teachers and parents. The two 'factions' are still kept apart. Indeed, such division is crucial, if parents are to act in accordance with government wishes, and constraints any 'progressive' impulses that might emanate from educational professionals (Johnson; Diale, 1989).

2.14 INDEPENDENT PARENTS

This term describes parents who have minimal contact with the school. For some this might be a deliberate decision, whilst others are non-participants through circumstance. The first category includes parents who have become disaffected with the school, and developed their own 'oppositional logic'. They might feel that their children are unfairly treated because of their ethnicities, religions, behaviours or personalities. Such a perception leaves parents with several choices. They can confront the staff, and as a result may themselves be labelled as a 'difficult' parent; they may transfer the child to another school; or they may decide to minimize contact with the school. This is characterized as 'active non-participation' by Pugh and De 'Ath (1989). Alternatively, 'passive non-participation' describes a parent who may wish to have more contact with the school, but is prevented from so doing for various reasons. She may not be fluent in English, but there are not interpreters present at school events, nor does it send home translated notes. She may work long hours. She may have small children and no child care, or she may simply be under a degree of financial or emotional stress that precludes involvement.

School-inspired events may not meet parent's concerns or interests, and a rational decision over the allocation of their time may therefore exclude such meetings (Showstack-Sasson, 1983). Some parents may choose to supplement their child's formal education without reference to the teacher. This may be because they disagree with the standards. A coherent and widespread form of additional provision- supplementary schools-has developed as a result. Such schools were originally established by African-Caribbean communities to compensate for the perceived inadequacies of the state system as the founder of a black supplementary school commented.

“Without exception we said that racism was the major reason why our children were failing in school. We complained, we advocated... but with little avail. That did not deter us ... we began to set up alternative supplementary education institutions rooted in our community. (Jones, 1986:2; Coard, 1971; Tomlinson, 1984).”

Supplementary classes now serve various communities, concentrating on religious teaching, the children's home language or culture, and a reinforcement of the 'basics' to ensure that children are progressing at an appropriate rate. The relationship between parents and teachers is often more friendly, open and informative than in mainstream schools (John, 1992; Jones, 1986). In addition, community provision has a function beyond remedying the deficiencies of the mainstream.

The supplementary education movement was seen, not as reactive but as pro-active, and to be about positive education. It aimed to project

positive images of black people, black achievement, black history, in a society where a person's worth was thought to be determined by the colour of their skin. (John, 1992)

2.15 PARENTS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE 1990'S

This section briefly explores, first, the role played by parents in governing bodies grant maintained schools and CTCs, and second, parental choice policies, in order to determine whether parents' roles and participation has increased in response to discourse consumerism.

2.16 PARENT GOVERNORS

The main question here is to what extent can parent governor act as representatives of the parent body? As individual governors derive their power from being part of an integral whole, it is difficult to see how parent governors can take on this role. Even within the governing body they may find it difficult to act as a spokesperson for the wider parent body. Deem, Brehony and Heath (1995) suggest that members of a governing body can be divided into two groups, those who operate at the core and those who operate at the core and those who remain the periphery, with parent governors being disproportionately represented in the latter grouping. The forum for governor-parent contact, the annual parents meeting, is notorious for often being organized in a dull, unimaginative way that does not inspire discussion, and attracts low attendance, although there are some signs suggesting that these events may be becoming more high-profile, better-organized, and more attractive to parents (Martin et al., 1995).

2.17 GRANT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Grant maintained status for schools was presented by the government as a mechanism for increasing school diversity, despite the fact that these schools are required to teach the National Curriculum. Given this apparent contradiction, Fitz, Halpin and Power (1993), in the study of grant maintained schools, asked whether opting out of local authority control has led to the formation of distinctive school identities, and whether the school has led to the formation of distinctive school identities, and whether the school experience, including parental relationships with schools, shows signs of change. They conclude that the introduction of GM status has had little significant effect upon parental perceptions of the availability of choice of school in a locality. Nor did the degree of school responsiveness to its pupils' families increase with GM status.

2.18 CITY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGES

In their study of CTCs, Whitty, Edwards and Gewirtz (1993) found a disjunction similar to that identified by Fitz, Halpin and Power, between parents' actual views and priorities and those that the government expected them to hold. In the aftermath of the 1988 ERA, the government presented CTCs as a major component of the new product diversity within the education market. Their brief was to become inner-city beacons of excellence, developing innovative styles of schooling. Indeed as the researches point out, the high number of applications to the small number of CTC's, the high-tech environment and ethos were subordinated to other concerns. CTC's were seen

as selective schools with additional resourcing and traditional values and styles of discipline (Whitty and Edwards, 1993). Therefore, neither increasing the responsibilities of governing bodies, nor introducing new type of institutions appears to have resulted in identifiable shifts in parents' relationships with their children's schools. This section continues by considering policies supporting parental choice of school. These measures are presented as capable of directly augmenting 'parental power'.

2.19 PARENTS AS PARTICIPANTS

It is clear that the formal inclusion of parents in the existing systems of representative democracy is patchy and uneven. A 1994 report from the Research and Information on State Education Trust (RISE) shows that out of the seventy seven responding local authorities in the UK, only twenty two had seven parent representations on the education committee. Over half of those were London Education Authority. Thirteen authorities (four of which are in Scotland and five in London) have consultative parents' organizations (O'Connor, 1994:67) RISE also concluded that less than half of the local authorities have any representative organization for governors of any sort. Even when there are systems for formal parental presentation in place, problems still remain, notably the need to try and ensure that the various associations attract as wide a membership as possible, the difficulties of representing such a sprawling, diverse group as 'parents' and the risk of representatives and groups being (or 'consulted'), but not heard is a problem faced by many parents endeavouring to assert themselves in relation to the education system.

RISE argue that other countries offer examples of ways in which representative structures have been established to communicate parents' views to schools and government at various levels, including the national level. However, as the problems mentioned here are associated with simply 'tacking on' parental representation to existing systems of governance, a more radical approach, operating at several different levels, is necessary in order to develop a new participative dimension to home-school relations. As Beattie (1985) points out, many current initiatives in the supporter/learner category could be defined as parent activity. That is, Association activity organized by or for parents whose children attend school. Its purpose may be quite diverse, but its main defining element is negative. It has no official or legal status in the eyes of the state, and therefore in the eyes of schools which are state institutions.

Some commentators (for example, Sallis, 1987; Tomlinson, 1991) have suggested that legislation is necessary to raise the status of potential parental contributions. Sally Tomlinson, proposing statutorily-based HSA's (Home-School Associations), argues that such groups have a better chance of survival if supported within a structure that gives them legitimacy. Thus she suggests that HSAs would be open to parents, teachers, governors and older learners, and would discuss educational issues rather than the more peripheral and mundane matters that often dominate parent groups (Moore, 1990). They would be funded by a government grant, and be statutory consulted about educational decisions at local and through representatives, at national level (Tomlinson, 1991:16). However, the effectiveness of legislative change cannot be assumed. The last part of Beattie's statement, quoted earlier, suggests a direct causal link between recognition by 'the state' and automatic recognition by school. (The context suggests that by 'the state' Beattie is

referring to the legal systems and to Parliament). However, as much legislation is of an enabling, rather than an enforcing nature, a direct causal link between legislation and practice cannot be assumed. (Ball, 1994a).

Tomlinson (1991) and Macbeth (1989 and 1995) also advocate class associations whereby parents and teachers have regular group meeting about the curriculum and organization of learning, school and class meeting could be supplemented with regular individual teacher-parent consultation concerning individual children's progress. Thus parents would have opportunities to participate at each level-the individual child, the class and the school. Such changes would involve great alterations in current relationships between teacher and parent. Several schools in a recent Royal Society of Arts (RSA) project have attempted innovations along these line although establishing whole school Endeavour to implement reforms that run counter to the dominant tenor of home-school relations (Jones et al., 1992) indeed, in recognition of this, one school adopted a snail as its logo for its development of a home-school contract (White and Smith, 1993). Although unlikely to be wholly transformative, legislation could promote reform. It is also important to have structures and networks outside individual schools to support parents, and the role of parents' centres is considered further in late chapters. Another development is the networking of parents' groups from different parts of the country. One result of this was a conference, Parents Talking About Education, held in 1993, Which was organized by parents' groups form around the country in order to give parents a channel through which to express their views and concerns to education professionals (Parent Talking About Education Steering Group, 1994). However, changes in both structures and relationships are necessary if there is to be any discernible increases in

participative processes in schools. Yeatman (1990), writing about the democratization of institutions, comments,

“Democratization... would involve the replacement of the hierarchical (vertical) principle of managerial/professional authority by non-hierarchical (lateral) principle of reciprocal exchange between differently positioned and skilled participants and contributors.”

Many writers in this area advocate attempt to achieve lateral home-school relations (for example, Stacey, 1991; Atkin, Bastiani and Goode, 1988). yet the dominance of the supporter-learner model persists.

2.20 THE NEW RIGHT'S EDUCATION PROJECT - THE PARENT AS CONSUMER

2.20.1 Education Policy in the 1980s

Although the first Margaret Thatcher government (1979-1983) implemented radical initiatives in housing and finance, in particular those which limited local government control, the first Conservative Education Act (1980) lacked a pervasive ideological framework. However, the Act did introduce the Assisted Places Scheme (state funding to allow pupils, whose parents could not afford the fees to attend private schools), and in doing so, sent out a powerful message about the deficiencies of the state system compared to the private sector, (Whitty and Menter, 1989). It also acknowledges the ideals of consumerism by slightly strengthening parents' right of appeal against CEAs. The 1986 Education Act however, embodied many familiar New Right

themes, a concern, such as discipline and order). 'SK" Excellence' and 'choice' (Brown, 1990). Professional control of the curriculum was decreased in favour of governing body influence (Deem, 1989; Jones, 1989). Furthermore, parent and teacher representation on governing bodies was strengthened and CEA representation reduced. By removing power from political appointees the Act ostensibly contributes to the 'neutralizing' of education, separating it from 'politics'. As the Thatcher governments were engaged in a project to shift values and attitudes to the right, politicians expected the 'depoliticized' views of parents and other lay people to be highly conservative: restraining influence upon progressive teachers and local authorities (Jones, 1989; Golby and Brigley, 1988). However, there is little evidence to suggest that this has been the case. To date, many governors appear to be concerned to offer teachers their largely unqualified support (Deem, Brehony and Heath, 1995).

Nevertheless, there have been instances of conflict, and these have revealed the uncertainty which surrounds governor powers and responsibilities, as they are enacted in relation to other agencies. Thus confusion over respective roles had led to sometimes fierce disputes between heads and governors (for example, Stratford School), and governing bodies and the CEA (Kingsmead Primary School, Hackney). This general uncertainty allows several different ideas about the role of governors to co-exist simultaneously, if uneasily. On this point, Balls (1994a) identifies three broad models of school governance, placing emphasis on the tension which can exist in individual sites between completing values.

The 'professional' discourse is rooted in a history of public sector/welfare state paternalism. This trades upon the maintenance of a high level of practitioner autonomy and limited citizen or consumer participation in policy or decision making... the 'business' discourse is a counter-discourse, which is articulated through neo-liberal economics and New right politics. It asserts a financial management/effectiveness perspective as well as a small business mentality... the empowerment discourse is also a counter discourse. It stands in antagonistic relationships to both of the other but is represented primarily in rhetoric rather than practice, its historical status is one of irritant and unrealized hope.

By 1987, conditions were such that radical reforms of the school system could be executed. Margaret Thatcher's government had been elected with a large majority for a third term. The left, at both local and national level, was in disarray and the teacher' unions were subdued by their long period of industrial action in the mid-1980s. The profession's criticism of government proposal was therefore somewhat muted, fragmented, and in any case, largely ignored (Haviland, 1988).

With the introduction of the National Curriculum, Local Management of School (LMS), open enrolment, grant-maintained status (GMS) and City Technology Colleges (CTCs), the themes of the 1988 education Reform Act can be identified as follows: a neo-conservative wish to reintroduce traditional pedagogies and a 'British' curriculum, coupled with a neo-liberal desire to introduce a market-oriented, diversified system of education with less (local) state control. The 'market' in education is not, of course, a free market, but a

quasi-market' (Le Grand, 1991). Education remains freely provided by the state.

2.20.2 Education policy in the 1990s

In comparison with Margaret Thatcher, his predecessor for the premiership, it may seem that in some areas Jon Major brought a more pragmatic approach to Government policy-making (witness the abandonment of the poll tax, and the rapid changes of economic and European policy). However, the general direction of education policy remains constant.

This can be illustrated with reference to the rising number of quangos in education. These include the Office for Standards in Education (to coordinate the privatized system of school inspections introduced by her 1992 Education School Act) the Higher Education Funding councils, the Further Education Funding Council (for the funding of universities and sixth-form colleges respectively) and the Training Agency (for vocational education). Quangos are non-elected bodies whose members are appointed by ministers, in this case, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. They offer a striking example of the way in which the role of directly-elected local authorities has been superseded). For example, the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS) established by the 1993 Education Act, and responsible for the funding of GM (grant maintained) schools, is accountable to the Secretary of State, but not directly accountable to the electorate. Its members do not hold ward surgeries, they cannot be petitioned and its meetings cannot be attended; all ways in which voters can make their views known to local councils despite this, in localities where over 75 percent of pupils are in GM schools, the FSA has sole

responsibility for planning to ensure that there are sufficient school places. It is also worth emphasizing that the FAS is a funding body. Unlike most CEAs, it is not concerned with promoting or disseminating a particular 'vision' of education.

Therefore, it can be seen that some of the primary intentions and effects of the 1998 ERA are also apparent in later legislation. These include the implementation of a more 'rule-bound culture' which has the effect of limiting the ethnicity and gender stratifications, and instead maintains that everyone has an equal chance to succeed, and responsibility for that success (or failure) is their own. Other forces that limit the choices available to people are also ignored. For instance, the Parents' Charter claims to offer parents the information they need to influence their children's education (DES, 1991: DFE 1994), but the overall control of the system is not open to question.

In metaphorical terms, the government has opened the 'shop' however dilapidated it may be, and so any complaints about the quality of the 'products' must be due either to shop assistance inefficiency or consumer carelessness when making choices (Vincent, 1992). Secondly, many parents will feel that to safeguard their children's future, they must act as 'rational consumers demanding a product inline with the requirements of the enterprise culture' (Jonathan, 1990:118). In so doing, they may be make choices regarding the style of education that their child receives, that they would otherwise have wished to make.

Indeed, the study of primary school parents' reaction to recent changes conducted by Hughes and his colleagues (1994) suggest that parents are

reluctant to see themselves as consumers, feeling that this was an inappropriate way to approach the education system. Thirdly, individual choices, may in aggregate, have adverse consequences both for their child and others. For example, a parent, aware of the additional funding that CTC commands may feel it is in her child's best interests to apply for a place, even though she may be concerned about the imbalance in funding between CTCs and 'ordinary' schools (Bash and Coulbly, 1989). Thus her application suggests approval for the existence and philosophy of CTCs in particular, and of the right to choose in general. It may be argued that the sum of such individual choices does not always benefit society overall. A few children may attain a place at a well resources CTC, but many attend under-funded schools-ever vulnerable to cuts in the level of staffing and resources (Jonathan, 1990). The logic of open enrolment itself suggests that it will eventually lead to less not more choice, if some schools close due to waxing and waning of public approval. Moreover, a school trapped into a downward spiral of falling rolls, low morale, and fewer resources can offer less and less to its existing pupils. Ranson (1988) comments that choice of school cannot be treated like other consumer choices. "If the researcher purchases a chocolate bar... his 'purchase' has no together with the unwitting choices of others will transform the product. 'A school with a relatively low class size for instance, may see a dramatic increase in the pupil-teacher ratios if it becomes popular. Hirsch refers to this situation as resulting from a 'tyranny of small decisions' (cited in Adler et.at., 1989:221). Such reliance on 'neutral' market forces could result in fundamental changes to the appearance of the state education system, (for instance moves towards racial segregation in schools). Gutmann (1987) and Jonathan (1990) argue that the state has some duties of 'trusteeship' towards all children, in vulnerable group.

2.21 PARENTS AND THE CURRICULUM

During the 1980s, the involvement of parents in teaching basic curriculum areas became more common (Edwards and Redfern, 1988). Initiatives vary in emphasis. Some aim to educate parents and make them more familiar with the teacher's methods, in the hope that the parents' will copy school activities at home (for example, Mertens and Vass, 1983). This latter group includes home reading and home Mathematics projects, and mark a significant development in parent-teacher relationships. They acknowledge that parents are 'the child's first teacher' and offer a continuation of this role throughout compulsory schooling (at least at primary level). Hewison (1985) concludes that the most important factor about these interventions is that, unlike earlier compensatory programs, parental involvement in curriculum support.

“Is based on an analysis of what parents can do for their children, what they cannot. Compared to the 'supportive home' analyses, this leads to a very different understanding of the relationships between teachers and parents—a changed understanding which is shared by teachers, parents and learners alike.”

2.22 THE EFFECTS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Turning from the matter of the role played by parents in children's learning, what about the outcomes produced by the role played by parents in school governance? The term “governance” here includes any activity which provides parents the opportunity to take part in decision making about school

programs. This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA. Areas in which parents may be helping to make program decisions include goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personnel decisions, and funding allocations.

This area of the role played by parents is one of the most controversial. Surveys show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and educators exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance.

The literature reviewed for this report indicates that although educators agree that parents should be involved with the schools in a variety of ways and that school personnel should spend time encouraging and training parents to become involved, they disapprove of the role played by parents in administrative areas such as educator and principal selection and evaluation, and are less enthusiastic than parents regarding the utility of parent participation in other activities, such as the selection of texts and other teaching materials or setting priorities for the school budget. They also tend to feel that parents do not have enough training to make school decisions, although surveys of parents indicate that the majority of them feel they are capable of making sound decisions.

In this review, no examples were found of programs in which parent participation in decision-making roles could be directly linked to improved learners achievement. The relationship between parent participation in

decision-making and learner achievement is not nearly as extensively researched as the effects of parent involvement in learners' learning. Indeed, writers on the topic indicate that it is more difficult to assess the effects of the role played by parents in decision making precisely because the connection to student outcomes is more indirect.

Of the half-dozen documents which do address the connection between the role played by parents in decision making and learner achievement, none were able to offer evidence of a causal relationship, though some writers seem to believe that such a relationship exists.

The lack of evidence linking the role played by parents in governance and learner achievement should not be taken to mean that parents should not be included in some aspects of school decision making, however. Researchers and other others have identified benefits other than student achievement which have been found to emerge from involving parents in governance.

2.23 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed literature review was given. Aspects such as parents and the nature of teaching and learning, Parents as first teachers, parents as partners with schools, Reasons why it is important for parents to play a role, What parents can do to support education restoration were discussed in details here in this chapter. The following chapter will engage on the empirical research of the problem .

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this research is to investigate how do parents restore the culture of teaching and learning in Primary Schools under Nzhelele East Circuit in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

The manner and means of obtaining appropriate information is imperative in research output for analyzing and interpreting acquired data Leedy and Ormond, (2001:117). According to Mouton (2001:91) “an empirical field research or fieldwork” forms a significant part of the research process of data collection.

The researcher prepared and administered all the necessary instruments that were used in this research.

3.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 Mode of inquiry

Tutty et.al. (1996:4) describes qualitative research as “the study of people in their natural environments as they go about their daily lives. It tries to understand how people lives, how they talk and behave and what captivates

and distresses them.” In support of this, Merriam (1994:6) maintains that qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, which is how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. Of particular concern to the researcher is that through qualitative research, the researcher will be involved with the participants in the research project and to personally experience the process of their daily lives. The researcher wants to understand the world from their point of view and to understand their experience and to explain their experience and feelings the way they explain them .

In addition the quest for objectivity in qualitative research means that the researcher have to understand the experiences and meaning of words that parents will provide as to how they can restore the culture of teaching and learning in primary school, Bryman (1988:61) states, “the most fundamental characteristics of qualitative research is its commitment to viewing events, actions and norms from the perspective of the people who are being studied.” What he is saying, is that qualitative research enables the researcher to “see through the eyes of the people you are studying.” The understanding that the researcher also have is that in qualitative study, less emphasis is placed on generalizability. No matter how small the number of participants may be included in this study.

The goal in this study project is to use the qualitative mode of inquiry to gather data from school parents in primary schools under Nzhelele East Circuit about their unique experiences and what these experiences mean to them. The researcher have also taken into consideration the pre-existing knowledge that he has acquired and gathered from the literature study, he

alluded earlier in this project and will take care that the knowledge he has gathered will not interfere with his ability to hear what parents will be saying with regard to the research question. Of particular importance to the researcher is that this project is informed by theories outlined earlier in several ways but what is important is that it is driven by what the parents will have to say. These are among other reasons why the researcher chose qualitative mode of inquiry to guide him in this inquiry. After having selected the mode of inquiry, it will also be important to indicate the strategy that will be followed in this project.

According to Matsuang (1999:26), as cited by Mamabolo L.J. discussed methodology as “science of methods”. The study used methods as tools or devices. As he puts it, “tools or devices are used to comprehend a phenomenon in the social and other sciences”.

In this context Matsuang (1999:21) continued stating that, “methodology refers to the research methods during the investigation by the research” and that “Methodology point at the route along which the researcher goes to work in order to render the phenomenon accessible”

As qualitative methods are humanistic, the researcher wants to study people and how we view them. When we reduce people’s words to statistics, we lose sight of the human side. When we study qualitatively, we get to know them personally and experienced what they experience in their daily struggle in the society. At the end this will help the researcher to come up with recommendations that will break the ice when it comes to the restoration of the culture in education.

Through qualitative approach people are studied in the context of their past and their present. In contrast to quantitative research which takes apart a phenomenon to examine component parts, qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole. The key concern is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participant's perspectives, not the researcher's (Merriman, 1998:6)

Interactive modes of inquiry can be divided into:

- a. Ethnography- it is a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system. Participant and non-participant observers try to record virtually everything that occurs in the setting being studied (Borg & Gall, 1989:387).
- b. Phenomenology-This approach aims to understand and interpret the meaning the subjects give to their everyday lives. In order to accomplish this, the researcher should be able to enter the subject's life and world and place himself in the shoes of the subject. Data are systematically collected and analyzed within a specific context (De Vos, 2000:80)
- c. Grounded theory-Is designed to inductively build a substantive theory regarding some aspects of practice, Is "Grounded" in the real world as it goes beyond the description to develop "dense", "detailed" concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:156)
- d. Critical studies-It begins with a commitment to expose social manipulation and oppression and to change oppressive social structures. A researcher may identify his or her gender, race, age, ethnicity, social

status and political positions to inform the reader that the interpretation are not value-free (Rossman & Rallis, 1998:234)

- e. Case study-In case study the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon “the case” bound by time and activity (a program, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time (Merriam, 1998: Yin, 1989 as cited by Cresswell, 1994:12). It can be used with any of the above types.

As deeply pressed by the lack of commitment on the side of learners and the political situation we are now in where everybody is talking about 50/50, partners in education had lost the working morale. The qualitative approach will help me as all perspective are valuable. The researcher will seek not only the truth or morality, but rather a detailed understanding of other people’s perspective is just as important as the judges. In qualitative research, those who are ignored by society, the poor and the deviant, often receive a forum for their views.

For the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning to be effective and alive, qualitative approach is essential as it allows us to stay close to the empirical world. They are designed to ensure a close fist between the data and what people actually say and do. By observing people in their everyday live, listening to them talk about the culture of learning and teaching; the researcher will be able to obtain first-hand knowledge of social life unfiltered through concepts and operational definitions (Azaliah College, 1999:73-75).

The literature consulted helped the researcher to understand the area on which he had to explore, but did not interfere with his ability to hear what parents had to say with regard to the research question. The project will be pioneered by theories outlined earlier.

In rural areas in primary schools under Nzhelele East Circuit in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province it is where the research project had been. The research had provided the researcher with an opportunity to focus on eight (8) parents, eight(8) educators, six (6) learners and (4) four principals in order to compile a research that unveil the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools.

3.3 CASE STUDY DESIGN

The term case study pertains to the fact that a limited number of units of analysis (often only one) such as an individual, a group or an institution are studied intensively (Welman & Kruger, 2002:190).

In a case study the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (“the case”) bound by time and activity (a program, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a period of time (Merriman, 1988: Yin, 1989 as cited by Cresswell, 1942:12). The researcher selected the case design as the researcher wants to be closer to the participants who will partake in the research project that is getting parents involved in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching in primary schools under Nzhelele East Circuit in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

3.4 THE RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE

3.4.1 Population

According to White (2003:57) a population is a collection of objects, events or individuals having some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying.

Melville and Wayne (1996:34), as cited by Thobejane H.R. see a population as groups the researcher wants to study. A population is the totality of people, events or sampling units with which our research problem is concerned. It is not practical to study an entire population. General findings based on a study of only a subset of the population are necessary.

Population is the total target group, who will be used as subjects of the research. The population was composed out of 26 respondents from four primary schools. This target population consisted of 8 parents, 8 educators, 6 learners and 4 principals of rural primary schools under Nzhelele East Circuit in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. The population interviewed was that group that the researcher was interested in its information and could draw conclusions.

The parents were included because they are primary educators of their children whom the culture of teaching and learning cannot be restored without them. Educators were included because they are directly affected and are usually blamed for poor cultures at schools. Learners were included because they are the grass where the ball is being played on. Some of them also

complained that they are staying alone at home and also blame teachers for not giving them effective teaching. Principals were also included because they are the managers of schools and some have learning areas to offer in classes.

3.4.2 Sample

The study used a “convenient or purposeful sampling”. It has to do with the selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth, Patton M.Q, (1990:169).

Bailey (1994:83) defines a sample as a subset or portion of the population. Furthermore, he says the sample must always be viewed as an approximation of the whole rather than as a whole in itself.

The sample selection implies that the researcher have to consider who will be his participants in the research project, where the interviews are going to be conducted, when the interviews are going to be conducted and what kind of data will be collected.

The sample of this study was composed out of 26 responses. Among them were 8 parents, 8 educators, 6 learners and 4 principals. The sample was divided into four sections:

Section A for parents (See appendix C), Section B for educators (See appendix D), Section C for learners (See appendix E) and Section D for principals (See appendix F).

According to Merriman (1994:60) as cited by Burgess (1982) “that sampling in field research involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events.” Furthermore Merriman, S.B (1994:67) states “that purposeful

sampling is a well known and widely used non-probability sampling strategy and therefore commonly used in conducting qualitative research.” Through purposeful sampling “the researcher aims at discovering, understanding and selecting a sample from which the most can be learned” Merriman, S.B (1994:61). The researcher’s reason for employing purposeful sampling is to understand restoration from the point of view of the parents, educators, learners and principals under Nzhelele East Circuit.

For the purpose of this study, the following types of purposeful sampling have been identified and will be used in this research project:

3.4.2.1 Networking Sampling

According to Merriman S.B (1994:63) “networking sampling involves asking each participant to refer you to other participants.” This concurs with McMillan J.H. and Schumacher C.J. (2001:403) who indicated that, “network sampling is a strategy in which each successive participant is named by a preceding individual.” The researcher used the networking sampling, because he has considered the research site where his research will be conducted i.e. primary schools under Nzhelele East circuit in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province are scattered throughout the rural areas and as a results the researcher managed to visit a limited number of schools.

3.4.2.2 Convenience Sampling

In addition to the networking sampling the researcher will also be using the convenience sampling. He has considered quite a number of factors before selecting the convenience sampling and these factors include the following:

- The time the researcher is left with to complete this research project
- The researcher's financial position
- Poor infrastructure made it difficult to access some schools

The researcher is of the idea that the combination of both the networking and convenience sampling produced the relevant data that he needed to use in his study.

In selecting the research site the researcher knew that he has to identify places where he has to meet his participants. He was also aware that he has to obtain a letter of permission to conduct the interview from someone in authority. The researcher made an application that he submitted to the circuit manager of Nzhelele East Circuit. Later the researcher received an approval that he is allowed to conduct research in schools under the jurisdiction of Nzhelele East Circuit's area of operation. The researcher also made an application and submitted it to the Ward 28 Councillor under Thulamela Municipality who also gave him the green light to conduct the research in all communities under his jurisdiction.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Qualitative approach had been used for gathering data in this research. The specific approach adopted should be the best method for answering the research question. In order to answer the research question, it is very important to collect data. According to Merriman S.B. (1994:69) "Qualitative data" consist of direct quotations from the people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge obtained for example through interviews.

When collecting data, the researcher had to take into consideration what he needs to know. His research participants had been the cornerstones of all answers to the research question. "How do parents restore the culture of teaching and learning?"

3.5.1 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interview are open questions to obtain data of participant meanings-how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or "make sense" of the important events in their lives. Interviews are the primary data collection strategy or a natural outgrowth of observation strategies Mc Millan J.H and Schumacher C.J, (2001:443).

The researcher have selected to use the in-depth interviews as the researcher have learnt from many authors in the literature study he has consulted and most of them are of the opinion that qualitative research interviews will enable him to understand and know the events, actions, experiences, feelings and knowledge of the participants under study. The researcher tried to the best of his ability to meet the participants face to face for interviewing purposes. In their responses, the researcher had been able to identify that parents have a role to play in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching.

Tuckman (1972) cited by Cohen and Manion, (1982:243) an interview provide access to what is inside a person's head, makes it possible to measure what a person knows, what a person likes or dislike and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

On the basis of the above explanation, the researcher relied upon his participants' worldview. The researcher have opted to use interviews in his project as an effort to obtain greater clarity to the problem involved, or as the main source of information or to supplement other findings, concerning the role of parents to the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching.

The researcher was made aware of the weakness and limitations of this data collection techniques such as the inconvenience caused by a person's reasoning ability adversely affected by factors such as fatigue, stress, illness, heat and density. The respondent sometimes gives answers in an interview situation that are less than his best effort because the interviewer arrived when the dog was barking, dinner was burning or the baby was crying. The unwillingness or uncomfortably on interviewees in sharing ideas was also a problem.

Schurink E.M (2000:306) is of the meaning that from the outset it should be explained to them that the relationship will hold little or no benefit for them other than they will have the undivided attention of a patient and non-critical listeners.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The researcher made an application that was submitted to Nzhelele East Circuit and later an approval letter was received from Vhembe District Department of Education. An application was also submitted to the Local Municipality namely; Thulamela Municipality Ward 28 and an approval letter

was received granting the researcher to conduct research in all communities under Ward 28. (See appendix A and B)

The researcher visited schools where interviews were to be conducted and arranged with the school managers about the date and time when interviews can be conducted. The main aim of the first visit was to familiarize the school managers about the purpose of the research and to assure them about the following ethical considerations.

- Participants were informed about the nature and consequences of the research project in which they are involved.
- The information anonymous.
- Privacy and confidentiality will be assured.
- Participants must agree voluntarily to participate; Denzil and Lincoln (2000:138)

Again on that day the researcher arranged with the school manager about the date and time the interview will take place. During the interview the researcher used a tape recorder to help him to capture the interview. He also used notes-taking to backup important aspects. When collecting data the five research phases outlined by McMillan J.H and Schumacher C.J (2001:405) were considered that is:

P l a n n i n g

In this phase the researcher tried to analyze the problem statement and research questions which focus on the data collection efforts. As outlined by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:405) one will have to describe the kind of setting, sites, or interviewees that would seem logically to yield information

about the problem “What are the roles of parents in the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching”.

Beginning data collection

In this phase the researcher tries to gain the confidence of his participants. If the project is not started with the trust and reciprocal relationship with an individual it, cannot be corrected along the way White C.J (2003:80). Over more the researcher shall by all means try to visit, and preferably spend considerable time in their natural habitat.

Basic data collection

In this phase in my project of trying to search the role of parents, the researcher was no more a listener but begin to hear, listen and read what is actually happening. It is in this phase where the researcher was able to make a choice when it comes to the selection of data collection strategies and informants. The researcher identified ideas and facts which need collaboration in the closing phase.

Closing data collection

It is in this phase where the researcher will pay more attention to possible interpretations and verification of emergent findings with key informants, the remaining interviews or documents. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) note “the continual intermeshing of data collection and analysis has direct bearing on how the research is brought to a close”.

C o m p l e t i o n

A s cited by M c M illan J.H and Schum acher C.J (2001:407) completion of the active data collection phase blends into formal data analysis and the constructions of meaningful ways to present the data. All information of all phases is combined to form a whole. It is in this last phase where the researcher will be going to ask a range of questions of the recorded data as the researcher will slowly induce themes, interpretations and propositions.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

W oods P. (1996:53), describes the researcher as a “finely tuned instrument with considerable skills, but is a person no less, with values, beliefs and self”. This important point will always be kept in mind for I know that if I become careless in my data analysis, my morals and beliefs can influence the outcome of this research work, turning it into a biased findings type of research.

Tutty et al. (1996) maintain “the central purpose of analysis in qualitative studies is to sift, sort and organize the masses of information acquired during the negative impact of noting anything and everything to my inexperience in the field, that is the reason why data that has been collected has to be sorted and sifted so as to remain with data that will be useful in the study.

A ccording to De Vos, (2002:339) as cited by Thobejane H.R. data analysis is the process of bringing order , structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. In this study the researcher analyzed the data inductively M cM illan J.H and Schum acher C.J (2001:502). W ith inductive analysis categories and

patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

3.8.1 Validity

By validity we simply mean that the researcher's conclusion is true or correct—that is corresponds to the actual state in reality (White, 2003:19).

McMillan J.H and Schumacher C.J (2001:406) defines validity as the degree to which the explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world. Again, validity in qualitative research is the degree to which the interpretation and concepts have mutual meaning between the participants and the researcher.

Validity may also refer to the degree of relevance of the instruments and in the way the instrument may be considered more reliable. The interviews have been conducted with 8 parents, 8 educators, 6 learners and 4 principals to support and put more emphasis to how do parents restore the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools. Their responses expressed satisfaction to the researcher in this study.

3.8.2 Reliability

Hudson (1981:113-120 as cited by DeVos (2000:85) defines reliability as the accuracy or precision of an instrument; as the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of scores; and as the extent

to which independent administrations of the same instrument yield the same (or similar) results under comparable conditions. For example, if you weigh 80kg on Monday and still weigh 80kg on Tuesday, your scale is reliable if it measures your weight as 80kg on both days.

The criterion of reliability is whether the researcher's instruments are neutral in their effect and would measure the same results when used on other occasions. In this study, reliability means whether or not a measuring instrument gives the same results if somebody else uses it.

3.9 CONSIDERING ETHICAL ISSUES

According to Tutty et.al. (1996:94) "Ethics is a crucial consideration throughout the research process". Confidentiality is of utmost importance when dealing with tapes and transcripts. Even though the researcher have mentioned that it will be his sole responsibility to transcribe data, the researcher still think confidentiality will have to be kept at its highest level. This will be done by assigning the research participants numbers in order to identify them .

Proper permission was negotiated with parents, educators, learners and principals of schools where research was conducted. All the information was discussed with participants in order to accommodate and address their concerns.

3.10 THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

In this study the researcher gave all participants an opportunity to know their rights and powers. They were also told that their privacy is guaranteed in the whole research project (Thobejane H.R.).

McMillan (1993:399) shows how important it is for researchers not to violate the privacy of the participants. Suggestions that other participants had regarding aspects of their right to privacy were also considered

3.11 CONFIDENTIALITY

Interviewees should be satisfied that their identity and any information that they provide will in all circumstances be treated confidential. A pseudonym should be used if preferred by interviewees. The interviewer should at all times respect the dignity of interviewees. It is difficult for interviewees to disclose personal and confidential information that could harm their reputation (C.J. White, 2003:79)

In the case of “deviants”, “the vulnerable subject needs to be assured that the researcher is legitimate, not an undercover police officer or a psychologist doing an assessment. Such an assurance must come from those they already trust” (Letkeman, 1980 as cited by Schurink, 2000:306). Hence, interviewers would employ the “snowball” technique for recruiting interviewees.

3.12 CONCLUSION

In this last chapter a thorough description of various aspects of methodology was discussed. The researcher has included among others; aspects of Research design, Research population and sample, Data collection techniques, Data collection procedures, Data analysis, Validity and Reliability of the study, Considering ethical issues, Right to Privacy and Confidentiality. The following chapter entails Empirical research.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data analysis and research findings. The method used in data analysis has been primarily the inductive method. According to White (2003:4) “in an inductive argument, genuine supporting evidence can lead to highly probable conclusions” and “in an inductive argument, supporting statements merely lend gradual support to the conclusion”.

The chapter has four sections, section A for parents, section B for educators, section C for learners and section D for principals

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher has to make sure that when sifting the information, will have to be guided by the goal of the research not to throw away important facts due to the researcher’s wished findings. The researcher will do the analysis exercise supplemented by the advice he will seek from the promoter.

The reason for embarking on this inquiry is to understand the personal realities of the research participants through interviews that have been conducted and to gain the different experiences, which parents might have with regard to the restoration of the culture of learning and teaching. The researcher understands the fact that data will be analyzed from the masses of information. The

following is a procedure, step by step process, which indicates how data will be analyzed.

4.2.1 Preparing data in transcript form

According to Tutty, et.al. (1996:92) “a transcript is the written material that the researcher had gathered”. A data collection technique used in this research project involves interviews and it is important for the researcher that the transcript form will consist of words that will have been spoken during the process as well as non-verbal interactions such as pauses and when an interviewee will be laughing.

4.2.2 Choosing a method of analysis

The researcher has opted to use interim analysis method because he wanted to save time when he will be finalizing analysis by the end of data collection. Mc Millan and Schumacher (2001:460) indicate that using this method the researcher will be able to “scan data as soon as collected” and ‘refocusing” on that data at a final stage to make interpretations out of it. It is the researcher’s understanding that, he will be able to organize data on hand well in advance and that will minimize a situation wherein it may be difficult to classify some long previously recorded information.

4.2.3 Reporting

This is the stage where the researcher needs to round off his work and make what Kvale (1996;88) calls “a readable product, presented in a manner that benefits scientific criteria.” It therefore implies that the researcher will be through with his data analysis and satisfied himself that he has completed his research within the perimeters prescribed by the topic, the aims and the population involved.

4.3 METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

In this chapter the method of interpretation is mainly inductive. Tables and percentages supplement it. For all items the findings are presented at first and then followed by the researcher’s interpretations.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

4.4.1 Interviews

The type of the problem under investigation namely how do parents restore the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools necessitated the use of interviews in this research. The problem to be investigated has led the researcher to interview the parents, teachers, learners and principals.

4.4.1.1 Need for Interviews

The researcher thought that it is necessary to use interviews for collecting data as an interview provides access to what is inside to a person's head, makes it possible to measure what a person knows (Knowledge or Information), what a person likes or dislikes and what a person thinks (Attitudes and Beliefs).

4.4.1.2 Constructive Interviews

The researcher prepared the interview schedules and the tape recorder was taken along to record the interview.

4.4.1.3 Conducting Interviews

The researcher conducted the research personally at the school and communities during the time given to him by the School Manager and the Ward Councillor when he was making appointments.

SECTION A

4.4.1.4 INTERVIEW FOR PARENTS

Table 4.4.1.4.1. Respondents were asked about their gender

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Male	3	37.5
Female	5	62.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of parents interviewed were female while 37.5 were male.

Table 4.4.1.4.2. Respondents were asked about their age

Response	Numbers	Percentage
20-30	2	25
31-40	4	50
41-50	1	12.5
Over 50	1	12.5
Total	8	100

50% of parents interviewed are of the age rank 31-40, 25% 20-30, 12.5% are of the age rank 41-50 and the last 12.5% are of the age 50 and above. This shows that the majority of parents are from 31 to 40 years.

Table 4.4.1.4.3. Respondents were asked about their highest academic qualifications

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Std 10	3	37.5
B A	2	25
B E D	1	12.5
B A H O N S	1	12.5
M .E D	1	12.5
P H D	0	0
Total	8	100

37.5% of parents interviewed passed Std 10, 25% had B A , 12.5% have B E D , another 12.5% had B A H O N S and the last 12.5% had M .E D . It is fortunate to note that none of the respondents has P H D .

Table 4.4.1.4.4. Respondents were asked about their employment

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Employed	5	62.5
Unemployed	3	37.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of parents are employed and 37.5% of them are not. It is encouraging to note that 62.5% of parents are working while 37.5% is not working. It is pleasing to note that the majority of parents can be able to finance studies of their children as the majority of them are working.

Table 4.4.1.4.5. Respondents were asked about their marital status

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Single-parent	3	37.5
Married	5	62.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of parents are married and 37.5% of them are singles.

Table 4.4.1.4.6. Respondents were asked about the culture of teaching and learning facing the schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Good	2	25
Fair	1	12.5
Poor	5	62.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of parents are employed and 37.5% of them are not. The majority of respondents (62.5%) say the quality of teaching and learning is very poor. 25% say the quality is good and 12.5% says the quality is fair.

Table 4.4.1.4.7. Respondents were asked if the school community involve them in the education of their children

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	0	0
Sometimes	1	12.5
No	7	87.5
Total	8	100

The majority of respondents (87.5%) say that the school does not involve them in the education of the children; only 12.5% say that sometimes they are involved especially when school progress reports are taken at the end of the year.

SECTION B

4.4.1.5 INTERVIEW FOR EDUCATORS

Table 4.4.1.5.1. Respondents were asked about their gender

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Male	3	37.5
Female	5	62.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of educators interviewed were female while 37.5 were male. It is clear that the majority of educators in primary schools are lady teachers. This started long time ago when only females had to work at primary school, therefore this is still a norm at primary schools.

Table 4.4.1.5.2. Respondents were asked about their age

Response	Numbers	Percentage
20-30	2	25
31-40	4	50
41-50	1	12.5
Over 50	1	12.5
Total	8	100

50% of educators interviewed are of the age rank 31-40, 25% 20-30, 12.5% are of the age rank 41-50 and the last 12.5% are of the age 50 and above. This shows that the majority of educators are from 31 to 40 years.

Table 4.4.1.5.3. Respondents were asked about their highest academic qualifications

Response	Numbers	Percentage
PTC	1	12.5
JPTC	0	0
SPTD	2	25
FDE, HED, ACE	4	50
BA, B.ED	1	12.5
Total	8	100

50% of educators interviewed had FDE, HED, ACE. 25% had SPTD, 12.5% have PTC and the last 12.5% had BA, B.ED. It is pleasing to find that the majority of educators are holding Diplomas which are regarded as the entrance to the teaching fraternity in our country.

Table 4.4.1.5.4. Respondents were asked whether they regard parents as partners in education

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	5	62.5
No	3	37.5
Total	8	100

62.5% of educators regard parents as partners in education and 37.5% do not regard them as partners in education. It is encouraging to note that 62.5% of educators regard parents as partners in education.

Table 4.4.1.5.5. Respondents were asked about their teaching experience

Response	Numbers	Percentage
1-4 years	2	25
5-10 years	3	37.5
11-15	2	25
16+	1	12.5
Total	8	100

37.5% of educators interviewed had 5-10 years experience, 25% had 1-4 years, 25% had 11-15 years experience and only 12.5% have 16 and above years of teaching experience.

Table 4.4.1.5.6. Respondents were asked about the culture of teaching and learning facing the schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Poor	5	62.5
Fair	1	12.5
Excellent	2	25
Total	8	100

62.5% of educators think that the culture of teaching and learning is poor, 25% think that it is excellent and 12.5% think that the culture is fair. It is disappointing to note that the highest percentage (62.5%) of educators think that the culture of teaching and learning is poor.

Table 4.4.1.5.7. Respondents were asked if educators are motivated to teach at their schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	0	0
Sometimes	2	25
No	6	75
Total	8	100

75% of educators think that educators are not motivated while only 25% think that they are sometimes motivated and none of them think that they are motivated. Respondents further maintained that they only teach because they want their salaries at the end of the months as they don't have anywhere else to go. In actual fact they are very much demotivated.

Table 4.4.1.5.8. Respondents were asked whether they believe in home-school based relationships

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	2	25
No	6	75
Total	8	100

75% of educators do not believe in home-school based relationships, while 25% believe in home-school based relationships. This is a clear indication that there is no harmonious working together between the educators and the parents of learners at the schools. In other words parents are not involved.

SECTION C

4.4.1.6. INTERVIEW FOR LEARNERS

Table 4.4.1.6.1. Respondents were asked about their gender

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Male	3	50
Female	3	50
Total	6	100

50% of the respondents were male and 50% were female though this balance was not planned for.

Table 4.4.1.6.2. Respondents were asked about their age

Response	Numbers	Percentage
9	1	16.7
10	2	33.3
11	1	16.7
12	2	33.3
13 and above	0	0
Total	6	100

33.3% of respondents were of age 10, 33.3 % of respondents were of age 12, 16.7% of the respondents were of age 9 and 16.7% were of age 11.

Table 4.4.1.6.3. Respondents were asked about their grades

Response	Numbers	Percentage
4	1	16.7
5	2	33.3
6	1	16.7
7	2	33.3
Total	6	100

33.3% of respondents were in grade 5, another 33.3 % of respondent were in grade 7, 16.7% of the respondents were in grade 4 and the last 16.7% were in grade 6.

Table 4.4.1.6.4. Respondents were asked whether they enjoy the culture of learning in their schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	0	0
Sometimes	1	16.7
No	5	83.3
Total	6	100

83.3% of respondents do not enjoy the culture of learning in their schools while only 16.6 enjoy it. The data clearly indicates that the learning morale is very low and as such there is a need for culture of learning need to be restored.

Table 4.4.1.6.5. Respondents were asked with whom they stay at home

Response	Numbers	Percentage
G r a n n i e s	2	33.3
P a r e n t s	1	16.7
S i n g l e p a r e n t s	1	16.7
O t h e r k i d s	2	33.3
T o t a l	6	100

33.3 % of respondents stay with their parents, and the next 33.3% with other kids, 16.7% of the respondents stay with parents while the last 16.7 stay with single parents. It is evident from the data that the majority of learners stay with their grannies and on the other hand with other kids themselves with no elder person or guardian. Learners who stay alone also indicated that they are usually victims of abuse.

Table 4.4.1.6.6. Respondents were asked about teaching and learning aids used in their classes

Response	Numbers	Percentage
T e x t b o o k s	6	100
C o m p u t e r s	0	0
O v e r h e a d p r o j e c t o r s	0	0
T e l e v i s i o n s	0	0
T o t a l	6	100

100% response has indicated that the only teaching and learning aids are text books. There are no computers, overhead projectors and televisions at their schools.

Table 4.4.1.6.7. Respondents were asked their parents' views concerning the culture of teaching and learning at their schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Satisfied	0	33.3
Worried	4	16.7
No comment	2	16.7
Total	6	100

66.6 % of respondents said that their parents are worried about the culture of teaching and learning while 33.3% did not comment. The majority of the parents in rural schools are not committed to school activities. Most of them say that they rely upon the school manager for everything.

Table 4.4.1.6.8. Respondents were asked whether they will pass at the end of the year

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Don't know	3	50
Fail	2	33.3
Pass	1	16.7
Total	6	100

50 % of respondents are not sure whether they will make it or not at the end of the year. It is a clear indication that learners are not motivated to learn. 33.3 % are sure that they won't make it at the end of the year. As of now they are doing nothing to improve their learning abilities and it is unfortunate to realise that only 16.7 it's ready to progress to the next grade.

Table 4.4.1.6.9. Respondents were asked if their parents visit the school

Response	Numbers	Percentage
No	4	66.7
Sometimes	1	16.7
Yes	1	16.7
Total	6	100

66.7% of respondents said that their parents never visit their schools. The table clearly indicate that parents are not involved to the education of their children. There is a need for the parents to get involved so that at the end of the day the culture of teaching and learning can be restored.

SECTION D

4.4.1.7 INTERVIEW FOR PRINCIPALS

Table 4.4.1.7.1. Respondents were asked about their gender

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Male	1	25
Female	3	75
Total	4	100

75% of principals interviewed were female while only 25% of them were male.

Table 4.4.1.7.2. Respondents were asked about their age

Response	Numbers	Percentage
30-40	1	25
41-50	2	50
Over 50	1	25
Total	4	100

50% of the respondents indicated that they fall under the age rank 41-50, 25% of them 30-40 and the last 25% are over 50 years in age. The table has indicated that very few principals will exit the department through retirement.

Table 4.4.1.7.3. Respondents were asked about their highest academic qualifications

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Std 10	0	0
B A	2	50
B .ED	0	0
B A H O N S	1	25
M .ED	1	25
PHD	0	0
Total	4	100

It is quite interesting that 50% of the respondents have B A , while 25% have B E D and B A H O N S . There is a need for the school managers to improve their academic qualifications as we are living in a dynamic world of knowledge .

Table 4.4.1.7.4. Respondents were asked about their highest professional qualification

Response	Numbers	Percentage
P T C	1	25
J P T C	1	25
S P T D	1	25
H E D A N D A C E	1	25
Total	4	100

It is unfortunate that 25% respond indicates that we still have principals that are in position of P T C as their highest professional qualification in the education system . It is no more acceptable as for one to enter into the teaching fraternity one needs to at least have a teaching diploma , the other 25% belongs

to the JPTC , 25% belongs to the SPTD and the other 25% to the HED and ACE

Table 4.4.1.7.5. Respondents were asked about the culture of teaching and learning at their schools

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Excellent	0	0
Good	0	0
Fair	1	25
Poor	3	75
Total	4	100

75% of the respondents indicated that the culture of teaching and learning in their schools is poor, while 25% indicated that it is fair. It is clear that the culture of teaching and learning is very poor.

Table 4.4.1.7.6. Respondents were asked whether there is contribution of provincial department of education towards a positive culture of teaching and learning at schools.

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Good	0	0
Fair	1	25
None	3	75
Total	4	100

75% of the respondents said that there is no contribution from the provincial department of education towards a positive culture of teaching and learning at schools while only 25% think it is fair. The table clearly indicates that the

provincial department of education is not assisting schools in recognising the importance of teaching and learning as their central task.

Table 4.4.1.7.7. Respondents were asked if they viewed parents as partners in education

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	2	50
No	2	50
Total	4	100

50% of the respondents are of the opinion that cooperation between parents and educators is the cornerstone for the child to be sufficiently educated. 50% of the respondents are of the opinion that parents are not professional and as such their inputs cannot be taken in educational matters.

Table 4.4.1.7.8. Respondents were asked whether they believe in extra teaching lessons before or after classes and on holidays

Response	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	1	25
No	3	75
Total	4	100

75% of the respondents do not believe in extra teaching lessons and only 25% believe in them. The majority of respondents complained that they cannot offer extra studies as they are the most underpaid government officials.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter it was clearly revealed through the responses of the respondents of the interviews that the culture of teaching and learning needs to be restored. A new model for teaching and learning seems necessary. The following chapter will come up with the findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is in this chapter that the testing of the hypothesis will be conducted and a recommendation given. A recommendation is based on important aspects that are worthy of acceptance and as a suggestion that something is suitable for a particular purpose. The recommendation given in this study is in accordance with the results of the research. As recommendations are, in a sense suggestions, such a recommendation could be considered for involving parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning.

In Chapter One the researcher gave the background of the problem. He also paid attention to the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools. The significance of the study, aims and objectives of the study, definition of concepts, Motivation for the research and Limitation of the study were also looked at. Chapter Two dealt with the Review of Literature. It is in this chapter where in roles of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in different countries were investigated. Chapter Three dealt with the Methodology of the study. Methods and designs employed during the process during the process of data collection have been thoroughly dealt with in this chapter. The number of samples to be interviewed has been indicated in this chapter. Chapter Four dealt with analysis and interpretation of data collected in Chapter three. More responses

from different interviewees have been analysed and interpreted. In Chapter Five which is the rounding chapter the researcher focussed on the findings and recommendations of the study.

Cooperation between teachers and parents is essential and cannot be avoided for effective teaching and learning at school. It must be noted that parents' involvement in the education of their children is not necessarily automatic. Improving parent involvement is one of the most challenging tasks facing educators today. The school principal as the managerial leader is expected to play a decisive role in creating a management culture that is oriented towards parent involvement.

5.2 FINDINGS

5.2.1 Findings pertaining to parents

- There are more female parents than male parents who have their children in primary school.
- More parents in primary schools have passed grade 12.
- The majority of parents are at the ages between 31-40
- Most of them are employed as migrant workers.
- The majority of parents are married.
- Most of the parents are not satisfied with the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools.
- Parents complain that they are not involved in the education of their children.

5.2.2 Findings pertaining to educators

- There are more female educators than male educators at most Primary schools.
- The majority of the educators in the Primary schools are between 31 years and 40 years.
- More educators have teachers' diplomas and they are furthering their studies.
- Educators regard parents as partners in education though they are unable to involve them.
- Most educators have over 5 years teaching experience.
- Most educators agree that their schools are characterized by poor culture of teaching and learning.
- The majority of educators are demotivated because their salaries are very low.
- Most educators do not believe in home-school based relationships.
- Educators have neglected their work and learners did as they pleased.
- The working morale of educators is very low.

5.2.3 Findings pertaining to learners

- The learning morale of learners interviewed was found to be very low.
- Most of the learners interviewed are between ten and twelve in age.
- There are also learners who are old enough to be in the primary schools
- Most of the learners do not enjoy the culture of learning.
- Learners complain that teachers are not teaching them.
- The majority of learners stay with their grannies at home.

- There are also learners staying with their brothers and sisters at home.
- Most schools do not have teaching and learning aids.
- Most schools use text books as their only teaching and learning aids.
- Majority of learners emphasize that their parents are not satisfied about the culture of teaching and learning at school.
- Half the number of the learners interviewed is not sure as whether they will pass at the end of the year.
- Most of the learners indicated that their parents have no time to visit schools.

5.2.4 Findings pertaining to principals

- More female principals have been employed in the primary schools.
- Younger principals are School managers in primary schools.
- Most principals are still holding Primary Teachers Certificate which is unacceptable.
- Principals should be life-long learners.
- Principals in the schools interviewed agreed that the culture of teaching and learning is poor.
- Principals also complain that the Limpopo provincial department of education is contributing nothing towards the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools.
- Half the number of principals interviewed viewed parents as partners in education.
- The majority of principals are not ready for implementing extra teaching lessons.
- Principals need to be workshopped on the managerial roles.

- Principals need to know that they are instructional leaders and are responsible for organisational cultures at their schools.
- Principals should make sure that they have effective school policies at their schools.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Recommendations to parents

- Parents' involvement is important in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning and parents should spend more time on it.
- Parents should be educated in participating in school activities.
- The school should find ways of involving parents in the education of their children.
- Parents should be workshopped on how to be involved in their children's work irrespective of their level of literacy.
- Parents have to encourage their children to do school work at home.
- Parents should attend and help with extra mural activities.
- Parents should attend parents' meeting.
- They have to assist with disciplinary matters, especially of their own children.
- Parents should fight for the restoration of the cultures in schools as it affects the future of their children.
- Parents should encourage and support the restoration of trust between the home and the school community.

5.3.2 Recommendations to educators

- More male educators must be employed at managerial posts in primary schools so as to reduce the imbalance of the past.
- Educators are encouraged to be life-long learners so that they will be able to adapt with changes.
- Educators should be workshopped on how to involve parents in the education of their children.
- Educators should have high morals and a commitment to teaching as this will result in a positive climate conducive for teaching and learning to take place.
- Educators should view parents as partners in education.
- It must be noted by the educators that home-school based relationships is the only weapon that can restore the culture of teaching and learning.
- All role players should work together in order to create a positive school climate.
- Restoration of the culture of teaching and learning refers to an attitude of all the role players towards teaching and learning.

5.3.3 Recommendations to learners

- The school must find ways to involve the department to cater for learners whose parents have died because of AIDS and other diseases.
- The department of education must come up with conducive strategies for implementing redeployment and restructuring process as it demoralize learners psychologically.

- The school should find ways of dealing with learners who are the victim of parents' separation and divorce. In most schools, approximately half of the learners have adversely been affected by family break-ups.
- Most of the learners in schools are leaving in bereavement situations. The passing away of parent(s) is most traumatic to a learner. Children often react by developing emotional or behavioural problems.
- The school community with the help of provincial department of education must make sure that the morale of teaching is brought back so that learners will end up enjoying the culture of learning in schools.
- The school and the department of education should improve their teaching and learning aids rather than to use text books only.

5.3.4 Recommendations to principals

- The imbalances of the past needs to be redressed. Let there be the appointment of also male principals in primary schools.
- Principals are encouraged to remain life-long learners as they are the instrument of change.
- Principals must formulate guiding mission in their schools
- Principals have to know that parent involvement has a significant effect on the quality of the learners' experience of teaching and learning in their schools.
- They have to know that without cooperation between the parents and school community the culture of teaching and learning cannot be restored.
- Principals are encouraged to regard parents as partners in education as this is the cornerstone that can help us to restore the culture of teaching and learning in our schools.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This conclusion differs from other conclusions at the end of each chapter, in the sense that it is the last part of the study concluding the most important arguments put forward in the dissertation. This chapter ends up the research on the role of parents in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in primary schools under Nzhelele East Circuit in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. In this study it was clear that parents are important instruments in the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning and they need the support of other role players (educators, learners and principals). Role players were made to be aware that parent involvement supports learners' learning behaviour and attitudes regardless of factors such as parents' income, educational level, and whether or not parents are employed that is the involvement of parents who are well educated, well to-do or have larger amounts of time to be involved has not been shown to be more beneficial than the involvement of less-advantaged parents. All parent involvement works and works well.

The research will also benefit the school community, as they will end up having disciplined learners at school. Schools where learners are failing, improve dramatically when parents are called in to help.

It is therefore necessary for parents and educators to get to know each other and work together as equal partners.

All parents, irrespective of their background and level of literacy can become involved in supporting their children's learning and development at home.

Home-learning has been described as the cornerstone of the future as the research proves beyond any doubt that learning at home results in higher grades and positive behavior patterns.

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO PARENTS

a. Gender

Male	
Female	

b. Age

Male	
Female	

c. Academic qualifications

Std 10	
B A	
B E D	
B A H O N S	
M . E D	
P H D	

d. Why is the employment rate very high in your community?

.....

e. How is the marital status in your village?

.....

f. What are the causes that forced the culture of teaching and learning to collapse?

.....

g. How can parents help to restore the culture of teaching and learning?

.....

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO EDUCATORS

a. Gender

Male	
Female	

b. Age

Male	
Female	

c. Academic qualifications

Std 10	
BA	
BED	
BA HONS	
M.ED	
PHD	

d. Professional qualification

PTC	
JPTC	
SPTD	
FDE, HED, ACE	

e. What are the specific roles, responsibilities of both parents and educators in partnership?

.....

f. How can we eliminate obstacles which render partnership to be dysfunctional?

.....

g. Why is the culture of teaching and learning poor at your school?

.....

h. Why are you so demotivated to the job you have been trained for?

.....

i. What does parents involvement entails?

.....

Thank you

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO LEARNERS

a. Gender

Male	
Female	

b. Age

Male	
Female	

c. Are you satisfied in the Grade in which you are? Why?

.....

d. Why is the teaching and learning morale low?

.....

e. How do you cope to live without parents at home?

.....

f. What is the level of Computer literacy at your school?

.....

g. What is your comment concerning how your parents view the culture of teaching in your school?

.....

h. How much are you prepared to face the year-end examination?

.....

i. How often do your parents visit your school?

.....

Thank you

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO PRINCIPALS

a. Gender

Male	
Female	

b. Age

Male	
Female	

c. Academic qualifications

Std 10	
B A	
B E D	
B A H O N S	
M . E D	
P H D	

d. Professional qualification

PTC	
JPTC	
SPTD	
FDE, HED, ACE	

e. What is the nature of the culture of teaching and learning at your school?

.....

f. How does your provincial department of education provide you support in leadership and administration?

.....

g. What are you doing to make sure that parents remain partners in education?

.....

h. How do you respond to call made by the provincial department that all schools should engage in extra teaching lessons?

.....

Thank you

APPENDIX G:

Map of Vhembe showing Nzhelele area

