

**CHALLENGES, ILLITERATE CAREGIVERS
EXPERIENCE TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN'S
EDUCATION**

By

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Declaration

I declare that, the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in it's entirely or in part, submitted it to any University, for a degree that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledge complete references.

Signature: _____

May 2015

MR BARRINGTON MTOBELI MAKUNGA



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Dedication

This research is dedicated to my late mother, **Christina Nomaphelo Makunga**, who guided me spiritually throughout the study and to my wife **Nompiliso Confidence Makunga**, who provided me with support while I was busy with the studies. To my experiences, by virtue of birth, grew up and shared from the challenges experienced by the caregivers who participated in the research study.

Barrington Makunga



Abstract

Primary Caregiver's ability to provide a healthy, nurturing and stimulating environment is critical, but Caregivers in South Africa, especially those living in rural communities, are facing many challenges, including a combination of poverty, lack of education and skills, as well as social isolation, which directly and indirectly affect their ability to care for their children in a way to ensure their optimal developmental outcomes. Residents in far rural communities, such as in the Eastern Cape, have had less opportunities to go to school, due to various reasons and Caregivers therefore face multiple burdens. For the purposes of this study, it is important to clarify with reference the term "Caregiver". The South African Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) differentiates between biological parents, guardians and caregivers. According to the Act(Children's 2005),parents may be a biological father or biological father, a guardian being an honorary parent to the child and a caregiver is any family member rather than the biological parent or guardian who is concerned with care, welfare and development of the child. Although there is such differentiation, caregiving remains central to the holistic care required of any adult responsible for the nurturing of children. This will include biological father, mother, grandparents, extended family members, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles as well as any person who is concerned with the care, welfare and development of the child and has been, after application to court of law, granted permission to exercise parental responsibilities over the child.

The population for this study encompassed caregivers who are least educated and or never attended school in the Ku-Jonga rural settlement in Coffee bay and research participants were purposively selected from the populations. Data was collected by means of focus groups with the aid of an interview guide. The interviews were conducted in Xhosa and later translated into English .A Thematic system was used according to the Tesch's eight steps and ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, informed consent and confidentiality were adheredto.The community has most citizens who identified with the target population. This is based on historical factors. The participants freely expressed themselves and contributed to the findings and thereby assisting the researcher reach the conclusions about experiences illiterate caregivers experience to support their children's education.

Key Words

Caregivers, literacy, illiteracy, parenthood, rural development,
exploratory research



Acronyms

| | |
|---------|--|
| ABET | : Adult Basic Education |
| IDP | : Integrated development plan |
| DsD | : Department of Social Development |
| KSD | : King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality |
| ORTDM | : O.R Tambo district municipality |
| RSA | : Republic of South Africa |
| StatsSA | : Statistics South Africa |
| SAHO | : South African History Online |
| SAIRR | : South African Institute of Race Relations |
| WLF | : World Literacy Foundation |



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

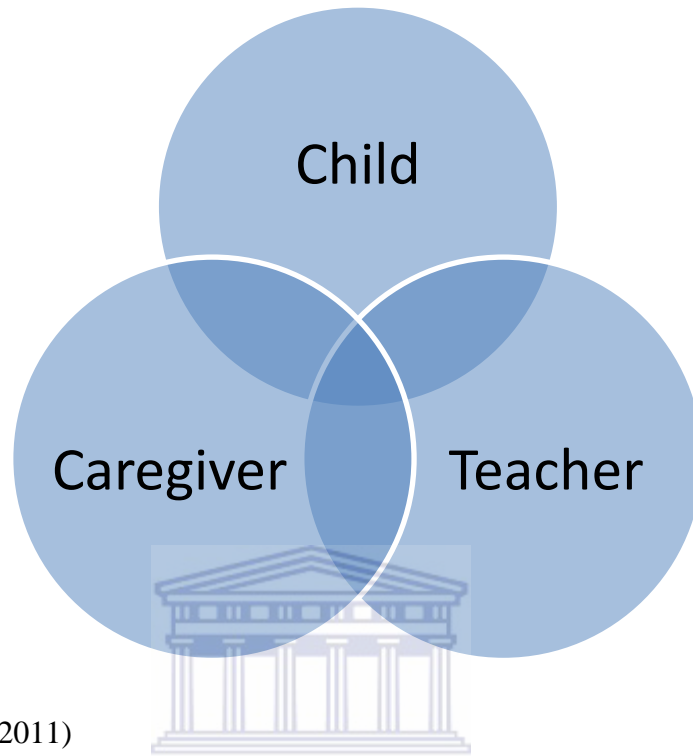
1.1 Introduction

A primary caregiver's ability to provide a healthy, nurturing and stimulating environment for his or her children is critical. But caregivers in South Africa, especially those living in rural communities, face many challenges which include poverty, a lack of education and skills, as well as social isolation (Mathambo & Gibbs, 2008). These factors directly and indirectly affect their ability to care for children in a manner which ensures the children's best developmental outcomes. Residents in rural communities such as the Eastern Cape have had fewer opportunities to go to school, and caregivers therefore face multiple burdens (Department of Education, 2013)

For the purposes of this study, it is important to clarify what is meant by the term "caregiver". The South African Children's Act 38 of 2005 differentiates between biological parents, guardians and caregivers. A parent is the biological father or mother of the child; a guardian is an honorary parent to the child, and a caregiver is any family member rather than the biological parent or guardian who is concerned with care, welfare and development of the child. Although there is such differentiation, caregiving remains central to the holistic care required of any adult responsible for the nurturing of children. This will include biological father, mother, grandparents, extended family members, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles as well as any person who is concerned with the care, welfare and development of the child and who has been, after application to a court of law, granted permission to exercise parental responsibilities over the child.

Caregivers are seen as one of the three key role-players and partners in the education of children (Department of Education, 1996), as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The Child-Caregiver-Teacher partnership in the education of the child



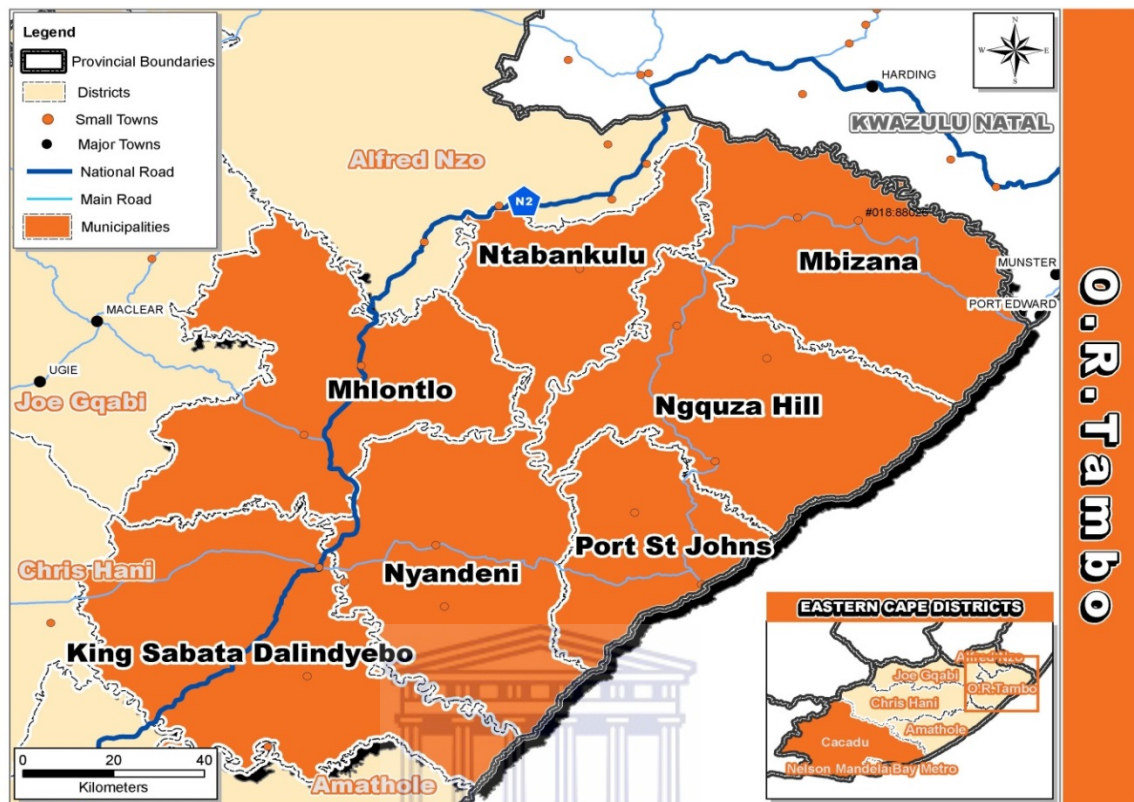
Source: Cuban (2011)

The South African Department of Education views teacher, caregiver and learner as key partners in the educational process. As much as teachers are able to share their experiences in a class, it is not clear how parents perceive and experience the support role expected of them (Sibiya, 2005:44). Matriculation results in 2013 and 2014 showed that the Eastern Cape had the lowest pass rate of all provinces (Department of Education, 2014).

1.2 Background and contextual information

The post-1994 Department of Education introduced new policies, which included adult basic education, to bring about change to ensure that the literacy gaps that existed among adults or caregivers were minimised. However, some rural communities, including rural villages attached to Coffee Bay in the OR Tambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, could not benefit from these changes, because residents are still living and believing in the lifestyle of their forefathers.

Figure 2: OR Tambo District Municipality



Source: South African Local Government (2012)

The statistics on illiteracy in South Africa (StatsSA, 2011) do not indicate a distinct percentage for Coffee Bay and its rural villages, where this research study is conducted. However, it does provide for the district municipality as well as the local municipality under which the area falls. According to Statistics South Africa (2014) the King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality comprises two magisterial rural communities, namely Mthatha and Mqanduli. Coffee Bay falls under Mqanduli magisterial area. It is 3 028 square kilometres and had a population of 451 710 in 2011 with 95 382 households. Of this population, 57, 8% are illiterate, 91% have no access to electricity, 93, 3% have no formal sanitation and 77% are unemployed, which does not provide a conducive context for good education

Coffee Bay is subdivided into two, namely a hotel and business zone situated on the seashore, as well as a village or settlement called Ku Jonga, in KwaTshezi administration area. The area forms part of the King Sabatha Dalindyebo local

municipality in OR Tambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape province. A chief heads the community, and is assisted by a ward councillor who is politically deployed by the local municipality.

Economically, socially and technologically, the fast-changing world seems to be increasing the gap between literate and illiterate people in parts of the King Sabatha Dalindyebo municipality. There is ongoing concern about the inadvertent failure of many parents to be involved in their children's schools and who struggle to provide educational support to their children. One of the reasons for this is the low level of literacy or even illiteracy of the parents.

There are four primary schools in the village of Ku Jonga, attended by children from the rural settlement. As much as teachers in these schools are able to share their experiences in a class, it is not clear how caregivers view and experience the support role expected of them (Sibiya,2005:44).

Okantey (2008) as quoted by Nicholas-Omeregbe (2010:176) maintains that educated caregivers, by virtue of their education level, are equipped to recognise the importance of caregiver involvement with the child, and the fact that caregiver-teacher relationships promote educational attainment and academic achievement of their children. Nicholas-Omeregbe (2010:177-179) further indicates that educational level and income are interconnected. This means that caregivers who are educated possess the potential for increased income. Therefore children from families with high socio-economic status are likely to improve their academic achievements because their caregivers (by virtue of their literacy levels) have higher aspirations for their children (Nicholas-Omeregbe, 2010). And the opposite is also true.

According to Hemmings (1997:27), apartheid South Africa was the only country in the world in which the government deliberately set out to separate and limit education for the majority of its population. According to Baard and Schriner (1986), the 1953 Bantu Education Act was one of the most offensive racist laws in South African education history. The legislation was intended to separate black South Africans from the main, education system (which was comparatively well-resourced) for whites (South African History Online [SAHO], 2007). It brought African education under control of the government and extended apartheid to black schools. During the apartheid regime, the

education system was characterised by imbalances and inequalities that were politically intentional. This system affected mostly the rural communities, especially in the former Transkei homeland, where this research is conducted.

It is on this basis that a need was identified to explore and describe the challenges illiterate caregivers experience in rural Ku Jonga, Coffee Bay, to support their children's education.

1.3 Theoretical framework of the study

The study was conducted according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems approach which states that children develop in a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment. The approach was found to be relevant for this study as it examines the experiences of adults in the life space of the children. Bronfenbrenner (1994) developed five theoretical structures which he termed "structures of environment" which are: (1) microsystem, (2) mesosystem, (3) exosystem (4) macrosystem and (5) chronosystem.

The first level which is in the centre is the microsystem. According to Berk (2013), the microsystem is the setting where children interact with caregivers or teachers. The second layer (mesosystem) contains the connections between the family, in this case caregivers and school (the teachers), while the exosystem includes a wide range of elements that the child does not experience directly but which have potential influence on the child's wellbeing. According to Bronfenbrenner (1994) as cited in Berk (2013), the macrosystem encompasses the larger cultural and subcultural settings for all the three systems to function and these are interlinked.

This study explores the challenges that illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children's education; therefore it is necessary to examine how they are currently providing the support and also look at additional support systems available to them within the environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory will be further discussed in Chapter 2

1.4 Problem formulation

The Eastern Cape Province of South Africa is known for its low matriculation pass rate (Department of Education, 2014). In the Ku Jonga rural settlement in Coffee Bay, there are four primary schools. The remote rural environment can be regarded as unfavourable to children's education because caregivers in rural areas are often disadvantaged by being financially poor, illiterate and are historically rooted in a culture which does not consider formal education important.

According to Misra (2006:169), rural people show little optimism about the future and think that education is only a necessity for rich, urban people. Caregivers play almost no role in their children's academic achievements. Misra (2006) further states that some rural people may think that if they can survive and earn with little or no education, then so can their children. It is therefore imperative that factors contributing to the challenges in the caregivers' daily experiences be identified.

Considering these problems, a need was found to explore the challenges caregivers experience in supporting their children's education. A considerable amount of research has examined various inputs on the causes of literacy crisis. For example, the World Literacy Foundation (WLF), 2003 found that a lack of books and learning resources in schools and communities contributes to factors causing illiteracy. WLF (2003) believes that the provision of learning tools, resource kits, books and learning tools to marginalised communities can inspire parents and caregivers to read with and support their children.

1.5 Research question

This study aims to explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience in supporting their children's education. The research question for this study therefore is:

What are the challenges that illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children with education?

The goal of this study is to explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience to support their children in their schoolwork, in the rural Coffee Bay in the Eastern Cape Province. The following objectives of the study are to:

- Explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience when assisting their children with schoolwork.
- Explore how they currently show support to their children.
- Explore what other support they would need to be able to support their children.
- Explore available support by other stakeholders like teachers to assist caregivers and their children.

Research approach: A qualitative research approach was used as it allowed the researcher to be in direct contact with the participants and make use of flexible methods of data collection such as interviews, and focus groups which yield quality and rich information. Boeije (2010) explains that qualitative research uses flexible methods and techniques to describe and understand social phenomena in terms of meaning brought by people. Qualitative research is based on the assumption that individuals have an active role in the construction of social reality; it enables contact with participants and produces rich descriptive data. Creswell (2009) points out that the research builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports and detailed views from information while conducting the study in natural settings. Qualitative research sets less formal relationships with the participants, as participants engage in reciprocal communication with the researcher.

This study found qualitative approach suitable for the data collection, as the data was aimed at hearing the voices of caregivers from the less educated population through their experiences in their natural environment.

1.6 Research design

This study used an exploratory research design to gain insight into the studied area of interest and descriptive research designs to paint a picture of the research problem studied. Neuman (2006) explains that an explorative research design is mainly used with qualitative research and is the first stage in a sequence of studies focusing on the “what” questions. The Department of Education (1997:9) developed a national multi-year implementation plan in order to address the challenge of reducing illiteracy statistics in South Africa. Neuman (2006) further describes the descriptive research design as similar to the explorative design but it seeks to paint a picture of a specific area of focus, asking questions such as “how” and “why”.

By using an explorative design, the researcher sought to explore the experiences of caregivers and the support systems available to them for helping children with their schoolwork. The researcher also explored the types of challenges caregivers experience in supporting their children's education. A descriptive research design was also used to obtain descriptive details of the challenges, as well as factors that contribute to the challenges.

1.7 Methodology

The research methodology of this study included population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study and ethical consideration to be applied in systematic processes of conducting the study.

1.7.1 Population and sampling

Population in research studies can also be described as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. Creswell (2009) describes two types of population, namely target population and accessible population. Target population refers to the culture group of individuals or objects which researchers are interested in generalising their conclusions to, while the accessible population may be referred to as the subset of the target population, also known as the study population (Karlton, 1983, cited in Creswell, 2009). The population for this study was caregivers who had received the minimum of education, or no formal education at all, in the rural Ku Jonga community of Coffee Bay, which is part of King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality, in the Eastern Cape.

Polit and Beck (2004) define a sample as a subset of a population. A sample must be representative of the population from which it was drawn. Similarly, De Vos et al. (2011) identify purposive sampling, theoretical sampling, snow-ball sampling and deviant sampling as sampling techniques of the non-probability method. Non-probability sampling is where every unit of analysis in the population does not have an equal chance of being selected into sample. Patton (1990) suggests using convenient sampling to approach an easily accessible participant. For this study, purposive sampling techniques were used. Convenient and availability sampling were highly considered, taking into account the sensitivity of the study with regard to the underlying assumptions of illiteracy. Some people might not feel comfortable to identify

themselves as illiterate; therefore it was difficult to reach out to all participants (Patton, 1990). Minimally educated and illiterate grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, mothers, stepfathers, stepmothers, aunts and uncles were also included in this study. Children and their peers were excluded from the research. There are households that are headed by children, and have minimal education. This study excluded those, as their experiences might differ to adult experiences.

1.7.2 Data collection

The researcher used focus groups as a suitable method to collect data. According to De Vos et al. (2002), focus groups are a means of better understanding how people feel or think about issues, products or services. The researcher worked with the Chief of the area, since he is the gatekeeper, and interviews were conducted at his palace to accommodate participants, who walked from different villages in the community. The ward councillor, who represents the political sphere of government, was consulted, in order to provide inputs from the government perspective. The researcher made use of interview techniques and communication skills such as open-ended questions, listening, probing and paraphrasing to facilitate the focus groups. The researcher planned to establish flexible relations between him and the participants. Consequently, the approach allowed participants to narrate their stories as they wished, and at a later stage they were easily guided towards the required data. The approach also allowed the researcher to follow up on interesting topics emerging from the interviews. The interviews were videotaped with the permission of the participants, field notes were taken and the data was transcribed verbatim.

1.7.3 Data analysis

According to De Vos et al. (2011), qualitative data analysis refers to the categorisation, ordering and summarising of data to obtain answers to research questions. It is also defined by Babbie (2004) as a non-numeric assessment of observations, content analysis, in-depth interviews and other qualitative research techniques, with their own logic and techniques. In order to conduct a comprehensive data analysis, the study followed Creswell's thematic data analysis. Creswell (2007:75) suggests that qualitative data analysis involves an analysis of themes. After data collection, the researcher transcribed all the interviews thoroughly and read them with the reference field notes in

order to gain general idea of the overall information collected. After transcribing the video recordings of the interviews verbatim, the researcher translated them from Xhosa into English for better understanding of the readers.

Creswell (2009) recommends that researchers should start by reading the shortest and most interesting transcript, reflecting on its underlying meaning and making notes on any viewpoint. Having carried out this process with regard to most of the data, the researcher made lists of all the noted topics and cluster similar topics together.

- Creswell advises that in relation to the drawn-up list on noted topics in the informants' data, the researcher should abbreviate the topics and develop codes on relevant segments in the participant's information. The various categories were given codes and were arranged according to these codes, as indicated by Creswell (2009).
- The codes allocated to each category were then listed alphabetically.
- The researcher made final decision on the abbreviations for each category and then categorised the codes.
- At this stage, Creswell (2009) advises that a descriptive wording for the noted topics should be developed. The researcher then cut and pasted together data pertaining to each category and began with a preliminary analysis.

1.7.4 Trustworthiness

According to Shenton (2004:63), qualitative researchers need to present a convincing case to show that their work is academically sound. Shenton cites Guba's (2005) four criteria for trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility: Shenton (2004:63) concludes that when addressing credibility, investigators attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented. Credibility in this study was ensured by giving each participant opportunity to refuse to participate in this study so as to ensure that only willing participants were involved to participate freely.

Transferability: Terre Blanche et al. (2006:91) call transferability an external validity in which the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another

context, rests more with the investigator who would make transfer, than with the original investigator. To ensure that the data gathered was transferable to similar contexts, the researcher ensured that the all levels of local government were involved, and that they received detailed accounts of the findings at the conclusion of the study.

Dependability: The meeting of the dependability criterion should enable a future investigator to repeat the study (Shenton, 2004:63). In this study, dependability was achieved.

Conformability: Shenton (2004:63) concludes that the construct of conformability captures that traditional concept of objectivity. To achieve conformability, the researcher consulted the participants afterwards, regarding the information they gave during the interview process. This was done to ensure whether inferences drawn from the data analysis process had the intended meaning.

1.7.5 Ethics considerations

The researcher ensured that the ethical codes of behaviour guiding research programmes were adhered to during the course of this research. The researcher first asked the approval of the University of the Western Cape Senate Research Committee and Higher Degree Committee.

Consent forms issued to participants informed them that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without being penalised and without losing any rights they may otherwise be entitled to. Participants were reassured that only information related to the study would be collected and that their privacy was not going to be compromised. Anonymity was ensured by omitting the names of individuals on transcripts and allocating numbers to participants. The interviews were held in a quiet room at the Chief's palace, to ensure privacy and confidentiality (Lund & Lund, 2010).

1.8 Definition of terms and concepts

Caregivers: The South African Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) defines a Caregiver, as any family member rather than the biological parent or guardian who is concerned with the care, welfare and development of the child. This includes single parents, grandparents, sibling-headed families, uncles and aunts as well as step-parents.

Literacy: According to De Beer (2004:219) literacy is about functioning properly, dealing with matters at hand, acting in situations and coping with oneself and one's world. For the purpose of this study, literacy is understood to be ability to read and write, and also being able to help with understanding their children to do their school work.

Illiteracy: Grady (1994) defines illiteracy as an inability to read and write more than one or two simple sentences .or cannot read or write their own names. This is supported by the Oxford English Dictionary, which defined illiteracy as having little or no formal education, and /or inability to read or write.

Parenthood: English dictionaries define parenthood as the state of being the person who gives birth to or takes care and raises a child. According to Meyer (2006) parenthood is being redefined moving away, from the understanding that it was a natural relation founded upon biological reproduction. There are social, economic, religious and scientific developments that influence the definition of Parenthood. In this study it is understood as a complex phenomenon that deals will the development and nurturing of children within a family environment.

Rural development: Generally refers to the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas and this view is in line with the intensions of this study. From Wikipedia. According to AgriInfo (2011), rural development is a process that aims at improving the standard of living of people living in rural areas. It can be defined as helping rural people set priorities on their communities through effective and democratic bodies, by providing the local capacity, investment in basic infrastructure and social services, equity and security, dealing with the justice of the past and ensuring safety and security of the rural population.

Exploratory research: Exploratory research is defined by Burns and Groove (2001:374) as conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas, and for increasing knowledge of the phenomenon.

Lobola: Collins online dictionary defines “Lobola” as an African custom by which a bridegroom's family makes a payment in cattle or cash to the bride's family shortly before the marriage, to give price to the bride. The primary purpose of Lobola is to build

relations between the respective families as marriage is seen as more than a union between two individuals.

1.9 Research outlay

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the research report will develop gradually as follows:

Chapter 1 forms the bases for the overall research study. The description of the background and contextual information, theoretical framework, the central research problem and aim of the study, the research question and the specific objectives of the research, as well as the research design and the identification of terms form part of the chapter

Chapter 2 will focus on the literature review encapsulating the effects of illiteracy on parenthood, causes and impact of illiteracy and the relationship between teachers and caregivers in children's school achievement.

Chapter 3 will present the methodology, research design, research setting and summary profile of Coffee Bay, in the King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality in the Eastern Cape Province, data collection and data analysis, the research ethics and validity and reliability of the research.

Chapter 4 will present findings that emanate from the analysis of data which will be generated by means of semi-structured focus groups.

The research will be summarised in the form of conclusions and recommendations in chapter 5

1.10 Summary

Chapter 1 served as an orientation to the study. Underlying assumptions on illiteracy and comments from the literature on this research topic were discussed, as the researcher sought to explore and describe the challenges illiterate caregivers experience to support their children with schoolwork. The research problem was presented and the researcher introduced readers to the aim of the research study and the reasons for choosing a carefully selected population. The researcher also discussed the research approach, research design and a qualitative research methodology which was found suitable for the study.

The next chapter will deal in depth with the literature concerning illiterate caregivers, their contextual space of dwelling as well as the interaction between caregivers, teachers and other government officials.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of the literature is presented, literature being the existing body of knowledge on the subject matter. This review helps the researcher identify how other researchers approached the subject under investigation.

According to Brink (2006), the researcher can use a literature review to acquire knowledge on the topic of the study to evaluate existing practices, to develop a theory of conceptual framework and to develop practice guidelines or policy statements. Notably, Creswell (2009), states that the purpose of a literature review in qualitative research depends on the methodology used, as well as the goals of the research.

The aim of this study is to explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience to support their children with formal educational requirements, and specific concepts relevant to the research topic will be discussed in depth. The challenges that illiterate caregivers experience will be identified, and how the caregivers provide support with their children's schoolwork in spite of these challenges, will be explored. It is hoped that an understanding of these experiences will lead to improved service delivery.

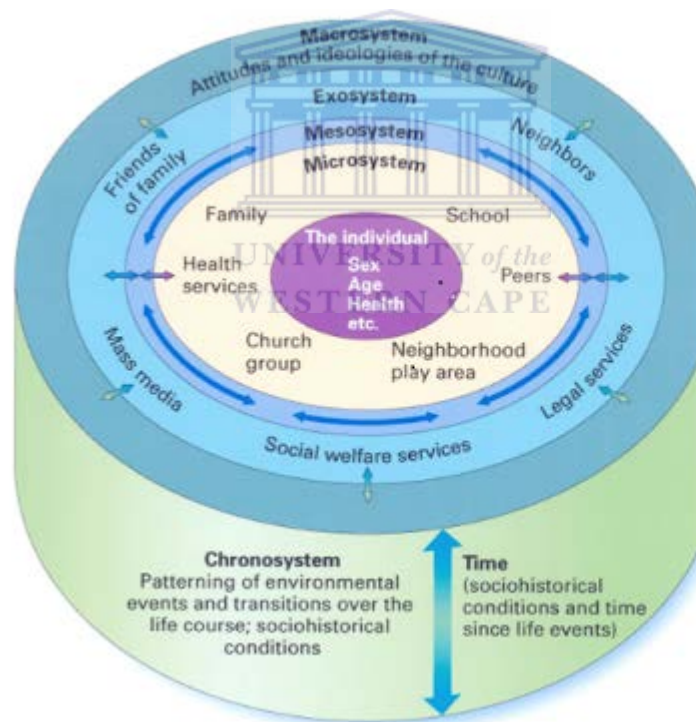
This chapter is divided into two main sections; the first section outlines the theoretical framework describing the interaction among family members. The next section examines illiteracy, its causes and the many theories that have been proposed to explain how literacy impacts on caregivers when supporting their children's education, together with a few theories looking at the available support those teachers may provide.

Although the literature presents this theme in a variety of contexts, this paper will focus on practical and realistic experiences in Ku Jonga, Tshezi which is the rural part of Coffee Bay which is situated in King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality in OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

2.2 Theoretical framework

Two interlocking theories guided this research study, namely Bronfenbrenner's ecological system's theory (1979) and Bowen's family systems theory (1988). As cited in Smith (2001), Bowen (1988) suggested that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family. Bronfenbrenner (1979) viewed a child's development in the context of the systems of relationships forming his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner suggested five levels which he believed to be interrelated and which could impact on a person's development, namely (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 19993 cited in Visser, 2007).

Figure 3: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory



Source: Penny (2005)

Bronfenbrenner (1979) believed that the innermost level (microsystem) is the immediate setting surrounding the developing person, such as home or school. The next level (mesosystem) is not so much a setting as the relationship between settings. However, Bronfenbrenner believed the interconnections could be as decisive in the way humans develop as events taking place in the first level. For example, the child's ability to read

and learn depends more on how he or she is taught than on the existence of ties between school and home. Bronfenbrenner (1979) further explained the third level (exosystem) as a level or structure that involves event in settings where the developing child is not even present. An example is a place where the parent or caregiver is employed; this means that the level could have a profound effect on the child's development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the fourth level involves aspects of the social environment that may connect many members of a culture or subculture. The ecological system's perspective, therefore, emphasises the potential of human beings to respond constructively to an ecologically compatible social context. The fifth and final level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is the chronosystem. In the chronosystem level, consideration is given to all experiences that the developing person has had during his or her lifetime, including environmental and historical events (Penny, 2005).

Garfat and Charles (2012) support Bronfenbrenner's model and suggest that for caregivers to provide better support to their children, a general connectedness among family members is necessary. Without connections, effective intervention is impossible, since the family in the first level of microsystem has potential to teach their children how to interpret things. Garfat and Charles (2012) believe that in some cases when children grow, they are indoctrinated into a particular way of seeing and interpreting the world. This may create some concerns or future challenges, for if children learn from the least educated caregivers, it may hamper their future in a technological and fast-developing world.

Caregivers may be illiterate but may still have good values and care. It is when it comes to education and aspirations that caregivers may create problems. Hough (2014) explains how a mother's literacy skills can translate into creating healthier children. Mothers have natural bond with their children that help them model behaviours. (Hough, 2014). Rowe (2012) cited in Hough (2014) supports the belief and confirms that women have an ability to retain skills learnt from childhood until the motherhood. Literate women, when skilled, make differences in the lives of children (Rowe, 2012, cited in Hough, 2014). The five distinct structures mentioned by Bronfenbrenner (1979) were found to be relevant in this study. Each of the five, are put into context and are discussed in detail in the following sections.

2.2.1 Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner (1993) defines a microsystem as a pattern of activities, social roles and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting. These include family, school, peer and workplace. A microsystem lays the first subsystem closest to the child within a family setting which is the structure that encompasses relationships and direct contacts among family members. Applying this to this research study, it can be seen that children living under care and guidance of illiterate caregivers are at the centre of this microsystem which includes illiterate caregivers who may be biological parents, grandparents and foster or adoptive parents and siblings. With regard to education, illiterate parents tend to have lower educational expectations and aspirations than their children (Martinez & Fernandez, 2010). In this case, children are exposed in the reproduction of vulnerability, on lack of exposure to formal schooling opportunities. In this study, children attend schools where teachers also form part of the microsystem. The teachers are also the immediate surroundings for the child growing up in the Ku Jonga locality. The nature of guidance and support in the learning and developing of the child is of great importance. What they learn from their immediate support systems will be carried into the next generation (Rowe, 2012).

2.2.2 Mesosystem

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the mesosystem is the second level following the innermost level, the microsystem, and cannot be regarded as a setting so much as the relationship between settings. The mesosystem comprises linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings within a microsystem, such as relationships between school and family. Illiterate caregivers are not necessarily involved in school activities. The relationship between the child's home, family and the school will be of vital importance to understand this study. The significance of the caregivers in this regard is that they have the abilities either to teach the child cultural, historical life-experiences or to transfer skills acquired from their own educational backgrounds. Bronfenbrenner believes that the child's ability to read may depend on the existence and nature of relationships between school and home.

2.2.3 Exosystem

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the exosystem comprises the linkages and processes which take place between two or more settings. Exosystem refers to a setting by which the child is indirectly affected by occurrences', while out of the environment but in which event occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives. For instance the parent's workplace may indirectly influence the child. Applying the exosystem model to this study, the manner in which the caregivers earn their living may affect their caring skills which impact on the child's schoolwork. For instance, if the caregiver is earning very little or is unemployed, the child will not have money for food or a school uniform, thereby affecting the child's progress at school.

Martinez et al. (2010) argue that the educational capital of the household is limited among children whose caregivers have not acquired basic reading and writing skills. These authors emphasise the fact that illiteracy among adults is the cause for present and future socio-economic vulnerability of people, and this vulnerability may go from one generation to the next. Illiterate caregivers face serious issues regarding employment. Martinez et al. (2010) point out that the low level of caretakers' knowledge and expertise which comes from lack of formal schooling is a huge obstacle for them to enter the labour market. This experience may have a profound effect on how their children develop and grow.

2.2.4 Macrosystem

A macro system consists of an overarching pattern of micro, meso and exosystem characteristics of a particular culture or subculture (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). (Berk, 2000 as cited in Paquette and Ryan, 2001) refers to this as the outermost subsystem in the child's environment comprised of belief systems, bodies of knowledge, material resources, customs, life styles and life course options that are embedded in the broader system.

With reference to this study, the research site is viewed as a community where tradition is still very important. This can be misjudged by children in urban areas and children growing in the environment can be affected. For example, children may be discouraged by comments from their peers who live a different lifestyle.

2.2.5 Chronosystem

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the chronosystem encompasses change or consistency over time not only in the characteristics of the person, but also of the environment in which that person lives. Berk (2013) views this as the final subsystem of the ecological system theory, suggesting that as the developing people mature, they create new experiences of their own. In relation to this study, it is possible that as some children grow and develop, they may move to other communities or even decide to stay in urban areas rather than in the rural Coffee Bay. As proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) cited by Yu and Stiffman (2007), the strength of the ecological model is that it pays equal attention to a range of influences on a child's development. The study will look at various experiences of the caregivers that in turn affect the development of children. The way in which Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory holds that we encounter different environments throughout our lifespan which may influence our behaviours in varying degrees, was found to be suitable to frame and structure this study in order to gain clear insight into challenges that the caregivers experience in supporting their children's education. The following paragraph describes the concept of illiteracy and its impact, based on the findings of other scholars.

2.3 Transfer of family emotional processes.

It is important to note the balance of individuality and togetherness, as family emotional processes. A child, as an individual may experience too much togetherness and prevents individuality, or develop own sense of self. According to Bowen's theory (1966), history of family creates a template which shapes the values and experiences of each generation, and how such experiences are passed from one generation to the next generation. According to Bowen's theory, too much togetherness creates fusion and too much individuality results in a distant and estranged family. Smith (2001) explains Bowen's eight interlocking concepts and refers to them as processes. These concepts are listed below:

1. *Differentiation of self* which according to Bowen means the ability to separate feelings and thoughts.
2. *Triangles* are the basic units of systems that are inherently unstable (Bowen,1966)

3. *The nuclear family emotional process.* According to Bowen's theory, this process relates to a mother who, for example lived with great depression and taught her daughter that life is depressive, therefore should prepare for the worst.
4. *The family projection process.* For example, the son who rejects his mother's pessimistic view, may find his mother and sister become closer and view his behaviour differently
5. *The multigenerational transmission process.* According to Bowen's theory, this process entails the way family emotional processes are transferred and maintained over the generations.
6. *Sibling position.* According to Bowen, each child has a place in the hierarchy of siblings within each family. For example the eldest child is expected to do certain chores within the family and the youngest is likely to be seen as irresponsible and immature.
7. *Emotional cut-off* .Bowen (1966) refers emotional cut-off as a complete separation from the family, and a child may feel completely independent from family
8. *Societal emotional processes.* Bowen refers to these as processes that carry social expectation about racial and class groups, the behaviour for each gender, the nature of sexual orientation and their effect on the family.

Central to this study is the fifth processes. This captures how the family re-inforce the beliefs of the family, as it continue over generations. According to Smith (2001), Bowen's fifth process looks at how family refer back to previous generations. The process strengthens relationships and attachments among family members (Smith, 2001).

While people need to have relationships and attachments with significant others in order to influence development, relationships and closeness were considered as part of this study. According to Smith (2001), Bowen's family systems theory reinforces Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and brings the reader into a close view of family contexts. Bowen's family systems theory is further, discussed in the following paragraphs.

Bowen's family systems theory is a theory of human behaviour that views the family as an emotional unit and uses systems thinking to describe the complex interactions in the

unit. Bowen's systems theory considers the closeness of the relationships within the family and how it affects the anxiety in group members and the way they respond (Smith, 2001). According to Smith (2001), family members who could differentiate themselves and function autonomously while still maintaining a sense of closeness could make considered responses amidst the stress. People who are poorly differentiated form close "fused" relationships with others. These people act as a single unit and their actions depend on the state of the relationship. Differentiated people develop clear identity and locus of control or agency. Take responsibility for the actions and decisions. On the other hand, poorly differentiated people base their decisions on the opinions of the group and whether decisions will impact on the fusion of the group. By contrast, well-differentiated groups base their decisions on an assessment of the facts and their own principles while withstanding the group pressure and still maintaining the desired level of closeness (Papero, 2000:27). It is important to understand whether children experience group pressure or have difficulties in receiving support from family members.

The research study focused on the support children received with their schoolwork and the challenges their caregivers experience in the rural Coffee Bay. For better support, caregivers and their children need to understand each other and maintain their relationships. The style of living and their historical cultural practices form the boundaries of their value systems that affect the manner in which decisions are made. The elements are children and their caregivers as they relate and function in an inter-dependent manner with regard to their daily life experiences.

From what has been learnt from Bowen, it becomes clear that the majority of the children, in rural areas grow within multigenerational transmission processes. They find themselves subjected to family projection processes. Families continue to re-inforce family beliefs, and grandparents carry much of experience regarding family values that are transferred from one generation to the other.

Programme activities need to be developed to encourage children and youth develop skills to cope with the fast changing world, and caregivers should be helped build capacity to upgrade their survival systems, such as stock farming and crop production to adjust to the climate change.

2.4 Causes and impact of illiteracy

From the literature describing challenges experienced by illiterate caregivers, three concepts were chosen by the researcher to explore these challenges, namely illiteracy, family context and the interactions between teachers and caregivers.

According to Soans and Stevenson (2008:831), the word “literate” is often used to indicate that a person is able to read and write, and also to illustrate that a person possesses knowledge and certain competencies. This means they have access to knowledge. This implies that literate people can be aware of the changes that take place around them and that they can be able to make informed decisions on social issues and issues affecting them. On the other hand Munganyi (1997:3) describes illiterate people as those who cannot read or write or are minimally educated and that their skills are so basic that they cannot function as productive and employable citizens. Illiterate people from disadvantaged communities find it difficult if not impossible to understand written materials that require basic proficiency in reading. This means that they cannot access certain written information, unless the information is shared with them orally.

De Beer (2004:291) emphasises the fact that literacy is about functioning properly, coping and dealing with matters at hand, coming to terms with one’s situation and being able to take action. The views by De Beer and Munganyi denote the significance of literacy for caregivers in supporting their children’s education.

To attend to the matter of illiteracy of parents, Kha Ri Gude (let us learn) Mass Literacy campaign was initiated and managed by the Department of basic education. The campaign is aimed at enabling adult learners to read, write and calculate in their mother tongue, in line with the Unit Standards of Adult basic Education and Training (ABET), level 1 and also to learn spoken English. (Department of Education,2008).According to the Department of Education, Classes are held in communities, in homes,churches,community centres and prisons, at times that are convenient to the adult learners. Kha Ri Gude is available at no costs, to adults who have little or no education However the Department’s country progress report (2013), reflects challenges in the implementation process. The challenges include lack of access by people in rural communities, and further suggest great effort to make it accessible to all citizens. The

second challenge t in the report is inappropriate response, to the learning needs of youth who are out of school, and adults. The Department of education's Green Paper on Post-Schooling confirms the presence of these challenges in the education system, and suggest that much effort be put to change the status quo (Department of basic Education, 2013).

In view of the family environment and unfavourable conditions like, illiteracy, caregivers experience to assist their children with school work, Weigel, Martin and Bennet (2006) note several challenges that illiterate caregivers face. Weigel et al. (2006) mention literacy levels, literacy habits, and child-parent interactions in literacy activities as well as socio-economic factors. Cooter (2006:698) refers to intergenerational illiteracy which she defines as a socio-economic-cultural phenomenon whereby illiterate caregivers inadvertently sponsor home conditions that may seriously hinder their children's reading and writing development. According to Cooter (2006), intergenerational illiteracy often exists in high poverty urban and rural settings where teachers often find that caregivers have low literacy skills.

Roman (2004:87) adds that children whose caregivers did not complete school or have trouble with literacy skills are more likely to be illiterate themselves, and are more than five times as likely to drop out of school . Illiteracy also poses a considerable burden on support systems of the individual in question as illiterate adults are highly dependent on others to function and survive. This implies that illiterate caregivers may not have knowledge and skill to act and respond to the challenges they encounter in their daily interaction with their children, for example, assisting them with homework, or reading invitation letters from teachers. Is this still Roman (2004) add

Lemmer, Meier and Van Wyk (2006) also looked at the teacher-caregiver relations. The involvement of caregivers in their children's education is a dynamic process, whereby teachers and caregivers work together for the ultimate benefit of the child. The partnership may ensure collaboration and cooperation between the school and the family in order to close the gaps that exist between what the school intends to achieve and what the community expects of their children's education (Lemmer et al., 2006).

The present study focuses on experiences that come in the form of challenges to illiterate caregivers when they support their children with schoolwork, taking into account the fast-changing technological world in which this happens.

2.5 Illiteracy

Throughout history there have been people who were illiterate. The Family Education Network (2012), states that the first known reference to illiterate laymen was in the 14th and 15th centuries, after the invention of printing. The problem of illiteracy was noticed when the bible required translation into the vernacular, so as to accommodate Protestant converts. From the 18th to the 20th centuries, the revolutionary political movements took advantage of illiteracy. The political movements utilised people with least education to achieve their goals and objectives, such as winning votes to benefit themselves. These political movements' activities created more confusion in understanding illiteracy. However the definition of illiteracy remained unclear to many. The exact nature of the criterion varies, so that illiteracy must be defined in each case before the term can be used in a meaningful way (Fen, 2012).

2.6 Distinction between Pure and Functional Illiteracy.

The United States Bureau of Education (1930) draws a distinction between pure and functional illiteracy. Differentiating between the two, their definition of pure illiteracy is a situation where people cannot read or write in any capacity, while functional illiteracy is defined as a situation where people can read or possibly write simple sentences with a limited vocabulary, but cannot read or write sufficiently to deal with everyday requirements of life in their own society.

Grady (1994) is of the opinion that illiterate people are those who cannot read more than one or two simple sentences, or cannot read or write their own names. He points out that illiteracy comes at a cost which no one can afford to pay. Not being able to read product labels on poisonous substances or electrical appliances, for instance, may well cost a life. People continually come into contact with things that seem harmless but could severely injure or kill them, because they cannot read warnings. People do not have to be physically hurt to be seriously harmed by illiteracy (Grady, 1994). UNESCO (2010) offers more specific descriptions of illiteracy and agrees that fundamentally, illiteracy is the inability to read or write. Illiteracy is caused by a variety of factors from which arise

effects that impact on the lives of children and their caregivers. One of the reasons for the high rates of illiteracy among adult South Africans are the result of the segregation apartheid policies and have been further exacerbated by a continued lack of development in rural areas (UNESCO, 2010).

UNESCO (2010) lists the following profound socio-economic effects of illiteracy on rural families, which are perpetuated by cycles of poverty:

- Limited productive capacity
- Lack of the skills needed to gain formal employment
- Inability to educate children
- Insufficient access to basic social services
- High prevalence of HIV/AIDS

UNESCO (2006) suggests three main causes of illiteracy, namely social problems, family problems and motivational problems. Social problems are associated with the shortage of schools, especially in rural areas. Some children still have to travel long distances to reach educational facilities. The second causal factor is seen to be family problems. Family problems range from caregivers or parents who have never been to school, to caregivers or parents who left schooling at lower grades in school. These caregivers would see no value in education, and thus encourage their children to find jobs in order to contribute to the family income. The final category is motivational problems. Children's willingness to learn can be distracted by entertainments, especially in urban areas. Children would rather be entertained and forget about education, or drop out at very early stages of schooling (UNESCO, 2006).

Martinez et al. (2010) contends that illiteracy has high impact on health, education, economics, social integration and cohesion. Illiteracy limits the caregiver's ability to understand messages and absorb the knowledge necessary for self-care. This challenge has a negative impact on household health, hygiene and nutrition. Martinez et al. (2010) warn about implications. According to Martinez et al (2010), the serious implication is that children in these households may drop out of schooling. Illiterate caregivers tend to have lower educational expectations and aspirations for themselves and their children, and children of caregivers or parents who have failed to complete primary education tend to do the same (Martinez et al., 2010).

As noted by UNESCO (2006) with regard to social integration and cohesion, illiterate persons are often denied the social recognition they deserve. This results in caregivers or parents suffering low self-esteem. This self-esteem may then deny them the assertiveness to encourage and inspire their children to attend school. Notwithstanding the importance of support of parents for the development of their children, very few studies directly analysed the challenges that the illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children with daily schoolwork, as discussed in the above paragraphs

2.7 Caregiving within a family structure

It is important to understand the institution in which illiterate caregivers operate. This is the institution where children and adults should be interacting often for support. Family structure provides an indication of the number of possible caregivers a child might have, as well as the quality of a child's family life (Manning & Lamb, 2003). The family is considered to be the foundation of socialising children into well-adjusted adults (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Cheal, 2002; Muncie, Wethered, Dallos & Cochrane, 1995).

Each family has its own distinctive set of identities also consisting of the family's collective identity. Some caregivers in these structures are fortunate to have attended school, while others could not afford the opportunity, and therefore remain illiterate. Often the focus in research is on the notion of family as being the larger group; however, this group is made up of smaller units (Epp & Price, 2008), such as the relationship between a brother and a sister, or children and grandparents or stepmother and her stepchild.

In a research report, the Department of Education in America (1993) suggested an investigation into the possibility of existence of factors which contribute to illiteracy within family contexts. The need was to assist low-literate parents to learn how to use their existing skills as tools for improving their own and their children's education. The implication is that parents would be able to influence their children's education better, and enable family members to construct useful meanings and definition of literacy.

In South Africa, families in rural communities are challenged with social, political, economic and demographic issues that affect their ability to help their children with education (Mathambo & Gibbs, 2008). These authors found that people in rural areas

still struggle to access sound social and economic services. Pensioners are forced to travel long distances for pay-outs and social grants, and there is lack of social services and infrastructure to link rural areas with urban areas socially, economically and politically. This means that communication systems such as radios, televisions and telephones are also affected, which impact a high number of families in rural communities.

According to the Department of Social Development (DSD) (2011), the family – which initially was seen as being the primary point of socialisation, care and nurture – is at risk from a number of issues such as gender inequalities, domestic violence, and abuse and absent fathers. Roy (2008) studied fatherhood in South Africa and the United States and found that fathers were absent from the family for a number of reasons, including unemployment and migrant labour. Absent fathers are also major concerns for families in poverty where their wage contribution could add to the family's functioning. Similarly, Madecha, Saman and Hafsa (2014) emphasised the significant role played by parental employment history. If parents are unemployed, especially the father, this has a direct impact on family resources for sustainability of the household. Demographic information on the size of households, number of siblings, birth order of the child and gender can provide insight on how resources may be distributed within the household in terms of educational expenditure. Madecha et al. (2014) conclude that parents' educational and work status play the most important role for a child's future. Their capacity to invest or not invest in the child's education may determine the future for that child. Madecha et al. (2014) believe that family is where children not only learn socialisation skills but also train themselves in family enterprises. Family background in the form of socio-economic status of the parents and their educational levels will have a huge influence on the priorities set of the parents regarding much they value their children's education. It is important to understand the value of parents in the family context, as it brings an insight into the nature of institutions within which the individual caregivers function; the institution provides a baseline for how caregivers and their children interact after school. The setting may help in identifying some of the challenges that caregivers experience in a family unit.

2.8 Illiteracy and parenthood

The link between illiteracy and parenthood differs in each case. The difference may be caused by a variety of factors within the same environment in which they live. The social and cultural perceptions within a family are causal factors which must be addressed in programmes that are designed to produce long-term changes in the lives of disadvantaged family members. (National Assessment of Education Progress [NAEP] 1993).

NAEP (1993) state that, traditional research has revealed that more highly educated mothers have greater success in providing their children with cognitive and language skills. Children of mothers with high levels of education stay in school longer than children of mothers with low levels of education. On the other hand, Benjamin (1993) argues and infers that there is no simple correlation between the parents' level of education and that of their children. This argument was based on the author's assessment of the effect of parents' educational background, amount of time spent on literature work with children and overall achievement

According to Roman (2004:86), literacy has become an important predictor of the general wellbeing of a society. Being literate in today's society demands a myriad of functional abilities, which when absent can have dramatic health, economic and social consequences. Cooter (2006:697) finds that one strategy often attempted in rural schools is to endeavour to bring illiterate or semiliterate parents to the level of functional literacy to help them help their children. It is interesting to see how Roman and Cooter view possible factors that might contribute to the challenges affecting parental support in general. Roman (2004) looks at implications such as shame and frustration, poverty and unemployment, health outcomes and societal implications of illiteracy, while Cooter (2006) examines factors that contribute to what he calls "intergenerational illiteracy", a socio-cultural phenomenon where the illiteracy of parents may seriously hinder their children's reading and writing development. This confirms that illiteracy is a huge global concern, not only in South Africa.

Grady (1994) suggests that caregivers should be capacitated so that they can support their children, to help them deal with the drastic changes occurring in the world. The suggestion by Grady (1994) indicates that the matter had been raised in literature as a

concern for some years. The suggestion given by Grady (1994) of illiteracy brings meaning to the current study; it refers directly to the population this study addresses.

The author which mention name further suggests that illiteracy begins in childhood, when young students start to fall behind their classmates, resulting in the loss of self-esteem, or else they have never been to school. However, the major problem of illiteracy arises when students grow up, because they have to engage in written words and cannot hide their illiteracy. Hough (2012) supports the finding by Grady. The author examines how mothers translate literacy skills into healthier children and concludes that the more formal schooling a mother receives, the better off her children's health will be.

Quoting from Le Vine and Le Vine (1980), Hough (2012) concludes that parents' schooling especially that of women, changes the lives of the world's children. Hough (2012) links the time a woman attends school as a girl with her behaviour later when she has become a mother. This positively affects children's attitude and behaviour.

Advancement in style of living creates a gap between citizens who are already educated and literate and those who have least education or are illiterate in various forms. Grady (1994) support this idea and sees technology and society as having increased reading and writing skills.

Roman (2004:86) advises that the first challenge of fighting illiteracy is recognising it. This advice is crucial for communities in rural areas as well. Roman (2004) finds that some people living with illiteracy tend to hide it from being known. This tendency is as a result of low self-esteem (names of the research studies. Weisse and Coyne (1997) cited in Roman (2004:85) find that identifying illiteracy problems among adults is a difficult task because many of them hide their illiteracy and have a lifetime's experience in doing so. This poses a significant challenge with regard to identifying illiteracy and its implications (Heathington, 1987, cited in Roman, 2004:87), putting emphasis on an assumption that one of the most serious implications of the illiteracy for individuals is the inability to obtain employment and receive competitive wages.

Unexpected parenthood can be a barrier to achieving higher educational status as parents, particularly for women, whose early assumption of the parental role usually causes them to drop out of school (Cooter, 2006). This view contradicts some situations

in South Africa, where girls after giving birth, leave their children with their parents. Hunt (2008) found that, although the girls drop out of school, they manage to go back and continue with their studies. However household income and shortage of employment opportunities are additional factors contributing to total loss of schooling. These challenges can become burdens to caregivers as they mean an unplanned increase of membership to the family.

This study will also be looking at available support systems for caregivers to be better equipped to support their children with schoolwork. In trying to find more ways of caregivers to support children from home (Nurss, 2000), recommends story-telling. Although Nurss mentions that story-telling provides an opportunity for holistic learning for children where grandparents and parents are normally involved, it depends on what to tell to young people. People living with less education may have limited information and knowledge, as their stories might be based on their experiences only, which might not be abreast with current life styles

2.9 Relationships between caregivers and teachers

Bronfenbrenner (1991) is of the view that parents and teachers are both educators. Parents are educators in the sense that they provide informal education that takes place in the family. The informal education that the parents or caregivers provide is a prerequisite for successes in formal education that the teachers provide from primary grades onward.

Christenson and Sheridan (2001) support Bronfenbrenner's view and refer to parents and teachers as partners. Partnership refers to a mutual effort towards a shared goal, which means shared responsibility of parents and teachers for supporting children as learners. Christenson and Sheridan (2001) extend the significance of parent participation to families of the learners. The goal of family involvement with education is to connect important contexts for strengthening children's learning and development. (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001:117).

Christenson & Sheridan (2001) define the following four components of a method to achieve sound parent-teacher partnerships:

- Approach – the framework for interaction with parents or caregivers

- Attitudes – the values and perceptions held about parent-teacher relationships
- Atmosphere – the climate for parent-teacher interactions
- Actions – strategies for building shared responsibility for children’s reading progress and success.

These four components serve a guide in the development of parent-teacher connections for children’s reading and learning.

Strong communication is fundamental in any partnership. If teachers believe in their professionalism, they can initiate opportunities to engage fully with parents or caregivers (Christenson & Sheridan, 2007.) According to Graham-Clay (2005), the following are communication opportunities for teachers to consider:

- Use of welcome signs that reflect a range of ethnic languages spoken in the school. These create inviting atmosphere and remove fear from caregivers or parents (Lai & Ishyama, 2004).
- Smiles from the school staff as a sign of acknowledgement and acceptance of parents or caregivers.
- Cleanliness of the school grounds.
- Student’s artwork on the walls.

The implementation and practice of the above may create a “customer-friendly” school environment. This implies that the communication with parents or caregivers is highly valued by the school staff.

It is important that the teacher and caregivers meet as adults about their common interest which is the child, each bringing life experiences. The social system provides framework for the interaction, in this case, interaction between teachers and parents (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Menheer and Hooger (2008) differentiate between parental involvement and parental participation. Parental involvement is the involvement of parents in the upbringing and education of their own children, both at home and at school while parental participation is a concept that can be defined as the active participation of parents in school activities. According to Smit et al. (2007), participation can be divided into two forms, namely

institutionalised form such as participation in school governance, and non-institutionalised forms by which parents assist teachers in day-to-day activities like helping with homework or accompanying children on educational trips. This practice may create a situation where both teachers and parents share responsibility of the children's successes or failures.

For illiterate or minimally educated parents, an interesting motivational situation should be created to encourage parental participation in either the institutionalised or non-institutionalised forms. Dempsey et al. (2005) suggest strategies to attract parents into participation. A welcoming and inviting school climate should be created; teachers should be empowered for parental involvement. Dempsey et al. (2005), further propose after school programmes such as, games and music, to create parental involvement opportunities. Without looking at level of literacy, these opportunities may increase parents' knowledge of school activities and their children may be inspired and enjoy learning.

Cooter (2006) adds a number of strategies which a teacher could use to help illiterate caregivers succeed in helping their children to become strong readers. He puts emphasis on what caregivers can do, not on what they are unable to do. For example, teachers could instruct parents on homework assistance and teach and promote dialogue reading, where children could lead the conversation around the pictures of the book. He further suggests that caregivers engage in effective play with their children and spending more time talking to them. In families where parents experience difficulties in reading and writing, there is a danger that low literacy is passed on to the next generation (Cooter, 2006).

In South Africa, caregiver-parent-child interactions are encouraged by the state as well as civil organisations (UNICEF, 2006). Teachers would be helpful to the parents and learners, learners would be responsible for the information given to them by both teachers and caregivers and caregivers would improve on curiosity and seek to know means and ways to help their children succeed in life.

Although the value of this tripartite (teacher-child-caregiver) is universally accepted in South Africa, there is uncertainty regarding various issues. These are: the complexities of matching the teacher/caregiver cultures and values; secondly, how to deal with

societal forces that affect both teacher and caregiver; and finally, how teachers and caregivers view their roles in the partnership. These concerns indicate the need for the researcher to conduct the current study to contribute to the available literature as discussed in this chapter (Cuban, 2011).

3.0 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the theoretical frameworks of ecological systems as family systems. The two theories were discussed at the beginning of the chapter to maintain the frame of discussion, and were considered with reference to the interactions and interconnections of elements in the study, these being the caregivers, children and teachers.

Illiteracy was discussed with reference to its origins, causes and its impact on society. The researcher discussed family environments within which caregivers and their children live, the support systems which are available and those required by illiterate caregivers as well as the relationships between caregivers and teachers

The literature reviewed supports the aim of the researcher to study whether the least-educated or illiterate adults in South African society, especially in OR Tambo District Municipality's Coffee Bay, really face unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDs and many more. It has also looked at national and international literature focusing on illiterate caregivers in relation to their experiences in supporting children under their direct care with education. To this end, it has drawn from studies and models in ecology, illiteracy and parents as well as studies that have looked at all the different factors within an individual's environment that impact on decisions and actions.

The next chapter will deal with the research methodology that was used to explore and describe the challenges illiterate caregivers experience to support their children's education, particularly regarding schoolwork.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 created a conceptual framework for the research study which took place.

In this chapter the research approach, research design and how the research process unfolded are discussed. The geographic setting for the data collection is also described. The research study focused on the challenges faced by caregivers in supporting their children's education. The researcher utilised a qualitative research approach as the most appropriate research design to meet the goals and objectives of the research study.

Qualitative research is best suited to the research question being asked in this study, as very little has been written on illiterate caregivers challenges regarding their experiences in supporting their children's education. A qualitative research approach was also chosen because the research topic is an emotional one, requiring a more flexible interview process.

People need creative techniques to encourage a broader dialogue with the research population (De Vos et al., 2002:81).

Caregivers are expected to form partnership with teachers in order to contribute fairly to the education of their children (SA Department of Education, 1997). Christenson and Sheridan (2001) expound on this idea and suggest that teachers should be skilled in establishing sound partnerships with caregivers and that the caregivers should participate in the school activities. There are some social, family and political factors that affect rural communities, thus creating challenges for caregivers to support their children.

Caregivers, who never attended school or have least education, may view and experience education of their children differently, can therefore expect to be faced with

challenges when trying to support their children. Children in their care may face difficulty doing their homework, can therefore discouraged learning at home.

Shulubana and Kok (2005) in Nyama (2010) note the critical role played by caregivers in support of their children's learning and development.

3.2 Research question

According to Creswell (2008), a research question is derived from the purpose of the study and is more specific, representing the actual question that the research study seeks to answer. This view is supported by Babbie and Mouton (2007), who explain that a research question sets boundaries, guides the research design and controls the direction of the study. Research begins with the identification of a research problem expressed in a form of a question (Babbie and Mouton, 2007:73). Creswell (2007) suggests using two forms of research questions: a central question and associated sub-questions. This author defines central questions as broad questions that ask for an exploration of the phenomenon or concept in a study. The research question posed by the researcher in this study is:

What are the challenges that illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children with education?

3.3 Research objectives

In order to be able to answer the research question, the researcher had to establish and formulate objectives. According to Creswell (2007), objectives describe the area a researcher would like to explore in a more focused way. The objectives of the study were to:

- Explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience when assisting their children with schoolwork
- Explore how the caregivers currently show support to their children
- Explore support which caregivers would need to be able to support their children
- Explore available support by other stakeholders like teachers to assist caregivers and their children in the Coffee Bay area.

3.4 Research approach

To be able to answer the research question and reach the objectives, this study followed a qualitative research approach and exploratory research design.

Qualitative research is not focused on investigating a research hypothesis, but the data is based on meaning expressed by words and symbols or metaphor (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2007). Welman et al. (2007) contend that qualitative research can successfully be used to describe groups, small communities and organisations that do not fit into specific theories. Qualitative research is also known as an anti-positivist approach and is concerned with understanding human behaviour from people involved and how they experience phenomena (Welman et al., 2007). May (2002) emphasises that qualitative research wants to understand the “why” and “how” of people’s behaviour. Similarly, Creswell (1994) views a qualitative study as an inquiry process aimed at understanding a social human problem. Qualitative research seeks to explore and describe variables, to discover and find causes and effects of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). De Vos et al. (2011) and Mouton and Marais (1996) believe that qualitative research provides the texture of real life by giving insight into the methods that motivates people to take action. The research site allowed the researcher an opportunity to observe quite closely and witness data accumulated in the focus groups. Data collection and data analysis in qualitative research is guided by one or more open-ended questions and a process of inductive inquiry (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative research was found to be best suited to the research question asked in this study, as very little has been written on illiterate caregivers’ experiences regarding their challenges in supporting their children’s education. A qualitative research was also used because the topic is a sensitive and emotional one requiring a flexible interviewing process within a supportive group setting.

3.5 Research design

Babbie and Mouton (2007) define a research design as a specific act by researchers, concerning how the research will be conducted. The function of applied research is to offer more practical solutions to an existing problem or specifically focus on the needs of practitioners or clinicians (Neuman, 2006). A research design is usually constructed

around and in relation to the nature of the research question (Green & Thorogood, 2009).

Explorative, descriptive and contextual research was applied in this study. Information regarding the research topic was needed to find a better understanding by means of exploring and describing the challenges that the illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children's education.

3.5.1 Explorative research

An explorative study aims to generate new information and make preliminary investigations into a relatively unknown phenomenon (Durrheim, 2006). The current study is therefore explorative in that very little has been written about challenges experienced by illiterate caregivers in supporting their children.. It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this research will aid government, teachers, social service professionals and other stakeholders' support to reach this group of people in the Ku Jonga village, rural Coffee Bay.

3.5.2 Descriptive research

According to Babbie and Mouton (2007), a descriptive research design is more organised than an explorative one and presents a picture of the specific details of a situation. Shuttleworth (2008) explains descriptive research in three categories, namely observation, case studies and surveys.

The main purpose of a descriptive design is to examine the relationships between variables and provide accurate descriptions of the phenomenon being researched (Creswell, 1994). Caregivers find themselves in relationships with their children when at home in the broader community, and thus function within a social setting. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) describe the purpose of descriptive design as being used to gain deeper and thicker description of experiences. This study was designed in order to gain a deeper understanding of details of challenges experienced by people who cannot write or read, or who can write or read very few words or sentences, in supporting their children with schoolwork. This study attempts to provide a thick and rich description of the explored data.

Anderson (2006) suggests that the three most commonly used qualitative methods are:

Participant observations which allow appropriate collection of data on natural occurring behaviours in their usual contexts;

In-depth interviews which are optimal for collecting data on individual's personal histories, perspectives and experiences;

Focus groups; by which data is elicited on the cultural norms of a group, thereby generating broad overviews of concern, to the cultural groups or subgroups.

The researcher utilised two of the three methods named above, namely participant observations and focus groups, in order to make sense of phenomena in terms of people making meanings and studying objects in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The two methods allowed the researcher a direct contact with participants and he was free to organise the five focus groups which provided rich data in this research study.

3.5.3 Contextual research

Qualitative research takes place in the natural setting of phenomena and attempts to explore, in an interpretive manner, the phenomenon in terms of the meaning people give to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998:2). This study is therefore contextual in that it investigates a sample of population who share a similar scenario. The implication is that life occurs in a context that is their natural setting. The participants' context is seen holistically, and is comprised of interactive and complex systems, rather than measurable variables (Rossman & Rallies, 2003).

The caregivers function in their natural setting; they interact with their children while at home and children interact with teachers when at school. These interactions happen within the same community. The context of the caregivers and children were observed, explored and which will be described hereafter

3.6 Research methodology

According to Babbie (2004: 75), research methodology is a process undertaken in order to attain the goal of the research. Specific tools and procedures are to be used as guidelines to collect and analyse data from few selected participants (sample) of a larger group (population).

3.6.1 Population and sampling

Polit and Beck (2004:50) define population as the aggregate or totality of those conforming to a set of specifications. Similarly, Durrheim and Painter (2006) describe the population as larger group from which a sample is taken to be representative and to which findings are to be generalised. The population for this study therefore comprised all illiterate caregivers in Ku Jonga village, Tshezi administrative area in rural Coffee Bay under the King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality in OR Tambo district municipality, Eastern Cape. In this study, the target population was made up of the caregivers in the Coffee Bay administrative area.

Sampling, on the other hand, involves a process of selecting observations and needs to adhere to the purpose of the study in a qualitative paradigm (Babbie & Mouton, 2007). Similarly, Polit and Beck (2004: 731) define sampling as the process of selecting a portion of the population that conform to a designated set of specification to be studied. A sample is a subset of a population (Polit & Beck, 2004:731). In this study, the sample was teachers, illiterate parents and illiterate grandparents.

Qualitative researchers purposefully and intentionally seek out participants for inclusion in their sample because of their knowledge of and ability to describe the phenomenon under investigation (Babbie & Mouton, 2007). Purposive sampling technique helps the researcher intentionally seek out participants for inclusion in the study to describe the phenomenon (Merriam & Associates, 2009). The teachers as key informants, together with the caregivers, helped the researcher to collect the data. The participants were illiterate parents and grandparents whose children attend schools in the rural Coffee Bay community and teachers who teach in those schools.

Key informants: To identify the key informants, the researcher used purposive sampling where the units that are investigated are selected based on the judgement of the researcher, allowing the researcher to focus on particular characteristics of a population that enable him or her to answer the research question (Creswell, 2009). This author believes that purposive sampling in qualitative research is used for selecting cases that can purposely shed light on the research problem. The key informants for this study were teachers, as the researcher believed that they carry complimentary knowledge and information that can shed light to the research topic. For teacher participants, the researcher firstly contacted the local district office of the Department of

Education to get permission and identification of suitable schools in the area. The district manager granted permission and appointments were made with school principals for the selection of participants. The two primary schools were recommended by the Chief, as the schools where the majority of their children attend.

Greeff in De Vos et al. (2002) suggests sufficiency and data saturation as criteria for determining the sample size. Two focus groups were drawn from two different schools and data saturation was achieved.

Participants: Three caregiver focus groups were utilised. It was not easy to predict the size of the focus groups at the outset of the study. The researcher began with a focus group comprised of mixed gender, followed by men only and then a women-only group. The distinction was made to allow free participation and less cultural influence. As observed during the first interview with the mixed group, men were holding the upper hand in decision-making and women were expected to obey and accept men's views. Men were talking on behalf of the women and their voices could not be heard. The following two focus groups were then held separately. The Chief and ward councillor were instrumental in the selection of caregivers who were the least-educated or who had never attended school. In his fear for anticipated intimidation, the researcher addressed the Chief and Ward Councillor upfront, and emphasised, to both the Chief and Ward Councillor, the significance of voluntary participation. The participants then confirmed that they were not influenced by the Chief's invitation, but felt secured by the presence of the Chief in the process. The researcher used the following criteria:

- Caregivers who cannot read or write.
- Caregivers who can read or write but cannot complete one or two sentences.
- Caregivers who are primary caregiver of the children.

3.6.2 Data collection

According to Creswell (2007), the data collection steps include boundary setting for the research study, information collection through interviews, unstructured and semi-structured observations, documents and visual material as well as setting protocols for recording information. The goal of the research study must guide the researcher to choose the most effective method of data collection. In qualitative research, the main

data collection methods are focus group interviews or individual interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

This study used observational to give the researcher opportunities to observe the caregivers engaging in day-to-day activities, as mentioned in the focus groups. Photos and notes were taken of caregivers' practical involvement in their daily life activities, such as grass-cutting and mud brick-making.

In this study focus groups served as the principle source of data (De Vos et al., 2005). Focus groups are a means of better understanding how people feel or think about an issue, product or service (De Vos et al., 2005).

In this study the participants' challenges with regard to supporting their children's education were explored and documented. The sample was selected because the participants have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group. The interview guide that was used to generate data from focus groups appears in the list of annexures for this research document.

The interview techniques employed by the researcher facilitated a smooth process to collect rich data. The use of vernacular was one technique which assisted this smooth communication. Greeff, in De Vos et al. (2005) suggests that for effective interviewing, researchers should have excellent listening skills such as listening for unusual terms, strong intonations or other clues which may signal a newer hidden, perhaps complex topic which is important to the participants. The researcher often used probing to illicit more information on each subject. Open-ended questions allowed for a fluent interview. Greeff, in De Vos et al. (2005) suggests use of paraphrasing during interviews to enhance meaning by stating the participants' words in another form with the same meaning in order to encourage the participants to talk more.

Before asking questions, the researcher explained to the participants who he was, the purpose of the research project, what value was hoped to be gained from it, what questions would be asked, the need for recording the interviews, the safeguarding and eventual deletion of the video recordings, confidentiality of the respondents' identity and the assurance that taking part in the study was voluntary (Creswell, 1994).

The Department of Education (1997:9) developed a national multi-year implementation plan in order to address the challenge of reducing illiteracy statistics in South Africa.

Permission for teachers to participate in this study was requested from the Department of Education and the school principals. The Chief of the area was approached for permission for the participation of caregivers, whom the researcher believed to be key in the process as they formed the nucleus of the population. A consent form was read out and interpreted for caregivers, as they were unable to read or write. For teachers, the form was issued for them to sign. Creswell (1994) explains the importance of consent of participants. Participants should understand the intentions of the study fully before they give consent to participation.

A pilot study was carried out with the first focus group, to enable the researcher to fine-tune the best method of accessing the data and also for him to become aware of his own level of interviewing skills.

3.6.3 Pilot study

De Vos et al. (2005) recommend using a pilot study to test the data collection tools. According to these authors, a pilot study is small and intended to test logistics, to ensure that errors are rectified before continuing with the entire process. The pilot study was implemented by conducting an interview with the very first mixed focus group (men and women), using the proposed interview guide.

According to De Vos et al. (2011), a pilot study is used to test the accessibility of the respondents and to see whether data collection techniques employed will result in gathering rich data. The exercise enabled the researcher to become aware of the dynamics of mixed focus groups in this particular area, where women could be dominated by men in the interview process. The dynamics necessitated a split of women from men, hence the second and the third focus groups for caregivers. The pilot study also gave the researcher experience so that he could, with confidence, proceed with the data collection.

Written permission to access the caregivers was obtained from the Chief. The Chief remained in contact with the researcher from the time he received the request, because

he was organising a suitable venue and time for the interviews, and was responsible for ensuring that all interested participants were presenting themselves as required.

On commencement of the pilot interview, the participants were made aware of the reasons for the study, as well as confidentiality and their rights to withdraw at any stage of the interview. One prospective participant exercised his right to withdraw after a short contribution to the focus group. Permission to video-record the interview process was obtained from the participants. The interview was conducted in Xhosa, the data was transcribed verbatim and later translated into English for the purposes of public reading and data analysis.

After each interview the researcher wrote down field notes on the interview conducted, which gave him a chance to record any observations made during the interviews.

According to De Vos et al. (2005), field notes should include empirical observations and interpretations; however, the two should be kept distinct. During the interview the researcher observed participants' body language and non-verbal communication when asking questions.

3.6.4 Data analysis

Merriam (2009) emphasises the fact that data collection and analysis are inseparable; they occur together. Data refers to information of fact and figures from which conclusions can be inferred. According to De Vos et al., 2005, analysis refers to the dissection of the whole into its component parts for the specific purpose of ascertaining its nature. De Vos et al. (2005) view data analysis as a twofold approach. Firstly the data is collected at the research site and secondly the data is analysed away from the site.

The first part of data analysis was very basic and consisted of the researcher analysing the participants' body language, tone of voice and other non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions. At a later stage the data was analysed in a more in-depth manner by watching the video interviews and making additional notes. Analysing the data onsite and away from the site gave the researcher a better understanding of what the illiterate caregivers were experiencing with regard to their challenges in supporting their

children's education. The data analysis conducted on the site assisted the researcher to add finer details about the illiterate caregivers' feelings and emotional experiences.

Miles and Huberman (1994) in Saldana (2013), describe the process of data condensation analysis in three levels, these being a concurrent process of selecting, simplifying and transformation of facts; data display and use of displays such as graphs and tables; and making conclusions by noting patterns and propositions.

The researcher used Miles and Huberman's methods as summarised in Saldana (2013) to analyse the data, and the results were then scrutinised by his supervisor. These steps were as follows:

Step 1: In preparation for analysis, the researcher organised data by transcribing all the interviews of the focus groups. Having completed the transcription process, all data was re-read to gain more sense of the information gathered and to reflect on its overall meaning (Creswell, 2009).

Step 2: Creswell (2009) suggests that the researcher should start with the shortest and most interesting transcript to read through, making notes on any thoughts which arise. To achieve this, the researcher looked through all informants' data from each focus group and made lists of all noted topics. Similar topics were clustered together.

Step 3: The researcher assigned codes to the clusters according to the identified similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes and categories and noted differences between subgroups. The coded material was further sorted and sifted accordingly. From the list of noted topics, the researcher abbreviated the topics and developed the codes.

Step 4: The researcher re-looked at coded topics and develop descriptive wording for the noted topics. Creswell (2009) suggests that the use of coding at this stage helps researchers to turn the topics into categories through the descriptive wording, and further advises reducing categories into related topics by grouping related topics.

Step 5: According to Creswell (2009), data belonging to each category should be assembled in one place and researchers should then perform a preliminary analysis where themes are assigned and sub-themes are allowed to emerge. In this study, the researcher used the stage to compare similarities and contrast findings. Observations

gained from the field notes as participants' reflections and remarks were jotted down, were also analysed during the process. Each field note was analysed separately according to emerging themes and

Step 6: The whole process was again tested against Saldana's (2013) interactive model to reaffirm conclusions according to the updated versions. Data coding or condensation lead to new ideas on which items should go to data display such as tables .After consultation with the supervisor, the researcher amended the themes and sub-themes and was able to capture the broader themes and then break them down into more relevant sub-themes.

3.7 Trustworthiness

According to Shenton (2004:63), trustworthiness as used by qualitative researchers means presenting a convincing case that their work is academically sound. Shenton (2004) cites Guba's (2005) four criteria for trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility: Shenton (2004:63) concludes that when addressing credibility, researchers attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:91) state that credibility of research is established while the research is undertaken. Credibility in this study was ensured by giving each participant opportunity to refuse to participate in this study to ensure that those taking part did so freely, ensuring that the research process was facilitated rigorous and sound.

Transferability: Terre Blanche et al. (2006: 91) calls transferability an external validity in which the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context, rests more with the researcher making the transfer than with the original researcher. Similarly, transferability refers to the ability to transfer research findings on methods from one group to another and can be established by providing comprehensive description of the demographics and geographic boundaries of the population being studied (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011:153).The demographics and geographic boundaries of the sample as well as the sampling method used were clearly described which facilitated the transferability of the research findings. The research process and observation notes were maintained throughout the research process.

The transferability of the research study has been enhanced by the thick descriptions provided in the research report on the motivation and decision-making process followed by the researcher in his choice of the research design, methodology, sampling as well as the provision of the interview guide used during the interviews.

The sampling criteria used during the research, further strengthen the transferability of the research study and the setting from which the participants were drawn, namely, the illiterate caregivers from a rural settlement.

Although the sample size was small, the thick descriptions provided through the selected research methodology enabled the findings to be transferable to similar settings, as all caregivers were subject to the same Constitutional Rights, namely South African Constitution of 1994.

Participants who had the knowledge and experience of the phenomenon, namely least or non-educated caregivers under study were approached to participate in the study. This enhanced the possibility that the findings would have the same meaning for other researchers, because the same sampling criteria can be used for future studies.

Dependability: The meeting of the dependability criterion should strive to enable a future investigator to repeat the study (Shenton, 2004:63). Thomas and Magilvy (2011) suggest that dependability of a research can be increased by a researcher describing how he arrived at his decisions regarding the purpose of the study, the reason for the selection and analysis process and the interpretation as well as dissemination of the research results. Description of techniques used to increase trustworthiness of the study and how the research data has been peer reviewed, has been described. The researcher's dependability was strengthened by describing the aim and motivation for the research, based on the researcher's observations and literature review. Dependability was enhanced by describing the research objectives and the path followed by the researcher in achieving the research objectives such as decisions taken in the selection of the research sample, data collection method and data analysis. The researcher engaged in telephonic and electronic discussions with the research supervisor throughout the research process and provided evidence of the process implementation and data generated. Ongoing review and feedback by the research supervisor on the submissions

enabled the researcher to maintain the audit trail in order for future researchers to repeat the study.

Conformability: According to De Vos et al. (2005:346), conformity has to do with whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another or whether the data helps to confirm the general findings. Shenton (2004:63) concludes that the construct of conformability captures that traditional concept of objectivity. To achieve conformability, the researcher consulted the participants afterwards, regarding the information which they had given during the interview process. This was done to ensure whether inferences drawn out of the data analysis process had the intended meaning, and refers to member checking.

3.8 Ethics considerations

Ramos (1989) cited in Orb, Eisenhaner and Wynaden (2001) describes three types of ethical problems that may affect qualitative studies: the researcher/participant relationship, the researcher's subjective interpretations of data, and the design itself. The dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing of participants were of primary concern in this research.

Informed consent: McMillan and Schumacher (2006:334) maintain that the settings and participants should not be identifiable in print. Thus, the locations and features of settings are typically disguised to appear similar to several places and the researchers routinely codes names of people and places. In order to obtain permission from the research participants, the researcher first had to describe the intended use of the data and then assure them of confidentiality of information and anonymity with regard to their names and persons. Teacher participants were also assured of the anonymity of the identities of their schools.

Research sites: Permission to conduct research at Ku Jonga, Coffee Bay was obtained from OR Tambo District Municipality. A letter requesting the researcher to conduct a research in the site was written to the office of the executive mayor, who granted permission and further provided the researcher with contact details of community leaders responsible for the area. OR Tambo district office of the Department of Education has an office established to coordinate all research done in schools within their jurisdiction. In conducting this study, a letter of request was written to this office.

Their letter acceding to the request further pledged support to the study, with the hope that the findings would be shared with the Department.

Ethical consideration with regard to participants: During the first interactions, ethical considerations were clearly communicated with the Chief, ward councillor, the principals of the participating schools and all participants. The assurance was given to them that their names would not be explicitly written in print, their views will be treated confidentially and that the names of their schools will be not be identified in print. De Vos et al. (2011) emphasise that every individual participating in interviews has a right to anonymity, privacy and voluntary participation.

All participants gave consent to the use of video in obtaining the interview data. The participants were informed that they had the right to choose whether or not to participate. Participation was voluntary and they had a right to withdraw at any stage of the study. The participants were further informed that they had a right to anonymity, as they were not obliged to give identification details in order to participate in this research.

Scientific integrity of the research: The researcher adhered to the ethical clearance requirements of the Senate Higher Degrees Committee, University of Western Cape.

No deception or plagiarism: All data came from the responses of the research participants from the interviews and observations obtained from the selected sites. The data was also not manipulated to support a personal position. The data from the literature was not plagiarised; all sources are indicated and are authentic.

3.9 Limitations of the study

De Vos et al. (2010:118) say that potential limitations are often numerous even in the most carefully planned research study and it is important that they be listed. These are constraints that inhibit progress of the study and are inevitable. Limitations experienced during the research are identified and explained below.

- The researcher struggled to secure an interview date with one of the two schools, probably because their school union was not comfortable with the arrangements. As a result, only non-union members could participate.

- The researcher experienced some challenges in accessing potential participants, as a result of their lack of self-esteem, probably caused by a feeling of inferiority concerning their illiteracy. Some people did not feel comfortable participating; the assumption is that they were intimidated being grouped with people who had not attended school or who had a minimal educational level.

3.10 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the motivation and the problem formulation of the study. The research question, aims and objectives, the research approach, type of research design of the research were explored and discussed. The chapter explained how the methodology applied in conducting this research study from beginning to end, including conceptual framework, population and sampling technique. This was followed by a discussion of the ethical considerations of the research study. Issues that gave this study legitimacy were dealt with. Regardless of the limitations, which were not significant, the researcher managed to gather enough data from the available participants.

Five focus groups were conducted. Two focus groups comprised teachers from two different schools and three focus groups were formed from illiterate caregivers from Ku Jonga, Tshezi administrative area, Coffee Bay.

The next chapter will present the research findings, starting from the type of support currently provided by illiterate caregivers in contributing to their children's education – to the support required by caregivers from other stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher described the application of the research methodology and research process embarked on to achieve the results, aims and objectives as stated in Chapter 1. The aim of the study was to explore and describe the challenges illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children's education

This chapter will present the findings that emanated from the analysis of the data that was generated by means of five semi-structured focus groups: two focus groups of only teachers and three focus groups of illiterate caregivers. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from the Ku Jonga, Tshezi administrative area of the rural section of Coffee Bay in the Eastern Cape. The data analysis as described in Chapter 1 (section 1.8.4) and Chapter 3 (section 3.7.4) was carried out according to the phases and steps proposed by Miles and Huberman (2005). The findings of the study will be presented by discussing each theme set against a literature control and supported by quotations from the interviews with the participants. This chapter concludes with a summary of findings and reflections on the achievement of the research goal.

Although Merriam (2002) advises that data should be presented in the form of interviewee's remarks, it should be noted that for this study, the interviews were conducted in Xhosa and translated into English by the researcher. Therefore it is the translations which are presented as remarks from the interviewees.

4.2 Research setting and summary profile of Coffee Bay

Coffee Bay falls within King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality of OR Tambo District municipality in the Eastern Cape, one of the poorest provinces in South Africa. Coffee Bay administrative area is traditionally led by chiefs or headmen and ward councillors who represent the local government. These leaders act as gatekeepers.

Figure 4: A two-hut household with nine family members
(one caregiver and eight children)



Source: B Makunga- researcher

Stats SA (2011) reported that the King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality is one of seven within this district, with a population growth rate that stands at 0, 5%. The district has a population of 1,365 million people with an unemployment rate of 44, 1%. The site research is called Ku Jonga in Tshezi administration area. The area is 115, 34 square kilometres. The average household capacity remains at 4, 1 occupant per household. The community resides mostly in huts that are built on mud and covered in thatched roofs.

Figure 5: School A in foreground

(Note walking distance to community residences in background)



Source: B Makunga-Researcher

King Sabata Dalindyebo municipality is 3 027, 37 square kilometres with a population of 451 710. The census of 2011 (StatsSA 2011) indicates a decline in the proportion of the population residing in traditional dwellings. In 2001 there were 43 933 residents and the census could not provide for the population of Ku Jonga, a traditional village

attached to the tourist zone of Coffee Bay, serving as a centre of the research site. This is where the Chief's palace is located, and according to the Department of Water Affairs (2011), the population stood at 1,365 million. The average household size is 4, 1 in the area. Coffee Shack Backpackers (2012) mentions the challenges identified by the Eastern Cape Department of Social Development that are experienced by community of Coffee Bay. These include food security, high unemployment, infrastructure backlogs, housing shortage, low levels of education, and low levels of health facilities, degradation and HIV/AIDS. As observed, citizens in Ku Jonga still depend on wood and paraffin for cooking and to keep them warm in winter and in cold weather.

Figure 6: A family of five lives in this one-roomed hut



Source: B Makunga-Researcher

The following discussions present the demographic data of the five focus groups. The findings of the analysis then follow under relevant themes and sub-themes, and quotations are inserted in order to substantiate these.

4.3 Demographic data of caregiver participants

Demographic details for each participant in the three focus groups were completed and are presented in Tables A1-A3 below. Each participant's demographic profile was compiled during the interview process. The demographic information of participants is

presented as discussed in sections 1.8.2 of Chapter 1 and 3.7.1 of Chapter 3. Five focus groups from Ku Jonga village, Tshezi administrative area, Coffee Bay were interviewed. Two of the focus groups consisted of teachers from two different schools, and three groups were illiterate caregivers from the community of Ku Jonga. Group 1 of the caregivers consisted of five men and four women; Group 2 consisted of one man and five women, and Group 3 of illiterate caregivers consisted of seven men. In total, 21 illiterate caregivers participated in the study.

4.3.1 Group 1 - Caregivers of both genders

In Table 1 below, M stands for male, F for female, S for single, Ma for married, D for divorced and W for widowed. Male participants are labelled M1 to M5 and female participants are labelled F1 to F4 in this table.

Table 1: Group 1 biographical data

| Label | Gender | Home language | Age | Marital Status | Level of education | Number of children under care | Relationship to the child | Who provides support to children? |
|-------|--------|---------------|-----|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| M1 | M | Xhosa | 56 | S | Never | 2 | Father | Siblings help each other |
| M2 | M | Xhosa | 61 | Ma | Never | 6 | Father | Wife |
| M3 | M | Xhosa | 52 | S | Grade 2 | 0 | N/A | N/A |
| M4 | M | Xhosa | 52 | D | Never | 2 | Father | Eldest son |
| M5 | M | Xhosa | 68 | Ma | Never | 4 | Father | Eldest son |
| F1 | F | Xhosa | 58 | S | Never | 3 | Granny | Each other |
| F2 | F | Xhosa | 40 | S | Grade 7 | 4 | Mother | Mother |
| F3 | F | Xhosa | 44 | Ma | Grade 1 | 5 | Mother to 3 and step-mother to 2 | Mother |
| F4 | F | Xhosa | 67 | S | Never | 8 | Granny | Each other |

Participants in Group 1 were privileged to have among them the head of the tribe. Most historical practices and land demarcation issues could be confirmed immediately with the Chief. For example, regarding questions about basic municipal services, it was clearly explained that electricity and accessible roads were not available for the Ku Jonga locality, which is under the Chief's area of jurisdiction. The group consisted of participants who believed principally in cultural values, beliefs associated with their age

group. The majority in this focus group were above 50 years of age with only two participants in their forties. The increase in the number of older fathers caring for their children is worth investigating. It has been common understanding that in most families, men are viewed as non-child carers and in some families they die before women die.

4.3.2 Group 2 - Female caregivers

The interviews followed the same interview guide and questions as for Group 1. Participants in this focus group were labelled M1g2 for the only male and F1g2 to F5g2 for female participants, who were all caregivers to children as indicated below. In the table below, M stands for male, F for female, S for single, D for divorced and W for widowed.

Table 2: Group 2 biographical data

| Label | Gender | Home language | Age | Marital status | Level of education | Number of children under care | Relationship to the child | Who provides support to children? |
|-------|--------|---------------|-----|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| M1g2 | M | Xhosa | 40 | S | Never | 8 | Father | Eldest daughter |
| F1g2 | F | Xhosa | 62 | W | Never | 4 | Granny | Each other (aunt when available) |
| F2g2 | F | Xhosa | 57 | D | Never | 5 | Mother | Eldest daughter |
| F3g2 | F | Xhosa | 58 | W | Never | 3 | Mother | No one |
| F4g2 | F | Xhosa | 69 | W | Never | 5 | Granny | Each other |
| F5g2 | F | Xhosa | 42 | S | Never | 3 | Mother | Each other |

All participants in Group 2 confirmed that they had never attended school. The one male participant seemed very sick during the group. The females accepted him as the only man present and sympathised as he had travelled a long distance on foot to participate in the group. The meeting had to agree to his participation, based on the fact that he was also a single parent who cared for eight children. Of the eight children four children belonged to his late sister and four were his biological children, whose mother left home in search of work. All participants were also single. Of the six participants, three were widows, two were single parents and one was divorced, so none had a husband. The latter indicates increase in number of single parents.

4.3.3 Group 3 - Male caregivers

The participants were labelled M1g3 to M7g3 according to seating arrangements. In the following table M stands for male, S for single, Ma for married, D for divorced and W for widowed. Two of the participants were literate and had acquired Grade 11 and 12 educational levels. The researcher accommodated the two literate caregivers in order to find and confirm reasons for the others not having had schooling. The inclusion of the literate individuals also helped in discussing possible support systems for illiterate caregivers to help their children.

Table 3: Group 3 biographical data

| Label | Gender | Home language | Age | Marital status | Level of education | Number of children under care | Relationship to the child | Who provides support to children? |
|-------|--------|---------------|-----|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| M1g3 | M | Xhosa | 54 | Ma | Never | 3 | Granny | Friends |
| M2g3 | M | Xhosa | 58 | D | Never | 2 | Granny | Each other |
| M3g3 | M | Xhosa | 46 | S | Grade 2 | 3 | Father | Sister (when there) |
| M4g3 | M | Xhosa | 51 | Ma | Never | 6 | Father | Mother |
| M5g3 | M | Xhosa | 68 | W | Never | 6 | Granny | Elder sibling |
| M6g3 | M | Xhosa | 36 | Ma | Grade 12 | 2 | Father | Father and mother |
| M7g3 | M | Xhosa | 38 | Ma | Grade 11 | 3 | Father | Father |

A brief discussion and analysis of the demographics of illiterate caregivers in the research study follows.

Gender: The demographics illustrate that of the 22 interviewed caregiver participants, nine were female and 12 were male. The greater number of males in the sampling endorses the recommendations made by Richter, Chikovore and Makusha (2010). Richter et al. suggest a radical change and improvement in the South African policy on fatherhood and fathering, in order for men to be portrayed as resources for their children.

Age: The demographics indicate that most children in the area are under the care of elderly. In the three caregivers' focus groups, seven were grandmothers; four were biological mothers, and one stepmother, while eight were fathers. According to the demographics, the age range of the participants was between 36 and 69 years. In this

range, only two were in their thirties and five in their forties, while the majority (15) were above 50 years. From the range, it can be deduced that children in the community are under the care of reasonably mature caregivers.

Marital status: According to the demographics, seven caregivers were married, while 15 were raising the children as single parents, never married, divorced or widowed. The sampling and representation affirm the findings of Stats SA (2011), being that most children in South Africa are raised by single parents.

Number of children in the household: The data in the tables indicated that the interviewees care for 87 children in total. Of these, 31 are in the care of grandmothers, 18 are in the care of their mothers and 36 are in the care of their fathers. The average number of children was four per household. Similarly, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2011) found that in King Sabatha Dalindyebo local municipality, the average number of children remains at 4 children per household. However, some caregivers seemed to be overloaded, as two participants reported caring for eight children each, and one male caregiver reported caring for six children.

Level of education: Of the 21 participants in the three different focus groups, three reported having studied as far as higher primary school level, two reported having dropped out at foundation phase, and 16 reported that they had never attended school and could not read or write one or two sentences or read or write their names. Grady (1994) refers to people who cannot write or read their names as illiterate. However two participants were in possession of grade 11 and 12 respectively and fall out of the criteria used. The two participants were kept in the group in order to help understand possibilities of provision of educational support to children by caregivers who have minimum qualifications. Challenges in this group were not much different from the other groups.

Summary – caregiver focus groups: From the three caregiver focus groups, 16 participants reported that children are helping each other or are assisted by their friends, whereas six reported having given support to their children after school with their homework. From the findings, it can be deduced that children in this community get very little support with their homework from caregivers.

4.4 Demographic data of teacher participants

A demographic profile was compiled by each teacher before the interviews took place. These are summarised in Tables 4 and 5 below.

4.4.1 Group 4 - Teachers from school A

The fourth focus group involved open-ended interviews and was focused on available support the teachers could offer to caregivers in their endeavours to support their children's education. Five female teachers were randomly selected by the school principal who recused herself after introducing the teachers to the researcher. The participants (all teachers) were labelled T1s1 to T5s1 according to their seating arrangement in the classroom where interviews were held. In the table below, the teachers are labelled as T1 to T5 while F stands for female, S for single, Y for yes and N for no.

Table 4: Group 4 biographical data

| Label | Gender | Age | Home language | Marital status | Qualifications | Which grade do you teach? | Number of learners in class | Are learners from illiterate families in your class? |
|-------|--------|-----|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| T 1 | F | 38 | Xhosa | S | Diploma | 3 | 76 | Y |
| T 2 | F | 36 | Xhosa | S | Diploma | 1 | 83 | Y |
| T 3 | F | 40 | Xhosa | S | Higher Diploma in Education | 5 | 44 | Y |
| T 4 | F | 38 | Xhosa | S | Diploma | Grade R | 89 | Y |
| T 5 | F | 34 | Xhosa | S | B Ed | 6 | 24 | Y |

The above table illustrates data of school 'A' participants. Some classrooms seem to be overcrowded, especially the Grade R classroom. The school is in two blocks which are built on a straight line and have seven classrooms. The classrooms are of different sizes. Three classrooms are 8,9m x 4, 8 m giving 42, 72 square metres, and four are 10,3m x 6.7m giving 69, 01 square metre. Teachers in school A seemed to be frustrated by lack of participation of parents in school activities, and lack of support by the provincial Department of Education. As observed the school buildings were dilapidated and windows were broken in almost all classrooms. Not conducive to schooling. Two

classrooms seemed to be overcrowded, since three classrooms were reported to have 79, 83 and 89 children in each. This is unacceptable and requires further investigation.

4.4.2 Group 5 - Teachers from school B

School B is approximately four kilometres north-west of school A, not far from the road to the sea. Six teachers (two males and four females) participated in the interview. They were labelled T1sB to T6sB according to seating arrangements in the staffroom where the interviews were conducted.

Table 5: Group 5 biographical data

| Label | Gender | Age | Home language | Marital status | Qualifications | Which grade do you teach? | Number of learners in the class | Are learners from illiterate families in your class? |
|-------|--------|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| T1sB | M | 32 | Xhosa | S | Diploma in Ed | 4 | 26 | Y |
| T2sB | F | 30 | Xhosa | S | Diploma in Ed | 3 | 33 | Y |
| T3sB | F | 41 | Xhosa | M | Diploma in Ed | 1 | 57 | Y |
| T4sB | F | 38 | Xhosa | M | Diploma in Ed | 6 | 28 | Y |
| T5sB | M | 28 | Xhosa | M | B Ed | 9 | 22 | Y |
| T6sB | F | 50 | Xhosa | W | Diploma in Ed | 2 | 45 | Y |

School B is built alongside the main road to Coffee Bay. The school is in two classroom blocks and an administration office. The administration office was half built at the time of the study. As observed, the school appears to have been initially built by professional contractors, but was not fully completed. Classroom dimensions are each 10,2m x 6,7m giving 68, 34 square metres. The number of learners seems to be balanced in each classroom. Much better regarding numbers in class - mention

A brief discussion and analysis of the demographics of participating teachers in the research study follows.

Language: All participants were Xhosa-speaking. It can therefore be assumed that language was not a barrier and that this would help in the flow of communication between caregivers and teachers.

Age: According to the demographics, the age range of the participants was between 28 and 41 years. One participant was 50 years old. From the ages of the participants, it can be deduced that teachers in the area are relatively young, and are keen to bring in innovative ideas to support the caregivers. In line with the strategies of involving caregivers in school activities (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005), the assumption is that young people are able to create a conducive environment to suit their need at any given time. Children have potential to think of creative ways to design an activity, including play activities. For example, these children need opportunities that adults create for them to play.

Level of qualifications: According to the demographics, two participants have a Bachelor of Education and nine have a Diploma in Education. From the qualifications of the teachers in the schools, it can also be deduced that caregivers in the area are likely to get professional support, and will therefore be able to support their children's education.

The following section of the chapter will present the themes and sub-themes which emerged from the processing of data analysis and the consequent consensus between the researcher and the research supervisor.

4.5 Overview of themes and sub-themes

The following table structures the major themes and sub-themes that emerged from data analysis from both teachers' and caregivers' focus groups.

Table 6: Themes and sub-themes

| THEMES | SUB-THEMES |
|--|---|
| <p>Theme 1: Children are mainly raised by illiterate caregivers</p> <p><i>Challenge 1.1: Children are supporting each other or by other person in schoolwork</i></p> | |
| <p>Theme 2: Challenges of children raised by illiterate caregivers</p> <p><i>Challenge 2.1: Illiterate caregivers challenged to value the education of the children</i></p> | <p>2.1.1: Caregivers lack education</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Challenge 2.2: Children playing the role of parents</i> | 2.1.2: Caregivers do not attend meetings 2.1.3: Caregivers do not assist with homework 2.1.4: Children are kept too busy 2.2.1: Children become father and mother at Home |
| Theme 3: Challenges experienced by caregivers/grandparents <i>Challenge 3.1: Being single caregiver</i> <i>Challenge 3.2: Increase in responsibility with more Grandchildren to take care of</i> <i>Challenge 3.3: Socio economic/poverty</i> <i>Challenge 3.4: Children misbehave – have no hope (cycle of poverty)</i> <i>Challenge 3.5: Experiences of powerlessness of Caregivers</i> | 3.1.1: Many parents are left by husbands/wives 3.2.1: Children have more children and then grandparents to look after 3.3.1: No income/little income for caregivers 3.4.1: Children do drugs and liquor – some do nothing |
| Theme 4: Lack of government and NGO Support | 4.1: Lack of government, NGO and church support |

In the next section of this chapter, the themes and their accompanying sub-themes and challenges will be presented and illustrated, underscored and/or confirmed by providing the direct quotations from the transcripts of the focus group interviews. The identified theme and sub-themes will be discussed and contextualised using the body of knowledge available.

Theme 1: Children are mainly raised by illiterate grandparents

The American Association of Retired Persons (2006) in Grant and Ray (2006), state that grandparents assume a parenting role for many reasons including death of the child's parents, parental divorce, unemployment and substance abuse which may lead to teenage pregnancy.

It can be expected that these grandparents will be supported in order to fulfil the parental role. However, Tloubatla in Lunga (2009) states grandparents continue to struggle to gain entry to support services, such as disability grants, child support grants and pension grants promised to them by the government.

In South Africa, older people may be eligible for child support grants, but very few of these are accessible by older people in rural communities (Lunga,2009).The author

mentioned unemployment, school drop outs, death of parents as the main causes for grandparents to live with their grandchildren.

The focus group interviews showed that 31 children were nurtured by grand- parents, representing 35 percent of the total sample. The participants related their challenges in this regard as follows:

“I am Mama Sompi; I have three children ... 1990, 1994 and 1996 and a grandchild who is attending at a nearby preschool ... I am illiterate ... and I am single. You know ... I used to sell fruits and sweets on the streets. I stopped because my health is deteriorating. I can no longer walk.”

Finally grandparents mentioned other causes, such as their heritage and teenage pregnancy that led them to live with their grandchildren. The views were supported by the teachers in school B as quoted below:

“Children drop out at very early stages ... get pregnant and after giving birth, they always leave those little ones under the care of their grannies ... we all know that people are illiterate in this community.”

Mathambo and Gibbs (2008) concur with the findings of the participants in this study and notes that people in rural areas still struggle to access sound social and economic services.

In addition, Lunga (2009) notes that grandparents provide a bridge to the past by acting as sources of family history, heritage and traditions: storytellers who kept grandchildren aware of their own family experiences and their culture.

Challenge 1.1: Children are supporting each other or are helped by another person in schoolwork

According to Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) (2006), parents are the first and ongoing educators of their own children, and, as such, should receive information and support to help their children’s learning at home. The department suggest everyday activities such as games, rhymes and language practice as helpful stimulation to child’s learning. These activities may enhance relationships between the caregiver and child, and encourage learning at home. Sound relationship with children create opportunities to discuss their learning with an adult, who can act as a mentor, help setting of goals for next stages of learning(SEED,2006)

Nurss (2000, 362) supports the notion of story-telling, and further explains that story-telling provide opportunities for holistic learning for children where grandparents and parents are normally experienced as support by their children.

Of vital importance are the identification, planning and provision of support to children's education by caregivers. SEED (2006) looks at different ways parents and caregivers can be involved and include advice and practical materials to support their children's education

The aforementioned findings are supported by Cuban (2011), who argues that in order to achieve high performance; the children's education should involve caregiver, teacher and child. The three role-players, as demonstrated in figure 1 of this study, should work together in support of the child's education.

By contrast the participants who took part in this study indicated that their children use other forms of support to do their schoolwork, as can be seen in the following quotations:

"Because I am not educated, when they come from school they help each other with their schoolwork. I prepare food for them."

"Huh! Yeah ... she is very clever, she is doing Grade 9 at Madakeni and her siblings are still at lower grades. She is good, assist them. You will always find her with them. I think my daughter was gifted with this one girl."

UNESCO (2010) alerts the reader to the factors that cause illiteracy and notes that some caregivers are unable to educate their children. The Department of Social Development (2011) warns that the family which was seen as being the primary point of socialisation, care and nurture, is at risk from a number of issues such poverty and illiteracy, which is a challenge in some rural settlements. This does not take away the fact that they care well for the children but in terms of education they cannot assist them

Martinez et al. (2010) support this view and note that although the illiterate caregivers have to deal with the complex and demanding different roles in raising their children; these caregivers have in many cases care and love for their children. The love and care helps them to encourage the utilisation of other forms of support by their children.

The findings further indicate that caregivers in the rural Coffee Bay see no value in the education of their children.

To this end, and after twenty years of democracy in South Africa, caregivers should be equipped to recognise the value of their children's education. This is discussed in the next theme as challenge 2.1

Theme 2: Challenges of children raised by illiterate caregivers

Although caregivers can expect children in their care to learn, they are unable to support them in their schoolwork. Children are experiencing some difficulties and use other options where possible.

The findings of the research study indicated that since children are raised by illiterate caregivers are faced with different forms of challenges that include physical and emotional distress. They therefore need to be assisted by their caregivers in all aspects of growth.

Current research supports the findings of this study and emphasise the fact that caregivers should be empowered in order to provide the required support for their children (Nyama, 2010)

Calitz, et.al (2002) in Nyama (2010) argue that caregivers in rural areas lack knowledge and skill to assist their children with school work. The lack of knowledge and skill from caregivers reduces chances of providing educational support for their children's schoolwork, and may lead to physical and emotional distress on their children. Shulubana and Kok (2005) in Nyama (2010) support the view and note the critical role played by caregivers in support of their children's learning and development.

Participants in the caregivers' focus groups portrayed challenges faced by these children. These challenges are discussed below:

Challenge 2.1: Illiterate caregivers do not value the education of the children

In accordance with the National Education Policy (1996) and the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996), education is important for all citizens and is valued by the State. The Constitution (1996), declared the rights of all people to a basic education (RSA, 1996). The White Paper on Education and Training entrusted the State to advance

and protect citizens, so that they have the opportunity to develop their capabilities and potentials. The policies indicate that the government have value in education, and as such, is of the view that caregivers in the country benefit from the policy arrangements. It is therefore likely that some caregivers benefit from the policy and some not.

Caregivers have different views of the role of education. For some, education's role is to instil self-reliance and independence in children. Most of the illiterate caregivers see no value in education for various reasons, as discussed in the next sub-theme:

Sub-theme 2.1.1: Caregivers lack education

The caregivers who took part in this study confirmed that caregivers in Ku Jonga community lack reading and writing skills and this was indicated in the following quotation:

“I have not been at school. I am not learned at all, so I cannot help my children with schoolwork.”

You asked our challenges. It hurts to have no knowledge on what your child is trying to write. Illiteracy is an evil thing.

The Department of Social Development (2005) proposed that the state assume full responsibility for the provision of education in rural areas. It is evident that the proposed responsibility has not been implemented in Ku Jonga community.

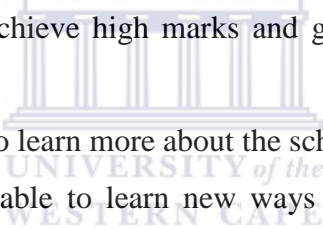
Gardiner (2008) argues that the realities of education facing people in rural communities cannot always be addressed by state policies. For specific needs, including inability to provide educational needs to the children, citizens should be consulted. Rural communities have their own methods to manage their affairs and cultural practices. Gardiner (2008) further argues that the achievement of real quality in education in rural areas can come about when their significant social and economic developmental needs are met. In South Africa the government has the responsibility to provide infrastructure and help in the empowerment of caregivers in rural areas (Constitution, 1996).

Similar to the findings of this study, Human Science Research Council (HSRC, 2003) reports inequalities in education, and claims that since the advent of democratic government two converging State initiatives have had a bearing on rural schools. The

first being the States policies towards rural areas. HSRC (2003) found that integrated rural development policies are in place, but do not make reference to education for rural communities. The second set of initiatives arises from Constitutional guarantee of the right to education. The State assumes responsibility for, and of, the provision of education and training in rural communities. In contrast, citizens in rural Coffee Bay have not experience the right to education, as participants in this study confirmed that they have never been to school and cannot provide support for their children's school work.

Sub-theme 2.1.2: Caregivers do not attend meetings

According to Christenson and Sheridan (2001), parents and teachers should work closely together as partners. Working close to each other includes meeting regularly to discuss the children's performance. When meetings of this nature occur, the following are benefits:

- 
- Children normally achieve high marks and get better results at the end of the year.
 - Caregivers are able to learn more about the school processes and procedures.
 - Caregivers are also able to learn new ways of supporting their children with homework.
 - Children become motivated, because they can see that their caregivers show interest in their studies.

However, the teachers' statements below indicate that caregivers are not attending meetings that are organised by the schools:

“You know! I don't know how many parents meetings were called, only this year, but you will find two or three coming.”

It is worse – caregivers do not honour parental meetings or even pay spontaneous visits at school.

“Ok ... the Department of Education always ... in SACE workshops we are always encouraged to involve learners' parents in their education. Sometimes parents are invited to discuss progress of their children. But ... we hardly get positive responses.”

According to Menheer and Hooger (2008), parental involvement includes the upbringing and education of their children, both at home and at school and parental participation is a concept which can be defined as active participation of parents in school activities.

Christenson and Sheridan (2001) conclude that the goal of caregiver involvement with education is to connect in an important context for strengthening children's learning and development.

Smit et al. (2007) support this view and divide parental participation into two forms and these are defined below:

- Institutionalised form such as participation in school governance
- Non-institutionalised forms by which parents assist teachers in day-to-day activities, like helping with homework.

The participants in the caregiver focus group confirmed poor attendance to school meeting. One of the participants expressed his concerns of non-attendance to school meetings, as follows:

“There are meetings called by teachers, our people in this area do not attend those meetings. In those meetings, but even them are scarce...are not often called. This year.Yeah, not even one was called; my wife and I always receive letters from teachers. Imagine, if you are literate how you can take those letters serious”

While the literature, in this research study, highlights the importance of partnership and suggests different approaches to improve relationships between teachers and caregivers, emerging from the findings is the need to examine effect of poor partnerships, as well as impact of poor relationships between the teachers and caregivers, on the child's performance at school. Poor relationships or weak partnerships between the two role-players, namely teacher and caregiver may discourage caregivers and make them feel worthless and unable to assist in their children's homework, as discussed in the next sub-theme:

Sub-theme 2.1.3: Caregivers do not assist with homework

The findings of this study indicated that, since caregivers operate within family structures, they are in direct contact with their children within the family contexts and

the they provide direct care to the children. They therefore need to assist their children with homework.

Mathambo and Gibbs (2008) believe that families have sufficient material and social resources to provide care for their children. Mathambo and Gibbs further contend that family environments are especially important for young children, because multiple risks can affect the cognitive, motor and social-emotional development of children, and therefore homes provide safety and primary care to the children. However families may require additional support to maintain positive functioning of the family (Mathambo and Gibbs, 2008)

In this study, illustrations in tables 1, 2 and 3, indicate that 20 participants have never been to school or least educated, representing 96% of the total sample. The caregiver's focus groups interviews indicated that children do not receive assistance with their homework from their caregivers and this is confirmed in the following quotations:

“Whoa ... I never went to school; my wife never went to school ... all they [children] are by themselves. I don't know what they are being taught; only what I do. I pay for them school fund, whenever I get paid from my piece jobs.”

“I must confess, most of us are not motivated enough to support our children with school- work.”

“We are not learned people, our children are... what they study is not known to us.”

Hoover-Dempsey,Battiato,Walker,Reed,DeJong and Jones(2001) suggest that parents should decide to become involved in children's homework because they believe they should be involved, they believe their involvement can make a difference and perceive their involvement as wanted or expected. According to Hoover-Dempsey et al.(2001)parents homework involvement includes a variety of activities, ranging from the establishment of home structures that are supportive of learning to patterns of interactive behaviour intended to enhance the child's understanding of homework. Hoover-Demsey et al(2001) contend that parents involvement activities influence the learner outcomes. The influence happens through caregiver's modelling, reinforcement and instructions. The authors, Hoover-Dempsey et al(date)., further find that operating

through the aforementioned mechanism help in production of school results and also help children develop attributes that are related to positive achievements such as attitudes towards homework, perception of personal competence and self-regulation.

On the other hand, Cooter (2006) warns of the dangers of minimal education in families. The author emphasises the fact that, in families where caregivers experience difficulties in reading and writing, the danger is that the low literacy level is passed on to the next generation. The fact that caregivers are unable to provide assistance discourages their children from learning, and children lose interest and drop out early from school. A safe learning environment is essential for children to do their homework as discussed in the next sub-theme.

Sub-theme 2.1.4: Children are kept too busy and lack a conducive environment for learning

In South Africa and other parts of the world, the rights of children to education are protected by legislation. Naturally, house chores depend on age and capabilities. Caregivers need to know what they can expect from their children at particular age. For children of school age, the notion of schooling should be priority. Caregivers need to understand which times are relevant and conducive for their children to do home chores which are appropriate to their age and learning.

In addition, caregivers manage a “buy in” from the children involved in the process doing chores, without disrupting their study schedules

Barton and Coley (2009) contend that a home should be recognised by caregivers and their children, as an educational resource to the children staying in it.

Barton and Coley (2009) further suggest improvements in home environments, in order to make it conducive for learning and for improving educational gaps. For the home to be conducive to learning, Barton and Coley (2009) suggest, appropriate parent-pupil ratios, enough family finances to meet educational needs of their children, literacy development and child care disparities

Although the number of single-parent families seems to be increasing, the home learning environment seems to be a challenge. Teachers in this study complained that children are not afforded enough time to do their homework. The following is a quotation which supports the finding:

“Children tell us that they wake up very early in the mornings, do house chores, such as fetching water from the rivers, and helping in the manufacturing of mud-building blocks before they are allowed to come to school.”

“After school he had to put his books down and go out to look for the cattle. Soon realised that the learner was not given enough time to look at his homework also.”

Lamb (1997) emphasized the significance of sufficient finances in family in order to provide for their children, and further concludes that fathers are as capable as mothers of behaving responsively and sensibly in interaction with their children. The current study also notes the presence of single fathers in the lives of children. In the demographics that are summarised in tables 1, 2 and 3, of the 22 participants, 12 were males, which represent 44% of the total sample. This finding is supported by Barton and Coley, who find the percentage of two-parent families declined and single-parents families, including male-parents increasing. The following quotations indicate a snowball of single-parents who are males:

“My name is Mzoli Sotshongaye(fictitious names),I, I grew up in this village and I was once married., and my wife left me with two children, a boy and a girl. The children have a bad attitude towards me...That cares! Their mother left them in my care”.

“I am also divorced; my wife left me with two boys and a daughter. My daughter is doing grade 7 and is very quiet”.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1998) supports that education for children should be prioritised by all member states. Thus States may help provide spaces for learning at community as well as family levels.

The study found that children also play the role of parents. Following is a discussion of this challenge.

Challenge 2.2: Children playing the role of parents

Sub-theme 2.2.1: Children become father and mother or adult at home

The following quotation bears evidence to the fact that children become father and mother. The challenge emanates from various factors, such as loss of father or mother,

or loss of both. In this study the most contributing factor is associated with cultural values. Caregivers believe that children assume responsibility to lead households when their caregivers are, at either grass-cutting gatherings or home-beer-drinking gatherings. One of the teachers who participated in the study expressed her concern as follows:

“Most homes are generally led by children, truly speaking. The grannies enjoy home beer and could go out as early as nine in the morning and return home very late.”

This finding is in contrast to normal child-rearing. Children of school-going age need parental attention, guidance love and care, physical and social security, play with friends (Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund Report, 2001:14). The Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund Report (2001) concludes that a complex set of problems or combination of factors lead to an increased risk of children heading families and may include the following:

- Educational failure
- Lack of parental supervision
- Poor housing, early marriage
- Disruption of normal child and adolescent development

In addition to many responsibilities, children are also challenged by home chores, which mean that they cannot do their schoolwork at home, as discussed in the previous theme.

These responsibilities can be associated with social expectations about behaviour for each gender, the nature of sexual orientation, and the child’s role within family (Bowen in (1966) in Brown (2008) According to Brown (2008), Bowen believes that history of our family creates a template which shapes the values, thoughts and experiences of each generation and how that generation passes down these to the next generation. Bowen’s theory refers to these as societal emotional processes. Thus, families who deal with persecution pass their children the ways they learnt to survive. The way family emotional processes are transferred and maintained over generations were evident to the findings of this study. Caregivers indicated how their beliefs of the family should be re-enforced, as suggested in the following quotation:

“Then, we had big herds of cattle, with wide grazing fields and we also ploughed mealies, there was no hunger like in these days. Our children can be helped in following our footsteps, we shall die one day”

In addition, children assume these responsibilities because they believe it is their place in the family. Bowen (1966) in Brown (2008) notes that the oldest sibling is likely to be seen as overly responsible and mature, while the youngest is viewed as overly irresponsible and immature. Children grow up and without realising it, model this way of thinking. The following theme will aid the reader in understanding the challenges which are experienced by caregivers.

Theme 3: Challenges experienced by caregivers/grandparents

Caregivers and/or grandparents should expect to be faced with challenges in the process of caring for these children, because caring for children is never an easy process (Holden, 2009). Holden (2009) argues that when the situation can be used to teach children how to manage their own emotions and behaviours, meet expectations, and solve problems, caregivers may rely on a collaborative approach. This approach assists children in meeting expectations by drawing on their strengths, valuing their input, respecting their worldview and helping them develop life skills (Holden, 2009). Participants in this study concur with Holding's suggestion and presented a number of challenges that they face when supporting their children.

Challenge 3.1: Being a single caregiver

Participants in the focus group interviews unanimously confirmed that many adults nurture their grandchildren and or children as single caregivers. In this study, illustrations in tables 1, 2 and 3 indicate that 13 participants were single; this number includes participants who are divorced and widowed, representing 59% of the total sample. The following are quotations from the participants:

“My husband passed away long ago. I did a little bit of schooling, although I left at lower grades.”

“Huh! I am Phiwani; I stay here at Kwa Tshezi. I lost my wife in 2009 and I live with eight children. Three of the eight are with me, attending school at Madakeni

Primary School and five were removed by the social workers to Bethany Place of Safety, as they are still very young. I have not been at school”

In addition to the above as discussed in the previous themes, caregivers are experiencing what is perceived as a lack of knowledge and skill to assist their children with schoolwork. Single caregivers share their responsibilities with their children, in order for the family to function. One participant alluded to the fact, as indicated in the following quotation:

I am not learned at all, so I cannot help my children with schoolwork. I often go out and look for piece-jobs... and the eldest daughter normally prepare and help others with everything in the house ... she is doing Grade 7.”

This quotation shows the dilemmas of the single parent and maybe the reason for the single parent to use the children to take over the roles of the other parent. The caregiver cannot cope on his or her own and try and earn a living and look after the children.

Osborne and McLanahan (2007) conclude that child of single parents are likely to be poor and to drop out of school. In general, children do best when raised by both of their married, biological parents and who have low-conflict relationships. These findings indicate the effects of raising children as a single parent.

Sub-theme 3.1.1: Many parents are left by husbands/wives

Male participants confirmed that they were left by their wives and also expressed their experiences of raising children as single parents.

“Wives leave us, because there are no jobs to feed them and their children.”

“I grew up in this village and I was once married, and my wife left me with two children, a boy and a girl. The children have a bad attitude towards me ... Who cares! Their mother left them in my care.”

South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) (2010), in Sonke Gender Justice Network (2013), showed that in South Africa 40% of children live with their mothers only, 3% with their fathers only and 23% live with either of their biological parents or both grandparents. Contrary to the findings of SAIRR (2010) who shows that unemployment and poverty contribute to a pattern of many fathers not taking

responsibility for caring for their children, this study finds majority of single caregivers being fathers. This therefore warrants further research, see recommendations in chapter 5.

Challenge 3.2: Increase in responsibility to care for more grandchildren

Raising a child is not an easy task, particularly for an elderly person, because there are needs and demands that should be met. Below are some challenges that this study examined:

Sub-theme 3.2.1 Children increasingly leave more children with grandparents to look after

The teacher focus groups confirmed that children, usually girls, would drop out of school, get pregnant and leave their children with their illiterate grandparents.

“Their grandparents are illiterate. Yeah ... but not all of them. The parents in our age group have been at school, but the only difference is, they leave their children with grandparents and go with their husbands to places of work.”

Bailey (2012) cited in Kinyua (2013) supports the findings of this study. The author notes that grandparents are faced with the responsibility of caring for their grandchildren for a variety of reasons which include:

- Parental death
- Substance abuse
- Divorce
- Teen pregnancy
- Abandonment
- Involvement of social services due to child neglect and child abuse.

In addition, grandparents assume the role of parents to keep children within the family, save them from further harm and keep them out of the foster care system.

Mathambo and Gibbs (2008) suggest that the emergence of this pattern of grandparents as primary caregivers for their grandchildren, risks the health of the inter-generational bond with the children's biological parents. As the children grow, grandparents often assume that they will be cared for by their children, but this social relationship is

fractured, as children continue to give birth to the grandchildren and leave them with their grandparents. This highlights the added burden of more responsibility on the elderly. Grandparents can find the added responsibilities more stressful, particularly if they are struggling with finances and are single.

Based on the experiences reported by caregivers and teachers in this study, it appears that state and government policies have failed to take into account the complexities of raising children when the caretaker is single, old and illiterate.

Kinyua (2013) finds that most grandparents are left in a difficult emotional, social and financial situation, which is not recognised by the state. This is confirmed in the next challenge which this study examined.

Challenge 3.3: Socio economic/poverty

May (1998) in Perret, Anseew and Mathebula (2005) defines poverty as the inability to attain a minimal standard of living measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy these needs. The authors add that poverty encompasses lack of power and the inability to afford decent health and education. The findings of this study confirm the situation of extreme poverty which the caregivers in Ku Jonga, Coffee Bay experience. These are discussed in the following sub-themes.

Sub-theme 3.3.1: Poverty experienced by caregivers

Caregivers found it difficult to provide for their children's educational needs. Following are quotations arising from focus groups:

“Oh my brother ... the biggest challenge we all face is hunger. [long pause] This affects our children's education ... may not be directly so, but I am telling you, how can you learn on an empty stomach? I know ... to you learned people it may sound ridiculous, but I am telling you. We used to plough mealies, rich in stock, but all of those are history. We do not have herds of cattle as our forefathers used to have and we are sloppy area where tractors, even if we had tractors they would struggle. We are deep in poverty. For me that is the worst of all.”

“You see son! I am old as I see myself. This community is starving, there are no jobs. Even the value of money seems to be zero. You cannot buy many things as

we used to do. Our sons are drunkards in this community; we do not get help from anybody ... I am old very old of my age ... I am even unable to buy them clothes, school uniform, bus fare. Nothing, you see.”

“Yeah, you know! I want to mention the fact that our illiteracy has led to unemployment. As a result, our children do... cannot compete with children from educated families. Take for an example: if you are learned, or maybe you are a teacher or nurse, you earn money to buy clothes that your child chooses. But with us, our children are laughed at, as a result their self-esteem drops. This affects their learning.”

Teachers confirmed the impact of poverty on the children’s education:

“Learners come to school in dirty and clumsy uniform; some come on empty stomachs, without pencils, books and some without uniform. Some children are from child house-headed families..... Yeah ... kona-kona ... it is understood. People in the area are jobless, so their sons and daughters prefer moves to other provinces for job, leaving their young ones with uneducated grannies.”

Perret et al. (2005) conclude that poverty results in a number of challenges which include:

- Alienation from the community
- Food insecurity
- Crowded homes
- Usage of unsafe and insufficient forms of energy
- Lack of adequately paid and secure jobs
- Fragmentation of the family

Martinez et al. (2010) support the view and link poverty with illiteracy. The authors contend that illiteracy has a high impact on health, education, economics and social integration.

Challenge 3.4: Behavioural problems of the children

According to Bailey (2012), behavioural issues in the children can be a challenge, as grandchildren may act out because of multiple factors. Muncie, Wetherell, Dallos and Cochrane (1995) argue that when children who are brought up in alternative care are

misbehaving, they are not psychologically damaged, but influenced by the absence of mothers. The authors view the mother attachment as significant in the lives of children. Bailey (2012) supports the view and contends that behavioural issues are caused by children's lack of understanding of the reasons why they cannot be with their parents.

This is evident from the information gathered from the focus group interviews. Participants confirmed that children, especially those who dropped out of school, use drugs and alcohol, as can be seen in the following quotations:

“The eldest son dropped Standard 8 and is more on drugs and alcohol. The other one also left school at lower grades and I heard he is at Mthatha.”

“One son left school while he was doing Standard 9. When I asked him why, he had no answers for me. He is a drunkard in this Ku-Bhonga location.”

These quotations indicate that caregivers have the added responsibility of dealing with difficult behaviour. They experience powerlessness and this is discussed in the following theme, as a challenge.

Challenge 3.5: Experiences of powerlessness of caregivers

In the light of huge amount of responsibility that caregivers have to deal with on a day-to-day basis, it is understandable that they exhaust their energy levels. The caregiver focus group interviews confirmed that they feel helplessness in supporting their children with educational needs.

“Yeah ... I want to support Mama Xhasa, who is raising the issue of home situation. Our children know they are from dilapidated mud-made rondavels, sometimes wear torn socks. At schools, children tend to boast about their homes, and at times here at school, children are asked to take off their shoes for certain exercises. These are embarrassing to children. I agree with Mama Xhasa – if you were educated you would be living a better life and your children would be benefitting from the lifestyle.”

“”....., we do not have electricity here, like in other villages. If your child wants to study until late, you have to buy paraffin or candles. Where is money for all these things? The grant is very little. I buy them food; one set of clothes is finished. Thirdly, it seems as if the government has ignored this village. I feel isolated and

it is not accessible to transport. If you are sick you will die in the house. I heard people talk computers; I so wish my children could have one and teach me how to use it too."

Carlini-Marlatt (2005) points out those grandchildren try to push grandparents away, because they feel their parents have abandoned them. The author observes that their inner feelings are grief, anger and anxiety; this may result in health problems for the caregiver. Caregivers present depression, poor health or chronic illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes. Although these health indicators are not fully understood, they are associated with the heavy duties placed on the caregivers, and they lead to social isolation (Carlini-Marlatt, 2005). Caregivers are therefore in need of support and empowerment in order to cope with these challenges.

Challenge 3.6: Changing Family values and cultural beliefs

Historically, South Africans (especially those living in rural communities) were known to be good farmers. The participants in this study confirmed that people used to live on livestock such as cattle, sheep, goats and grains like maize and beans. In addition, when men were employed, they had contracts with mines for six months and come back home with money to buy more cattle or to pay Lobola. A young man had to look after the cattle and ensure their safety. Girls, irrespective of age, had to fetch water from the river, cook and fetch wood from the forest, in order to be prepared for customary marriage. These cultural values and some living conditions have prevented most caregivers from attending school activities, in support of their children. Barrett (1991) mentions the economic role of cattle in communal farming systems, which are associated with cultural practices and living conditions. Barrett (1991) contends that cattle ownership lead to capital growth as the herd grows through reproduction. People in rural areas used to sell cattle for fattening and slaughter in order to raise money. Cows usually provide milk for cattle-owning households. Barrett (1991) relates cattle production with crop production. Cattle provide manure and transport as inputs to crop production (Barrett, 1991)

These became values in some rural communities, especially in the Eastern Cape. Older citizens still live with such beliefs, and this is indicated in the following quotations:

“In the first place, we are not learned and the way we lived our lives also affect them, because they think it was the correct way of living life. They do not know we were forced by our elders to look after their cattle. Then, we had big herds of cattle, with wide grazing fields and we also ploughed mealies. There was no hunger like in these days”.

Caregivers, especially the grandparents believe that the poverty that they experience is associated with the loss of respect to their customs and cultural beliefs. The following is a quotation from one of the caregiver focus groups.

“No [long pause] you see ... people have forgotten their customs. They do not believe there are ancestors. Our ancestors are angry. We need to go back to our roots. Even the leadership in the government is confused, because they lost the spirit of Ubuntu. My suggestion would be, the government should encourage people to uphold their cultural values ... stop canvassing for the votes. I am old now. I never attended school; I used to have a huge stock of cattle, sheep, and chicken. My children could not complain. But now here you come ... they leave children with us, yet they themselves were never abandoned. ... [Standing] One thing to say, wives in this community are very diligent, they organise us food, some make mud brick here and are very good.”

Cultural values were significant for the caregivers who were interviewed. Their geographical location and the various sectors (NGO and government) had little or no influence on their understanding of child-rearing. Teachers however, were aware that there has been a shift from the traditional beliefs about child-rearing. Teachers were of the view that children should be educated and that looking after livestock should be the responsibility of adults.

The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) provides for an educated generation and policies for free education were passed by the government to advance the requirements of the law.

Theme 4: Lack of government and NGO support

In South Africa, families in rural communities are challenged with social, political, economic and demographic issues that affect their ability to help their children with

education (Mathambo & Gibbs, 2008). These authors find that people in rural areas still struggle to access sound social and economic services. Pensioners are forced to travel long distances for pay-outs and social grants, and there is lack of social services and infrastructure to link rural areas with urban areas socially, economically and politically. This means that communication and communication systems such as radios, televisions and telephones are also affected. Today's politicians struggle to address the needs of women, youth, the disabled and aged in rural areas. This is confirmed in the current study and the findings are discussed in the following sub-themes.

Sub-theme 4.1: Lack of government, NGO and church support

The participants in both teachers' and caregivers' focus groups expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of support from both the government and other service providers. These are some relevant remarks from the focus groups, and confirm their survival struggles, as the environment seems to be non-conducive to make a living

"I want to emphasise the lack of support from the government. Go to Mthatha and other parts of the province; they are given tractors to plant whatever. Children cannot be motivated if they are hungry. I cannot as well get motivated if I am hungry ... our children leave school at very early ages and in lower grades. They force themselves into teenage marriages, dropping out of school. We are not employed here ... there are not jobs ... Even in Gauteng, they stay in streets, yet they left us saying they are going to look for jobs. Imagine! Leaving these young ones with us, illiterate and jobless as we are."

The above quote the importance of this research on how grandparents experience it to look after their grandchildren. Illiteracy and joblessness seem to be major challenges for them. The following quotations from the participants indicate additional challenges that these caregivers experience while trying to support their children:

"Electricity – we do not have all those things. Children study in candles and paraffin. If I do not have money to buy those ... they will study on wood fire light. Yes, it is true; we are not getting support from the government. Look at our community, there is not even one road into the community. Your car ... I am sure was hit by the big stones you passed before getting in here."

“Who knows, if officials from the government can constantly avail themselves here, maybe that could minimise all bad behaviours by our youth. Huh?”

Villages and rural communities are difficult to reach; the physical conditions in schools are inadequate and learner performance in comparison to schools in urban areas is weak (Department of Education, 2007).

In 1994, the South African Education Department published a policy framework for education and training. The framework includes the following proposals:

- The state will assume full responsibility for the provision of schools in rural areas.
- The state will where necessary provide transport to schools and establish rights to cross private land to ensure effective access to schools.
- The physical and service infrastructure of many forums and rural schools needs to be upgraded to ensure minimum standards.
- Where possible, schools will operate as learning centres with a range of after-school activities.

Although the government made these proposals, the current study finds that teachers, caregivers and their children are still challenged by the non-existence of these services. Participants in the teachers' focus groups confirmed lack of support from the government. The fact that their schools are still built on mud bricks contributes to the bad experiences that the people in the community continue to have.

Graham-Clay (2005) suggests creation of a “customer-friendly” school environment and this may include the following:

- Cleanliness of the school environment, including the walls of buildings, where children are able to display their artwork.
- Use of welcoming signs that reflect a range of ethnic languages spoken in the school.

By contrast, the findings of this study confirm negative experiences of both teachers and caregivers, since the schools in the community are dilapidated and made of mud and old material.

“Yeah, it is a bit challenging ... You knows. Children in our school are not inspired by anything, or by anybody, for that matter. They come at school dirty; even the classrooms as you can see, are dilapidated ... They are not appetising at all. So I cannot put blame to illiteracy per se of anybody really. The whole class is up to no standard.”

In addition to the lack of government support, teachers-children-caregivers are also challenged by the condition of schools.

4.6 Summary of findings

This chapter provided the reader with an in-depth understanding of the themes and sub-themes that emerged during the study. Four themes and their respective sub-themes were generated from the obtained data. Challenges were identified and specific problems were discussed. The main findings of this study were as follows:

1. Children are mainly raised by single parents. Significant to the finding, is that the majority of participants in the study were single men.
2. Children are challenged by lack of caregiver support in doing their school work at home. The study finds that caregivers lack skill and knowledge.
3. Caregivers are challenged with difficult emotional, social and financial issues. They are not exposed to counselling agencies and government support.
4. Caregivers are challenged with behavioural problems which their children display. The absence of biological parents increases anxiety and frustrations on the young people.
5. Lack of government and NGO support in providing basic services. Human basic needs such as infrastructure, water and electricity are fundamental rights and are required by caregivers in order to provide support to their children's school work at home.
6. Caregivers do not participate in school activities and are not involved in their children's education.

7. Inequalities: Women are believed to be the only people to provide parental responsibilities and household chores are not divided evenly, among family members. Children assume adult responsibilities.

The description of findings was supported by verbatim quotations that were translated from Xhosa to English by the researcher, for understanding by other readers. These were generated from the semi-structured focus groups. The discussions were framed by supporting and contrasting literature from previous studies.

The South African Department of Education (2013) realises the bad conditions of schools' infrastructure and has published norms and standards which are regulations that define the infrastructural conditions to make a school conducive for learning. These regulations stipulate the basic level of infrastructure that every school must meet in order to function properly.

The findings of this study are also supported by the Equal Education Campaign (2011). This organisation of concerned citizens saw the bad conditions of schools in rural areas and decided to compel the South African government to attend to the mud schools. The following methods were used to pressurise the government:

- Marching in public
- Picketing in places of work, namely schools
- Writing petitions
- Writing letters to the Minister of Education

It is hoped that the findings of this study will add value to the process of articulation of these norms and standards.

The next chapter will present general conclusions derived from the study based on the objectives which guided the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher presented the themes and sub-themes that arose from the findings of this study. This chapter concludes the study concerning the challenges experienced by illiterate caregivers in supporting their children's education. A brief summary and conclusions for each chapter are presented, followed by recommendations for caregivers and teachers as well as for future research.

5.2 Summary and conclusions

The conclusions arrived at during the course of the study were outlined in this chapter. The significance and value of the qualitative research process was described by a short evaluation of the different research components of the research process. The research goals and objectives, as outlaid in chapter 1, were achieved and the research question answered through a qualitative enquiry which was considered the best research approach for this study, as it acquired rich data concerning experiences of illiterate caregivers in rural Coffee Bay. The findings of the study provided a better understanding of the challenges illiterate caregivers experience in supporting their children with schoolwork.

5.2.1 Chapter 1

Chapter 1 provided the reader with an overview of the research study undertaken and the researcher discussed the importance of caregiver-child-teacher partnerships in the education of children. In the preliminary literature review, the researcher introduced the concepts of illiteracy and parenthood. The research question for the study was then presented, together with the study's objectives. Namely:

What are challenges faced by illiterate caregivers in supporting their children's education?

In order to answer the research question, the following aims and objectives were formulated:

The aim of the study was to explore and describe challenges that illiterate caregivers experience when supporting their children's education.

The objectives were:

- To explore and describe the challenges caregivers experience when assisting their children with schoolwork.
- To explore how they currently show support to their children.
- To explore what other support they would need to be able to support their children.
- Explore available support by other stakeholders like teachers to assist caregivers and their children.

Chapter 1 functioned as an overall introduction to the study and provided a context within which it takes place. The researcher used a qualitative research approach to address the research problem and to effectively work towards the research goal and objectives. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1994) was discussed in its application as a theoretical framework for the study. Purposive sampling was applied and the sampling criteria were discussed. Focus group interviews served as means of data collection and thematic system was considered for data analysis. Strategies to ensure trustworthiness and ethical consideration of the study were also discussed.

In conclusion, the researcher deduced that the qualitative research approach and the designs and methodology used in the study were adequate for reaching the goals and objectives of the study.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

Chapter 2 presented the literature review encapsulating the phenomena of literacy, contexts within which caregivers operate as well as teacher-caregiver relations. The chapter also provided literature assertions from previous studies which gave credibility to the significance of this study. The application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as a framework to this study, accounts for the development of children through a holistic interaction with their environment from the immediate family environment to the broader society, at the same time emphasising the importance of relations between caregivers and their children within a family context. Literacy and illiteracy were

defined and compared. Socio-economic status in relation to illiteracy, and strategies necessary for teachers to enhance the school environment in order to attract caregivers were also explored. This chapter concluded by emphasising the interdependence of teachers and caregivers. From the literature reviewed, it was deduced that illiteracy involves lack of knowledge and information regarding children's schoolwork, as well as lack of government support in providing basic needs to rural communities.

The researcher concluded that the literature reviewed was in line with the goals and objectives of this study, and would serve as a reference for the study.

5.2.3 Chapter 3

This chapter provided a description of the research methodology that was implemented in the study. A qualitative research approach culminated in an explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. The various steps that the researcher carried out during the research process were set out exactly as they were implemented. The study's population encompassed illiterate caregivers in the rural area of Ku Jonga village, Coffee Bay in the Eastern Cape Province. The purposive sampling technique was used and five focus group discussions were facilitated. Community leaders, the Chief and ward councillors were instrumental in forming the caregiver focus groups while school principals organised their staff for voluntary participation. The data collection process began with preparation and refining of focus group interview guides, and engaging with the traditional leadership to build relationships beforehand. The interviews were translated from Xhosa to English by the researcher and transcribed verbatim. A thematic system was used to analyse the data, guided by Tesch's data analysis steps (Creswell, 2009).

Trustworthiness was used to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality were central to this study and were discussed in detail to provide evidence of adherence to research ethics.

5.2.4 Chapter 4

In this chapter, the findings of the study were presented by means of themes and sub-themes which were identified during the data analysis process. The demographic data

showed that 14 of the 22 participants in the caregivers' focus groups had never attended school. The participants' voices, in the form of relevant quotations from the focus group interviews, provided evidence for the findings, and were compared to and contrasted with available literature.

A summary and conclusions for each of these themes is presented below.

Theme 1: Children are mainly raised by illiterate grandparents

Grandparents have taken over the role of the biological parents to care for and nurture their grandchildren. Thus grandparents assume parental responsibilities. This study concludes that children drop out of school; girls fall pregnant and leave their children with their grandparents. Therefore grandparents are called to parent a second time unexpectedly. In addition, caregivers are challenged by children's behavioural issues which arise from not understanding why they cannot live with their parents.

Theme 2: Challenges of children raised by illiterate caregivers

Children are challenged by lack of caregiver support in doing their schoolwork at home. The children find alternative support from siblings, friends or from another person, as their caregivers are unable to read or write, or else are unable to match the level of the child's education in order to contribute anything. Therefore, the researcher concluded that caregivers are unable to model the required behaviour for their children in order to inspire their quest for education. Caregivers lack the reading and writing skills needed in order to contribute to their children's schoolwork.

Theme 3: Challenges experienced by caregivers/grandparents

This study concludes that grandparents are challenged with difficult emotional, social, financial issues and parenthood responsibilities that are not recognised by those in authority. In addition, grandparents assume a responsibility for a vicious childcare cycle of caring for children from one generation to the other.

The data indicates that some caregivers are single, since they have been left by their husbands or wives. The children under the care of these caregivers display unacceptable behaviour, thus affecting the health of their caregivers. Caregivers assume the role of parents to keep children within families to save them from further harm and keep them

out of the foster care system. The huge responsibility that these caregivers face happens without recognition from those in authority. They do not have income sources and face poverty with their children.

Caregivers are challenged with behavioural problems which their children display. The misbehaviour is associated with the absence of biological parents in their lives, as well as with boredom. In light of the misbehaviour as outlined by the caregivers, there is no hope for improvement in family lives; the people who are supposed to find jobs and contribute financially to the needs of households are using drugs and liquor. This indicates a continued cycle of poverty.

Theme 4: Lack of government and NGO support

Although teachers showed willingness to support caregivers, infrastructure appears to be unfriendly and non-motivational. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) suggest strategies to attract parents, including a welcoming and inviting school climate. However, the data indicates that schools are in bad condition and that, caregivers, especially grandparents; do not get recognition for caring for their grandchildren.

This study therefore concludes that the challenges experienced by caregivers in supporting their children can be associated with a lack of basic services. Education and development are dependent on various human rights which appear to be neglected. A basic adult education programme which used to be on offer was withdrawn without the involvement of the community. It is apparent that the government and other NGOs including churches do not provide the necessary support required by this population.

The research goals and objectives were achieved and the research question answered through a qualitative enquiry which was considered the best research approach for this study as it required rich comprehensive data concerning illiterate caregivers and their experiences with regard to their children's education.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendations with regard to the research findings

In order to promote better educational services to support caregivers in supporting their children with schoolwork, the following recommendations are made.

Caregivers recommend the address of root causes. It is recommended that traditional leaders be recognised so that their voices can be heard by those in authority. Residents in this rural part of Coffee bay were used to cattle farming and crop ploughing. To assist in the eradication of poverty and unemployment, it is recommended that the Department of Agriculture and Rural development provide the community with the modern means of farming, such as tractors and irrigation systems. In their school syllabus, the Department of Education should include Agricultural, Tourism and vocational subjects, in order to improve the style of living through farming. It is impossible for all to have jobs, but the Department may facilitate programmes and training of the residents in order to work on the wealth of the Eastern Cape soil and vegetation.

Caregivers require support. The Department of Social Development needs to engage with civil organisations for the development of self-sustainable projects for caregivers. It is recommended that the government and agencies develop community centres that will build capacity and empower caregivers to cope with the challenge they experience in raising their children.

It is recommended that the Department of Education commissions a study of illiteracy in order to understand the causes of recurring illiteracy of citizens of Ku Jonga in Coffee Bay, and also to understand the impact of value systems and cultural practices on children's education. Educators should also involve parents, and reach out to their homes..

Caregivers need access to basic needs such as job creation and material support. It is recommended that the government create opportunities for the citizens to access decent jobs, in order to avoid the situation of leaving children with grandparents, to seek jobs outside the province. Schools are better positioned to teach children from, foundation phase to primary levels, on stock and crop farming. Eastern Cape is known of its fertile soil. Agricultural activities can assist in job creation and improve their living conditions. The Department of Public Works should provide infrastructure conducive to road users and labour markets.

Caregivers and teachers recommend re-introduction of ABET. The community has young people who have matriculated but who roam around without jobs. These

individuals could be utilised to teach their elderly, and by so doing, could be accessing job opportunities.

Teachers recommend support for children. In order to support the children, teachers recommend that the government provide the essential services to the people of Ku Jonga, as in other parts of the country. Children struggle to study at night without electricity.

Teachers require support. Teachers recommend that the schools be upgraded and a curriculum relevant to the rural children be established. This need exists because current examination papers normally disadvantage rural children who are not exposed to computers and other technological appliances. Teachers also recommend that the schools be upgraded into modern classrooms made of bricks and cement and be fully furnished.

Engagement with caregivers. The Department of Education as well as the Department of Social Development should engage with the community and listen to their challenges. This will help in the development of intervention strategies relevant to the needs of the people.

Obtain government, NGO and church support. It is recommended that the Department of Human Settlement in conjunction with the Department of Education assist in the establishment of NGOs to encourage the community to develop self-sustainable projects.

Family strengthening programmes. It is also recommended that the Government Agencies as well as Civil organisation, seriously engage with families in rural areas in view to provide strengthen families in order to support their children holistically. Single fathers and elderly men who seemed to be increasing in the caring for children, need to be provided with parenting skills.

Family advocacy: It is recommended that the Chief as well as the Ward Councillor take the proposals of their people serious, take their concerns to relevant authorities in order for the Government to understand the situation better.

Infrastructure and education for all: It is further recommended that the Department of Roads and Public Works look at opening proper roads and general infrastructure in Ku Jonga, for transport to be accessible to the residents, and the Department of Basic education to ensure education is accessible by people in rural Coffee bay as well.

This study touches the heart of all the wrongs from history until what government is not doing now. It is the symptom of neglect in much way and on different levels

5.3.2 Recommendations for future research

It is recommended that future research engage with those responsible for improving living conditions in rural communities in terms of the following:

- A quantitative research should be conducted in this community, in order to provide distinct figures on its population, literacy and socio-economic factors. Statistics South Africa could only provide statistics up to the local municipal level.
- A further research is required to establish the causes of growing number of single fathers, who are least educated or never attended school, caring for their children. Amazingly, in this study the number of single fathers was the highest.
- Explore the causes of unemployment, lack of infrastructure and the challenges which senior citizens in this part of the country experience in attempting to access adult education. There is a clear need to establish development centres and access to employment. It would be ideal to consult with the community to uncover their specific concerns, before attempts are made to create such opportunities, to ensure their participation in such programmes.
- Explore causes of delays in addressing issues of inequalities in this part of the country. For example, the study found that women in this community are still burdened with all household tasks. There is no fair distribution of work, with the result that there is little time to focus on their children's schoolwork. The study found that women leave home early for grass-cutting and are expected to provide food for their families. When the need arises, they must also attend meetings called by the Chief, such as when this study was first introduced.

However, they are not expected to contribute in the presence of the men (hence the researcher's decision to break the focus groups into two gendered sets).

- Determine the causes of young people dropping out of school. Findings indicate that young men drop out at high school level and loiter around the community drinking home-made beer.
- Conduct an extensive needs analysis, comparing rural and urban areas, focusing on caregivers with low educational levels, in order to determine the exact needs in each setting regarding caregiver involvement in their children's education.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the findings emanating from the research, the following final conclusions can be drawn:

Caregiver involvement and active participation in the education of their children is imperative, since it is aimed at strengthening and supporting teachers in order to maximise children's potential and performance at school. By so doing, the caregiver's tensions can be eased.

This research is important on how grandparent experiences it to look after their grandchildren. We all have this idea that the want to do it and now it seems that it is not the case.

It is crucially important for teachers to establish strategies to create a welcoming environment for caregivers and the community which would accommodate all, irrespective of their level of literacy. Literature has shown that when caregivers' literacy levels are low, it may inhibit their involvement in their children's education. It is therefore important to realise that caregiver involvement should not only be limited to assisting children with their schoolwork after school hours, but can also be in terms of support and motivation.

The provision of human basic needs such as food, water and electricity, in support of caregivers in rural communities should remain priority, as this may reduce stressful experiences for caregivers. Caregivers struggle to provide food and electricity on their own, thereby become confused and frustrated because their children starve. Revival and

re-establishment of adult education and training programmes in the rural Coffee Bay area is also of paramount importance, since it is aimed at reducing the level of illiteracy in these communities. The more caregivers are enlightened, the more they will be able to support their children's education.

In addition, the researcher made a number of recommendations for future research, based on uncovered information, which may have a positive impact on caregivers' support for their children's education.



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Annexure A

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INFORMATION SHEET

Project title: Challenges:illiterate caregivers experiences to support their children's education.

What is the study about?

This research project is conducted by Barrington Makunga from the University of Western Cape.It has been discovered by statistics South africa,that children from this part of the country are not doing well,as a result each year the pass rate is very low.The experiences of teachers and those of learners are understood,so there is a need to explore challenges experienced by caregivers in particular,those that are illiterate.You are being invited therefore to participate in this research so that you may assist me in determining these challenges,causes and help to formulate recommendations to the Government.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?

You will be asked to answer a few questions about caregivers experiences in assisting their children with school work.The interview will not take more than 45 minutes of

your time. If you have children under the age of 12 years who cannot consent to participation, you will also be asked to give consent on their behalf.

Would my participation in the study be kept confidential?

Your participation and your personal particulars will be kept confidential, and pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity when results are published.

What is the risk of this research?

There is no known risk in participating in this research.

What are the benefits of this study?

There is no financial gain to you personally, or other benefits that participants may get out of this exercise. The findings of this study may assist the researcher to understand the support needed by caregivers in supporting their children with school work. It will assist the Local government in influencing the Integrated development programme, so include training and education of parents in the Coffee Bay rural area.

Am I obliged to participate in this research and may I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you will be, as well be free to withdraw at any time and you will not be penalised when deciding to withdraw or stop participating in the research.

Am I allowed to ask questions?

Should you have any question about the researcher, the research study as well as your rights or you wish to report any problems you will be experiencing to the study please alert me, Barrington Makunga from the University of Western Cape, by calling 0715785723 or e-mail: makhosi229@gmail.com. You may as well contact

The Head of Department

:Dr N. Roman

:021 959 2852

:child.familystudies@gmail.com

Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences

:Prof Hester Klopper

:hklopper@uwc.ac.za

University of the Western Cape

:021 959 2631

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee.



Annexure B



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e-mail: cjerasmus@uwc.ac.za

FOCUS GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY BINDING FORM

Title of Research Project: Challenges: illiterate caregivers experiences to support their children's education.

The study has been described to me in language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time and this will not negatively affect me in any way. I agree to be audi-taped during my participation in the study. I also agree not to disclose any information that was discussed during the group discussion.

Participant's name.....

Participant's signature.....

Witness's name.....

Witness's signature.....

Date.....

Annexure C



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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The District Director

Department of Education

OR Tambo

MTHATHA

5080

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE



Dear Sir,

Re: Consent to conduct Research

I am a post graduate student at the University of the Western Cape, studying towards a Masters Degree in Child and Family Studies. My topic in my mini-thesis is: ***Challenges: Caregivers experience to support their children's education***". The purpose of this study is to explore means to support caregivers in the Coffee Bay, in supporting their children with school work. Pass rate has been found to be very low.

In order to conduct this study, with your permission, individual and group interviews will be conducted with parents, grand-parents, as well as with teachers from two of your schools in the rural Coffee bay, who will be selected by means of purposeful sampling, and informed consent will be obtained from them to participate in the interviews.

Having access in the two schools would be of great importance to complete the study. A suitable place for both individuals and group interviews will be necessary. I therefore request

your permission to conduct my research at your schools in Coffee Bay. I am attaching the research proposal with the necessary information sheet and informed consent that will be provided to participants. Participants will participate voluntarily and may withdraw from participating, at any time and will not be penalised for stopping. All information of the participants will be treated confidentially and they will be interviewed in the language of their choice and will remain anonymous even after the study is completed.

The information gathered through this research will be shared with participants before it is published and the results will be published in accredited journals.

Yours sincerely

Barrington Makunga: Student Number.3209866

Contact No.0715785723

Supervisor is Prof.C Schenck

University of Western Cape

Bellville, 7530

Cape Town

South Africa

Cell no. 0828640600



Annexure D



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
Tel: +27 21-959 2760, Fax: 27 21-959 3683

e-mail: makhosi229@gmail.com

Chief Ngwenyathi Pali

Tshezi Great Place, Lower Nenga A/A

MQANDULI

5080

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

Dear Sir,

Re: Consent to conduct Research



I am a post graduate student at the University of the Western Cape, studying towards a Masters Degree in Child and Family Studies. My topic in my mini-thesis is: ***Challenges: Caregivers experience to support their children's education***". The purpose of this study is to explore means to support caregivers in the Coffee Bay, in supporting their children with school work. Pass rate has been found to be very low.

In order to conduct this study, with your permission, individual and group interviews will be conducted with parents, grand-parents, as well as with teachers from two schools in the rural Coffee bay, who will be selected by means of purposeful sampling, and informed consent will be obtained from them to participate in the interviews.

Having access in this area would be of great importance to complete the study. A suitable place for both individuals and group interviews will be necessary. I therefore request your permission to conduct my research at your Administrative Area of Coffee Bay. I am attaching the research proposal with the necessary information sheet and informed consent that will be provided to participants. Participants will participate voluntarily and may withdraw from participating, at any

time and will not be penalised for stopping .All information of the participants will be treated confidentially and they will be interviewed in the language of their choice and will remain anonymous even after the study is completed.

The information gathered through this research will be shared with participants before it is published and the results will be published in accredited journals.

Yours sincerely

Barrington Makunga: Student Number.3209866

Contact No.0715785723

Supervisor is Prof.C Schenck

University of Western Cape

Bellville, 7530

Cape Town

South Africa

Cell no. 0828640600



ANNEXURE E

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS IN RURAL COFFEE- BAY

Challenges, illiterate caregivers experience to support their children's education

Good morning everyone! It is my pleasure to have you all in this meeting. As communicated to the school principal, this interview is about challenges faced by caregivers to support their children with schoolwork. I will be asking a few questions pertaining to this so that we are able to understand their experiences. Your experiences on teaching their children might have accumulated rich and valuable information, using the children as lenses.

I would like to tape-record the interviews for the purpose of transcriptions. Do you have a problem? May I also request that I read out a consent form which states that details will be kept confidential, and that you may decline to answer as well as that you will be giving me permission to use the material or answers gathered here for a Mini-Thesis, which is the requirement of my Master's degree in Child and Family Studies offered by the University of Western Cape.

Question 1

Let's begin by going around the room one at a time. Please start by telling your name; what grades are you teaching and how many learners from illiterate families are in your class?

Question 2

Think about if you have ever tried to deal with a situation where you or other colleagues picked up that a learner showed lack of parental assistance on schoolwork? If you have, describe what situation it was?

Possible probes

- What made you think it lacked parental intervention or support?
- What made you want to intervene?
- How did you try to change the situation?
- If it worked, what did you do to make it work?
- If it did not help what would have helped you or your colleagues to help the learners?

Question 3

What, if anything, do you do to plan for the learner- support ahead of time?

Possible probes

- When do you decide what educational needs to prepare and provide the learner?
- If you do anything to plan for the learner support, how much time do you spend?
- What do you consider when choosing the learner support?
- Where and how often do you provide these learners with learner support?

Question 4

What sorts of challenges do you experience in providing educational support the learners from illiterate families?

Possible probes

- What major challenges do you often come across from the learners?
- What other obstacles face you in providing the learners with the educational support?
- Have you ever tried to help a learner from the illiterate families, who struggled to get parent's educational support, if yes could you tell me more about the incident?

Question 5

Some teachers feel they need more information or time on extending their educational support to illiterate caregivers. Others think there are some restrictions. What do you think about extending your help into the homes of learners staying with illiterate caregivers?

Possible probes

- What kind of support do you think is lacking?
- What sort of support do you think you can give the illiterate caregivers to support their children with schoolwork?
- Is there any kind of support you think can be provided?
- What are other sources would you recommend for illiterate caregivers to support their children with schoolwork?

Question 6

Can you think of other ways that you and/or other teachers would want to offer to support illiterate caregivers in order to support their children with schoolwork?

- What do you like or not like about the support?
- What kinds of suggestions can you make for getting other people involved in education to support illiterate caregivers in order to support their children with schoolwork?

Question 7

Before we finish, is there anything else you would like to add that we have not covered?

Wrap-up

Thank you for your participation in this interview. If there are still inputs that you want to make, please feel free to do so, I shall leave my contact details with the School Principal. Further on, when all data is collected, analysed a research document will be compiled and you will have access to it.



ANNEXURE F

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE: CAREGIVERS**Challenges, illiterate caregivers experience to support their children's education**

Good morning everyone! It is my pleasure to have you all in this meeting. As communicated to your Councillor, Mr Msakeni and the Chief, this interview is about challenges faced by caregivers to support their children with schoolwork. I will be asking a few questions pertaining to this so that we are able to understand your experiences.

I would like to tape-record the interviews for the purpose of transcriptions. Do you have a problem? May I also request that I read out a consent form which states that details will be kept confidential, and that you may decline to answer as well as that you will be giving me permission to use the material or answers gathered here for a Mini-Thesis, which is the requirement of my Master's degree in Child and Family Studies offered by the University of Western Cape.

Let us begin by going around the room one at a time. Please start by telling your name, how many people live with you, how many children are under your direct care and who takes responsibility for the support of the children with their school work?

Question 1

Think about, if you have ever tried to help your children with school work. If you have, what type of support have you provided?

Possible probes

- What did you like or unlike about the support you gave them?
- Describe how your children typically deal with their schoolwork at home?
- What is positive about assisting children with their schoolwork?

Question 2

My second question will be to determine the challenges caregivers experience to support their children in their schoolwork.

Possible probes

- What are the biggest challenges that the caregivers encounter when trying to support their children with schoolwork?
- Tell me more about other challenges that caregivers experience when trying to provide educational support to their children?
- Some people, who never attended school, find it difficult to assist children with their homework, and other caregivers think having gone to school yourself would not help either. How do you think literacy influence caregiver's abilities to assist their children with homework?

Question 3

Some people feel they need more knowledge and skill to help their children with education. Others think having knowledge and skill would not help. What support do you need to be better equipped to assist the children with their schoolwork?

Possible probes

- What would you be interested in learning about?
- If mentioned, how will that (mentioned) help you assist the children?
- Can you think of other ways that you would want to learn about school work or education of your children in relation to your support as a caregiver?

Question 4

Some people do not take responsibility for the support of their children with the schoolwork. If you do not, who takes the responsibility?

Possible probes

- What does the person do?
- Tell us the reasons for the person to do so?
- How do you ensure the person is doing well with the support?

Question 5

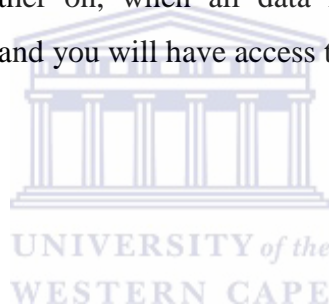
Before we finish, is there anything else you would like to add that we have not covered?

Possible probe

- Who are the other people that you think can help caregivers support their children with school work?
- What suggestions can you make to get other people involved in helping caregivers provide adequate support to their children's education?

Wrap-up

Thank you for your participation in this interview. If there are still inputs that you want to make, please feel free to do so, I shall leave my contact details with the Councillor and as well as the Chief. Further on, when all data is collected, analysed a research document will be compiled and you will have access to it.



Annexure G



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Attention Ms Madlalisa

The School principal

Madakeni Primary School

COFFEE BAY

5080

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE



Dear Sir,

Re: Consent to conduct Research

I am a post graduate student at the University of the Western Cape, studying towards a Masters Degree in Child and Family Studies. My topic in my mini-thesis is: ***Challenges: Caregivers experience to support their children's education***". The purpose of this study is to explore means to support caregivers in the Coffee Bay, in supporting their children with school work. Pass rate has been found to be very low.

In order to conduct this study, individual and group interviews will be conducted with parents, grand-parents, as well as with teachers from two primary schools in Coffee bay, who will be selected by means of purposeful sampling, and informed consent will be obtained from them to participate in the interviews.

Having access in your school would be of great importance to complete the study. A suitable place for group interviews will be necessary. I therefore request your permission to conduct my

research at your School. I am attaching the research proposal with the necessary information sheet and informed consent that will be provided to participants. Participants will participate voluntarily and may withdraw from participating, at any time and will not be penalised for stopping. All information of the participants will be treated confidentially and they will be interviewed in the language of their choice and will remain anonymous even after the study is completed.

The information gathered through this research will be shared with participants before it is published and the results will be published in accredited journals.

Yours sincerely

Barrington Makunga: Student Number.3209866

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Annexure H



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Attention Mr Mzola

The School principal

Xonyeni Primary School

COFFEE BAY

5080

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE



Dear Sir,

Re: Consent to conduct Research

I am a post graduate student at the University of the Western Cape, studying towards a Masters Degree in Child and Family Studies. My topic in my mini-thesis is: ***Challenges: Caregivers experience to support their children's education***". The purpose of this study is to explore means to support caregivers in the Coffee Bay, in supporting their children with school work. Pass rate has been found to be very low.

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Yours sincerely

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Annexure I

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WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT

Project title: Challenges:illiterate caregivers experiences to support their children's education.

The research study has been described and explained to me in the language that I understand and I hereby freely and voluntarily agree to participate.I am clear about the decision and my questions about the study were answered.I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study without giving reasons,at any time and I will not be penalised for the action.

Participant's

name.....

Participant's

signature.....

I further agree that the interview be voice recorded

Participant's

signature.....

I further agree that the researcher takes field notes

Participant's

signature.....

Witness.....

.....

Date/...../.....

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems, you have experienced related to the study, feel free to contact the study coordinator: Prof. C.J. Schenck

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