



**UNIVERSITY of the  
WESTERN CAPE**

***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT A SCHOOL OF SKILLS  
IN THE WESTERN CAPE***

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**By:**

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**A full thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

**MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS**

**University of the Western Cape**

**Supervised by: Prof. Trevor Moodley**

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## DECLARATION

**I declare that study presented in the form of this thesis: Parental involvement at a School of Skills in the Western Cape, is my own work that has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.**

**Ayabulela Dick**

**13 March 2020**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## ABSTRACT

Parental involvement in their children's schooling has been found to be an important factor with regard to children's experience of schooling including their academic performance. This quantitative study focused on parental involvement at a school of skills in the Cape metropole, Western Cape. Epstein's (2009) six typologies of parental involvement in their children's schooling provided the theoretical framework of the study and guided the formulation of the research instrument and the data analysis of the study. A survey research design was used and 74 parent/caregiver participants were conveniently sampled after all ethical protocols were followed.

The findings indicated that participants: (i) indicated a very positive attitude towards being involved in the education of their children at the school of skills and were inspired to be involved in the education of their children, (ii) were highly involved in the following typologies of parental involvement: *learning at home*, *parenting* and *collaboration with community*, (iii) *communication between school and the parents* as a form of parental involvement was found to be at a moderate level, (iv) participants were found to be minimally involved in *decision-making* as a form of parental involvement, (v) *volunteering* as a form of parental involvement was represented by low to moderate levels of involvement, (vi) participants' marital status, forms of kinship relations with the learners at the school of skills (e.g. biological mother, foster parent) and levels of formal education were not found to have a significant statistical relationship with their levels of parental involvement in their children's schooling. (vii) The challenges that participants faced with regard to their involvement in their children's schooling included the following: a) a fair number of about 30% participants frequently found language as a barrier for them to assist their children with homework, b) about 46% of the participants indicated that they were seldom or never recruited by educators to volunteer at the School of Skills, c) about half of the participants indicated that their challenge was that they were not trained on how to offer their talents for volunteering at the school, d) participants also found it difficult to share information with the school about their child's cultural background, talents, and needs.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

PI	=	Parental Involvement
WCED	=	Western Cape Education Department
S.O. S	=	School of Skills
SGB	=	Schools Governing Body
DBE	=	Department of Basic Education
UNICEF	=	United Nation Children’s Fund
SPSS	=	Statistical Package for Social Science
SIAS	=	Screening Identification Assessment and Support
SAQA	=	South African Qualifications Authority
NSDP	=	National Skills Development Strategies
DHET	=	Department of High Education and Training
VET	=	Vocational Education and Training
NCSNET	=	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCESS	=	National Committee of Education Support Services
DoE	=	Department of Education
SACA	=	South African Children’s Act

# **CHAPTER ONE:**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Chapter one serves as an orientation chapter for the study. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) had established Schools of Skills to accommodate learners who are experiencing certain barriers to learning. The Western Cape Government believes it has a crucial role to play in the empowerment and self-improvement of the youth. Schools of skills serve as an important building block in the programmes created by the Western Cape Premiers Development Forum (Western Cape Education Department [WCED], 2013). The researcher in this study sought to evaluate parental involvement at a School of Skills in the Western Cape. This chapter incorporates the background to the study, rationale for the study, problem statement, significance of the study, research objectives, research questions, hypothesis of the study, an overview of the methodology, an overview of the ethical considerations, and an outline of the chapters to follow.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

The Western Cape Department of Education (WCED) had established Schools of Skills (S.O.S) for learners who are experiencing various learning, behavioural or developmental difficulties and/or disorders. The Western Cape Education Department, (2013, p. 3) describes these learners as learners who previously attended mainstream schools and had a record of unsatisfactory scholastic progress; despite extensive documented support and regular school attendance. These learners function 2 years and more below their age cohort in the mainstream school. They may have moderate cognitive barriers to learning, some experience short attention spans and have poor reading abilities. They also do not present with serious behavioural learning barriers. These learners are usually transferred to the school of skills at the age 14 or 15. Schools of Skills are expected to provide an environment that better responds to the particular education needs of the learners. Therefore, Schools of Skills constitute part of the intervention strategies that the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has embarked upon for addressing barriers to learning and for ensuring that learners learn effectively.

One of the pioneers of these schools is Westcliff School of Skills, located in the Cape metropole, which was the first special vocational training school, established in 1953 (Westcliff School of Skills, n.d.). To date, the WCED has about 23 schools of skills. According to the Western Cape Education Department, (2013, p. 1) these schools of skills have an adapted curriculum to meet the needs of learners who experience barriers to learning. The sole purpose of the school of skills curriculum is to enable learners in these institutions to develop their potential based on the curriculum that supports their cognitive ability and nurtures their learning skills (WCED, 2013). The Western Cape Education Department, (2019) further states that these learners will benefit from a vocational/practical approach to the curriculum and develop skills to be able to enter the job market. In order to effectively implement the intervention strategies, there is a need for partnership between homes and schools.

In the adapted curriculum of the schools of skills, it is stated that teachers together with the parents are expected to ensure that learners participate in academic and skills programmes that help them achieve to the best of their abilities (Western Cape Education Department, 2013, p. 4). Therefore, the WCED, emphasizes the importance of partnerships between the home and schools of skills. Literature asserts that parental involvement has a positive impact on the academic development of a learner (Bojuwoye, 2009; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Sheldon, 2002)

Lee and Bowen (2006) assert that parental involvement has a positive influence on children's educational performance and general behaviour development. Parental involvement also helps to ensure that the school is conforming to the values and culture of the community. Sheldon (2002) elaborates on parental involvement at schools, by stating that parents get first-hand information about the school environment, placing them in a better position to support their children. In support of this view, Bojuwoye, (2009) asserts that learners do better in their school work when parents are empowered, teacher morale improves, schools get better and communities grow stronger.



### **1.3 Rationale for the study**

The WCED plays its role in supporting schools of skills with resources and suitably qualified teachers, two essential factors that were also mentioned by the 2011 report of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education after sight visit at schools of skills in Western Cape Province (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2011). The researcher in the current study is a teacher at a school of skills and has observed the potential that schools of skills hold for transforming the lives of learners with barriers to learning in giving them the skills to become productive citizens. The researcher, in her capacity as a teacher, has also observed the significant role that parents can play in supporting the education of their children at schools of skills. This therefore, piqued the researcher's interest in the role played by parents in supporting their children's academic progress. Some of the areas of interest to the researcher were to: investigate the attitudes of parents towards parental involvement, and whether marital status, kinship relations and the educational attainment of parents had an impact on the level of parental involvement. According to Epstein (2009) parental involvement has challenges, therefore, the researcher was also interested in identifying the specific challenges encountered by parents with regard to their involvement in their children's education at a school of skills.

### **1.4 Problem statement**

The uniqueness of schools of skills established by the WCED is related to the category of learners they accommodate. These schools are specifically set up to provide interventions to remove or reduce barriers to learning for learners with "special educational needs". In order to attain the objective of creating effective schools of skills, certain measures have to be taken, such as encouraging parental involvement. The National Committee of Education Support Service (NCESS) (Department of Education, 1997) and the South African Schools Act (1996) accentuate that parental involvement in the teaching and learning process is central to the effective learning and development of such learners. This, therefore, indicates that these schools have to involve parents in these intervention programmes for them to succeed. The South African Department of Basic Education has developed a document of Practical Guidelines on how parents can contribute meaningfully to the success of their children in schools (2016). These guidelines do not necessarily accommodate parents who have children in schools of skills. The South African schools of skills are deemed as special schools, which might require special strategies related to parental involvement; yet there is no document or training produced by the Department of Basic Education which capacitates parents on how to be involved in the education of their children at a school of skills.

This study sought to investigate the extent to which, and how parents of children at the school of skills under focus, were involved in the education of their children, and whether certain factors influenced their involvement. According to the South African Department of Education (DoE, 1997), although parents are expected to be involved in the educational development of their children, they do not always participate because of several factors. Two of these factors are the low formal education levels of parents and their previous negative experiences with the schools and the teachers. Hornby (2011) elaborates on this point by stating that parents who lack the belief that their involvement might not bring positive outcomes are likely to avoid contact with the school. Hornby (2011) further states that parents who believe that their children's intelligence is fixed and that children's innate ability will set a limit on their achievement, may consider being involved in their children's schooling, as a waste of time.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The above sections have highlighted the importance of Schools of skills in supporting learners with certain barriers to learning with the aim of preparing them to become productive citizens (Western Cape Education Department, 2013) . To achieve this aim, it is important for parents to be involved in the schooling of their children. This study therefore highlights the status of parental involvement at a school of skills. There is also a dearth of South African studies focussing on schools of skills, which play an important role in supporting learners with barriers to learning. In addition, the researcher has not found any South African study that specifically investigates parental involvement at a school of skills. This study therefore contributes to the body of knowledge in that regard.

### **1.6 Aim and objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were:

- To evaluate the attitudes of parents towards involvement in their children's education at the School of Skills,
- To ascertain the forms of involvement of parents in their children's education at the School of Skills,

- To evaluate whether the marital status of parents had an influence on their level of involvement in the education of their children at a School of Skills,
- To investigate whether the different forms of kinship relations between the participants, as caregivers and the learners at the school of skills, influenced their levels of involvement in the different forms of parental involvement,
- To ascertain whether parents' educational attainment impacted on their involvement in the children's education at the School of Skills, and
- To identify the challenges of parental involvement in their children's education in the School of Skills.

### **1.7 Research questions**

Research question one:           What are the attitudes of parents towards involvement in the education of their children at a School of Skills?

Research question two:           In what ways are the parents of children at the School of Skills involved in their children's education?

Research question three:       Does the marital status of the parents of children at the School of Skills have an influence on their level of involvement in the education of their children?

Research question four:       Do different forms of kinship relations between participants as caregivers and the learners at the School of Skills influence the levels of different forms of parental involvement?

Research question five:       Do parent participants' levels of educational attainment influence their level of involvement in their children's education?

Research question six:       What parental involvement challenges are encountered by parents/guardians at the School of Skills?

### **1.8 Hypothesis of the study**

- **H1:** Parents at the School of Skills have high involvement in all six forms of parental involvement in their children's schooling.
- **H2:** There is a significant relationship between levels of parental involvement and parents' marital status.
- **H3:** There is a significant relationship between the different kinship relations of participants as care-givers of learners and their levels of involvement in the different forms of parental involvement.
- **H4:** There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and parents' formal educational attainment levels.

### **1.9 Theoretical framework of the study**

The theoretical framework of this study is based on two theories, Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of involvement and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) theory of why parents become involved in their children's education. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) theory is specifically built on the first stage of construction which entails parents' choice to become involved. Please see a detailed explanation of these theories in chapter two of the study. Epstein's (2009) framework consists of a partnership between school, family and community in caring for a child. One sphere that played a major contribution in this study from Epstein's (2009) framework was the six typologies (types) of parental involvement in their children's education. Epstein's (2009) typologies are: learning at home, parenting, volunteering, decision-making, communication and collaboration with community. Each of the six typologies of parental involvement make it easy for parents and schools to work together holistically. Many of the items of the survey instrument used in this study, were based on these typologies.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) developed a model of parental involvement which consists of five levels of construction. These levels range from the parent's decision to be involved which is the first level up to the child's personal sense of self-efficacy for doing well at school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 4). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) theory is specifically based on the first level of construction which states that the decision by parents to become involved in the education of their children is influenced by three structures. These structures are: role construction, self-efficacy, and general invitation. Role construction is defined as what parents believe to be their role in their children's education and the basic series of activities they deem as imperative, necessary and permissible for their actions with

and on behalf of their children. Parent's sense of efficacy refers to what parents believe their involvement should be in helping their children to succeed at school. General invitation refers to the perceptions that parents have about being invited by their children or the school to be involved in the education of their children. This means that parents get the feeling that the school and the children want them to be involved in the education of their children (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

## **1.10 Methodology**

This section provides a brief overview of the methodology used in this study. Please refer to Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in this study.

### **1.10.1 Paradigm**

The paradigm used in this study was post-positivism. "Post positivism reflects a determinist philosophy about research in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes. Thus, the problems studied by post positivists reflect issues that need to identify and assess the cause that influences the outcomes" (Creswell, 2014, p.245). Post-positivism strikes a balance between positivist and interpretivist approaches, therefore, it is an effective paradigm for social and educational research (Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017, p. 253). These authors further state that post-positivism reduces the personal biases and prejudices of the researcher by allowing use of multiple research methods.

### **1.10.2 Research Approach**

The research approach to this study was the quantitative approach. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 646) define quantitative research as a numerical representation and manipulation of observation. Quantitative analysis was used to verify the proportions of parents in the different forms of parental involvement. Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.158) define quantitative research as a study that is based on measuring variables for individual participants to obtain scores, usually numerical values, that are submitted to statistical analysis for summary and interpretation.

### **1.10.3 Research design**

The design used in this study was a survey. In view of the many aspects or dimensions of parental involvement that were investigated, this study adopted a survey method design

employing the quantitative approach. Creswell (2014, p. 13) describes the survey as a numeric or quantitative description of the trends and attitudes of the sample.

#### **1.10.4 Population and sampling**

The population for this study consisted of 400 parents whose children attended a School of Skills. The final sample size was 74 participants who volunteered to participate in this study. The convenience sampling method was used in this study. Qian, ( 2010, p. 391) states that convenience sampling is categorised under non-probability sampling. These authors further describe convenience sampling as the selection of ready availability.

#### **1.10.5 Data collection**

The survey entailed the completion of a questionnaire According to Babbie and Mouton (2005:233), questions and statements are used when the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which respondents hold particular attitudes or perspectives. A “questionnaire is a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. Questionnaires are used primarily in survey research and also in experiments, field research, and another mode of observation” (Babbie &Mouton 2005:646). The questionnaire was compiled according to the study’s objectives. The sections in the questionnaire were as follows:

- Section A: Biographical information
- Section B: Home and parenting involvement
- Section C: Decision making and communication
- Section D: Volunteering community and collaboration
- Section E: Challenges encountered at a School of Skills
- Section F: Parent’s attitudes towards parental involvement

Some variables in Section A were measured by a single item, they are categorical variables. Section B to section E included Likert scales.

### **1.10.6 Data analysis**

The analysis of the data for this study was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24.0 (IBM Corp, 2017). Quantitative analysis was used to calculate the frequencies of participants' participation in the different forms of parental involvement. Cross-tabulations and Chi-square tests were used by the researcher to evaluate: the significance between marital status of the participants and their levels of involvement in the different forms of parental involvement, the significance between the kinship relations of participant with learner at the School of Skills and their level of involvement in the education of their children, and the significance between the levels of educational attainment of the participants and their levels of parental involvement. The challenges faced by participants with regard to their involvement in their children's schooling, were also identified.

### **1.11 Ethical considerations**

Having identified a School of Skills in the Western Cape and the population with which to conduct this study, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the Senate Research Ethics Committee. This was followed by permission from Western Cape Education Department WCED, and then the school authorities. Information on the nature of the study, the participants and the conditions for participation were made available to these authorities. Participants were provided with information on the study (the purpose, and the conditions of participation) including that participation was voluntary. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of the information. The participants were not obligated to participate in the study. No research would have taken place without the consent of the above-mentioned authorities and the participants. The questionnaires were completed at the research site which is the selected school of skills and some were completed at the participants' homes. The participants in this study were reassured of their privacy (anonymity) and that their names or the name of the school would not be mentioned in the report of the study. Parents had the right to refuse to participate in this study and not complete the questionnaire, therefore, participation in this study was done voluntarily. The full description of the ethical considerations undertaken in this study is discussed in chapter 3.

### **1.12 Structure of the thesis**

#### **Chapter 1**

This chapter is the orientation of the study.

## **Chapter 2**

This chapter presents the clarification of key concepts, literature review, and the theoretical framework on which this study is based.

## **Chapter 3**

This chapter explains the methodology of this study.

## **Chapter 4**

In this chapter, the results are presented and discussed.

## **Chapter 5**

This is the final chapter, which entails the conclusion, limitations, recommendations of the study and future research suggestions.

### **1.13 Conclusion**

This chapter is an orientation of this study, it entails a brief background to the study, problem statement, aims and objectives, research question, the rationale, hypothesis, methodology and the ethical considerations of this study. This study is substantiated in previous literature, which is discussed in the literature review section in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 presented the background of the study. This chapter presents the literature review of parental involvement in their children's schooling. Parental Involvement at a School of Skills. The theoretical framework underpinning the study is also presented. A literature review is a retrospect of what has been written by scholars on the topic of investigation. It therefore, relates the researcher's study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in literature, filling the gaps and extending prior studies (Creswell, 2014, p.28). The main objective of a literature review is to expose the researcher to a world of scientific knowledge on the topic of interest to the researcher. According to Davids (2010, p .14), a literature review presents previously investigated conceptual and theoretical understandings of the topic of interest to the researcher. Boote and Beile (2005, p. 4) state that a good literature review is the basis of both theoretical and methodological sophistication thereby improving the quality of, and usefulness of subsequent research. Creswell (2012) deems the reviewing of literature important as this aids the researcher to determine whether the topic is worth studying and navigates the researcher to needed areas of investigation. Boote and Beile (2005) further state that the literature review demarcates what is and what is not to be investigated. Machi and McEvoy (2016) refer to a literature review as a synthesis of current knowledge pertaining to the research question and serves as the foundation of logical argumentation which permits research to construct a convincing thesis case. Hart (2018) states that no review of literature is the same as the other because of the uniqueness of the research projects so, as was also the case in the current research project too.

The main question of this study which the researcher sought to answer was: "What is the nature and characteristics of parental involvement in their children's education at a School of Skills"? In this chapter, the researcher will be narrating views of literature pertaining to parental involvement in a Schools of Skills. Based on the literature the researcher was able to substantiate the findings of this study and to bridge the gap between this study and previous studies done.

This section reviews literature which enables one to understand this study in-depth and contextually. The review starts with a discussion on the conceptual clarification or explanations

of some important key concepts in the study for a deeper understanding of the study, followed by the literature review, theoretical framework, and conclusion.

## **2.2 Clarification of key concepts**

### **2.2.1 Child**

The South African Children's Act 2005 (2010, p. 12) describes a child as a person under the age of 18 years. However, for the purposes of this study children at the school under focus, may also include those who are 18 years and older, attending the school and are still taken care of by their parents or other care-givers. The term child in this study is used interchangeably with learner. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE), (2016, p. 6) the learner is the centre of the relationship between school, parent and community, and the optimum goal of this relationship is the achievement of the learner. DBE (2016) further states that learners do not exist in a vacuum instead their development is influenced by different spheres and environments. The following section describes one of the influences, namely parents.

### **2.2.2 Parent**

Fowler and Fowler (1995) define a parent as “a person who has begotten or borne offspring, a parent is also defined as a person who has adopted a child or a person who holds a position or exercises the functions of a parent” (p. 992). According to Britto, Ponguta, Reyes, and Karnati, (2014, p.16) the UNICEF report refers to a parent or caregiver as an individual who looks after a child and provides care in a family context. Britto et al., (2014, p. 16) further state that parents or caregivers are often assumed to be biological parents; yet other adults who provide consistent care to the child such as: foster and adoptive parents, grandparents, stepparents, elder siblings, and other adults, may also be referred to parents or caregivers. Furthermore, Britto et al. (2014) mention five domains of parenting according to the Western Model whose expression is influenced by contextual differences. These five domains are: caregiving, stimulation, support and responsiveness, structure and finally socialisation. Laible and Eye (2012, p. 21) view parents as important role players in the development of a child, they further describe parents as the source of comfort, protection, affection, and support. Laible and Eye further present parents as providers of control and discipline ensuring that children acquire all the social and cultural knowledge and skills they will need to be successful. Myers and Myers, (2014, p.116) also describe family on the basis of relationships among adult and child

household members, stating that these relations are not random. Bornstein (2012,p. 389) states that parenting cannot be fully understood in the context of one culture, with that being said many parenting cognitions and practices are similar in many cultures. Bornstein also asserts that in many cultures, parenting involves: developing physical health, social adjustment, educational achievement and economic security for their children.

The South African perspective of parenting is not different from the UNICEF perspective. The term *parent* is also used interchangeably with the term *caregiver*. As stated in this definition parents are not necessarily biological; but a parent can be anyone who performs the parenting duties for a child (Britto et al., 2014, p. 16). In the South African context there are different people who take up the responsibility of being parents besides the biological parents. These include other family members who play the parenting role in the absence of a biological parent or if the biological parents are incapable of taking up their parental duties. According to the South African Child Care Act 2005, a parent is any person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child. Moreover, care-givers are stated as those who truly care for the child, these include foster parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts or even siblings. Some literature uses the term parental involvement interchangeably with family involvement, thus leading the researcher to examine the description of the term *family*, within the South African context. According to the South African Children's Act, 2005 (2010, p. 12) family members in relation to a child are: guardian, biological parents of the child, grand parents, siblings to the child, aunts and uncles or cousins of the child or any other person with whom the child has developed a significant relationship, based on psychological or emotional attachment which resembles a family relationship. The Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 6) gives its own description of the term *parent*, as any caregiver responsible for caring and supporting a learner. The term, *parent* is inclusive of the biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner, the person legally entitled to custody of the learner or a person who undertakes to fulfil the obligation towards the learner's education at school.

For the purposes of this study, parents are defined as any person fulfilling the parental responsibilities mentioned in the Child Car Act 2005, (p.22) which includes the family members as mentioned earlier. DBE, (2016, p. 7) states that parents are the most important partners of in the child's education.

### **2.2.3 Barriers to learning**

Barriers to learning are an important consideration in this study because the learners referred to schools of skills in South Africa, invariably experience one or more barriers to learning.

According to the Screening Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) policy document of the South African Department of Basic Education , (DBE, 2014, p. 7) barriers to learning are defined as difficulties that arise: within the education system as a whole, at the learning site and or within the learner that prevent access to learning development. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, (2002, p. 4) also define barriers to learning as any factor , either internal or external to the learner, which causes a hindrance to the development of the learner's ability to benefit from schooling. According to Donald et al. (2002), intrinsic barriers are those barriers that emanate from the learner and extrinsic barriers are found in the environment.

According to Mather, (2012, p. 3) barriers to learning arise from different aspects of the curriculum design, content and delivery. Some of these barriers to learning may relate to: the content of the learning area which may not be understood by the learner, the language of instruction may not be the learner's home language, classroom organisation, teaching methodologies, the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum, the availability of teaching and learning support material, and assessment practices. Daniels, (2013, p. 63) refers to the scholastic barriers as weak academic performance and absenteeism of a learner. SIAS defines scholastic barriers as difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, and prevents learning and development (DBE, 2014, p. 7). These are: inflexible school curricula that do not accommodate different contexts (e.g. learners with hearing impairments may struggle in a school that does not have sign language therefore this can be a barrier to the learning), the medium of instruction is different to the learner's home language, inaccessible school infrastructure that is not accommodative of the needs of learners with special needs (e.g. is not wheelchair friendly) and the unavailability of accessible learning and teaching support material and assistive technology.

The Department of Basic Education, (2014, p. 12) further states that learners are faced with challenges in the learning process that are a result of a broad spectrum of experiences in the classroom. These classroom experiences include reading, writing, numeracy, medium of instruction and the contexts in which learning occurs. Home environment experiences that may challenge the learning process could include home environments that are not conducive for learning and lack of family support for learning. Community experiences that may challenge

the learning process could include a lack of community training programmes to develop the learner and a lack of partnership between the school and community. Other factors negatively influencing the learning process could be poor physical health or disability (e.g., chronic illnesses, speech impairment, poor eyesight, learning disabilities, etc.) (Lee, 2018, p. 1). Daniels (2013, p. 59) adds to these barriers the psychosocial factors such as poverty, disruptive behaviour, aggression, substance abuse, emotional abuse, domestic violence, and gangsterism which has high prevalence in some of the learners depending on their backgrounds and it impacts their learning.

As a means of reducing the above barriers to learning, Shaldon and Epstein (2002, p. 42) mention that parental and community involvement can help to reduce some barriers to learning such as absenteeism. Shaldon and Epstein (2002, p. 80) further suggest ways of reducing absenteeism. One way is for the school to take a comprehensive approach in involving families and community, and have frequent and positive communication with parents about attendance. Therefore, parental involvement is essential for the prevention of learning barriers. As means of overcoming the barriers to learning the Department of Education, (2001, p.7 ) states that, in implementing inclusive education, special schools will not be abolished instead the needs of learners who have barriers to learning, will be addressed both qualitatively, as well as quantitatively, such as improved and appropriate infrastructure.

#### **2.2.4 Schools of skills**

Schools of Skills in South Africa are special schools catering for learners with special educational needs. Daniel (2011, p. 18) refers to a School of Skills as a special school that accommodates learners who lack basic writing, reading and arithmetic abilities. Eksteen, (2009, p. i) in his abstract describes Schools of Skills as a type of special school which is for learners with disabilities, maladapted social behaviour and learning disabilities and these learners are excluded from mainstream schools.

The concept of schools of skills seems to have evolved from vocational educational training. For example, in 1953 the first special vocational training started at Westcliff primary school, a school located in the Cape metropole. This school became a fully-fledged special school in 1956, and provided learners with prevocational technical subjects. This school was the forerunner of the six special schools and now it is one of the 17 schools of skills in the Western

Cape which implement the adapted curriculum and assessment policy for Schools of skills (Westcliff School of Skills, n.d.).

In 2009 the Western Cape Education Department, WCED, established 14 other Schools of Skills for learners who were experiencing various forms of barriers to learning. The rationale for establishing these schools was to ensure educational opportunities for those learners who were experiencing learning difficulties in mainstream schools. In May 2013 there were over 7000 learners who were enrolled at Schools of Skills in the Western Cape. As means of overcoming the barriers to learning the South African education system has placed learners at Schools of skills which offers the adapted version of the national Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011) to meet the needs of learners who experience barriers to learning and to ensure that these learners exit the school with an appropriate certificate of attainment (WCED, 2013, p. 1). Although the Education White Paper 6 (EWP 6) (DoE, 2001) has no specific reference to Schools of Skills; the curriculum for Schools of skills was established to achieve some of the objectives of the Education White Paper (WCED, 2013, p3).

South African education according to Mather's (2012, p.3) draft of Skills Programme Development for Schools of Skills entails the inclusion of the National Curriculum Statement (DoE...). According to the DBE (2011, p. 2) the objective of the EWP 6- was to build an inclusive education training system that commits the state to the achievement of equality, non-discrimination and maximum participation of all learners in the education system as a whole. The DBE (2011) further states that in order to attain this inclusion it is important to have differentiation in the delivery of curriculum. According to the WCED (2013, p. 3) learners at a school of skills have the right to follow the adapted national curriculum in order to achieve their academic goals. The adapted curriculum for the school of skills is composed of an academic and a skills component WCED further states that the academic section of the curriculum should not be viewed as a watered-down curriculum but as a reflection of the academic level of the learner. The skills section of the curriculum is aligned with the world of work. It therefore, provides learners with the passport to life-long work, citizenship and the certificate attained from the school of skills is aligned with the South African Qualification Association (SAQA) qualification framework (WCED, 2013, p.4).

The WCED (2013, p. 3) gives a clear description of the admission criteria to schools of skills. Learners that are admitted to schools of skills must be 14 or 15 years old. They must have

received extensive documented support at the mainstream schools due to barriers to learning experienced by these learners. These barriers of learning include: moderate cognitive barriers, problems with attention and poor reading ability. Candidates for placement at schools of skills have a history of good school attendance but have not made satisfactory progress and have seemingly not benefited from the mainstream school curriculum despite supportive efforts. These candidates may have repeated at least two grades while attending mainstream schools. Therefore candidates for placement at schools of skills are usually functioning two or more years below their age, this makes them prone to becoming dropouts at mainstream schools without attaining skills to enter into the world of work. Therefore these learners would benefit from a vocational or practical approach to the curriculum and for them to be able to enter the job market they ought to develop skills well (WCED, 2013).

The significance of schools of skills cannot be underestimated when looking at the skills-development needs of South Africa. The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) has been crafted from the previous National Skills Development Strategies and in the policy context of the National development plan (South African Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2019, p. 1 ). The purpose of the NSDP according to the DHET (2019, p. 5) is to ensure that South Africa has adequate appropriate and high-quality skills that contribute towards economic growth, employment creation, and social development. This means that the skills education will not only be limited to Schools of Skills, but it can also be extended to higher educational level, the NSDP and the new landscape will be ushered in on the 1 April 2020 ( DHET , 2019, p. 1 ). According to the DHET, the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (2001) states that the national economic development has been prioritised, and the role of education and training as a contributor to development has begun to receive much attention. This is not to devalue the intrinsic importance of education. Quality education is an important right, which plays a vital role in relation to a person's health, quality of life, self-esteem, and the ability of citizens to be actively engaged and empowered. However, few can argue with the need to improve the performance of the economy, to expand employment and to equip people to achieve sustainable livelihoods. This means improving partnerships, developing effective and well- understood vocational learning and occupational pathways, and improving the quality of the learning and work experiences along those pathways ( DHET, 2019, p. 7).

The Western Cape Government believes it has a crucial role to play in the empowerment and self-improvement of the youth. Schools of skills serve as an important building block in the programmes created by the Western Cape Premiers Development Forum. One of the objectives for this initiative is to create, together with further education, business and organised labour, a tailor-made programme where young people from Schools of Skills are afforded further training through internship or courses that will equip them with specific skills needed by the economy which are currently in short supply (WCED, 2013).

### **2.2.5 Vocational schools and schools of skills curricula**

The curriculum offered at South African Schools of skill is the same or similar to what is internationally known as vocational education and training (VET). Rodríguez-Planas, (2015,p. 245) describes Vocational Education and Training (VET) as technical training which refers to qualifying education paths that provide one with occupation-specific knowledge and practical skills. Vocational Educational Training is very much like the educational training received at South African Schools of skills. According to Rodríguez-Planas, VET is classified into three systems: school-based, a dual apprenticeship system combining school training with a firm-based approach and informal-based. School-based VET according to Rodríguez-Planas offers learners a combination of general and occupation-specific knowledge. Dual VET is a combination of transferable skills acquired during class-based VET and work experience within a training company. Informal-based VET is an open apprenticeship, taking place in the informal sector, having non-standardised structure and duration, and are based on some contractual agreements between trainee and the trainer.

The transfer to VET according to Pilz, (2016, p. 67) has recently become increasingly relevant in international and comparative vocational education and training research. The VET system seems to be used in other countries where skills are enhanced. Pilz (2016) states that there are industrialised countries that have identified skill gaps and labour shortage at intermediate skill levels and have realised the need for bridging these skills gaps through the provision of appropriate training. For example, the German government according to Rodríguez-Planas, (2015, p. 245) provides the VET educational system as a means of improving the opportunities of youth who lack skills demanded in the labour market. Rodríguez-Planas, (2015, p.246) further states that the installation of VET system is conceived as an important pillar of transformation into a knowledge-based economy. According to Cournoyer, Fournier, &



Masdonati (2017, p.196 ) new organisations' expectations and needs of workforce qualifications demand more advanced knowledge and skills among workers, therefore VET plays a major role in economic and social development in communities. Cournoyer et al., (2017, p. 196) further state that VET promotes the socio-professional integration of young people and young adults in many countries, the pursuit of careers more oriented towards own life aspirations, as well as preventing social exclusion and poverty.

According to Daniels (2013, p. 18) learners at Schools of Skills are learners who need to be motivated to improve their self-esteem, gain self-respect and excel academically. Daniels, (2013, p. 18) further states that Schools of Skills provide appropriate curricula, enabling environments, and good quality teachers and resources that can support effective learning. These institutions offer academic and vocational training. It was envisaged that these schools equip learners with appropriate skills and knowledge that will enable them to conduct their lives in society (WCED, 2013). Schools of Skills are intended to help learners to overcome their barriers to learning. Bronagh Casey, the spokesperson for Donald Grant, the then provincial minister for education in the Western Cape, made a pertinent comment in her speech at the opening of Agulhas School of Skills. She mentioned that schools of skills create a wide range of educational opportunities to accommodate those learners whose educational needs are not met in Mainstream Schools. Schools of Skills offer a more relevant vocational, practical, technical but, high skills curriculum in study fields such as: welding, building construction, farming, hairdressing, hospitality studies, office administration, and educare (WCED, 2013).

### **2.2.6 Parental involvement in their children's schooling**

In the previous section, literature has given a scientific description of parents and parenting. This section describes parents being involved in their children's education. Williams, Sánchez, and Hunnell (2011, p.689) assert that parental involvement must be contextualised by acknowledging the interaction between the school personnel and the parents. Therefore their study refers to parental involvement as a school-family partnership. Smith, Reinke, Herman, and Huang, (2019, p. 363) state that family forms the first foundation system wherein the youth learns how to form relationships, follow routine and family serves as a lifelong resource. While at school the youth gains knowledge, navigates social interactions and guidance in solving academic and interpersonal problems. These authors argue that the combination of the home and school influences lead to a mutually supportive foundation where the youth learns key

academic and problem-solving skills, appropriate behaviours and socio-emotional competencies.

Freund, Schaedel, Azaiza, Boehm and Lazarowitz, (2018, p 194 ) define parental involvement as a number of activities done by parents with their children in the context of learning, namely helping the child with homework, school assignments, participation in education enhancing activities and serving on school boards. Crosnoe (2001, p. 212) also refers to parental involvement as parents helping their children to select careers, assistance in homework and school projects, encouraging educational goals and attending school events. Castro, Expósito-casas, López-martín, & Lizasoain (2015, p 34) mention that parental involvement should be considered as an active holistic participation of parents in all aspects of their children's social, emotional and academic development. Dick (2016, p.11) refers to parental involvement as parental participation. Regardless of all the definitions given for parental involvement Avvisati, Besbas, and Guyon, (2015, p. 761) speak of a traditional definition of parental involvement which is limited to school-related activities such as home-based (e.g. helping children with homework, discussing what was done at school) and school-based (e.g. communication with the school and participating in school-based activities). Heystek (2003), elaborates on the traditional definition by stating that schools and homes are in a partnership based on the fact that school is the formalised extension of the family. He also states that family is the primary education structure for children. Therefore, parental involvement is an obligation that parents have to develop their children's education and social life. It is about various activities and or actions that indicate parents' direct or indirect involvement in the education of their children.

Bower and Griffin's (2011, p. 77) reason that parental involvement is an effective strategy to ensure student's success, However, they consider a traditional definition of parental involvement which includes activities in the school and at home which is the investment of time and money from parents and the failure to adhere to this is viewed as uninvolved. Bower and Griffin's (2011) definition did not include people of low socioeconomic status in their study because those people had low incomes and others worked long hours which limited their time for involvement. Bower and Griffin (2011, p. 85) further state that definitions of parental involvement have limitations and that a more suitable definition is still to be found which accommodates different cultures and socio-economic groups. Nevertheless, schools ought to involve the parents by building relationships and networking with parents, even having cultural

awareness days. Avvisati et al. (2015, p.760) describe parental involvement from an economic perspective meaning, parents invest their resources like time as a direct effort, provided by parents in order to increase the educational outcomes of their children. Hill and Taylor (2004, p.161) define parental involvement as the beginning of the nation's intervention for at-risk children.

Hoover-Dempsey (1997) state three reasons why parents seem to be involved in their children's education. They believe that (1) their involvement will make a positive difference in their children's education, (2) they should be involved and (3) they are asked by teachers and/or their children to be involved. On the basis of these definitions, it can be safely concluded that parental involvement is an obligation that parents have to develop their children's education and social life.

In Seginer's, (2006, p. 27) synopsis, parental involvement is viewed according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework of four systems: micro-, meso-, exo- and macro systems. A microsystem of parental involvement is home-based, where the home is an education-relevant environment. A mesosystem is where parent-teacher interaction occurs and the interactions are about factors affecting school-based involvement. An exosystem refers to four parental involvement contexts: social network, workplace, neighbourhoods, legislation, and policy-making. Seginer (2006, p. 32-33) describes a social network as a network of parents based on home and school involvement, which entails interpersonal relationships where information is transmitted, and social support is provided, affecting individual's behaviours, attitudes, expectations, norms and values. Workplace, is an important setting for learning skills, attitudes and values. A workplace is therefore a resource for developing parental knowledge and school involvement. Neighbourhoods are examples of exosystems whose characteristics facilitate or hinder child adolescent development through their effect on family processes, or peer relationships. Legislation and policy-making, affect educational outcomes directly and have an indirect effect on parental involvement, which has become an important component of the Headstart programmes in the United States and programmes that promote parental involvement have a positive effect on children's basic school skills and social competence. The macro-system refers to sociocultural effects on parental involvement such as "developmentally-institutive belief systems, resources, hazards, life-styles, opportunity

structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in each of these systems” This synopsis gives a multidimensional view of parental involvement (Seginer, (2006, p.34).

One of the many positive aspects of parental involvement mentioned by Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, (2002, p. 290) is that such involvement aids in overcoming barriers to learning. They further state that getting parents involved prevents difficulties of learning problems from becoming worse and that it ought to be adopted for inclusive education.

### **2.2.6.1 Factors related to parental involvement in their children’s education**

#### **a) Attitudes of parents towards parental involvement**

According to Avvisati, Besbas and Guyon, (2015, p. 760) parents' attitudes are strongly shaped by their own background and environment, therefore what parents do is traced back to who they are. Laible and Eye (2012, p.25) state that parents are key models of emotional expressions for their children. For example, if parents express positive attitudes the child will also express positive attitudes. The same applies to parents expressing negative attitudes. This, therefore, suggests that parents’ attitudes towards being involved in their children’s education might have an influence on how the learners view their education.

Parents’ perceptions of being involved in the education of their children is impacted by whether the school invites parental involvement. Ramirez (2003, p. 95) mentions that when schools take initiatives to prioritise parental involvement, then parents develop positive attitudes to being involved. The author further states that the determining factor whether the parents will have a positive or negative attitude towards being involved in the education of their children is communication between the school and the parents. According to Ramirez’s study parental involvement is bound to improve if the gap between the school and the parents is bridged.

Heystek (2003, p. 340) contends that regular parent evenings can offer a very meaningful opportunity to improve relationships and communication between home and school. This is especially true in the case of rural areas where certain means of communication, such as

telephones, are not readily available. Parent evenings offer good forums for initiating and promoting the partnership idea between school and homes. According to Williams et al. (2011) participants in their study had a negative attitude towards parental involvement because the school personnel would communicate with them in a negative and disrespectful manner. This was more obvious with those parents the school perceived as low-income parents. They further stated that older parents trusted the school more than the younger parents.

A study by Freund et al. (2018, p. 199) found that Arabic parents become more involved in the education of their children on invitation by teachers when their children experience problems at the school. Some of the problems mentioned in that study were behavioural problems and non-completion of homework. These authors further found that Arabic parents became motivated to be involved in the education of their children because they perceived that the educational success of their children would result in a better future with regard to socioeconomic status.

#### **b) Forms of parental involvement**

The Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and National Committee of Education Support Service (NCESS), (DoE, 1997) states that parental involvement in the teaching and learning process is central for effective learning and development. The report further suggests that parental involvement at school may include attending parent-teacher conferences, attending programmes featuring students and engaging in volunteer activities. Epstein (1995) refers to these forms as models of parental involvement. “Parent educational involvement at home may include providing help with homework, discussing the child's schoolwork, experiences at school, and structuring home activities” (Lee & Bowen 2006, p. 194).

Khan in Heystek (2003) states that parental involvement may occur at different levels, ranging from simplistic tasks such as motivating children, being positive about school, or assisting children with their homework to more complicated and skill-demanding tasks such as assisting educators or the official management of schools, which demands higher skill levels. Oswald, Zaidi, Cheatham and Brody, (2018, p.1 ) also mention different forms of parental involvement such as involvement at school (e.g. parent-teacher communication, attending school events and volunteering), involvement at home (e.g. structured homework time and educational

opportunity, monitoring of school work and academic progress), and academic socialisation (e.g. communicating parents' expectations regarding schoolwork, encouraging educational and career goals and expectations for future goals).

There are also non-academic activities that parents might be involved with and that would keep the parents being in contact with the school. These activities include coaching or training learners in extramural activities or being responsible for the maintenance and upgrading of school buildings. Therefore parental involvement does not necessarily have to be academic involvement (Heystek,2003). According to Porumbu and Necşoi's (2013, p. 708) review, parental involvement can be categorised into two categories, home activities, and school activities. Home activities refer to parent and child discussions about school, parent aspirations, and expectations about their child, parenting style, checking of homework, home rules, and supervision. School activities refer to parent-teacher communication, volunteering, and parents attending school meetings. Similarly, Rispoli, Hawley and Clinton (2018, p. 2) view parental involvement in two aspects, one being home based involvement the other being school-based involvement. Oswald et al., (2018, p. 2) states that the differences in parental involvement are related to family characteristics. Therefore, parents may be involved in their children's education in more ways than one. Epstein (1995) has provided a framework of parental involvement in their children's schooling consisting of six typologies (types). Please refer to section 2.3 in this chapter that describes his framework

### **c) The benefits of parental involvement on children's education**

Parental involvement has proved to have a positive influence on the children's educational performance, attendance, retention, behaviour and attitude (Lee & Bowen, 2006; Mattingly et al., 2002; Bower & Griffin, 2011). Mattingly et al. (2002, p. 550) mention that parental involvement has a lasting effect on children's success in school irrespective of class, race, ethnicity, gender or age. Wilder (2014, p.377) states that the positive influence of parental involvement on students has also been identified by policy-makers who have included different aspects of parental involvement in new education initiatives and reforms. Pushor and Amendt (2018, p.5) state that engagement of parents in their children's learning has been deemed to be the most powerful device for improving the school.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) state that through parental involvement, parents develop a personal construction which includes being involved in their children's education, and they also develop a sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school. Parents are also expected by their children and the school to be involved in their children's education. Oswald et al., (2018, p.8) states the school plays a major role in the level of parental involvement. When school staff engage in caring and trusting relationships with parents and recognises parents as partners in the educational development of children, those practices enhance and motivate parents to be actively involved in the educational development of their children. When parents become part of decision-making processes in the school, they add value by providing the educators with information about the children's needs and strengths that can be used by educators to enhance the learner's development. This also motivates learners and reinforces a positive culture of learning in the home (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Green, Walker, Hoover, and Sandler (2007) state that parents' awareness of their personal skills and knowledge impact on their involvement activities in their children's schooling. Such awareness by participants in the current study may have also influenced their choices with regard to participating in certain forms of parental involvement at the school under focus. Parental involvement also helps parents ensure that the school is conforming to the values and culture of the community.

When Shaldon (2002) elaborates on parental involvement at schools he states that parents get first-hand information about the school environment, placing the parents in a better position to support their children. Parental involvement at school builds a relationship between adults in two of the child's primary micro-systems, the home, and the school. Also, parental educational involvement at home conveys congruence between home and school governance (Lee & Bowen, 2006, p. 196). This therefore means that parents are involved in the child's life in more ways than one and that it is highly unlikely that a parent would be unaware of the child's academic and social progress. Parental involvement can also help with networking among parents. Lee and Bowen (2006) elaborate on this point by stating that, attending parent-teacher association meetings can help parents gain access to beneficial information, parenting skills, or resources available in the social network represented by those parents. Epstein (1995) argues, that effective relationship between the school, home, and community develops the education environment and climate. One other reason why parents become involved in the education of their children according to literature cited by Avvisati et al., (2015, p. 489), is to enhance the

performance of their children in their academic progress by engaging in their homework and in preparation for tests.

#### **d) Effects of marital status on parental involvement**

This section reviews the literature pertaining the impact of marital status on the level of parental involvement in the education of children. Rispoli et al (2018, p.8) focussed on parental involvement with regard to disabled children's schooling. They state that single parents are less involved in the home-based education of their disabled children compared to parents that are co-parenting or married parents, because single parents are under the impression that their children are getting adequate attention at the school. They therefore, pay more attention to household activities as they are the only caregivers in their households. Schneider and Coleman (2018) state that traditional families which consist of mother, father and a child have decreased though, in such families, two-income families seem to invest in their children's education. The majority of working mothers, whether single-parents or part of traditional families, work outside their homes for a significant part of their children's education, leaving the duty of supporting their children academic activities such as helping with homework, to after-care constitutions (Schneider & Coleman, 2018).

According to Avvisati et al., (2015, p. 296), in traditional families which include is a husband and a wife , the wife is the one who makes decisions about the education of their children. Avvisati et al. (2015) further state that mothers who communicatee with the child on school matters, significantly boosts the academic performance of the child especially on language information processing, though in mathematics and grade retention it is better when both parents are involved . Avvisati et al. (2015) futher state that single and teenaged parents are less likely to be involved in their children's education because of other family or work obligations. Oswald et al., (2018, p.6) also agree by stating that divorced parents and single parents indicated low parental involvement because single parents are more likely to have limited time for school activities and educational support for their children considering due to other priorities. Ngure, Paul and Amollo, (2017, p. 40) discovered that marital status also has an influence on the the learner achievement. They found that children from nuclear families with the mother and father in the same household perform better than children who come from



single parent, foster, extended and polygamous families. Ngure et al. (2017) further state that the psychological state of the child is usually affected by parent's constant absenteeism as well as conflict. This may occur in instances such as when the parents are separated, divorced or when one parent is deceased.

#### **e) Parental involvement in relation to kinship relations**

Lawrence-Webb, Okundaye, and Hafner, (2003, p. 135) define kinship caregivers as individuals who assist in providing care to children within the family on a formal or informal basis. These authors further state the kinship caregivers are either related by blood, marriage, or individuals perceived and designated as family members by the family regardless of whether they have blood or legal ties to the family unit. "Kinship care is usually the first choice for placement of a child when the parent is unable to continue parenting because this kind of care preserves family ties, provides community and ethnic/cultural consistency, and reduces the trauma of separation from the parent" (Strozier, McGrew, Krisman, & Smith, 2005, p. 1012).

Myers and Myers (2015, p.115) define family structure types by their composition, membership, and relationship among the adult and child household members. These authors further state that family structure types are chosen and are non-random events. They also claim that specific resources are more common in some family types. Schneider and Coleman (2018, p. 1) mention that the type of family or family composition (referring to the number of adults in the household and their relationships to children) constitutes another social resource, the nature of which can affect educational opportunities in the home.

A study that was conducted by Sheng (2012) in China indicated that female parents are more involved in their children's education than male parents. These female parents didn't just invest time, energy, and money but, they also invested the mental and emotional effort in their children's education. Mattingly et al. (2002, p. 552) agree that the vast majority of involved parents are mothers. When designing and planning strategies of parental involvement female parents are more involved than male parents (Sheng 2012, p. 136) Many middle-class male parents are usually at a distance when it comes to parenting and being directly involved in their

children's education. In Sheng's (2012) study the mothers were more involved in their children's education than the fathers.

A similar study by Anderson et al. (1999) in Cape Town, South Africa among isiXhosa High School students compared the involvement of biological fathers to that of stepfathers. Anderson et al. (1999, p. 442) found that resident biological fathers when compared to non-resident biological fathers and resident step-fathers, spent more time with their children, helped them with homework and even spoke English to their children, a language enjoying much status in South Africa. Anderson et al. (1999, p.442) also indicate that resident stepfathers were more involved with their children than non-resident biological fathers. Among the non-resident biological fathers, fathers that had never resided with their children had minimal involvement in their children's education compared to those who had previously resided with their children.

When comparing school financing in the Anderson et al. (1999, p.444) study, resident biological fathers financed the school expenditures of their children the most, followed by biological fathers who once lived with their children, then the biological fathers who had never lived with their children and lastly, the resident stepfathers minimally contributed in this category. Anderson et al. (1999:446) summarise their findings by saying men spend more time with their children when they live with their children, and the history of people living together determines the amount of time men assist their children with homework. According to Oswald et al. (2018, p . 6) stepparents are less involved in the education of their step-children, because of not knowing what role they ought to play in the education of their stepchildren The stepchildren also perceive step-parents as friends rather than parents, which therefore results in lower levels of step-parent involvement in the education of their step-children.

#### **f) Effects of parent's educational attainment on parental involvement**

One of the hypotheses in this study is that parents' educational level attainment has an impact on the level of parental involvement. Sheng (2012) argues that all middle-class parents particularly those who are highly educated have a high expectation of their children's education. According to Sheng (2012, p. 138), the successful educational history of middle-class mothers appears to play a significant influence on shaping their children's attitude towards higher education learning, the expectation of higher education and academic

achievement. Sheng (2012) further states that academic achievement obtained by parents in the low socioeconomic contexts usually serves as a great inspiration to their children. Oswald et al., (2018, p.1) state that parents' educational attainment is one of the determining factors of children's readiness and success.

Parents with low levels of education, maybe less involved at school because they feel less confident about communicating with school staff owing to a lack of knowledge of the school system, a lack of familiarity with educational jargon, or their own negative educational experiences (Lee & Bowen 2006, p.198).

According to Mattingly et al. (2002, p.552) more educated parents would be more involved in their children's education compared to less educated parents. Similarly, Deplanty, Coulter-kern, Duchane and Duchane (2010, p.361) state that parents' level of education may serve as a barrier to their involvement in the education of their children. If parents have attained low levels of education they might feel challenged in assisting their children with homework. Rispoli et al. (2018, p.8) in their study, noted that parents who have not completed their high school education are less likely to be involved with home-based parental involvement compared to those that have completed their high school education. Rispoli et al. (2018) further discuss that in their study, parents with higher education who had disabled children benefited more from teacher support than those who were less educated with regard to the more specialised strategies to support the learning of their children at home.

Hendrick (2014, p. 147) states that knowledge and skills form personal resource. He cites the example of parents who feel more knowledgeable in mathematics than social studies, would likely be willing to assist in mathematics homework than in social studies. Similarly, parents who are skilled at public speaking would likely stand in front of the class and speak about their accomplishments unlike those who perceive that they lack such skills (Hendrick, 2014, p. 147). Nevertheless, educators need to ensure that parents have access to relevant information regardless of their educational level. Access to relevant information in promoting parental involvement is also highlighted by Rispoli et al. (2018, p. 8) who identify socioeconomic status as a barrier to parental involvement in children's education. Nonetheless, these authors emphasise the importance of providing information about low cost or free enriching activities

to all parents so that those who encounter socioeconomic problems may be able to have access to such information. Contrary to popular belief the study of Camacho-Thompson, Gonzales, and Tein, (2019, p. 394) indicates that parents' academic-related behaviour (e.g. parental home-based involvement) which influences subsequent academic performance, is not impacted by their educational value or knowledge about academics, therefore from their study parental involvement is not related to parents' educational attainment.

Heystek (2003) states that the management and governance system of the school is built on the expectation that parents have good literacy rates and that parents have skills and knowledge to contribute actively to the governance and management system. This might be especially important in South Africa, where the parents play an important role in the formulation of policies for schools and are responsible for the school finances including the budget (Department of Basic Education, 2016, p. 16). In this regard, illiterate parents might have problems with being involved in school activities. This depends on the form of involvement. Other researchers have found that parents' education levels have no real effect on parental involvement. For example, Govender (2005) found that many poor Black South African parents, despite their financial difficulties and low-levels of education, inspire their children to obtain a good education. The following section elaborates on the challenges encountered by parents with being involved in the education of their children.

### **2.3 Challenging factors that influence parental involvement:**

Epstein (2009) claims that there are challenges when parental involvement is practiced. These challenges must be resolved in order to reach and engage all families in the best way. According to Epstein, (2009), one of the challenges that parents at schools in the more economically depressed communities face is that schools are more prone to report the children's problematic behaviours than they are to give feedback on their positive accomplishments. Consequently, these practices have a negative impact on parents' views on school involvement. The literature further indicates that parents experience various challenges through involvement in the education of their children.

One of the challenges experienced by parents in being involved in the education of their children is, that older adolescents may demand much autonomy from their parents and are therefore more likely to discourage or reject attempted parental involvement (Muller, 1998). Similarly, Oswald et al. (2018, p. 6) states that parents of learners in higher grades have fewer opportunities to be involved in the classroom because their children are becoming independent and expect their parents to refrain from school involvement, this therefore results in less home involvement.

According to Pushor and Amendt, (2018, p. 202) regardless of the number of benefits that have been mentioned by research pertaining to parental involvement; there is still the tendency by schools to minimally engage parents.

Dick (2016, p.48) adds that language barriers and low literacy levels of parents lower the standard of communication between the school and home, this factor also affects the involvement in the school governance. Dick (2016) further states that lack of capability to govern limits parental participation in the decision-making process and low literacy impacts the ability of parents to being involved with policymaking. In Dick's study, there was not much difference between parents who had been trained for serving on the school governing body and those who had not been trained when it came to policy reading and drafting because of inadequate literacy.

Davies (2002) concludes by saying if schools want to promote parental involvement these above-mentioned challenges should be considered and overcome.

Williams and Sánchez (2011, p. 63) in their study which included some disabled participants state that more than half of the participants in their study wanted to be involved in the education of their children; but they had experienced four forms of barriers to their involvement. The first barrier was time poverty, meaning the economically poor working parents did not have time to dedicate to their children's education demands, therefore parents with low income who had less flexible schedules at work, experienced time poverty. The second barrier was lack of access which was indicated by twenty participants: the physical structure of the school was seen as a barrier to parental involvement due to the fact that it limited access to parents with

disabilities and that the schedule of the school's events did not accommodate the parents' schedule. The third barrier to involvement was lack of financial resources: some of the participants stated that not having money to pay for school fees placed them at a disadvantage of not being able to even participate in school activities because they felt ashamed of not being able to school fees, let alone the fact that they could not attend school activities because of a lack of finances. The fourth barrier was lack of awareness: this was also deemed by the school's personnel as one of the barriers to parental involvement. Lack of awareness according to their study meant that parents were unfamiliar with school policies or parents were not properly informed about the events at the school. The two contributors to the latter barrier were: using the learner as the messenger between the school and home because learners may not have delivered the message to the relevant person, the second contributing factor was incorrect contact information of the parent.

Lee and Bowen, (2006, p.198) mention inequality in families as one of the challenges to parental involvement; the positive influence of parental involvement on children's educational performance may not be fully implemented in some families, because they do not have the resources required for parental involvement. They further state that parents with different economic and social backgrounds may display different types of involvement because they differ with regard to habits (e.g. wealthy parents can offer their children more expensive and advanced resources which cannot be afforded by the poor).

Dick (2016, p. 53) states that one of the challenges to volunteering as a form of parental involvement at their children's schools is not having free time to do so because of occupation. According to Dick (2016), the relatively older parents find it challenging to volunteer in sports, because they do not even understand the sport played at the school.

In a study conducted by Ramirez (2003, p.93) parents had the desire to be involved in the education of their children, but the forces within their children's school had prevented them from being involved in their children's education. Ramirez (2003, p.105) in his study highlights a number of factors that frustrate the parents with being involved in their children's education. These were: (i) that the parents in his study felt that the school was not even listening to them as parents regardless of their plea for communication (ii) lack of communication between the school and the families so much that parents were dependent on other parents for information

about school activities, (iii) language of communication was a barrier between the school and the parents regardless of the fact that the school was bilingual and therefore it ought to have accommodated the Spanish-speaking parents, (iv) parents felt that educators did not care about the learners nor their families so much that they did not know the difference between the Latin families, they would mistake one family for another. One of the structures of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical framework (1997) is that parents want to be invited by educators to be involved in their children's education and when this is not done we get parents who are not pleased as the parents in Ramirez's (2003) study.

Hornby and Lafaele, (2011, p. 39) mention the attitude of parents as one of the barriers to parental involvement, for example, parents who think that just taking the child to school is all that is required of them to be involved in the education of their children. These authors argue that these parents will not do home-based or school-based parental involvement. According to Oswald et al., (2018, p. 6) the education system for children with disabilities requires more parental involvement yet the activities which require parental involvement are not necessarily accommodative of some of the disabilities that their children had experienced. Consequently, this resulted in limited parental involvement. These authors also state that when a child has high nursing needs which require the time and attention of parents this might result in minimal or no attention given to the academic assistance of the learner.

In summary, Davies (2002) states that there are a number of factors that contribute minimal parental involvement, namely:

- “Too little time/work schedule/single-parenthood
- Lack of resources/transportation/childcare
- Language barrier/cultural isolation
- Social isolation/low educational level
- Not knowing how to contribute
- Feeling overwhelmed, intimidated or unwelcome” (Davies, 2002, <http://www.kellybear.com/TeacherArticles/TeacherTip22.html>).

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is a combination of two theories, Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model of parental involvement. These two theorists inform this study.

### **2.4.1 Epstein's Framework**

Epstein's (2009) framework consists of a partnership between school, family and community in caring for a child. According to Epstein et al. (2018, p.9) these theory summarises the overlapping responsibility of developing children between school, family, and community. It summaries the six researched typologies of parental involvement with their challenges. Abrahams (2012, p. 31) views Epstein's overlapping partnership of the different spheres as a link that develops the learner. Abrahams (2012, p. 34) further states that each sphere ought to have an inclusive practice of role and cooperate with the other spheres as-is will strengthen the feeling of security, being cared for and hardworking courage in the learner. Epstein et al. (2018, p.11) describe the partnership between school, family, and community as a partnership that shares interests and responsibilities, for they all have a common goal of working together in creating better programmes and opportunities for students. Epstein et al. (2018, p. 12) in the description of this theory state that the schools make the choice to connect the different spheres or not. This is done by either minimal communication which would then lead to a minimal connection between the spheres or much high-quality communication which would then lead the three spheres closer together. The focal point of all these spheres is a learner. If the home, school and community spheres are not connected the student suffers and if they are highly connected, the student succeeds. When the link between the spheres is closely connected the learner will find many similarities between the spheres. One sphere will be of great benefit to the other sphere. In addition to the overlapping spheres is the six typologies of involvement which according to Epstein et al. (2018, p. 16) originate from different research studies in different levels of education.

Epstein, (2009) describes each of the six typologies of parental involvement that will make it easy for parents and schools to work together holistically. These are:

- (a) Parenting (featuring practices in school aimed at helping families to establish a supportive home environment for children)



- (b) Volunteering (characterized by practicing in which parents volunteer to support teachers in curriculum planning, tutoring, and as replacement teachers).
- (c) Learning at home (featuring school activities of children, to help in children's homework, to be involved in supervising and mentoring out of school activities of children), an example is when parents would assist learners with school projects.
- (d) Decision-making (characterized by a practice that encourages learners' parents to play meaningful roles in school governance), an example is parents being part of the School's Governing Body (SGB).
- (e) Communication (incorporates practices associated with direct and indirect verbal and written home-school communication), an example is when parents communicate with educators about the progress of a learner.
- (f) Collaboration with a community (involving practices for identity and integrating resources and services from communities for strengthening school programmes), for example, parents that are stakeholders at the school.

The instrument of measuring the levels of parental involvement in this study are solemnly based on the above Epstein's typology. Another theory that informed the study's theoretical framework is Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) theory which is discussed next.

#### **2.4.2 Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler theory**

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) propose a model of parental involvement which consists of five levels of construction (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997, p. 4). The first level is the parent's decision about involvement, this decision is influenced by parents' construction role, parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school, and general invitation and demand for involvement from the child and the school. The second level is that parents' choice with regard to forms of involvement, is influenced by specific domains of parents' skill and knowledge, mix of demands on total parental time and energy, specific invitations and demands for involvement from child and school. The third level is the mechanisms through which parental involvement influences child outcomes which are: modelling, reinforcement, and instruction. The fourth level is tempering or mediating variables which are: parents' use of developmentally appropriate involvement strategies, mediating variables which fit between parents' involvement actions and school expectations. The fifth level is child outcomes which are the skills and knowledge, and the personal sense of efficacy for doing well at school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 4).

The first level of construction in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theory (1997) states that parents are constrained by three major constructs to be involved in their children's education, which speak to the objectives of this study. The first is role construction, this is parental motivation beliefs about what parents are supposed to do in their children's education. Therefore, parents establish the basic range of activities that they view as important and permissible for their own actions on behalf of their children. The second is the sense of parents' efficacy in being capable of helping their children to succeed in school. This construct focuses on the extent to which parents believe that through their involvement they can exert positive influence on their children's education. The third is general invitation, meaning the demands and opportunities for involvement with regard to parents' perceptions that the child and the school wants them to be involved (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997, p. 3).

Role construction: defines what parents believe to be their role in their children's education and the basic series of activities they deem as imperative, necessary and permissible for their actions with and on behalf of their children. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) further explain role construction as including a sense of personal or shared responsibility of parents for their children's educational products and as a parental sense doing what is required of them in their children's education. "Parents' ideas about child development, child-rearing and appropriate roles in supporting children's education at home appear to constitute important specific components of the parental role construct as influential particularly in parents' decisions about involvement in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 17). In this study the role construction is covered within the following headings: the attitude of parents toward parental involvement at a school of skills, meaning how parents view their role in being involved in the education of their children at such a school. Role construction is also viewed within the forms of parental involvement, in what ways do parents think they ought to play their role of being involved in the education of their children at a school of skills, within the kinship relationships, meaning this study also evaluated whether the level of involvement is affected by the kinship relationship between the participant and the learner at the school of skills and whether marital status affected the level of involvement.

Parent's sense of efficacy refers to parents' perception of their abilities in helping their children succeed at school. Parents' efficacy is about the influence; parents can wield (positive influence) on their children's educational outcomes. David (2010) states that self-efficacy is a

belief in one's abilities to act. Self-efficacy will produce outcomes when parents are involved in different ways at school and the performance of the learners will improve. Parents' self-efficacy is also covered in the current study with regard to the following aspects: (i) attitude of parents towards involvement in their children's education, meaning when parents have a positive attitude towards parental involvement they were most likely to exercise their sense of efficacy, even in the forms of parental involvement (e.g. parenting: when parents motivate their children about academic achievements), and (ii) parents' educational attainment measured in this study may be a reflection of their sense of efficacy with regard to parental involvement as mentioned in literature (Hoover-dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

General invitation for involvement from others. This refers to the perception that parents have about being invited by other people to be involved in their children's education. Parents get general invitations, demands, and opportunities to be involved in their children's education. This refers to the parents' perceptions that their children and the school want them to be involved in the education of the child. Green, Walker, Hoover, and Sandler (2007) view general invitation specifically with regard to teacher invitations and child invitations. They state that teacher invitation is identified as the motivation for parental involvement. The attitude of parents for involvement in their children's education can be affected by teacher invitation. This can also serve as a challenge to their involvement in their children's education. Green, Walker, Hoover, and Sandler (2007) further explain specific child invitation as a powerful tool in promoting parental involvement. Meaning when the child asks the parents to be involved in their education this prompts the parents to be involved in their children's education. Parental motivation to be involved in their children's education can be observed in the parent's attitudes to parental involvement. Parents engage in different forms of parental involvement illustrating that which they perceive will benefit their children's education. This study sought to evaluate the attitude of parents toward parental involvement and the levels of involvement in different forms of parental involvement. "Overall, the literature suggests that even well-designed school programmes inviting parental involvement will meet with only limited success if they do not address issues of parental role construction and parental sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school" (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler 1997:3). In this study the general invitation construct is covered within the challenges encountered section.

## **2.5 Conclusion:**

This chapter consisted of three sections: the first section is the conceptual framework which covers the terms like parenting, parental involvement, schools of skill and barriers to learning. The second section is the literature review which covers the following concepts: attitudes of parents towards parental involvement, forms of parental involvement, the marital status effect on parental involvement, the kinship relationship impacts on parental involvement, and parents' levels of education affecting parental involvement, factors influencing parental involvement. The third section is the theoretical framework and the last section is the conclusion of this chapter. This chapter has revealed the views of the world of science in this study. The following chapter describes the research methodology used in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology used in this study. It gives in-depth descriptions and justification of the research paradigm, research approach, research design and data collection methods. It also includes a description of the participants and data collection instruments used. An explanation of the method of data analysis and verification is included in this chapter. Finally, this chapter presents the ethical considerations that were followed during the study.

#### **3.2 Research paradigm: post-positivism**

A paradigm is a framework for observation and understanding which shapes both what we see and how we understand it. Thomas Kuhn (cited in Babbie & Mouton, p. 615) refers to a paradigm as “an accepted tradition and set of beliefs or values that guide research”. Neuman (1997, p. 62) also mentions Thomas Kuhn the philosopher-scientist as the one who made paradigms known as a basic orientation to theory and research. Creswell (2014, p. 6) refers to a paradigm as a philosophical worldview. According to Guba in Creswell (2014, p. 250), a worldview is a basic set of beliefs that guides action. However, Neuman (1997, p. 62) generalises a paradigm as a whole system of thinking. According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 49), quantitative researchers believe that properties of phenomena like attitudes (such as those of parents towards parental involvement in this study) are measured through quantitative research. There are different paradigms such as positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism and critical paradigms (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.43) define positivism as a metatheory that is based on the key assumption that social science should follow the lead of natural science and its practices ought to be based on the successes of natural science. The interpretive paradigm is defined by Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.643) as a metatheory in opposition to positivism, based on the key assumption that human phenomena are fundamentally different from natural phenomena. This means that the understanding of human behaviour cannot be understood under the same principles as natural sciences, therefore post-positivism balances out both these metatheories. This study is governed by the post-positivism paradigm.

Creswell (2014, p.7) gives a description of what post-positivism is. He states that it is a worldview that originates from the traditional forms of research more so from quantitative rather than qualitative research. Furthermore, he mentions that the term “post-positivism” originates from the fact that it represents the thinking after positivism, challenging the traditional notion of the absolute truth of knowledge. The difference between positivism and post-positivism is that post-positivism is not rigidly positive about the claims of knowledge when studying the behaviour and actions of humans when compared to positivism that claims that truth is absolute (Creswell 2014, p.7). Panhwar, Ansari, and Shah (2017, p. 253) state that post-positivism is an effective paradigm for social and educational research because it strikes a balance between positivist and interpretivist approaches. According to Panhwar et al. (2017) post-positivism allows multiple methods of research to be used in order to reduce personal biases and prejudices of the researcher.

According to Creswell (2014, p.7), a post-positivism paradigm holds more true to quantitative research than to qualitative research. Creswell further describes post-positivism as a paradigm that determines the effects of the outcomes while reducing ideas into small discrete sets to test, such as variables that comprise hypotheses and research questions. Creswell (2014) further states that this paradigm observes and measures the objective reality that exists in the study, therefore studying the behaviour of individuals is important and verifies theories that govern the world. Creswell (2014, p.7) also claims that post-positivist studies reflect the need to identify and assess the causes that influence the outcomes. In this case, the current study sought to identify and assess the causes that influence parental involvement at the School of Skills by developing numeric measures of observation and studying the behaviour and attitude of parents. It is for this reason that post-positivism was the appropriate paradigm for this study.

Henderson (2011) considers post-positivism to be a clearer way to acknowledge the problems with traditional scientific methods. In his account, he states that one of the reasons why post-positivism often works is that researchers are always interested in uncovering meaning from people about their multiple interpretations of reality. This study sought to uncover the levels of parental involvement at one particular School of Skills.

### **3.3 Research approach: quantitative approach**

In view of the many aspects or dimensions of parental involvement, in relation to the current study, a quantitative approach was adopted. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.12) state that quantitative research is based on some form of logical positivism. Bobby and Mouton (2005, p.49) state that quantitative researchers believe that the best or only way of measuring the properties of phenomena (e.g. attitude towards a certain topic) is through quantitative measurements. Thus the researcher found it fitting to use the quantitative approach as this study measures the properties of phenomena such as parents' levels of involvement as well as their attitudes towards the education of their children at the school of skills. Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.158) define quantitative research as a study that is based on measuring variables for individual participants to obtain scores, usually numerical values, that are submitted to statistical analysis for summary and interpretation.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.13) also give a clear description of the quantitative approach taking into consideration assumptions about the world, the research purpose, research methods and processes, prototypical studies, research roles and the importance of the context for quantitative research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.13), quantitative research is usually based on a single reality, logical positivism and measured by an instrument.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.13) state that the purpose of quantitative research is to establish a relationship between measured variables. In the case of the current study, the researcher sought to establish the relationships by cross-tabulation and chi-square analysis between the different variables under focus. Punch (2003, p.2) also agrees that the crux of quantitative research is the study of relationships between variables. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.13) describe quantitative research as a sequential procedure that is established before the study is conducted in order to guide the researchers in their study. Further, they mention that for the prototypical study, quantitative research employs the experimental or correlational design to reduce error, bias, and inessential variables. This study has employed the correlational design. In light of research questions three, four and five, this study sought to evaluate if there is a correlation between parents' marital status and levels of Parental involvement (PI), the correlation between kinship relations and levels of PI, and the correlation between parents' educational attainment and PI.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.13), the role of the quantitative researcher is ideally to detach from the study to avoid bias, meaning they are not to consider their own subjective understandings when conducting the research. Furthermore, these authors state that most quantitative research intends to establish universal context-free generalisation.

Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.646) also define quantitative research as a numerical representation and manipulation of observation. Creswell (2014) describes quantitative research as a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, using quantitative research questions which are interrogative statements that raise questions about the relationships among variables that the researcher seeks to answer. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.49) mention that quantitative research became a dominant research approach in the social sciences since the early nineteenth century. Punch (2003:3) refers to the essential objective of the quantitative survey as the means to measure a group of people on variables of interest and to see how those variables are related to each other across the sample studied. There are also advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research. Some of them are discussed next

### **3.3.1 Advantages of the quantitative approach:**

Creswell (2014, p. 4) mentions a number of advantages for quantitative research, one of which is that this approach tests objective theories by examining relationships among variables. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.12) agree and state that the main purpose of the quantitative approach is to seek to establish relationships and explain the causes of changes in measuring social facts. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) further state that the quantitative approach has specified steps that direct the researcher to reduce error and biased meaning because it is structured in some form of logical positivism, separated from the feelings and beliefs of individuals which might be unstable. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.12) also claim that this approach attempts to establish universal, context-free generalisations, therefore the results of the current study may be applicable to similar study contexts. Savela ( 2018, p. 41) considers the quantitative approach as an approach that can illuminate important trends and patterns, which qualitative research cannot do in areas like linguistic landscape. Savela (2018) further states that quantitative approaches can have a broad overview and protect research from erroneous generalisations. Having stated the advantages of the quantitative approach there are also disadvantages.



### **3.3.2 Disadvantages of quantitative approach:**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.12), some of the disadvantages of the quantitative approach are that the main purpose of the quantitative approach is not fully concerned with understanding the social phenomena of the participant's perspective. These authors further mention that quantitative research is not entirely flexible in strategies and research processes. It assumes social facts with a single reality separated from beliefs and feelings of individuals, meaning it doesn't accommodate multiple realities which might give the collective (more informed) perception of the same situation. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that the quantitative approach doesn't take context into consideration, yet human behaviour cannot be fully understood out of context. Savela (2018, p. 31) also states that quantitative research cannot provide an in-depth understanding of the analysed study.

Having looked at some of the potential disadvantages of quantitative research, the researcher attempted to mitigate potential disadvantages in using the quantitative approach by firstly designing research objectives that focused on patterns and relationships among variables rather than trying to gain an in-depth understanding of the complexity of parental involvement at the school of skills. Therefore, the survey items were carefully crafted to appropriately contribute to the answering of the study research objectives and for the testing of the study hypotheses. Furthermore, Epstein's (2009) theoretical framework of parental involvement informed the design of the survey items which was an attempt at reducing research bias.

### **3.4 Research design: descriptive survey**

The current study used a survey research design. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.230) traced the origin of surveys back to the Bible, specifically the Old Testament: Numbers 26:1-2, and through to the new testament. According to Neuman (1997, p.28), a survey produces quantitative information about the social world and describes features of people or the social world. Surveys ask people about their beliefs, opinions, characteristics, and past or present behaviour. Punch (2003, p. 23) states that the main objective of the quantitative survey is to measure a group of people on the variable of interest and to see how those variables are related to each other across the sample studied. Floyd and Fowler (2009, p.1) also agree that the purpose of a survey is to produce statistics which is a quantitative description of some aspects of a study's population, they state that the main way of collecting information is by asking people questions. The answer to the questions asked is used to describe the experiences,

opinions and other characteristics of those answering the questions (Floyd & Fowler, 2009, p.11).

A survey in this study asked parents about their attitudes and opinions concerning parental involvement, explored the characteristics of different forms of parental involvement according to parents' attitudes and evaluated their behaviours with regard to being involved in the education of their children at the School of Skills. Through the survey, the challenges of parental involvement encountered by the participants in the education of their children were also identified. It was via the survey that the researcher could evaluate the significance of relationships between: the levels of parental involvement and the marital status of the participants, the kinship relations with the learners at the School of Skills and educational levels attained by the parent participants. Creswell (2014:13) also describes surveys as numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying the sample. In conducting this study, the researcher had evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of survey research.

### **3.4.1 Advantages of a survey**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.262), surveys are useful in giving a description of characteristics of large numbers of the population, no other method of observation can provide this general capability. Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.385) state that flexibility is a real strength of the survey, they substantiate this by stating that surveys can be used to obtain information about a wide variety of different variables including attitudes, opinions, preferences, and behaviours. They further add that some of these mentioned variables might be very difficult to describe using other methods. Babbie and Mouton (2005) also state that surveys are self-administered and make samples of large numbers feasible. Large numbers of cases are very important for descriptive and explanatory analyses. Surveys are flexible based on the fact that many questions may be asked on the same topic. Surveys also allow the researcher to develop operational definitions based on actual observations. Babbie and Mouton (2005) also mention that standardised questionnaires have important advantages with regard to measurement. Though there are advantages to the survey; there are also disadvantages.

### **3.4.2 Disadvantages of the survey**

Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.262) state the disadvantages of survey research, that the use of standardised questionnaires in assessing people's attitudes, orientations, circumstances and

experiences might be at the least, minimally appropriate to all respondents, based on the fact that the survey can rarely deal with the context of social life. The researcher seldom deals with the whole life situation in which respondents are thinking and acting to the degree of observation. Babbie and Mouton (2005) further state that surveys are inflexible, unlike other direct observation studies that can be modified as the field conditions allow, therefore, surveys typically require that an initial study design remains unchanged throughout. According to Flynn, Pagell and Fugate (2018, p. 2) supply chain survey researchers frequently use perceptual measures which require the respondent to engage in high-level cognitive processes. Even the most competent respondents can experience perceptual and cognitive limitations which could result in inaccuracies. For example, retrospective reports might be required and the respondents recalling of the past events might be imperfect thus resulting in inaccuracy (Flynn, Pagell &Fugate, 2018, p. 2).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.263), survey researchers would probably be unaware of new variables, unlike qualitative researchers, because of the inflexibility of surveys. These authors further state that surveys are subject to artificiality, for instance, respondents providing conservative answers in the questionnaire does not necessarily mean that they are conservative, the same also applies to those giving prejudicial answers.

One of the noted disadvantages of survey research by Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.385) is a high nonresponse bias. They further state that some of the responses can be difficult to analyse more especially that of open-ended questions. One other concern about the use of survey research according to Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.356) is that the information obtained is always a self-report. Babbie and Mouton, (2005, p. 263) also state that surveys cannot measure social action, they can only collect self-reports of recalled past action or of prospective or hypothetical action. Therefore, there is always the chance that participants distort or conceal information, or even have no knowledge about the topic when answering the questions. The survey therefore depends on the accuracy and truthfulness of the participant.

In this study, the researcher carefully and in detail informed participants about all aspects of the study, prior to them giving informed consent to participate in the study. They were informed about the objectives of the study, all ethical considerations were spelled out to participants, including voluntary participation and withdrawal with no penalties for withdrawing, anonymity, and confidentiality, the intended outputs of the study and how data

would be stored and eliminated. In this way, it was hoped that participants would feel at ease to share their candid views about their involvement in their children's schooling. The following section discusses the sampling process.

### **3.5 Population and sampling**

#### **3.5.1 Research population**

The research population according to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.173) is a theoretically specified aggregation of study elements. Neuman (1997, p.202) defines a population as a specific pool of cases that the researcher wants to study. Punch (1998, p.36) mentions that a population is technically a large group in which the researcher has an interest and from which the researcher ought to draw a sample in order to gain information about the large group. Similarly, Gravetter and Forzano (2012:138) state that a population is the entire set of individuals of interest to a researcher, and this entire set usually doesn't participate in a research study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008, p.91) in their description of population, state that it is a group of interest to the researcher and a group for which the researcher would like to generalise the results of the study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008, p.91) further describe the dilemma of target and accessible population, the target population is the population in which the researcher would like to generalise and unfortunately it is rarely available. The population to which the researcher is able to generalise is the accessible population. The target population for this study was all the Schools of Skills in the Western Cape but the accessible population was one School of Skills on which this study was conducted.

In the current study, the School of Skills from which the population was drawn is situated in a previously disadvantaged area with a vast majority of the people who are unemployed, uneducated, and with low socio-economic background. The school is partially surrounded by informal settlements, though not all the learners in this school reside in the area where the school is located.

The population for this study comprised a group of about 400 parents whose children are learners at a School of Skills in Western Cape South Africa. This population of parents and/or legal guardians' included parents and guardians who were part of the School's Governing Body (SGB) and those who were not. These parents were of different age groups, gender, marital statuses, and educational levels. Floyd and Fowler (2009:1) state that general information of

the population is collected only by a fraction of the population and that fraction is referred to as the sample, this they state is done instead of collecting information from everyone within the population.

### **3.5.2 Study sample**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.164), sampling is a process of selecting participants from a population under observation. Punch (2003, p.36) agrees and states that the sample is a technical term in research which means a small substance drawn from some large group, the large group being the population. Punch (2003, p.36) elaborates on this description by stating that the researcher is usually interested in studying something about the population. However, usually the entire population cannot be studied, therefore a sample is drawn from the population and studied. This means that the sample drawn must represent the population very well, as the results of the study usually end up being generalised for the population. “The principle is, where possible, select the sample so that any relationship between the variables has the maximum chances to be observed” (Punch, 2003, p.37). Gravetter and Forzano (2012:138) define a sample as a group of individuals selected from a population and usually is intended to represent the population in the research study.

In the current study, a sample was drawn from the population of parents at one School of Skills in the Western Cape. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008, p.90) state that a sample of individuals that are selected from a population is sometimes a representation of how a larger group of people act or what they believe. Gravetter and Forzano (2012:141) mention that to be able to generalise the results of the study, the sample selected must be a representative sample. Furthermore, they define a representative sample as a sample with the same characteristics of the population. The sample of this study represented the population of the study, meaning all parents were represented in the sample. Parents of learners from all four different year levels were represented in this sample, parents with different marital statuses, different levels of educational attainment, different genders, and different kinship relationship between the participants and the learners at the school of skills, all were presented.

Gravetter and Forzano (2012:144) define sampling as a process of selecting individuals to participate in research. Jager, Putnick and Bornstein, (2017, p. 15) state that within the developmental sciences the sampling strategies fall between two broad categories which are:

probability sampling (which uses forms of random selection) and nonprobability sampling (which does not use random selection). Therefore convenience samples are not selected randomly (Landers & Behrend, 2015, p. 148). The sampling technique that was used for this study was convenience sampling, which is the most common nonprobability sampling strategy used within developmental science (Jager et al., 2017, p. 15). Jenkins-Smith et al., (2017, p. 53) define convenience sampling as accessible and relatively low-cost sampling. Qian, (2010, p. 391) states that convenience sampling is categorised under non-probability sampling. Qian further defines convenience sampling as a selection of ready availability. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 166) refer to this kind of sampling as reliance on available subjects. Babbie and Mouton further state that these strategies of sampling are easy and inexpensive, it explains its popularity but it seldom produces data of any general value. Antonius, (2003, p. 116) refers to convenience sampling as haphazardly choosing a sample that usually contains important biases. Antonius further states that the results of convenience sampling should not be considered accurate because they are not representative, but they are very informative about the range of opinions found in the population.

To ensure maximum participation all parents were invited to participate in this study. The target sample size for this study was about 30% of the total population of parents which is 120. Not all of the 120 sampled parents at the school were able to participate due to various reasons including parents who did not have time to participate in the study. Eventually, the sample size was 74 participants. In conducting this study, the researcher evaluated and took into consideration the following advantages and disadvantages of convenience sampling.

### **3.5.2.1 Advantages of convenience sampling**

Convenience sampling is inexpensive and easily accessible for the researcher, meaning respondents are selected because they are at the right place at the right time (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2017; Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013). Convenience sampling is defined according to its characteristics because the selection of participants is often guided by the availability of resources (Landers & Behrend, 2015; Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013). According to Clark, (2017, p.1) convenience sampling can be very useful for establishing the plausibility of relationships among variables, which is a desirable step for theory-building. Clark (2017, p.2) further states that this type of sampling is also useful for exploratory or ground-breaking research on relatively understudied topics or new areas. According to Jager et al., (2017, p. 26) non-probability convenience samples are the standard

within developmental science because probability samples are cost-prohibitive and they are unsuitable to examine developmental questions. There are also disadvantages to convenience sampling, a few disadvantages are discussed next.

### **3.5.2.2 Disadvantages of convenience sampling**

Convenience sampling is treated casually, even in organisational research method textbooks, and this sampling method almost guarantees that the sample will not represent the population (Landers & Behrend, 2015, p. 148). Therefore, one disadvantage is that generalisations cannot be made based on the results of studies using convenience sampling. Similarly, Clark, (2017, p. 1) states that convenience sampling has a problem of not being technically generalisable, it prohibits obtaining information that pertains to much of that population, and it does not technically fulfil the requirements of inferential statistics. According to Qian (2010, p. 391) convenience sampling might be viewed as biased in its sampling estimators, though the level of biasness is unknown. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 166) also state that this strategy of sampling may be useful in pretesting a questionnaire but doesn't recommend it for describing the population. Jager, Putnick, and Bornstein, (2017, p. 14) articulate that as a result of poor generalisability, convenience sampling often yields biased estimates of the target population and its socio-demographic subpopulations. Having taken into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of convenience sampling the researcher in the current study, included parents for participation in the study who were available.

## **3.6 Data collection measures**

Having identified the School of Skills in which the study was to be conducted, the researcher observed all protocols required to conduct the study. When permission to conduct the study from the necessary authorities was granted the researcher went ahead with the study. The school principal informed the parents of the study in a parents' meeting that was held at the school. The researcher was granted an opportunity to appraise the parents on what the study was about and how their assistance would be of help to the study and what was expected of those parents who would participate in the study. Parents who were interested in the study indicated to the researcher after the parents meeting and others informed the research via messages from their children. Some of the parents who participated in the study came to the school to complete the questionnaire; other parents preferred that the researcher come to their homes to help them with the questionnaire, while others took the questionnaire home and

completed it and returned them to the school. Not all 120 questionnaires that were handed out to the participants came back completed. Some of the questionnaires handed out to the parents came back blank and others were incorrectly completed. There were only 74 valid questionnaires for the study. The school has year levels (1-4) and not grades. The participants in this study had children enrolled representing the different year levels. The response rate for this study was not high, because not all the parents attended the parents' meeting, therefore, it was only a few knew about this study. Punch (1998, p.42) mentions that a response rate of 30-40% or less is not uncommon, though it might raise additional questions such as "is it safe to generalise the result of this study based on the size of the sample?". In order to achieve the objectives of this study, a research tool was required, which in this study was a survey questionnaire.

### **3.6.1. Questionnaires**

The researcher saw it best to use questionnaires to collect data since they guided the participant in answering the relevant questions which spoke to the aims and objectives of the study. One of the other intentions for using a questionnaire was to evaluate trends of parental involvement and to measure the significance of relationships between levels of parental involvement and certain variables.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 646), a "questionnaire is a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. Questionnaires are used primarily in survey research and also in experiments, field research, and other modes of observation". According to Punch (1998, p.30), a questionnaire is a tool that sits between research questions and strategy and the process of data collection. This, therefore, means the questionnaire is a means of getting answers to the research questions. Punch (1998, p.30) further states that the research questions provide a map for the questionnaire, thus the starting point for developing the questionnaire is the research questions.

#### **3.6.1.1 Advantages of the questionnaire**

Yan (2017, p. 8) views the questionnaire as a multifunctional tool because it is a blending of data collection and statistical analysis with subjective expressions and opinions. Yan (2017)



further states that survey questionnaire design is the mix of art and science, a blend of practicality and principle. This means that questionnaire that is ultimately fielded is likely to represent multiple compromises that balance statistical considerations, such as reliability and validity, against practical considerations, such as length, usability, and cost.

Floyd and Fowler (2009, p.74) mention the following advantages with regard to the use of questionnaires as data collection measures: (i) the respondents may complete the questionnaire at a time that is convenient for the respondent and this situation may provide a relevant and sincere response, (ii) when the topic is sensitive, respondents prefer a questionnaire rather than a face-to-face interview, (iii) the questions in the questionnaire gather relevant information for the study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008, p. 395) agree with Floyd and Fowler that questionnaires are self-administered by the respondent, therefore, the respondent may complete the questionnaires at a time of convenience and may choose not to respond to some questions which make them uncomfortable to answer. Opie (2004, p.95) refers to the questionnaire as the most used and useful procedure for gathering data based on the view that it is the most reliable and valid method which could be used.

### **3.6.1.2 Disadvantages of the questionnaire**

There are also potential disadvantages of using questionnaires as tools for collecting data. Floyd and Fowler (2009, p. 72) state that the questionnaire places more burden on the reading and writing skills of the respondent. Therefore, if the respondent is illiterate or has no interest in the topic, then their responses might not be a valid reflection of their views. Another disadvantage stated by Floyd and Fowler (2009, p.72) is that people who have poor eyesight, prefer being interviewed rather than completing a questionnaire, which may result in respondents returning incomplete questionnaires. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, (2008, p. 395) one of the disadvantages of a questionnaire is that it has to appear short and attractive for the respondent to be interested in completing it. However, it might not cover all that the researcher intended to cover because of its length, thus there is always the chance that insufficient data may be collected to answer the research questions. Fraenkel and Wallen(2008, p.397) also add that if the questionnaire has closed-ended questions then it may limit the breadth of the response, consequently, more questions may be required to cover a research topic. According to Opie (2004, p. 95) one of the disadvantages of using a questionnaire is that it may be able to answer the “ what, where, when and how” questions but may not be conducive

to answering the “why” questions, which is a limitation in trying to understand complex phenomena.

To counter the mentioned disadvantages in the current study, the researcher translated the questionnaire into IsiXhosa the home language of the participants for better comprehension of the survey items. The font of the questionnaire was large enough to accommodate participants who had poor eyesight in being able to read the questionnaire. The participants who could not read the questionnaire were assisted by the researcher by reading the questionnaire to them.

To evaluate parental involvement at a School of Skills, the researcher used a structured questionnaire. It was divided into six sections, each section consisted of about 10 questions. The sections of the questionnaire represented: biographical information of the participants, the six typologies of parental involvement in their children’s schooling according to Epstein (2005), challenges encountered in parental involvement and attitudes of parents towards the education of their children at the school of skills under focus. Each section of the questionnaire directly addressed an objective of the study. Therefore, the questionnaire was compiled according to the study’s objectives. The sections in the questionnaire were as follows:

- Section A: Biographical information
- Section B: Home and parenting involvement
- Section C: Decision making and communication
- Section D: Volunteering community and collaboration
- Section E: Challenges encountered at a School of Skills
- Section F: Parent’s attitudes towards parental involvement

Some variables in Section A were measured by a single item, they are categorical variables. Section B to section E included likert scales.

The questionnaire was not originally developed by the researcher of this study; it was adopted and adapted from David’s study (2010). According to Punch (1998:31) the researcher may develop a questionnaire in its entirety, or use an existing survey instrument or even use a combination of the two alternatives. Based on this statement the researcher in this study used the combination of both. The instrument for this study was informed by the instrument of David’s study (2010) and the six typologies of parental involvement that was proposed by

Epstein (2009). From David's mixed-method study the researcher partially adopted the questionnaire for the quantitative approach, though the psychometric properties of the questionnaire were not reported in David's study. The researcher had to adapt the questionnaire to a School of Skills context which seems to be a minimally researched context. The questionnaire was adjusted for the context of a school of skills and the researcher edited the questionnaire according to the research questions. The reason for adopting David's instrument was that it covered similar research questions and it is also based on the six typologies of Epstein (2009). See appendix B that indicates the items that were adapted in the instrument that was used from David's (2010) study. Both David's and this study used likert scales to measure the levels of involvement. David's questionnaire was divided into four sections: at home involvement, at school involvement, knowledge and skills. The likert scale used in David's questionnaire ranged from one to four and the likert scale of the current study ranged from one to five. The researcher in this study added *sometimes* as an option because the involvement of parents sometimes occurs. David's (2010) study has the other forms of involvement combined into the knowledge and skills section whereas in this study they were included in the sections: involvement at school (decision making and communication), volunteering and collaboration with the community. The challenges and attitude sections in this study were added to cover the research questions of this study. The items in the questionnaire were phrased in a question and or statement format and the respondents' responses were appropriately coded. According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.233) questions and statements are used when the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which respondents hold particular attitudes or perspectives. In this instance, the strategy of using both questions and statements assisted the researcher to ascertain the extent to which the parents hold the attitude or perspective on parental involvement at a School of Skills, their forms of involvement, challenges encountered in parental involvement and factors that may have influenced their levels of involvement such as educational attainment and marital status of their kinship relations with learners at the School of Skills.

A pilot test for this questionnaire was done with some parents at another special school close to the research site of this study. The population on which the pilot was done has a similar setting as that of the population of this study. From the questionnaire that was conducted as a pilot, the questionnaire had to be improved in the following ways:

- The length of the questionnaire was shortened to make it less laborious for participants to complete.

- The section where participants had to write comments was removed based on the fact that participants were not comfortable with writing the narratives since this activity took up much time and some participants were illiterate. They, therefore, preferred to tick their responses. When the participants could not read, the researcher would read the questionnaire to them.
- The language had to be translated into modern commonly used vocabulary in the vernacular spoken by the parent participants to ensure that they would easily understand the questionnaire.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

Fraenkel and Wallen (2008: G2) define data analysis as the process of simplifying data in order to make it comprehensible. According to Punch (1998, p.44), the researcher should be able to analyse the data according to the research question. The analysis of the data for this study was done through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24.0 (IBM Corp, 2017). Pretorius (2007, p.16) mentions that the computer plays a major role in the analysis of data. He further makes mention of the well-known statistical programmes that are available: SPSS (Statistical Packaging for the Social Science, and SAS (Statistical Analysis). IBM SPSS Statistics, (n.d.) describes the software as the world's leading statistical software for solving research problems by means of hypothesis testing and predictive analytics. IBM SPSS further states this software is used to understand data, analyse trends, forecast and plan to validate assumptions and drive accurate conclusions. Stauber (2017) mentions a few additional features to the software such as:

- Execute new Bayesian statistics functions including regression, ANOVA and t-test.
- Quickly create attractive, modern charts and edits in Microsoft office
- Extend your advanced statistics analysis with updates to Mixed, GENLIMIXED, GLM, and UNIANOVA
- Write edit and format syntax faster with Syntax editor shortcuts, etc. (Stauber, 2017)

Both the descriptive and inferential statistics were used in this study. Pretorius (2007, p.15) defines descriptive statistics as the area that organises and summarises data, and he defines inferential statistics as the area of statistics concerned with generalising from a sample to the population. In analysing the biographical information, the forms of parental involvement the attitudes of parents towards parental involvement at a School of Skills and the challenges

encountered in parental involvement, the researcher used descriptive statistics. Pretorius also states that SPSS was also used to analyse the levels of involvement, the significant relationships between levels of involvement and the marital status, kinship relations, and educational attained levels of the participants.

The levels of significance were measured using the cross-tabulation and the chi-square tests. The parents' marital status, kinship relations between the parent and the learner at the school of skills, and the level of educational attainment.

Quantitative analysis was used to verify the proportions of parents in the different forms of parental involvement. Cross-tabulations and Chi-square tests were used by the researcher to evaluate: the significance between marital status of the participants and their level of involvement in the different forms of parental involvement, the significance between the kinship relations of participant with learner at the School of Skills and their level of involvement in the education of their children, and the significance between the levels of educational attainment of the participants and their levels of parental involvement.

### **3.7 Reliability and validity**

#### **3.7.1 Reliability**

Punch (1998, p. 42) describes reliability as the stability of response. This means that if the respondents were to be asked the same question again they would give the same answer. This would, therefore, mean that the question is highly reliable. Creswell (2014, p. 247) also agrees with Punch, he describes reliability as an evaluation of whether scores to items on an instrument are internally consistent, are the item responses consistent across constructs, are they stable over time and whether there was consistency in test administration and scoring. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008, p. 154) define reliability as the consistency of the scores obtained for each individual from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 646) clearly define the concept of reliability as the quality of measurement method that suggests that data would be collected each time in repeated observation of the same phenomenon. Cronbach's alpha test was used to test for the reliability of the instrument.

**a) Reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha**

Reliability in statistics is the overall consistency of a measure. It is the extent to which the same research technique applied again to the same object/subject will give the same result. In essence, it refers to the reproducibility of observed values. Heale and Twycross (2015, p. 66) describe reliability as the consistency of a measure. Heale and Twycross (2015) further state that it is not possible to give an exact calculation of reliability, the estimate of reliability can be achieved through different measures such as the homogeneity (internal consistency), stability and equivalence. "Homogeneity (internal consistency) is assessed using item-to-total correlation, split-half reliability, Kuder-Richardson coefficient, and Cronbach's alpha" (Heale & Twycross, 2015, p. 66). The Cronbach's Alpha test was used in this study. Heale and Twycross, (2015, p. 67) describe Cronbach's Alpha as the most commonly used test to determine the internal consistency of an instrument. This test determines the average of all correlations in every combination of split-halves. Heale and Twycross (2015) further state that instrument questions that have more than two responses can be used in this test. Table 3.1 provides a guide to interpret alpha scores when testing for reliability.

**Table 3.1 Interpreting alpha scores for reliability when using Cronbach's alpha**

$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

(George & Mallery, 2003)

If the Cronbach's alpha score is less than 0.6, then it means the reliability is poor and if the test score is 0.5 or less it means it is unacceptable (George & Mallery, 2003). In such instances the low scoring items in the scale that can be removed to increase the Cronbach's alpha test

score. According to Steyn cited in Moodley, Esterhuyse, Beukes, and Esterhuyse, (2012, p.14) reliability scores of cognitive tests are expected to be 0.8 or higher but with non-cognitive measures, lower reliability scores are expected since these measures a broader construct. This point must be considered when evaluating the alpha scores of the sub-scales of the instrument used in this study to measure parental involvement at a school of skills, since the survey in the current study was a non-cognitive measure.

Table 3.2 presents the results of Cronbach’s alpha test scores of the survey instrument used in this study to measure parental involvement. Alpha scores are given for the following subscales: learning at home, parenting, communication, decision making, volunteering, collaboration with the community, challenges encountered sections of the questionnaire and the alpha score of all the subscales combined.

**Table 3.2: Internal consistency scores of parental involvement survey instrument used in the current study**

<i>Scales</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>N of Items</i>	<i>Level of internal consistency of the scale.</i>
Learning at Home PI	.581	4	Poor
Parenting PI	.525	4	Poor
Communication PI	.745	9	Acceptable
Decision Making PI	.663	5	Questionable
Volunteering PI	.736	6	Acceptable
Collaboration with community PI	.232	2	Unacceptable
Challenges encountered	.646	10	Acceptable
Overall (combined) scale	.890	40	Good

The alpha scores of the subscales in Table 3.2 range from .232 to .890. A future study may want to improve the alpha scores of the subscales by omitting items via the statistical process of item analysis (Pietersen & Maree, 2019, p. 263). The alpha score of the overall scale is .890 suggesting good reliability of the instrument as a whole.

### **3.7.2 Validity:**

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1998: G-9), validity is the degree to which correct inference can be made based on results from an instrument. It depends not only on the instrument itself but also on the instrumentation process and the characteristics of the group studied. Punch (1998:42) defines validity as a means of testing whether the data represents what it is expected to represent. Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 648) describe the term of validity as a measure that accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure. According to Creswell (2014:250) validity refers to whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on a particular instrument. Validity was ensured in this study by designing the instrument to measure parental involvement based on an existing instrument (David, 2010). In addition, the current study, as well as David's study (2010), looked at parental involvement using Epstein's (1995) framework which is a well-known framework in assessing parental involvement in their children's schooling. Therefore, the construct being measured in the current study, namely parental involvement, was measured using indicators that had been used in previous research, thereby supporting the claim, that indeed, parental involvement was measured.

### **3.8 Ethical considerations and procedures**

Having identified a School of Skills in the Western Cape and the population with which to conduct this study, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the Senate Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape. This was followed by permission from the Western Cape Education Department WCED, and then the school management team of the school under study focus. Information on the nature of the study, the participants and the conditions for participation were made available to these authorities. Participants were also provided with information on the study (the name of the researcher, the institution where the researcher is registered as a Masters's student, the purpose, and the conditions of participation) including that participation was voluntary. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of the information. The participants in this study were reassured of their privacy (anonymity) and confidentiality and that their names or the name of the school would not be mentioned in



the report of the study. Parents had the right to refuse to participate in this study. Therefore the participants were fully aware of their rights in this study, their rights were communicated to them in writing and in verbal communication, and they consented to the participation of this study. The researcher communicated with the parents that no raw data would be shared with anyone other than the researcher and the supervisor. Floyd and Fowler (2009:166) state that all who have access to the data or play a role in the data collection are committed to writing to confidentiality.

Participation in this study was voluntary. The ethical issues that needed to be addressed before this study was conducted were addressed, according to Babbie and Mouton (2005: 519-528) and are described below.

#### ***Informed consent to research:***

The researcher of the study took into consideration the guidelines related to informed consent in research provided by Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.529). The participants of this study were informed that no one besides the researcher and the study supervisor would have access to the raw data, not even the school. Participants were informed that the raw data in hardcopy form would be stored in a locked cabinet with access only to the researcher. The electronic data would be stored in a file that is password-protected on the researcher's computer. Participants were also informed that all data would be destroyed after a period of 5 years post the completion of the Master's study. Participants were also informed about the intended research outputs in the form of a Master's dissertation and the possible publication of articles in academic journals.

#### ***Voluntary participation***

Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.521) state that participation in the research study consumes the time of the participant; therefore, no one should be forced to participate. These authors further state that the norm of voluntary participation goes against the number intended by the researcher. Therefore, in the current study, the researcher had intended for a larger group of participants but only a few were willing to take part in this study. Fraenkel and Wallen, (2008, p.54) elaborate on this point by stating that the researcher ought to respect the rights of individuals to refuse to participate in the study or to withdraw from participation in the study at any time.

### ***No harm to the participants***

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.522) “Social research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for study or not”. This meant that the participants of the current study were not be endangered because of their participation in this study. Townsend and Wallace (2017, p.7) state that the participants might experience the risk of harm if the researcher breaches the anonymity ethic. In this study, individual participants were explicitly informed that their responses in completing the questionnaires, even the negative ones, would not be shared with the school under any circumstances. In any case, anonymity in participation ensured that individual participants could not be associated with a specific questionnaire specimen.

### ***Anonymity and confidentiality***

The identity of the participant must be fully protected from any form of exposure that might endanger the participant. According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.523) in a confidential survey, the researcher may be able to identify the person’s given responses but, may not publicly do so based on the essential promises, meaning the researcher may be able to identify the respondent for research purposes but may not expose the respondent’s identity as this would be a breach of contract. According to Townsend and Wallace(2017, p.6), anonymity is a key consideration in research particularly when the information is to be shared outside the research team. The participants in this study remained anonymous since numbers were allocated to questionnaires instead of names. Floyd and Fowler (2009:166) also state that in cases where a name is used or address of the participants is indicated, this information must be removed and replaced with a code identity number as soon as possible. The questionnaire for this study did not even require the names or the address of the participants.

### ***Deceiving subject (misleading topics)***

Deceiving or misleading information should be considered as harmful and ethical considerations try to guide against harm to participants of research studies. In the current study, the researcher did everything possible to ensure that information to participants was not misleading (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p. 525).

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the study's aim and objectives and also discussed the research methodology. The discussion covered the different elements of the research methodology including the: research paradigm, research approach, research design, population and sample of the study, the data collection methods, data analysis, reliability and validity, and the ethical considerations. The next chapter presents the study findings and discussion of the findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study, which entails the following: the biographical information of the participants, the attitudes of parents towards parental involvement in the education of their children at the school of skills, the forms of parental involvement at the school of skills, the influence of the parents' marital status in parental involvement, the impact of different kinship relations on parental involvement, the influence of parents' educational attainment on parental involvement, and the challenges encountered by parents at the School of Skills on parental involvement . The summary of the results is presented towards the end of the chapter.

#### 4.2 Demographical profile of participants

Among the 74 participants who responded to the questionnaire, 6 (8.1%) were males and 68 (91.9%) were females. Pertaining to the marital status of the participants 43.1% were married or staying together with their partners, 12.5% were widowed, 6.9% were divorced, 1.4% of the participants were separated and 36.1% were never married. When indicating their level of education 1.4% had never been formally educated, 32.9% had acquired the education levels ranging from grade R to grade 9, 13.7% of the participants had attained a grade 10 level of education (which was previously referred to as standard 8 or form 3), 23.3% of the participants had passed grade 11 (previously known as standard 9 or form 4), and 15.1% had matriculated (this level of education was previously known as standard 10 or form 5), Pertaining to tertiary education, 5.5% parents had obtained a tertiary certificate, 2.7% had diplomas and only 5.5% had attained university degrees.

The participants of this study had different kinship relations to the learners at the school and they were the ones who were responsible for the education of these learners. The results indicated that 73% of the participants were biological parents of the learners , 8.1% were legal guardians, 2.7% were non-legal guardians, 4.1% were grandparents and 12.2% were relatives of learners at this School of Skills. Table 4.1 presents the summary of respondents' demographic characteristics.

**Table 4.1: Demographic profile of participants**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Biographical category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	6	8.1
	Female	68	91.9
	Total	74	100.0
Marital Status	Married/staying together	31	43.1
	Widow	9	12.5
	Divorced	5	6.9
	Separated	1	1.4
	Never married	26	36.1
	Total	72	97.3
Level of education	Never schooled	1	1.4
	Grade R to Grade 9/ Standard 7	24	32.9
	Grade 10/ Standard 8/ Form 3	10	13.7
	Grade 11/Standard 9/Form 4	17	23.3
	Matric/Standard 10/Form 5	11	14.9
	Certificate	4	5.5
	Diploma	2	2.7
	Degree	4	5.5
	Total	73	98.6
Relationship to learner	Biological Parent	55	73
	Legal Guardian	6	8.1
	Non-legal Guardian	2	2.7
	Grandparent	3	4.1
	Relative	9	12.2
	Total	74	100.0

The findings related to each of the study's research questions are presented next.

#### **4.3 Research question one: What are the attitudes of parents towards parental involvement in the education of their children at the School of Skills?**

Table 4.2 represents the results of parents' attitudes towards parental involvement at a School of Skills. Not all the 74 participants of this study answered this section. Most parents (86.5%) believed that their children had better developmental opportunities at the School of Skills than they would have had at the previous mainstream (ordinary) school. According to literature parents who have children in vocational schools (schools of skills in this instance) tend to have a positive attitude towards this kind of education. This is due to the fact that they become aware of technological and employment opportunities provided by vocational education programmes (Adewale, Amgbari, Erebor, Tipili & Ejiga, 2017; Allais, 2012; Cournoyer, Fournier & Masdonati 2017; Okocha, 2009; Rodríguez-Planas, 2015).

The vast majority, 97.1% of the participants preferred the School of Skills to the previous mainstream-schools where their children had studied. The overwhelming majority of 94.2% of parents indicated that they were more inspired to be involved in the education of their children at the School of Skills compared to the previous mainstream-schools.

On the number of participants, 97.1% indicated that they were involved in the education of their children. The overwhelming majority of 95.7% of participants believed that their involvement at the School of Skills assisted with the academic development of their children. It can, therefore, be concluded that most parents who participated in this study largely had a positive attitude towards being involved in the education of their children at the School of Skills. This findings are encouraging and reflect what previous research has found about the importance of parents' attitude with regard to the type of formal schooling their children receive, including VET (schools of skills in the context of this study). The attitude of learners about schools of skills or VET is highly influenced by the parents' attitude towards the school of skills or VET (Ayub, 2017, p 535). Ahmed-Alnaqbi (2015, p 33) states that parents who do not have children enrolled with vocational education institutions are more likely to be negative towards it, and a more positive attitude is found among parents who have children enrolled at such institutions. Regardless of how negatively the school of skills might be perceived by other people, parents' attitude towards this type of education is very important because it becomes the determining factor of how their children will perceive the school of skills (Adewale et al., 2017; Adewale, Amgbari, Erebor & Tipili, n.d; Ayub, 2017). The South

African Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 8) states that when parents show interest in their children’s education, they influence their children into seeing education as a priority. Therefore the attitude of parents becomes one of the determining factors on how the children will perceive the school of skills. Wiyono, Rasyad and Nasrun, (2018, p. 20) state that the high rate of school dropout is a result of the parents who think that the education at school is not a guarantee for a decent job. Therefore the attitude of parents is influential to their children’s decisions about education.

**Table 4.2: Parent’s attitude towards parental involvement at a School of Skills of Skills**

<b>Do you think that your child will have better development opportunities at this school at the end of their final year?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1 Yes	64	86.5
2 No	10	13.5
Total	74	100.0
<b>Do you prefer this school (School of Skills) for your child as compared to the previous school</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1 Yes	68	97.1
2 No	2	2.9
Total	70	100.0
<b>Is having your child in this type of school inspiring you to be more involved than you were in your child’s previous school?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1 Yes	65	94.2
2 No	4	5.8
Total	69	100.0
<b>Are you involved in the education of your child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1 Yes	68	97.1

#### **4.4 Research question two: In what ways are the parents of children at the School of Skills involved in their children's education?**

This section contains questions that explored the forms of parental involvement in the study. These questions were informed by Epstein's six typologies of parental involvement. Please refer to chapter two of this study, where the six typologies are explained.

The subthemes are as follows:

- Learning at home as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: learning at home
- Parenting as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: parenting
- Communication between home and school as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: communication between home and school
- Decision-making as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: decision making
- Volunteering as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: volunteering
- Collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement
- Levels of parental involvement: collaboration with community

The results of the analyses are presented in twelve different tables which are categorised according to the different subthemes. The final table in this section presents the overall levels of the different forms of parental involvement.

##### **4.4.1 Learning at home as a form of parental involvement**

Table 4.3 represents results of learning at home parental involvement. . Each of the items in the table indicates different aspects of learning at home as a form of parental involvement. The results of the current study indicate that 54.8% always or often discussed what was being done



at school, 37% sometimes did and 8.2% of the parent participants seldom did. Interestingly, there were no participants who never discussed what was done at school. The results of this study therefore indicated that most of the parents (at least sometimes) discussed with their children what was being done at school. Literature also substantiates that, discussing what was being done at school with children at home is one of the examples of parental involvement (Avvisati, Besbas & Guyon, 2015; Bower & Griffin, 2011; DBE, 2016; Ingram, Wolfe & Lieberman, 2007; Laible & Eye, 2012 ; ). According to Avvisati, Besbas & Guyon, (2015, p. 761 ) the examples of home-based involvement include parents helping children with homework and discussing with their children, their experiences at school. In the Ingram et al., (2007, p. 486) study, one of the questions which measured the learning at home type of parental involvement, was whether parents talked with their children about how fun school was, the majority of their participants indicated that they always did so. Parents who discuss what was done at school are also emotionally coaching their children on how to cope with negative emotions, In this manner, children acquire scripts on how to manage and handle negative emotions, and these children have more success with peers and are more psychologically competent (Laible & Eye, 2012, p.26).

**Table 4.3: Learning at home as a form of parental involvement**

	Item no.	Item	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always
1	B1	Do you discuss what was being done at school with your child?	0 (0%)	6 (8.2%)	27 (37%)	13 (17.8%)	27 (37%)
2	B2	Do you help your child with homework or other school assignments?	2 (2.7%)	6 (8.2%)	29 (39.7%)	12 (16.4%)	24 (32.9%)
3	B4	Does your child have extra academic classes (e.g. Maths afternoon classes)	49 (68.1%)	5 (6.9%)	11 (15.3%)	2 (2.8%)	5 (6.9%)
4	B5	Do you encourage and motivate your child with his/her school work?	1 (1.4%)	2 (2.8%)	3 (4.2%)	11 (15.3%)	55 (76.4%)

Regarding homework assistance, 49.3% of parents indicated that they often (or always) assisted their children with homework while 39.7% indicated that they sometimes assisted their children with homework. Only 10.9 % indicated that they never or seldom assisted their children with homework.

According to literature assisting learners with homework is deemed as one of the very important aspects of parental involvement and it benefits the learner academically (Abrahams, 2013; Bower & Griffin, 2011; Epstein, 2009; Viljaranta et al., 2018; Silinskas & Kikas, 2019). Abrahams' study (2013, p.78) found that parents had the desire of helping their children with homework assignments but, they did not know how to. This was due to their historically disadvantaged backgrounds which was manifested as low levels of formal education. The situation of parents not being able to assist children with their homework in Bower and Griffin's (2011, p. 83) study was deemed as a frustration to the educators. Though according to Bower and Griffin's (2011, p. 62) findings, teachers are the main persons in giving guidance to parents on how to support their children with their individual needs in homework situations.

In Viljaranta's et al. (2018, p. 62) study it was found that there is a continuous interplay between maternal homework assistance and children's task persistent behaviour, this interplay contributes to children's further skill development. Though parental involvement in assistance with homework is important and the effects thereof is usually seen in the performance of the child, the perceived parental support is not predicted by children's math performance or motivation. There are other contributing factors that need to be taken into consideration such as self-efficacy, parenting stress, warmth, behavioural and psychological control (Silinskas & Kikas, 2019, p. 31). The Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 15) states that despite the fact that homework encourages independent learning for a learner, parent supervision is necessary.

In situations where parents cannot assist with home-work, parents must make other arrangements for getting assistance for their children. Though in this study the minority of the participants seemed to have opted for arranging for their children to attend extra classes. The majority 74 % of the participants indicated that their children seldom or never attended extra

classes, while 15.3% indicated their children sometimes attended extra classes. Only a minority of 9.7% had children who often or always attended extra classes. Extra classes might truly help vulnerable and slow learners to catch up to their peers passing grades (Harpham & Tran, 2005, p. 633). According to Zhang and Liu, (2016, p.35) having a private tutor resulted in improved academic achievement in school tests and university entry examinations. Although having extra classes might seem to have positive results, there are financial implications, therefore not everyone can afford them (Harpham & Tran, 2005; Zhang & Liu, 2016). The issue of affordability of extra classes may have also been a challenge among many participants in the current study.

An overwhelming majority of 91.7% of participants indicated that they always or often motivated their children with school work, 4.2% sometimes motivated their children about school and 4.2% seldom or never encouraged their children about school work. “By paying attention, showing interest and praising good performance and behaviour, parents motivate their children to maintain the spirit of hard work and doing more of what leads to success” (DBE, 2016, p. 9).

In summary, the majority of parents in this study discussed what was being done at school with their children, and they sometimes assisted with the homework, though few of their children attended extra classes and most participants indicated that they motivated about with regard to schooling.

#### **4.4.2 Levels of parental involvement: Learning at home:**

Table 4.4 presents the levels of parental involvement with learning at home. To calculate the levels of involvement the researcher re-categorised the 5-point Likert-scale into three categories. The categories ‘*never*’ and ‘*seldom*’ were combined to reflect low involvement equal to a score of 1, ‘*sometimes*’ was recoded to moderate involvement = 2, and ‘*often*’ was combined with ‘*always*’ and reflected high involvement = 3. These scores were then multiplied by the number of items measuring this form of parental involvement to get an overall picture of low, moderate and high levels of parental involvement with regard to learning at home. **Please note that a similar process was undertaken when calculating low, moderate and**

**high levels of parental involvement in each of the other typologies of parental involvement according to Epstein’s typology (sections 4.4.3-4.4.17).**

Learning at home is one of the vital forms of parental involvement, the Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 8) states that homes are environments where children learn, grow and develop their potential. Out of a total of 75 participants, only 2.7% indicated a low level of involvement, 33.3% indicated moderate involvement and the majority 64%0 indicated high involvement with learning at home. The minority of parents indicated low involvement and the majority ranged from moderate to high levels of parental involvement with learning at home. According to Wilder's review, (2017, p. 4) learners who have low academic scores or who are academically struggling may influence their parents to be more involved in their education, by assisting with homework. Though there might be reasons for low levels of parental involvement in the learning at home category, in this study those reasons did not prevent the participants from becoming involved. According to Hakyemez-Paul, Pihlaja, and Silvennoinen, (2018, p. 9) the reason for low levels of parental involvement in this category were: inadequate time, parents have inflexible time schedules which do not accommodate learning at home as a form of parental involvement and parents also mentioned that they did not trust themselves enough to facilitate their children’ learning at home.

**Table 4.4: Levels of parental involvement with learning at home:**

<b>Levels of parental involvement with learning at home</b>	<b>Number of representatives</b>	<b>%</b>
Low	2	2.7
Moderate	25	33.3
High	48	64
Total	75	100

**4.4.3 Parenting as a form of parental involvement**

Table 4.5 illustrates parenting as a form of involvement. Each of the items in Table 4.5 reflects aspects of parenting as a form of parental involvement. Most of the parents (67.2%) indicated that their children always or often followed a routine of doing their school work at home in comparison to 19.4% who indicated that they sometimes encouraged their children to follow a routine of doing schoolwork at home while 13.5% of parent participants reported that their children never or seldom followed a routine of doing schoolwork at home. Routines are essential because they give children a sense of security and help them to develop patterns of

discipline (Department of Basic Education, 2016, p . 15). According to Laible and Eye (2012, p. 21) routine is also used to socialise children and for shaping the behaviour of the child.

The great majority of parents in this study (93.1%) often or always ensured that their children attended school and none of the parents never or seldom ensured that their children attended school. Though 6.8% of the participants sometimes encouraged their children to attend school. Literature also indicates that school attendance is one of the common indicators of parental involvement which counters one of the major barriers to learning, absenteeism (Epstein, 2009; Huat See & Gorard, 2015; Ingram et al., 2007; Sheldon & Epstein, 2004; Weeks, 2000). According to Hatchard, (1994, p. 11) the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996) states that children have a right not to be required or permitted to do work or service that places the child's education at risk. The South African Constitution also states (RSA, 1996) that everyone has a right to basic education. Therefore, it is important for parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly. According to the DBE (2016, p. 13) school attendance and punctuality at school are some of the factors that indicate learner's academic success, parents have to ensure that their children are at school except when the child is ill, and written explanation of why the child missed school must be written.

The belief that children should show positive personal qualities at school as shown at home was popular among the participants of this study. This is because 93.7% indicated that they always or often encouraged their children to show positive personal qualities at school, 1.4% sometimes encouraged their children and another 1.4% seldom did so. According to the Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 9) parents encourage positive qualities in their children by role-modelling these qualities.

The importance of education was always or often discussed by the large majority 87.5% of the parents in this study. A small number of participants 8.3% sometimes did so and a minimum of 4.2% of the participants never or seldom discussed the importance of education with their children. The discussion of the importance of education is one of the strategies used to influence the children to have a positive perception of education (Cheatham & Brody, 2018; Heystek, 2003; Laible & Eye, 2012; Oswald et al., 2018).

**Table 4.5: Parenting as a form of parental involvement**

	Item no.	Item	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always
1	B3	Does your child have a routine for doing their school work?	5 (7.5%)	4 (6%)	13 (19.4%)	19 (28.4%)	24 (38.8%)
2	B6	Do you ensure that your child attends school?	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (6.8%)	12 (16.4%)	56 (76.7%)
3	B8	Do you encourage your child to show positive personal qualities, habits, and behaviour at school as she does at home?	0 (0%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	18 (24.7%)	53 (72.6%)
4	B10	Do you discuss importance of education with your child?	2 (2.8%)	1 (1.4%)	6 (8.3%)	15 (20.8%)	48 (66.7%)

#### 4.4.4 Levels of parental involvement: Parenting

According to Table 4.6, the majority of the participants 92% were highly involved in parenting as a form of parental involvement. Only 5.3% of the participants indicated that they were moderately involved and the minority of 2.7% of the participants indicated low levels of parental involvement. This was a clear indication that the majority of the participants in this study had no problem with ensuring that their children followed a routine for doing schoolwork, attending school, encouraging their children to show positive qualities at school as they do at home and discussing the importance of education with their children. Hoglund, Jones, Brown and Aber, (2015, p. 519) substantiate this point by stating that parents socialise children to value learning and to develop self-regulation skills necessary to participate successfully in school through parental involvement.

**Table 4.6: Levels of parental involvement with parenting:**

Levels of parental involvement with parenting	Number of representatives	%
Low	2	2.7
Moderate	4	5.3
High	69	92
Total	75	100

#### **4.4.5 Communication between the home and the school as a form of parental involvement**

Table 4.7 displayed the frequency of communication that occurred between the school and the home, and mediums of communications used. Each of the items in Table 4.7 reflects aspects of communication as a form of parental involvement. There was not much of a difference in the percentages of different categories of parental involvement. Parents who always or often communicated with their child's teacher were 35.6% of the sample. Those who sometimes communicated with their child's teacher were 34.2% and those who never or seldom communicated with the teachers were 30.1%. Communication is one of the fundamental features in building the partnership between home and school (Graham-Clay, 2005, p. 117). According to Murray, McFarland-Piazza and Harrison, (2015, p. 1033) constant communication between the teacher and parent about the child keeps parents informed about their child's well-being and the educator can also receive insight from the parent on how to better understand the child. Therefore, both one way and two-way communication between the educator and the parents is vital.

Murray et al., (2015, p. 1047) mention possible reasons for lower communication between the parent and educator, including a drop in frequency of communication as children reach higher levels of schooling because older children seek more independence from their parents, and the strategies of communication used by teachers become less direct compared to those strategies used in the lower levels of schooling.

Based on the results in Table 4.7, phone calls as a mode of communication between the school and the parents indicated minimal involvement, 46.9% of the participants seldom or never communicated with the school using phone calls, 27.3 % sometimes and 25.8% always or often used phone calls. This mode of communication represents the two-way communication strategy (Department of Basic Education, 2016; Graham-Clay, 2005). Graham-Clay (2005) further states that this popular way of communication, when done frequently, keeps the educator updated about the student's life and what is happening with the student and the family.

The majority of the participants 46.9% indicated that they seldom or never texted messages to the school, while 28.8% indicated that they sometimes texted and a minimum of 13.6%

indicated that they often or always texted. Graham-Clay (2005, p. 122) recommends texting by stating that recorded messages provide updates on homework assignments, classroom highlights, and also invites parents and children to respond with their own messages.

Newsletters seemed to be an unpopular form of communication used by the school in the current study. Among the participants of this study, 62.8% indicated the school never or seldom communicated with them via newsletters, 17.6% reported that newsletters were sometimes used, and 19.6% indicated that the school often or always communicated using the newsletter. A newsletter is one of the one-way communication strategies mentioned by Graham-Clay (2005, p. 119), this author further states that newsletters are commonly used to share written information with parents and community about what is going on in the school and in classrooms. Amongst the four strategies of communication presented in Table 4.7 the most utilised was school meetings 49.1% [often or always] and the least utilised were newsletters. According to Reppa, Botsari, Kounenou, and Psycharis (2010, p. 2210), letters are creative strategies of inviting parents to meetings. In their study, they further discussed that leaders who communicated with parents using verbal (formal and non-formal meetings) and nonverbal (letters, text messages) communications, personally addressing parents, inspired more communicational parental involvement, so much that many of the problems and dysfunctions at the school were solved through formal and informal meetings.

Of the participants, 49.7 % indicated that they always or often communicated with the school about their children's academic progress while 23.9% sometimes communicated and 26.8% never or seldom communicated with the school about their children's academic progress. Hoglund et al., (2015, p. 528) state that parents who have children who experience difficulty in their academic progress and/or who have behavioural problems are compelled to have home-school communication so as to brainstorm with educators and come up with solutions to these problems. The Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 13) states that when the school reports on the learners' performance it is communicating about the learner's progress to the learner, the parents and other stakeholders like the universities and workplaces.



Regarding the choice of skill that the child was learning at the school, 61.5% of the parents in this study indicated that the school always or often informed them as parents about the choice of skill that the child was learning at the school. Another 7.1% stated that the school sometimes informed them regarding this information and 31.5% indicated that this seldom or never happened. This form of communication is vital as it informs the parents about the progress of the learner in a particular skill and what the skill that the learner has chosen entails. According to Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 11) each learning phase has a requirement for a learner to progress to the next phase, therefore in order to support learners through schooling, parents ought to know the requirements of each phase, and this information can be obtained from the school.

**Table 4.7: Communication between school and the parents as a form of parental involvement**

	Item no.	Item	Never	Seldom	Some-Times	Often	Always
1	C1	Do you communicate with your child's teacher	12 (16.4%)	10 (13.7%)	25 (34.2%)	8 (10.9%)	18 (24.7%)
2	C2.1	Strategies of communication: Phone calls	15 (22.7%)	16 (24.2%)	18 (27.3%)	5 (7.6%)	12 (18.2%)
3	C2.2	Text messages	23 (39%)	11 (18.6%)	17 (28.8%)	3 (5.1%)	5 (8.5%)
4	C2.3	News letters	29 (56.9%)	3 (5.9%)	9 (17.6%)	5 (9.8%)	5 (9.8%)
5	C2.4	Parents' meeting	10 (17.5%)	6 (10.5%)	13 (22.8%)	9 (15.8%)	19 (33.3%)
6	C2.5	Report cards on improving grades	7 (11.5%)	5 (8.2%)	20 (32.8%)	13 (21.3%)	16 (26.2%)
7	C3	Do you communicate with the school about your child's academic progress?	13 (18.3%)	6 (8.5%)	17 (23.9%)	10 (14.1%)	25 (35.6%)
8	C4	How often does the school inform you of the choice of skill that your child is doing?	16 (22.9%)	6 (8.6%)	5 (7.1%)	16 (22.9%)	27 (38.6%)
9	C6	Is the language of communication used at the school clear and easy to follow?	4 (5.8%)	0 (0%)	3 (4.3%)	9 (13%)	53 (76.8%)

The study findings also indicate that the majority of parents 89.8% stated that the language of communication used at the school was always or often clear and easy to follow, a small number of parents 4.3% stated that this was sometimes or never 5.8% the case. Language may be a barrier to this form of parental involvement. If parents do not understand the language as a medium of communication by the school, they are bound to less involved ( Hakyemez-Paul et al., 2018; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Murray et al., 2015).

#### **4.4.6 Levels of parental involvement: communication between school and parents**

According to Table 4.8, the majority 62.2% of the participants were moderately involved in the parental involvement category of communication between the school and parents. The minority 6.8% indicated low levels of involvement and about a third, 31.1% of the participants indicated that they were highly involved in this category. This, therefore, meant that for the vast majority of parents there were at least moderate levels of communication between the school and parents. According to Hakyemez-Paul et al., (2018, p. 9) some of the contributing factors to low levels of communication as a form of parental involvement are time management (for example parents being too busy at work and not being able to contact the school during working hours) and personal differences amongst educators and parents (these are inclusive of cultural differences, interests, and resources). Hoglund et al., (2015, p. 519) declare the importance of communication with teachers about children’s school-related adjustment, which assists parents to actively support their children to adjustment in new school settings. With regard to the current study, communication with the teacher at the school of skills, inter alia, assists and informs parents about how to help their children adjust to a school of skills in making the transition from a mainstream school.

**Table 4.8: Levels of parental involvement with communication between school and parents**

Levels of parental involvement with communication	Number of representatives	%
Low	5	6.8
Moderate	46	62.2
High	23	31.1
Total	74	100

#### **4.4.7 Decision-making as a form of parental involvement**

Each item in Table 4.9 presents the findings of different aspects of decision-making as a form of parental involvement at a School of Skills. This study sought to evaluate whether the parents had a clear understanding of the school's policies and programmes. From the results, 40.6% of the parents often or always had a clear understanding of the school's policies and school programmes, while 26.1% indicated that they sometimes had an understanding. A third of the participants (33.3%) indicated that they seldom or never understood school policies and the school programmes. According to Williams and Sánchez (2011, p. 63), parents' lack of awareness about school policies or not been properly informed about events at school, was one of the barriers to parental involvement. When parents are not informed they feel neglected (Ramirez, 2003, p.93). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical framework (1997) states that parents want to be invited and be informed about what is going on in the education system of their children.

Pertaining to the governance of the school most participants 81.7% indicated that they often or always were aware that as parents they have a say about the governance of the school, 4.2% indicated that they sometimes were aware, and 14.1% indicated that they seldom or never were aware that they had a say in the school's governance. Over a third (35.3%) of the participants specified that they always or often participated in the policy formation of the school, while 11.8% sometimes took part and the majority 52.9% never or seldom participated in policy formation committees at the school. participants in this study are aware that they have a say in the governance of the school. According to the Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 15) every three years, parents have an opportunity to elect a new school-governing body (SGB). For parents to be part of the election of the SGB they need to be aware of the policies of the election of SGB members. The importance of this process is that it is about democracy in action where all parents may elect a new SGB. When the schools' SGBs function well, parents have the opportunity of practicing good governance. Heystek, (2003, p. 330) states that the SGB must stand in a position of trust toward the school, community and parent

**Table 4.9: Decision-making as a form of parental involvement**

	Item no.	Item	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always
1	C5	Do you have clear information on all the school policies, programmes, reforms and transitions?	16 (23.2%)	7 (10.1%)	18 (26.1%)	6 (8.7%)	22 (31.9%)
2	C7	Are you aware that parents have a say in the governance of the school	8 (11.3%)	2 (2.8%)	3 (4.2%)	10 (14.1%)	48 (67.6%)
3	C8	Do you take part in policy- making committees?	29 (42.6%)	7 (10.3%)	8 (11.8%)	7 (10.3%)	17 (25%)
4	C9	Do you attend parents' teachers' association (PTA) meetings?	11 (15.7%)	8 (11.4%)	14 (20%)	9 (12.9%)	28 (40%)
5	C10	How often do you participate in the election of the SGB?	35 (50%)	10 (14.3%)	10 (14.3%)	4 (5.7%)	11 (15.7%)

In the evaluation of whether parents attended Parents Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, the findings indicate that over half the participants 52.9% always or often attended PTA meetings, 20% sometimes attended and 27.1% never or seldom attended the PTA meetings (Epstein, 2009, p. 4). According to Park, Stone, and Holloway, (2017, p. 196) participation in activities that improve school quality or provide resources to schools, such as volunteering, PTA membership, and fundraising, can be viewed as involvement for the public good. In measuring the participation of parents in the SGB elections, the analysis indicated that only just over a fifth 21.4% of the participants of this study always or often participated in SGB elections, while 14.3% sometimes participated, and the majority of about 64.3% seldom or never participated in the SGB elections, a worrying finding when considering the key role played by the SGB in school governance and functioning. Parents become involved in such activities through the invitation of the school and educators (Hoover-dempsey & Sandler, 1997). According to Hendricks, (2014, p. 6) parents become less involved in school-based parental involvement (including decision- making) when their children are adolescents because their children seek more independence from them.

#### 4.4.8 Levels of parental involvement: decision-making

Table 4.10 presents levels of parental involvement through decision-making. Out of the 72 participants who responded in this category there seemed not to be much of a difference between moderate 44.4% and high 47.2% levels of parental involvement with decision-making. The minority of about 8.3% of the participants indicated low levels of involvement in this category. This therefore clearly indicated that the participants either participate in decision making a The DBE (2016, p. 14) gives explicit reasons why parents should be involved in decision making by stating that participating in decision-making would enhance their sense ownership in the learning of their children, this will also benefit the school and develop parent leaders and who can sustain good practices.

**Table 4.10: Levels of parental involvement with decision making**

Levels of parental involvement with decision making	Number of representatives	%
Low	6	8.3
Moderate	32	44.4
High	34	47.2
Total	72	100

#### 4.4.9 Volunteering as a form of parental involvement

Table 4.11 presents the results of parental involvement through volunteering. Each of the items in the table reflects aspects of volunteering as a form of parental involvement. According to Đurišić and Bunijevac, (2017, p. 4) there are three basic ways of parental involvement through volunteering: (i) volunteering in the school or classroom by being a tutor or providing assistance to administrators, (ii) volunteering for the school (for example, fundraising for events or promoting the school in the community) and (iii) volunteering as members of an audience, attending school programmes or performances (this includes: volunteer programmes to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents, volunteering at parent rooms or family centres, attending meetings, finding resources for families, conducting annual postcard surveys to identify all available talents, times available for volunteering, and the locations of volunteers) (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017, p. 141)

Most of the participants 71% indicated that they never or they seldom volunteered in school activities, 10.1% sometimes volunteered, and 18.8% always or often volunteered in assisting with various school activities. This indicated that the majority of the parents in this study did not or hardly volunteered in school activities. A fair majority of the parents in this study indicated that they were involved in their children's learning that occurred at school, 50% of the participants indicated that they always or often assisted their children with school activities, 11.8% sometimes did, while 38.3% never or seldom helped their children with any school-based activities. According to Park, Stone, and Holloway, 2017, p. 196,) parent volunteers help teachers manage their workload and when parents are present at school it reduces the number of disciplinary problems.

The analysis indicates that only 33% of the participants regularly (often or always) participated in school safety programmes. In contrast, about 28.4% sometimes participated and 38.8% seldom or never participated in school safety programmes. The participants were asked to indicate how often they supported school projects. Over a third of the participants 35.3% always or often participated in such projects. About 10% sometimes did, while the majority of 54.4% seldom or never supported such projects. Reinke, Smith, and Herman, (2019, p. 346) state that parents who participate in school-based activities tend to have the confidence of being involved in all the other forms of parental involvement.

**Table 4.11: Volunteering at a School of Skills as a form of parental involvement:**

	Item no.	Item	Never	Seldom	Some-Times	Often	Always
1	D1	How often do you volunteer for various school activities including going to school camps and helping on sports' day?	40 (58%)	9 (13%)	7 (10.1%)	4 (5.8%)	9 (13%)
2	D4	Are you involved in your child's learning that occurs at the school? For example, teaching about decision making, problem-solving, entrepreneurship or skills that are offered at the school?	22 (32.4%)	4 (5.9%)	8 (11.8%)	11 (16.2%)	23 (33.8%)
3	D6	How often do you participate in school safety programmes?	24 (35.8%)	2 (3%)	19 (28.4%)	4 (3%)	18 (26.9%)
4	D7	How often do you support school projects or activities, for example, the school magazine and tree planting?	25 (36.8%)	12 (17.6%)	7 (10.3%)	5 (7.4%)	19 (27.9%)
5	D9	Do you volunteer to talk to learners about government or community services?	35 (52.2%)	8 (11.9%)	12 (17.9%)	6 (9%)	6 (9%)
6	D10	Do you provide medical services at the school and or coaching in sports events?	42 (61.8%)	4 (5.9%)	7 (10.3%)	5 (7.4%)	10 (14.7%)

There seemed to be a few participants who volunteered by talking to learners about government or community services. Table 4.11 indicates that 18% of the participants in this study always or often volunteered to talk to learners about the government and community services, 17.9% sometimes talked about such services, and the majority of 64.1% seldom or never volunteered to talk about these services. In ascertaining whether parents provided medical services at the school or coached in sports events, 22.1% indicated that they always or often offered their services, 10.3% sometimes offered their services, and the majority of 67.7% seldom or never offered their services to the school. According to Park et al., (2017, p.196) volunteerism may

be beneficial to creating positive school learning environments, they also add that principals perceive volunteerism to benefit family-school relations and report that parents connected their volunteer experience to enhanced respect for school staff and a greater understanding of how the school operates. One of the motivating factors to volunteering stated in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2007) theory is the invitation from the school especially by the teacher and the invitation to the parents by the children for parental involvement. Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, (2007, p. 533) elaborate that several qualities of the school environment are associated with enhanced parental involvement, invitations are manifest in the creation of a welcoming and responsive school atmosphere, school practices that ensure that parents are well informed about student progress, what the school requires of them and the events which will be occurring at the school.

#### **4.4.10 Levels of parental involvement: volunteering**

Table 4.12 out of the group of 70 participants who participated in the category of parental involvement with volunteering only 28.6% indicated a low level of involvement. The majority of 55.7% were moderately involved in this category. There was 15.7% participants who were highly involved in the volunteering category of parental involvement. This meant that a high majority was at least moderately involved with regard to volunteering as a form of parental involvement in their children's schooling. Moderate involvement in this volunteering category is not unusual. In the study of Wiyono, Rasyad, & Nasrun, (2018, p. 19) none of their participants indicated high involvement in this category, few indicated low involvement and the majority indicated moderate involvement. Wiyono et al., (2018) further states that the reason for the low involvement is that teachers and school management do not encourage parents to participate. Hoglund et al., (2015, p. 529) state that parents prefer school-based involvement only if their children have positive nurturing relationships with teachers and have developed academically as this would draw positive attention to the parents. Low levels of parental involvement in this category may also be caused by the minimal or no invitation from the school for parental involvement. Lui, Lau, Tam and Tam, (2019, p. 4) found in their study that volunteering was omitted because mainstream schools in Hong-Kong did not invite parents to help at the school or to join school fieldtrips as volunteers.



**Table 4.12: Levels of parental involvement with volunteering**

Levels of parental involvement with volunteering	Number of representatives	%
Low	20	28.6
Moderate	39	55.7
High	11	15.7
Total	70	100

#### **4.4.11 Collaboration with Community as a form of parental involvement**

Table 4.12 demonstrates the results of parental involvement in collaboration with the community. Each of the items in Table 4.12 reflects aspects of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement. The main purpose of collaboration with community parental involvement according to Đurišić & Bunijevac, (2017, p. 149) is to build upon careful consideration of the unique needs of the community, building trust, emphasizing positive interactions, and increasing parent-school collaboration in order to promote healthy child development and safe school communities. Van Roekel, (2008, p. 1) defines collaborating with the community as a coordination of resources and services for families, students, and the school with community groups, including businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities.

In the current study, there are skill-based activities in the community where the school is situated. This study sought to investigate whether the children of the participants engaged in such activities. The analysis indicated that 34.3% of the participants' children always or often participated in community-based activities for their skill development, 28.6% of the participants' children sometimes participated in community development activities, while 37.1% seldom or never participated in any community development services. What seemed to be interesting was that parents who participated in this study seemed to be more involved in creative arts activities done in their community and not alone but with their children. The Department of Basic Education, (2016, p.20) states that parents are aware of resources available in the community such as outreach programmes that provide information and services for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs, therefore parents can create partnerships between the school and these community organisations. The majority 55% of participants indicated that they always or often participated in creative art activities, while 18.8% indicated that they sometimes participated in such

activities and 26% indicated that they seldom or never participated in such community services. Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler, (2007, p. 533) define self-efficacy as a personal belief that a parent acts in ways that will produce desired outcomes, such as being involved in community activities which are likely to lead to their children also becoming involved in community activities.

**Table 4.13: Collaboration with Community as a form of parental involvement**

	<b>Item no.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Some-times</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>D3</b>	Does your child participate in community-based activities to develop their skills e.g. Zip Zap Circus School, cycling, etc.?	18 (25.7%)	8 (11.4%)	20 (28.6%)	10 (14.3%)	14 (20%)
<b>2</b>	<b>D8</b>	Do you or your child participate in community services e.g. recycling, art, music, drama and other activities for seniors or others?	15 (21.7%)	3 (4.3%)	13 (18.8%)	13 (18.8%)	25 (36.2%)

**4.4.12: Levels of parental involvement: collaboration with community**

Table 4.14 is an indication of the levels of parental involvement with regard to collaboration with the community. The minority 12.9% of the participants in this study indicated low levels of involvement in collaboration with the community, 42.9% were moderately involved and 44.3% were highly involved in this category. Van Roekel, (2008, p. 1) states that a successful school and community partnerships are well integrated with the school mission and goals, this partnership improve schools, strengthen families, builds community support and increase student achievement and success. According to Davis, (2000, p. 16) there are benefits in having this partnership which are: Schools feel they are getting help from multiple sources, Communities can unite around the shared responsibility of educating youth, and schools are able to expand the number of positive role model and Community businesses can make people aware of their support for schools and families.

**Table 4.14: Levels of parental involvement with collaboration with community**

Levels of parental involvement with collaboration with community	Number of representatives	%
Low	9	12.9
Moderate	30	42.9
High	31	44.3
Total	70	100

#### 4.4.13 Overall levels of parental involvement

To conclude section 4.4, the researcher calculated an overall summary of levels of parental involvement, Table 4.15 presents this summary. The majority of the participants in this study indicated moderate parental involvement. These participants seem to be more involved in home-based parental involvement than they are school-based. Home-based parental involvement and educational inspirations have been argued to be more important than school-based parental involvement (Li, Hu, Ge, & Auden, 2019, p. 140). Hoglund, Jones, Brown, & Aber, (2015, p. 517) also state that when children are struggling academically, socially and behaviourally (as was the case with learners in the current study), their parents show prospective levels of homework assistance and home school conferencing but lower levels of school-based support, meaning the parents become intensely involved with assisting in homework than them being involved in school-based activities like volunteering at the school.

**Table 4.15: Levels of overall parental involvement**

Levels of parental involvement with regard to Epstein's typologies	Number of representatives	Percentage
Low	2	2.6
Moderate	60	78.9
High	14	18.4
Total	76	100

Table 4.15 presents only 2.6% of the 76 participants as those parents with overall low levels of parental involvement, 78.9% were moderately involved and 18.4% indicated high involvement. These findings, therefore, suggest that a minuscule number of participants were hardly involved in their children's schooling. Regardless of the minuscule number of low

involvement in all six forms of involvement, the hypothesis is still rejected. The majority of the participants in the study moderately involved and not highly involved.

Research questions 3, 4 and 5 respectively investigate the levels (low, medium and high) of the different types of parental involvement with regard to the following variables: marital status, kinship relations between parent participants and the learners at the school of skills, and educational levels. Please note that chi-square analysis was first done to investigate these relationships by calculating significance levels ( $p < .05$ ). Only those relationships that were found to be significant, were further analysed using cross-tabulations with regard to low, moderate and high levels of parental involvement (as per typology of parental involvement) and the respective variable mentioned above.

#### **4.5 Research question three: Does marital status have any influence on the level of parental involvement on the education of their children at the school of skills?**

To answer this question, the researcher did a cross-tabulation of marital status and forms of parental involvement. Only those forms of parental involvement that were identified to have a statistically significant relationship with marital status will be discussed in relation to relevant literature.

##### **4.5.1 Marital status in relation to the category of parental involvement: learning at home involvement**

Table 4.16 presents an insignificant relationship between parents' marital status and their level of involvement in the learning at home category (Chi-square=4.5,  $df = 8$ ,  $p = .809$ ). The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected and means that marital status did not influence the levels of learning at home as a form of parental involvement

**Table 4.16: Learning at home as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.501 <sup>a</sup>	8	.809
Likelihood Ratio	4.915	8	.767
Linear-by-Linear Association	.193	1	.660
N of Valid Cases	73		

a. 10 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

#### 4.5.2 Parenting as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status

According to Table 4.17, the chi-square test revealed a significant relationship between parents' marital status and their level of parenting as a form of parental involvement (Chi-square=19.24, df=8, p=0.014). Based on the fact that  $p < 0.05$ , the null-hypothesis is rejected. This, therefore, means parents' marital status does influence their level of parenting as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.17: Parenting as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Test**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.238 <sup>a</sup>	8	.014
Likelihood Ratio	8.964	8	.345
Linear-by-Linear Association	.738	1	.390
N of Valid Cases	73		

a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Table 4.18 presents levels of parenting as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status. The majority of the participants indicated high involvement regardless of their marital status and the one separated individual indicated moderate involvement.

In this category, only 2 (2.7%) of the participants were found to have low involvement. The 2 participants who indicated low involvement in this category were from the 'married or staying together' and from the 'single or never married' marital status categories. Of the 73 participants only 5.5% indicated that they were moderately involved and came from the 'married or staying

together’, ‘separated’ and the ‘single or never married’ categories. The overwhelming majority 91.8 % of participants; except for the marital status category, ‘separated’; indicated high levels of involvement in the parenting category of parental involvement. The single participants in this study also seem to be highly involved in the parenting category of parental involvement. This latter finding is unlike the study of Rispoli et al. (2018, p.8) which found less parental involvement in children’s education by single parents.

**Table 4.18: Parenting as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status**

Parenting in relation to Marital status								
			Marital status					Total
			Married or staying together	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Single or never married	
Parenting	Low	Number of participants	1	0	0	0	1	2
		% within parenting	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Marital status	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	2.7%
	moderate	Number of participants	1	0	0	1	2	4
		% within parenting	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Marital status	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	7.7%	5.5%
	high	Number of participants	30	9	5	0	23	67
		% within parenting	44.8%	13.4%	7.5%	0.0%	34.3%	100.0%
		% within Marital status	93.8%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	88.5%	91.8%
Total		Number of participants	32	9	5	1	26	73
		% within parenting	43.8%	12.3%	6.8%	1.4%	35.6%	100.0%
		% within Marital status	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**4.5.3 Communication with the school as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status:**

Table 4.19 presents the relationship between levels of communication with the school as a form of parental involvement and marital status. The Chi-Square test indicated that levels of communication with the school as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status was insignificant (Chi-Square=7.296, df = 8, p=0.505). This, therefore, means that the null hypothesis is not rejected. This statistic suggests that levels of communication with the school are not influenced by parents’ marital status.

**Table 4.19: Communication with the school as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.296 <sup>a</sup>	8	.505
Likelihood Ratio	8.049	8	.429
Linear-by-Linear Association	.186	1	.666
N of Valid Cases	72		
a. 10 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .07.			

#### 4.5.4 Decision-making as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status:

Table 4.20 presents levels of decision-making at school as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status. The relation between levels of decision-making at the School of Skills and parents' marital status was found to be insignificant (Chi-Square=10.652, df=8, p=.222). This, therefore, means that the null hypothesis is accepted and that marital status did not influence levels of decision-making at school as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.20: Decision making at school as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.652 <sup>a</sup>	8	.222
Likelihood Ratio	11.495	8	.175
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.687	1	.194
N of Valid Cases	70		
a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.			

#### 4.5.5 Volunteering as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status:

The relation between volunteering and parents' marital status according to Table 4.21 is insignificant. This is an indication that there is no relation between the level of volunteering as a form of parental involvement and the parents' marital status (Chi-Square =6.492, df=8, p=0.592). The null hypothesis is not rejected.

**Table 4.21 Volunteering in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.492 <sup>a</sup>	8	.592
Likelihood Ratio	4.552	8	.804
Linear-by-Linear Association	.352	1	.553
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 10 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .15.

#### 4.5.6 Collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement in relation to marital status

Table 4.22 presents the results of the Chi-square test conducted between the marital status of the participants and their level of parental involvement through collaboration with the community. According to the test the relation between marital status and the level of involvement in collaboration with the community is insignificant (Chi-Square=6.368, df=8, p=0.606). This, therefore, means that the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that marital status did not influence collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.22 Collaboration with the community in relation to marital status: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.368 <sup>a</sup>	8	.606
Likelihood Ratio	5.969	8	.651
Linear-by-Linear Association	.225	1	.635
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.

#### 4.5.7 Relationship between levels of overall parental involvement and marital status

Table 4.23 presents the relationship between overall parental involvement (combining all types of parental involvement) and the marital status of the participant. It was found that there is no significant relationship (Chi-Square=1.34, df=8, p=.995) between marital status and overall levels of involvement. The results of this study indicate that the level of parental involvement



of the participants in this study is not affected by their marital status. According to the study of Lui et al., (2019, p. 10) happily married parents are the only one who become highly involved in the education of their children even, even the parents who do not have that marital status tend to be more involved with their children, to compensate for their own unsatisfied emotional needs.

**Table 4.23: Overall parental involvement in relation to marital status: Chi-Square test**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	1.344 <sup>a</sup>	8	.995
Likelihood Ratio	1.961	8	.982
Linear-by-Linear Association	.045	1	.833
N of Valid Cases	74		
a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.			

**4.6 Research question four: Do different forms of kinship relations between participants as caregivers and the learner at the School of Skills influence the levels of different forms of parental involvement?**

To answer research question four, the researcher cross-tabulated the types of kinship relations between participants and their children/wards with regard to each of Epstein’s forms of parental involvement. Only those forms of parental involvement that were identified to have a statistically significant relationship with kinship relations will be discussed in relation to relevant literature.

**4.6.1 Participants’ kinship relations with the learners at the School of Skills with regard to learning at home as a category of parental involvement**

The study findings indicate that there were different types of kinship relations between the parent/guardian participants and the learners at the school of skills. These kinship relations were categorised as biological parents, legal guardians, non-legal guardians, grand-parent and relatives.

Table 4.24 presents the Chi-Square test of learning at home as a form of parental involvement in relation to kinship relationships of the participants with the learners at the School of Skills. Based on the table the relation is significant (Chi-Square=19.514, df=8, p=0.012). The alpha value is < 0.05. This, therefore, means that the null hypothesis is rejected, the kinship relationship of the participant with the learner at the School of Skills has an influence on the level of learning at home as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.24: Learning at home in relation to relationships: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.514 <sup>a</sup>	8	.012
Likelihood Ratio	8.463	8	.390
Linear-by-Linear Association	.121	1	.728
N of Valid Cases	75		

a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

Table 4.25 presents the cross-tabulation between types of kinship relations and learning at home as a form of parental involvement. Lawrence-Webb, Okundaye, and Hafner, (2003, p. 135) define kinship caregivers as individuals who assist in providing care to children within the family on a formally or informally established basis. According to Table 4.25, only 2 (2.7%) of the 75 participants had low levels of involvement. Of the 2 participants, one was a biological parent and the other was a non-legal guardian. A third of the 75 participants 33.3% indicated moderate involvement. This comprised 19 (75%) biological parents, 2 (8%) legal guardians, 4% non-legal parent participants, 4% grandparent, and 8% familial relatives of the learners at the school of our study. Two-thirds the 75 participants 64% indicated high levels of involvement, of which 72.9% were biological parents, 4 8.3% were legal guardians, none of the non-legal guardians indicated high levels of involvement, 4.2% were grandparents and 7 (14.6%) were relatives. Within this category it is evident that non-legal guardians are less likely to be involved, Oswald et al.,( 2018, p . 6) substantiate this by stating that stepparents are less involved in the education of their step-children as a result of not knowing what role they are to play in the education of their stepchildren. The stepchildren also perceive step-parents as friends rather than parents, which therefore results in lower levels of step-parent involvement in the education of their step-children.

**Table 4.25: Learning at home as a form of parental involvement and in relation participant-learner kinship relations**

Learning at home in relation to Relationships								
			Relationship					Total
			Biological parent	Legal guardian	Non-legal guardian	Grand parent	Relative	
Learning at home	Low	Number of participants	1	0	1	0	0	2
		% within learning at home	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within relationships	1.8%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
	moderate	Number of participants	19	2	1	1	2	25
		% within learning at home	76.0%	8.0%	4.0%	4.0%	8.0%	100.0%
		% within relationships	34.5%	33.3%	50.0%	33.3%	22.2%	33.3%
	High	Number of participants	35	4	0	2	7	48
		% within learning at home	72.9%	8.3%	0.0%	4.2%	14.6%	100.0%
		% within relationships	63.6%	66.7%	0.0%	66.7%	77.8%	64.0%
Total		Number of participants	55	6	2	3	9	75
		% within learning at home	73.3%	8.0%	2.7%	4.0%	12.0%	100.0%
		% within relationships	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

One interesting finding of the current study was the level of grandparents' involvement. Kim (2019, p. 4) states that though not much research has been done on grandparents' parental involvement, grandparents are less likely to be equipped and willing to be involved in their grandchildren's education. Strozier, McGrew, Krisman and Smith, (2005, p. 1012) also agree and state that grandparent caregivers often find being involved in education and helping their grandchildren to be successful in school, as the most difficult area for them in raising

grandchildren, because they themselves do not feel skilful in working with the schools. Though Kim’s study (p.15) recommends the inclusion of grandparents in family-school models as this might also be a constructive next step in light of the prevalence of grandparental care. Lawrence-Webb et al., (2003, p. 141) suggest that schools should listen to the grandparents because they know these children better than anyone else and grandparents do not give up on their grandchildren, instead, they attempt to provide love and a stable living environment for these children.

#### **4.6.2 The relationship between parenting as a form of parental involvement and participant-learner kinship relations**

Based on findings in Table 4.26, the relationship between levels of parenting as a form of parental involvement and participant-learner kinship relations is insignificant (Chi-Square=9.686, df=8, p=.288). The alpha value is >0.05, which therefore means, the null hypothesis is accepted. This statistic, therefore, suggests that participant-learner kinship relations do not influence parents’ level of involvement in parenting as a type of parental involvement

**Table 4.26: Participant-learner kinship relations with regard to parenting as a form of parental involvement**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	9.686 <sup>a</sup>	8	.288
Likelihood Ratio	6.441	8	.598
Linear-by-Linear Association	.686	1	.407
N of Valid Cases	75		
a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.			

### 4.6.3 Participant-learner kinship relations and levels of communication with the school of skills as a form of parental involvement

The Chi-Square test between levels of communication with the school and the relationship of the participant with the learner is significant according to the findings presented in Table 4.27 (Chi-Square=18.482, df=8, p=0.018). The alpha value is <0.05 which therefore means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Participant-learner kinship relations do seem to play a role with regard to the levels of communication with the School of Skills.

**Table 4.27: Communication in relation to relationships: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.482 <sup>a</sup>	8	.018
Likelihood Ratio	17.157	8	.029
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.419	1	.120
N of Valid Cases	74		
a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.			

Table: 4.28 presents levels of communication of the participants with the school of skills with regard to their respective kinship relations with the learners. Among the 73 participants who participated in this section only 5 (6.8%) indicated low levels of communication with the school, 46 (62.2%) indicated moderate levels of communication and 23 (31.1%) indicated high levels of involvement. The non-legal guardians indicated 50% each for low as well as high parental involvement with regard to communication with the school. The majority of the biological parents 39 (72.2%) were moderately involved, 3 (50%) of the legal guardians were also moderately involved. The grandparents indicated 100% high involvement in the communication category. Lacombe-davis, Patton and Pawl, (2019,p.44 ) in their study, state that grandparent-headed families are fast growing and the duration of their parenting surpasses that of caregivers, so much that there are programmes which train grandparents about parental involvement. According to Kim, (2019, p. 15) when biological parents are missing, grandparents are the next reliable set of people for educators to communicate with.

**Table 4.28: Levels of communication with the school of skills with regard to participant-learner kinship relations**

Communication in relation to relationship								
			Relationship					Total
			Biologic al parent	Legal guardia n	Non- legal guardia n	Grand parent	Relativ e	
communicati on	Low	Number of participants	3	0	1	0	1	5
		% within communicati on	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0 %
		% within relationship	5.6%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	11.1%	6.8%
	Moderate	Number of participants	39	3	0	0	4	46
		% within communicati on	84.8%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%	100.0 %
		% within relationship	72.2%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	62.2%
	High	Number of participants	12	3	1	3	4	23
		% within communicati on	52.2%	13.0%	4.3%	13.0%	17.4%	100.0 %
		% within relationships	22.2%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0 %	44.4%	31.1%
Total		Number of participants	54	6	2	3	9	74
		% within communicati on	73.0%	8.1%	2.7%	4.1%	12.2%	100.0 %
		% within relationships	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %

The findings of this study, therefore suggest that biological parents are the most moderately involved group when it comes to communication more than any other group of parents. One of

the contributing factors to lower communication levels according to Epstein (1995) is that schools are more prone to report the children’s problem behaviours rather than giving feedback on children’s positive accomplishments, more especially to parents in the more economically depressed communities. This, therefore, discourages parents from communicating with the school. According to Strozier et al., (2005, p 1022) kinship caregivers sought strategies to work more closely with the school to ensure their children’s academic success, though they felt intimidated by the school, to the extent that they were afraid to ask questions of the teachers or school administrators. They also experienced the fear of being perceived as parents who were not cooperating or disinterested in their children’s schooling.

#### 4.6.4 Participant-learner kinship relations with regard to decision-making as a form of parental involvement

According to the presentation of Table 4.29, there was no significant relationship between levels of decision-making as a form of parental involvement and participant-learner kinship relations at the School of Skills (Chi-Square=8.808, df=8, p=0.359). The alpha value >0.05 and therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. Participant-learner kinship relations, therefore, do not seem to influence levels of decision-making as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.29: Decision-making in relation to relationships: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.808 <sup>a</sup>	8	.359
Likelihood Ratio	8.626	8	.375
Linear-by-Linear Association	.044	1	.833
N of Valid Cases	72		
a. 13 cells (86.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .17.			

#### 4.6.5 Participant-learner kinship relations and levels of volunteering as a form of parental involvement

As indicated in Table 4.30, Chi-square analysis found that participant-learner kinship relations with regard to levels of volunteering as a form of parental involvement were not significant (Chi-Square=12.871, df=8, p=0.116). The alpha >0.05, therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, participant-kinship relations do not seem to influence levels of volunteering at the school of skills.

**Table 4.30: Levels of volunteering as a form of parental involvement with regard to participant-learner kinship relations**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.871 <sup>a</sup>	8	.116
Likelihood Ratio	15.205	8	.055
Linear-by-Linear Association	.435	1	.509
N of Valid Cases	70		
a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.			

#### 4.6.6 Participant-learner kinship relations with regard to levels of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement

Table 4.31 indicates that the relationship between levels of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement and participant-kinship relations was insignificant (Chi-Square =9.740, df=8, p=.284), The alpha > 0.05 and that the null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus participant-learner kinship relations do not seem to influence participants' levels of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement.



**Table 4.31: Collaboration with the community in relation to relationships: Chi-Square Tests**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	9.740 <sup>a</sup>	8	.284
Likelihood Ratio	12.428	8	.133
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.016	1	.313
N of Valid Cases	70		
a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.			

#### **4.6.7 Participant-learner kinship relations and overall levels of parental involvement**

According to Table 4.32, the relationship between overall levels of parental involvement and participant-kinship relations was insignificant (Chi-Square=3.428, df=8, p=.905). This, therefore, means that the null hypothesis is not rejected and that overall levels of parental involvement were not influenced by participant-learner kinship relations.

**Table 4.32 Overall parental involvement in relation to kinship relationship: Chi-Square test**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	3.428 <sup>a</sup>	8	.905
Likelihood Ratio	3.562	8	.894
Linear-by-Linear Association	.171	1	.679
N of Valid Cases	76		
a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.			

#### **4.7 Research question five: Do parent participants' levels of educational attainment influence their level of involvement in their children's education?**

This question was answered through cross-tabulation of the participants' level of educational attainment and Epstein's forms of parental involvement: learning at home, parenting, decision-

making, communication, volunteering collaboration with the community. Levels of educational attainment were categorized into eight categories namely: never schooled, Grade R to Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11, Matric, tertiary certificate, Diploma, University Degree. Only those forms of parental involvement that were identified to have a statistically significant relationship with participants' levels of educational attainment, will be discussed in relation to relevant literature.

#### 4.7.1 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to the form of parental involvement: Learning at home parental involvement

Table 4.33 presents the Chi-Square test of levels of learning at home as a form of parental involvement and the levels of education attained of the participants. There is no relation between the levels of learning at home involvement and the educational attainment of the participants (Chi-Square= 9.128, df=14, p=0.23). This, therefore, means the null hypothesis is not rejected. The level of learning at home parental involvement in this study is not impacted by the parents' level of educational attainment the Department of Basic Education, (2016, p. 8) supports this by stating that children need their parent's support and supervision regardless of whether parents are educated or not. Wilder, (2017, p. 3) also states that parents' level of education attainment does not directly affect their quality of parental involvement, but parents' efficacy beliefs pertaining to their ability to assist in homework may affect home parental involvement because of their level of education attainment. According to Kigobe, (2019, p.28) less educated parents become more involved at home so as to contradict the stereotype that they would be less involved in their children's education at home because of low education levels.

**Table 4.33: Learning at home as a form of parental involvement in relation to educational attainment Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.128 <sup>a</sup>	14	.823
Likelihood Ratio	10.886	14	.695
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.998	1	.158
N of Valid Cases	74		
a. 18 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.			

#### 4.7.2 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to parenting as a form of parental involvement

The relationship between levels of parenting as a form of involvement and educational attainment of the participants was found to be insignificant, see Table 4.34 (Chi-square=10.212, df=14, p=.747). Therefore, the educational attainment of the participants has no influence on their level of involvement when it comes to parenting as a form of parental involvement. This is contrary to the study of Ayub, (2017, p. 357) which states that the educational level, occupational and income have a great impact on their children's attitudes towards VET education. Ayub (2017) further states that parents with low levels of educational attainment and low socioeconomic status are more likely to support the VET curriculum which is the type of curriculum used at a school of skills in the current study. Deplanty, Coulter-kern, Duchane and Duchane (2010, p.361) agree with Ayub (2017) and state that parents' level of education may serve as a barrier to their involvement in the education of their children. If parents have attained low levels of education they might feel challenged in assisting their children with homework. Kim (2019, p. 4) also states that grandparents (acting as primary caregivers in the context of the current study) are sceptical of being involved in the education of their children because of their low educational attainment. Sheng (2012, p. 138) argues that when parents have a successful educational history they are bound to influence or shape their children's attitude towards higher education learning, the expectation of higher education and academic achievement. Rispoli et al. (2018, p.8) have also noted that parents who have not completed their high school education are less likely to be involved with home-based parental involvement compared to those that have completed their high school education.

**Table 4.34: Parenting involvement in relation to educational attainment**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	10.212 <sup>a</sup>	14	.747
Likelihood Ratio	11.020	14	.684
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.205	1	.272
N of Valid Cases	74		
a. 20 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.			

### 4.7.3 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to communication with the school as a form of parental involvement

According to Table 4.35, there is no significant relationship between the participant's levels of educational attainment and their levels of communication with the school as a form of parental involvement (Chi-Square=17.063, df=14, p=.253). The null hypothesis is not rejected.

**Table 4.35: Communication involvement in relation to educational attainment: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.063 <sup>a</sup>	14	.253
Likelihood Ratio	18.660	14	.178
Linear-by-Linear Association	.154	1	.695
N of Valid Cases	73		

a. 18 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

### 4.7.4 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to levels of decision-making as a form of parental involvement

Based on Table 4.36, the relation between the parent's levels of educational attainment and their levels of decision-making as a form of parental involvement was found to be insignificant. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected (Chi-Square=12.391, df=14, p=.575). These results, therefore, suggest that levels of educational attainment do not influence levels of decision-making as a form of parental involvement. These findings are not in line with the study of Wiyono et al., (2018, p.21 ) which state that more educated parents are likely to be involved in this category as they are able to make informed decisions and increase their contribution to the implementation of the education system at schools.

**Table 4.36: Decision-making involvement in relation to educational attainment**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	12.391 <sup>a</sup>	14	.575
Likelihood Ratio	14.950	14	.382
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.047	1	.152
N of Valid Cases	71		
a. 19 cells (79.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .07.			

#### **4.7.5 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to volunteering as a form of parental involvement**

There was no significant relationship between the levels of volunteering as a form of parental involvement and the levels of educational attainment of the participants (Chi-Square=14.653, df=14, p=.402). As presented by Table 4.37 the null hypothesis will not be rejected. Levels of educational attainment did not seem to influence levels of volunteering as a form of parental involvement in this study. Contrary to this study, the study of Wiyono et al. (2018, p.20 ) indicated a positive significance between level of education and the parents' participation in volunteering to implement education at the school.

**Table 4.37: Levels of volunteering in relation to educational attainment**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	14.653 <sup>a</sup>	14	.402
Likelihood Ratio	16.345	14	.293
Linear-by-Linear Association	.034	1	.854
N of Valid Cases	69		
a. 19 cells (79.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.			

#### **4.7.6 Participants' levels of educational attainment in relation to collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement**

Table 4.38 presents the Chi-Square test of analysis with regard to collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement and levels of educational attainment of the

participants. According to this table, there is no significant relation (Chi-Square=14.749, df=14, p=.396) between the two variables, which suggests that participants' levels of educational attainment did not influence levels of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement. This means that there is no relation between participants' educational attainment levels and their levels of collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement.

**Table 4.38: Collaboration with the community as a form of parental involvement in relation to educational attainment**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.749 <sup>a</sup>	14	.396
Likelihood Ratio	16.732	14	.271
Linear-by-Linear Association	.036	1	.850
N of Valid Cases	69		
a. 20 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.			

#### **4.7.7 Relationship between levels of overall parental involvement and educational attainment of the participants**

Table 4.39 presents the overall levels of parental involvement in relation to the educational attainment of the participants in this study. According to the table, there is no significant relationship between the educational attainment and the overall levels of parental involvement (Chi-Square =9.210, df=14, p=.817). The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected and the educational attainment of parent participants did not seem to play a role with regard to overall levels of parental involvement in this study. Hakyemez-Paul et al., (2018) in their study state that the least cited reason for lack of parental involvement is the inadequate educational attainment of parents to practice parental involvement. However, some literature states that parents' educational level of attainment and the socio-economic status has a huge impact on parental involvement at schools of skills or VET. Literature indicates that VET is associated with low socio-economy and low levels of education (Ahmed Alnaqbi, 2015, Ayub, 2017, Hakyemez-Paul, Pihlaja, & Silvennoinen, 2018), as a result, the higher educationally attained parents are less likely to be part of the school of skills and VET.

**Table 4.39: Overall levels of parental involvement in relation to educational attainment**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	9.210 <sup>a</sup>	14	.817
Likelihood Ratio	9.436	14	.802
Linear-by-Linear Association	.046	1	.830
N of Valid Cases	75		

a. 20 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

**4.8 Research question six: What parental involvement challenges were encountered by parents/guardians at the School of Skills?**

Research question six presents the challenges encountered by parent participants in this study. Participants had to answer 10 of the survey items in responding to this research question. The questions in this section were compiled according to Epstein's (2009) framework of six typologies of parental involvement. In her framework, she also mentions challenges that might be encountered by parents with each type of involvement. Therefore, the items were developed according to those challenges.

Table 4.40 presents the results pertaining to the possible challenges encountered by parents at a School of Skills. Just over half (51.5%) of the participants always or often had a flexible schedule that allowed them to attend school meetings, while 30% sometimes did, and 18.6% seldom or never had a flexible schedule that allowed them to attend school meetings. The participants in this study indicated that their schedule was flexible enough to allow them to attend meetings at the school of skills, though literature identifies this as one of the barriers to parental involvement (Williams & Sánchez, 2011, Hakyemez-Paul, Pihlaja, & Silvennoinen, 2018; Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007).

About 59.7% of the participants in this study often or always found the design of the homework given to their children interactive. Epstein (2009) explains interactive homework as homework which requires students to discuss and interact with family about the important classwork that was done, thus enlightening parents about what is being studied at school. Only 25% of the participants sometimes found the homework interactive, and a minimum of 15% seldom or never found the homework interactive. Among the participants 30.3% often or always found language as a barrier for them to assist their children with homework, 25.8% sometimes did, and about 44% of the participants seldom or never found language as a barrier to assisting their children with homework, meaning more parents had trouble understanding the language used for the homework and were mostly hindered by language when assisting their children with homework.

The medium of instruction in some of the learning areas at the school under focus in the current study is English although the home language IsiXhosa. Ramirez, (2003) also deems language as one of the barriers to home-based parental involvement. Based on the fact that language can be a barrier to communication Đurišić and Bunijevac, (2017, p. 141) state that if needed there must be a translator when there is communication between the teacher and parent. Kauffman, Perry, and Prentiss, (2001, p. 8) states that language is one of the factors that prevent parental involvement because at times the school would use educational jargon when communicating with the parents, this also refers to the language used in the homework instructions. In order to overcome some of the challenges to parental involvement Rispoli et al., (2018, p. 8) mention that it is vital for teachers to ensure that efforts to involve parents are accessible to parents regardless of education level.

More than half of the participants in this study (53.7%) always or often had access to means of communication with the School of Skills, 23.9% of the participants sometimes had access to the strategies of communication with the school. The minority (22.4%) seldom or never had access to the communication strategies used by the school. These results suggest participants of this study have minimal challenges when it comes to major communication channels between the school and the home. Reinke et al., (2019, p. 346) state that when parents are involved in school this increases their confidence in their ability to parent, help their children learn at home, and engage in communication with teachers. Camacho-Thompson, Gonzales, and Tein (2019, p. 388) refer to these channels of communication as parents' interaction with



the school which is deemed important though it might be difficult when their children are adolescents because it comes with adjustment for parents, such as less communication with teachers and a shift in the developmental needs of their adolescents.

**Table 4.40: Challenges encountered by parents/guardians at the School of Skills pertaining parental involvement**

	Item no	Variables	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	E1	Is your schedule flexible enough to allow you to attend all school meetings?	7 (10%)	6 (8.6%)	21 (30%)	13 (18.6%)	23 (32.9%)
2	E2	Is the design of the homework given to your child interactive, (e.g. you can contextualise the activities to real life situations)?	5 (7.5%)	5 (7.5%)	17 (25.4%)	10 (14.9%)	30 (44.8%)
3	E3	Do you find language as a barrier to you, for being able to assist your child with school work?	24 (36.4%)	5 (7.6%)	17 (25.8%)	5 (7.6%)	15 (22.7%)
4	E4	Do you have access to the school's major communication strategies such as newsletters, report cards and meetings?	12 (17.9%)	3 (4.5%)	16 (23.9%)	12 (17.9%)	24 (35.8%)
5	E5	Do Educators recruit parents to volunteer at the school?	26 (38.2%)	5 (7.4%)	8 (11.8%)	8 (11.8%)	21 (30.9%)
6	E6	Is there training available at the school on how parents would volunteer using their talents to capacitate the learner?	29 (41.4%)	5 (7.1%)	11 (15.7%)	8 (11.4%)	17 (24.3%)
7	E7	Do you know what requirements are used to for the selection of the school governing committees/ body?	25 (36.2%)	5 (7.2%)	14 (20.3%)	7 (10.1%)	18 (26.1%)
8	E8	Do you find it easy to share information with the school about the culture, background, child's talents and needs?	18 (25.7%)	5 (7.1%)	16 (22.9%)	12 (17.1%)	19 (27.1%)
9	E9	Does your education background hinder you from taking part in your child's education	40 (59.7%)	5 (7.5%)	7 (10.4%)	6 (9.0%)	9 (13.4%)
10	E10	Does the school involve you and your child in all important curriculum-related decision?	13 (18.6%)	2 (2.9%)	8 (11.4%)	16 (22.9%)	31 (44.3%)

Among the participants, 42.7% indicated that they always or often were recruited by educators to volunteer at the school, while only 11.8% sometimes got recruited and about 45.6% of the participants indicated that they seldom or never got recruited by educators to volunteer and the School of Skills. These findings suggest that more than half of the participants were hardly (seldom or never) recruited by the educators to volunteer at school. Parents are not confident to initiate volunteering so, when educators recruit them to volunteer then their self-confidence is boosted (Hakyemez-Paul et al., 2018). According to Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2007, p. 536) when parents are invited to volunteer they feel welcome and become confident in their volunteering.

About 48.5% of the participants indicated that there was never or seldom training offered at the school for parents on how they could volunteer using their talents to capacitate learners at the school. About 15.7% of participants indicated that there was sometimes such training offered while 35.7% indicated that such training was always or often offered at the school. Parents deem the invitation to parental involvement from that school very important (Hoover-Dempsey & Jones, 1996).

Over a third (36.2%) of the participants indicated that they always or often knew the criteria used for the selection of the School's Governing Body (SGB), while 20.3% indicated that they sometimes knew, and about 43.4% indicated that they seldom or never knew the requirements needed for selection of the SGB. This meant that about two-thirds of the participants mostly did not know what the criteria were for selecting the SGB. In Williams and Sánchez's (2011) study, lack of awareness and unfamiliarity with school policies or parents not properly being informed about the events at the school, are some of the major barriers to parental involvement. However when parents are informed it gives them a sense of ownership, and the school can also benefit by including the parents the school decision-making processes, these parents can be representatives who can sustain good practices (DBE, 2016, p. 13).

About 44.2% of the participants in this study often or always found it easy to share information with the school about their child's culture, background, talents, and needs. About 23% sometimes found it easy to share information with the school about their child, and 32.8% of

the participants seldom or never found it easy to share such information with the school. This meant that more than half of the time participants found it difficult to share information with the school about their child's cultural, background, talents, and needs. More participants in this study deemed it important to share information about the learner's culture, background, talents, and needs. Graham-Clay (2005, p.121 ) refers to this as two-way communication and the parent would share with the educator some information that will enable the educator to understand the learner wholly.

Cultural background as well as socio-economic status seem to be important with regard to parental involvement in their children's schooling. For example, Freund, Schaedel, Azaiza, Boehm and Lazarowitz (2018, p. 195) report that since 1948, Jewish and Arab Israelis have been functioning in two different education systems under the same administration of the ministry of education. The Jewish dominate at 80% while the Arabs (Muslim, and Christians) are 20% of the population in Israel. The language of instruction in the schools is Hebrew, and the dominant culture is the Jewish culture. Freund et al., (2018, p. 199) further state that within these two cultures the Arab parents indicated higher involvement in school and community than the Jewish parents, though the Jewish participants were a majority in the study. Freund et al., (2018, p. 199) substantiate this finding by stating that Arab parents become more involved based on the invitation from their children and the teachers, though the invitations from the teachers may be as a result of their children's behavioural problems, and the Jewish are more involved because of higher self-efficacy (refers to parents' perception of their abilities in helping their children succeed at school), because of their higher socio-economic status (SES). This meant that parents of high SES believed that through their involvement they can exert positive influence on their children's education without going to school to be involved.

The majority (67.2%) of the participants in this study stated that the school often or always involved them and their children in all important curriculum-related decisions, while 11.4% of them indicated the school sometimes involved them and 21.5% of the participants indicated that the school seldom or never involved them and their children in important curriculum-related decisions. According to Hendricks, (2014, p. 150) it is imperative that parents be informed or be involved in the curriculum-related decision.

The language used in the homework given to the learner, invitation to volunteering at the school of skills by the teachers and knowledge on the policies for electing school governors were the major barriers to parental involvement at this school of skills in the current study.

#### 4.8.1 Levels of challenges encountered by parent participants at the School of Skills

Table 4.41 displays the level of challenges encountered by parents who have children attending a School of Skills. From the table, there seems to be a vast difference between parents who experience high 9 (12.9%) levels of challenges and those who experienced moderate 28 (40%) levels of challenges. There isn't much difference between those who moderately 28 (40%) encountered challenges and those who experienced low 33 (47%) levels of challenges when dealing with the school of skills.

**Table 4.41: Challenges encountered**

Levels of challenges encountered by participants at the School of Skills	Number of representatives	Percent
High	9	12.9
Moderate	28	40.0
Low	33	47.1
Total	70	100.0

#### 4.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the study. Within the chapter the researcher covered the biographical information of the participants, the attitudes of parents towards the school of skills and the extent of parental involvement in their children's learning in terms of Epstein (2009) six typologies of such involvement, In addition, levels of parental involvement were also analysed in terms of the following factors pertaining to the parent participants: marital status, levels of formal education attained and different kinship relations with their children/wards attending the school of skills as well as. The findings also presented the challenges encountered by parents at the school of skills. Findings indicated that there was a significant relationship

between levels of parental involvement and the following factors: marital status of participants and parenting as a form of parental involvement ( $p=.014$ ); learning at home as a form of parental involvement and the kinship relations between the participant and the learner at the school of skills ( $p=.012$ ) as well as kinship relations (between participant and the learner at the school of skills) and levels of communication between the school of skills and the participants ( $p=.018$ ). In the next chapter, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Results were presented and discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter entails the summary of the findings, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, recommendations, suggestions for further research and the conclusion of the study.

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

The findings of this study represent the level of parental involvement at the school of skills. In this section, a summary of the findings is briefly stipulated.

- According to the findings of this study, parents have a positive attitude towards being involved in the education of their children at the school of skills.
- Among Epstein's parental involvement typologies, participants of this study preferred home-based forms of parental involvement more than school-based forms of parental involvement.
- The findings of this study reveal that there is no significant relationship between the marital status of the parents and their level of parental involvement. Therefore their level of parental involvement is not influenced by their marital status. Lui et al. (2019, p. 1) substantiate this point by stating that marital status has no direct effect on parents' school engagement nor the academic performance of the learner.
- Based on the findings of this study, the kinship relations between the participants and the learners at the school of skills has no significance with regard to parental involvement in their children's schooling. How the participant is related to the learner at the school of skills doesn't influence their level of parental involvement.
- The findings of this study affirm that parent's educational attainment does not influence their level of parental involvement. The participants of this study did not seem to be restricted or liberated because of their educational attainment.

- According to the findings of this study, the challenges encountered by the participants towards parental involvement at the school of skills are a result of the lack of invitation by the school or educators. This, therefore, results in minimal school-based parental involvement.

### 5.3 Significance of this study

- Parents' attitude toward parental involvement at the school of skills:  
Based on the fact that parents already have a positive attitude towards the school of skills and being involved in the education of their children, they would be easily trained on how to be involved.
- Forms of parental involvement: The findings of this study indicated that the parents are highly involved in home-based parental involvement. However there seems to be a lack of invitations from the school, including a lack of training on school-based parental involvement.
- The findings of this study focussed on parental involvement at a school of skills in Western Cape South Africa. The literature highlighted in this study emphasises the importance of parental involvement in their children's study. The importance of the schools of skills in providing an alternative pathway for advancing formal education by learners with special needs in South Africa was also highlighted in this study. This study is therefore significant, because it may be the only South African study to date, which has investigated parental involvement at a school of skills. Furthermore, the findings of the study could contribute to the effectiveness of schools of skills in South Africa in the following ways:
  - **The South African Department of Basic Education:** The Department of Basic Education produced a document of Practical Guidelines about how parents can contribute meaningfully to the success of their children in schools (2016). This study may be significant for the production of a similar document specifically channelled towards parental involvement in Schools of Skills.
  - **The District Department of Education:** The findings of this study may be of significance to the District Department of Education for empowering the School Management Team (SMT), educators and the SGB on parental involvement at a school of skills.
  - **Schools of Skills:** The findings of this study could inform the SMT and educators at the school of skills on the challenges encountered towards parental involvement. This would be relevant for staff training on how to involve parents.



#### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

**This research study has the following limitation:**

- This study only focused on one School of Skills in the Western Cape therefore the population and the sample of this study were too small for the research to be generalised to other schools of skills.
- Surveys are inflexible, unlike other direct observation studies that can be modified as the field conditions allow Babbie and Mouton (2005).
- In a survey, there is always the chance that participants distort or conceal information, or even have no knowledge about the topic when answering the questions, meanwhile the survey depends on the accuracy and truthfulness of the participant (Babbie & Mouton, 2005).
- This study only used a questionnaire to collect the data which may have limited the participants in fully expressing their views, unlike such a possibility in collecting data via other data collection measures such as interviews.
- The sample only consisted of parents, and not the educators and learners, therefore the information is limited to the parents' views.
- One other concern about the use of a survey in this research according to Gravetter and Forzano (2012, p.356) is that the information obtained is always a self-report, meaning parents reported about their involvement.

#### **5.4 Recommendations to the school of skills that was under the study focus**

- Educators must be empowered and trained on how to involve parents in the education of their children at the school of skills.
- The school must assist parents to develop insight on what it means to be involved in the education of their children at the school of skills.
- The school should invite parents to school-based activities.
- Educators should build good relations with the parents so that the parents may find it easier to communicate with them and that they may know the talents of the parents whom they may invite for volunteering at the school of skills.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for further studies**

This study was a quantitative study the researcher suggests future mixed-method studies as a means of expanding strategies of data collection to gain richer insight into the complex

phenomenon of parental involvement. Further studies should consider adding other role-players, notably teachers and learners to gauge their views and experiences about parental involvement. The survey instrument in this study could be refined in its psychometric properties to improve its reliability and validity. Further studies, should expand the sample and evaluate parental involvement in other schools of skills and even go to the extent of comparing parental involvement in different schools of skills. Looking at whether the Social Economic Status plays influences the level of parental involvement at schools of skills. Although the gender of the participants was indicated in the questionnaire it did not play a vital role in the study. Therefore for further studies, it would be interesting to find out whether the gender of the parent has an impact on parental involvement at the school of skills.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This study was conducted to ascertain parental involvement at a school of skills in Western Cape South Africa. Literature in this study has defined schools of skills as special schools that offer an adapted national curriculum, for the development of learners who have special educational needs. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the nature and characteristics of parental involvement at one School of Skills. This investigation was done to ascertain the following: the attitudes of parents towards involvement in their children's education at the school of skills, the forms of parental involvement, to evaluate whether the marital status of parents, including their kinship relations with learners, and whether their level of formal education influenced their involvement in the children's schooling. This study also sought to identify the challenges of parental involvement at the selected School of Skills. The results of this study indicated that the parents had a positive attitude towards being involved in the education of their children at the schools of skills. The participants of this study were more inclined to home-based involvement than they were towards school-based involvement. From this study, it became evident that parents need to be capacitated and motivated on how to be involved in the school of skills for the development of their children in such institutions. The results of this study indicated that there was no significance between parental involvement and marital status, kinship relations, and parents' educational attainment. The study also found that parental involvement at the school of skills faced the following challenges at varying degrees: not knowing what role parents ought to play in the education of their children at the school of skills, inadequate recruitment by educators to volunteer at the School of Skills, not being trained on how to offer their talents for volunteering at the school and lack of awareness

and unfamiliarity with school policies. The findings of the study could contribute to the effectiveness of schools of skill in South Africa.

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## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT LETTER FOR PARENTS –QUESTIONNAIRE

I ..... agree to participate in the Study of Ms Ayabulela Dick of parental involvement at a School of Skills in the Western Cape South Africa. I have read and understood the information sheet. I know that my participation in this study is voluntary and all the information gathered from the study will be kept confidential. My identity will be kept anonymous and I will not be identified by the recorded responses in the study. I am fully aware of the fact that I can freely withdraw from participation at any time without explaining the reason for my withdrawal to the researcher.

Participant's Name:..... Signature:.....

If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me at: 2644479@uwc.ac.za or 0732612358. My supervisor, Prof. O. Bojuwoye, can also be contacted at: obojuwoye@uwc.ac.za (or 021 959 3887)

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## APPENDIX B

### Parental Involvement in School of Skills Questionnaire

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Please complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible.

**Part A. Biographical Information:**

Mark X in the appropriate answer box

1. What is your marital status:

Married/ staying together	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Never married

2. What is your gender/ Sex:

Male	Female

3. What is your relationship with the learner at the School of Skills:

Biological Parent	Legal Guardian	Non-legal Guardian	Grandparent	Relative

4. What is your highest level of Education or Educational achievement:

Never schooled	Grade R to Grade 9/ Standard 7	Grade 10/ Standard 8/ Form 3	Grade 11/ Standard 9/ Form 4
Matric/ Standard 10/ Form 5	Tertiary certificate	Diploma	University degree

5. Number of your children/ wards at the Special School:

1	2	3	4	More (state how many)

--	--	--	--	--

6. In what year level/ phase is/are your child/children/wards? Indicate by writing the year level

Example: If you have two children/wards at the school one in **year 3** and the other in **year 1** then you will mark as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child	4 <sup>th</sup> Child
Year 3	Year 1		

6.1

1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child	4 <sup>th</sup> Child

7. Indicate the gender/sex of your child/children/ wards by “**F**” for **Female** or “**M**” for **Male**

Example: If you have two children/wards at the school one in **year 3** is **FEMALE** and the other in **year 1** is **MALE** then you will mark with a “**F**” or “**M**” in correlation with the previous question:

1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child	4 <sup>th</sup> Child
F	M		

7.1

1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child	4 <sup>th</sup> Child

8. What do you think about your child’s academic achievement since being at the Special School? Choose any of the following options number then write that number below the child as an indication of their progress

Lower than it was in the previous school	Not improved at all	Slightly improved	Vastly improved
1	2	3	4

8.1

1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child	4 <sup>th</sup> Child

**9. Part B. At-Home Involvement of Parents/guardian/caregiver in Children's education**

Instruction to the respondent:

In the following table please indicate your option with the mark **X**.

<b>At Home involvement of parents in the education of their children</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Never</b>
1. Do you discuss what was being done at school with your child (e.g. class work)?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Do you help your child with homework or other school assignments?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Does your child have a routine for doing their school work?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Does your child have extra academic classes (e.g. Maths afternoon classes)	5	4	3	2	1
5. Do you encourage and motivate your child with his/her school work?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Do you ensure that your child attends school?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Do you make time to talk to your child about school issues or about education in general? (e.g. How their day was at school)	5	4	3	2	1
8. Do you encourage your child to show positive personal qualities, habits, and behaviour at school as she does at home?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Do you share information with the school about the cultural background, child's talents and needs which will enable the child's success at school?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Do you discuss importance of education with your child?	5	4	3	2	1

**Part C. At – School Involvement of Parents in children’s education**

**Involvement in Decision making and communicating:**

Instruction to the respondent:

In the following table please indicate your option with the mark **X**

<b>Decision making and communicating</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Never</b>
1. Do you communicate with your child’s teacher?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Which of the following strategies of communication do you use to communicate with the school/ teachers: 2.1 Phone calls 2.2 Texting of messages 2.3 News letters 2.4 Parents’ meeting 2.5 Report cards on improving grades	5	4 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you communicate with the school about your child’s academic progress?	5	4	3	2	1
4. How often does the school inform you of the choice of skill that your child is doing?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Do you have clear information on all the school policies, programmes, reforms and transitions?	5	4	3	2	1

6. Is the language of communication used at the school clear and easy to follow?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Are you aware that parents have a say in the governance of the school	5	4	3	2	1
8. Do you take part in policy- making committees?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Do you attend parents' teachers' association (PTA) meetings?	5	4	3	2	1
10. How often do you participate in the election of the SGB?	5	4	3	2	1

**Part D: Volunteering, community and collaboration**

Instruction to the respondent:

In the following table please indicate your option with the mark **X**.

<b>Volunteering, school community and collaboration</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Never</b>
1. How often do you volunteer for various school activities including, going to school camps and helping out on sports' day?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Are educators aware of your talents and interest in school children?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Does your child participate in	5	4	3	2	1

community based activities to develop their skills e.g. Zip Zap, Cycling etc.?					
4. Are you involved child's learning that occurs at the school? For example, teaching about decision making, problem solving, entrepreneurship or skills that are offered at the school?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Are you aware that families are welcome to assist at the school for example in events like open day, final year farewell ceremony and learners' prize giving and even classroom teaching?	5	4	3	2	1
6. How often do you participate school's safety programs?	5	4	3	2	1
7. How often do you support school projects or activities for example the school's magazine and tree planting?	5	4	3	2	1
8. Do you, or your child participate in <b>community</b> services e.g. recycling, art, music, drama and other activities for seniors or others?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Do you volunteer to talk to learners about government or community services?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Do you provide medical services at the school and or coach in sport events	5	4	3	2	1

### Part E: Challenges encountered

Instruction to the respondent:

In the following table please indicate your option with the mark **X**.

<b>Challenges encountered</b>	<b>Alw ays</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Ne ver</b>
1. Is your schedule flexible enough to allow you to attend all school meetings?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Is the design of the homework given to your child interactive, (e.g. you can contextualise the activities to real life situations)?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Do you find language as a barrier to you, for being able to assist your child with school work?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Do you have access to the school's major communication strategies such as newsletters, report cards and meetings?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Do Educators recruit parents to volunteer at the school?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Is there training available at the school on how parents would volunteer using their talents to capacitate the learner?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Do you know what requirements are used to for the selection of the school governing committees/ body?	5	4	3	2	1
8. Do you find it easy to share information with the school about the culture, background, child's talents and needs?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Does your education background hinder you from taking part in your child's education?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Does the school involve you and your child in all important curriculum-related decision?	5	4	3	2	1



## Part F: Attitude of parents

Instruction to the respondent:

In the following table please indicate your option with the mark **X**.

<b>Attitude of parents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Do you think that your child will have better development opportunities at this school at the end of their final year?		
2. Do you prefer this school for your child as compared to the previous school		
3. Is having your child in this type of school inspiring you to be more involved than you were in your child's previous school?		
4. Does this school add value to the education of your child?		
5. Are you involved in the education of your child		
6. Is your involvement at this school assisting your child's academic development?		

Thank you for your participation

## APPENDIX C

### INXAXHEBA YOMZALI KWISIKOLO SEZAKHONO IMIBUZO

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#### Imiyalelo

Nceda uphendule le mibuzo ingezantsi ngoku nyanisekileyo.

#### **Icandelo A. Iinkcukacha ngawe:**

Faka uphawu u-X kwi bhokisi enempendulo echanekileyo

1. Isimo somtshato:

uTshatile/ okanye uhlala nomlingane	Ungu Mhlolo okanye Umhlokazi	Uqhawukile umtshato	Wohlukene neqabane lakho	Zange watshata

2. Xela ubuni bakho:

iNdoda	iBhinqa

3. Buhlobo buni onabo nomntwana olapha kwisikolo sobugcisa:

Ngumntwana wakho ncam	Umlondoloz womntwana ngokwa semthethweni	Umlondoloz womntwana ngokungekho semthethweni	Ngumzukulwana wakho	Sisizalwane

4. Leliphi elona nqanaba liphezulu le mfundo yakho?:

Awuzange wafunda	Ibanga lokuqala ukuya kwe lesixhenxe	Ibanga lesibhozo	Ibanga lesithoba
Ibanga leshumi	Isatifiketi semfundo ephakamileyo	Idiploma	Idigri yase dyunivesithi

5. Bangaphi abantwana bakho abalapha kwisikolo sobugcisa?:

1	2	3	4	Ukuba bangaphaya kwesi 4 bhala inani labo apha ngezantsi

6. Bhala ibanga elenziwa ngumntwana wakho apha kwesi sikolo

**umzekelo:** ukuba unabantwana ababini apha kwesi sikolo omnye omnye ukunyaka **wesithathu** elapha kwesi sikolo aze, omnye ukunyaka **wokuqala**. Uyaku phendula ngoluhlobo:

<i>Owoku-1</i>	<i>Owesi-2</i>	<i>Owesi-3</i>	<i>Owesi-4</i>
<i>Ukunyaka wesithathu</i>	<i>Ukunyaka wokuqala</i>		

6.1

Owoku-1	Owesi-2	Owesi-3	Owesi-4

7. Xela isini somntwana wakho ngokuthi ubhale “B” iBhinqa (Female) okanye “N” iNdodana (Male).

**umzekelo:** ukuba unabantwana ababini apha kwesi sikolo lho ukunyaka **wesithathu uliBhinqa** aze, omnye lho ukunyaka **wokuqala uyiNdodana**. Uyaku phendula ngoluhlobo:

<i>Owoku-1</i>	<i>Owesi-2</i>	<i>Owesi-3</i>	<i>Owesi-4</i>
<b><i>Bhinqa</i></b>	<b><i>Ndodana</i></b>		

7.1

Owoku-1	Owesi-2	Owesi-3	Owesi-4

8. Luthini uluvo lwakho ngenkqubela kwifundo yomntwana wakho oko ethe wafunda apha kwesi sikolo? Khetha inani libe linye elicacisa uluvo lwakho. Uze ulibhale ezantsi komntwana ngamnye, ukubonisa olwakho uluvo nge nkqubo yemfundo yalomntwana.

Umgangatho wakhe usezantsi kunalowo ebekuwo Kwisikolo sangaphambili	Umgangatho wakhe uyalingana	Umgangatho wakhe uphucuke kancinci kunakuqala	Umgangatho wakhe uphucuke kakhulu
1	2	3	4

**umzekelo:** ukuba unabantwana ababini apha kwesi sikolo ukuba lho **wokuqala** umgangatho wakhe wemfundo **uyalingana nalo ebekuwo kwisikolo esingaphambili** uze, umgangatho wemfundo **yomntwana wesibini** ube **uphucuke kakhulu** kunalowo wesikolo esingaphambili. Uyaku phendula ngoluhlobo:

<i>Owoku-1</i>	<i>Owesi-2</i>	<i>Owesi-3</i>	<i>Owesi-4</i>
<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>		

8.1

Umntwana woku-1	Umntwana wesi-2	Umntwana wesi-3	Umntwana wesi 4

**Icandelo B. Inxaxheba yomzali kwi mfundo yomntwana ekhaya**

Imiyalelo:

Faka uphawu u-X kwi bhokisi enempendulo echanekileyo

<b>Inxaxheba yomzali kwi mfundo yomntwana ekhaya</b>	<b>Ngalo lonke ixesha</b>	<b>Rhoqo</b>	<b>Ngamanye amaxesha</b>	<b>Manqaphanqapha</b>	<b>Nakanye</b>
1. Ukhe uthethe ngezinto ezenziwa esikolweni nomntwana wakho? (umsebenzi wase klasini)?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Uyamncedisa umntwana wakho ngomsebenzi wesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Ingaba umntwana wakho unexesha eliqingqiweyo lokwenza umsebenzi wesikolo phaya ekhaya?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Ingaba umntwana wakho unezifundo zokuphuma kwesikolo? (ixesha elongezelelweyo lasemvakwemini umzekelo Izibalo emva kokuphuma kwesikolo)	5	4	3	2	1
5. Uyamkhuthaza na umntwana wakho ezifundweni zakhe?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Ingaba uyaqinisekisa ukuba umntwana wakho uyasihamba isikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Uyalenza na ixesha loku thetha nomntwana wakho ngemeko okanye eye mfundo ngoku banzi?	5	4	3	2	1
8. Uyamkhuthaza na umntwana wakho ukuba abonakalise isimilo esilungileyo, esikolweni njengokuba esenza ekhaya?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Ingaba uyasazisa isikolo somntwana ngezithethe nezakhono zomntwana wakho, ezinokuthi ziphuhlise	5	4	3	2	1



5. Ingaba unolwazi oluthe vetshe ngee polisi, inkqubo, utshintsho nokuphuculwa kwesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Ingaba ulwimi lonxibelelwano oluthi lusetyenziswe esikolweni lucacile kwaye luya landeleleka?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Uyayazi ukuba ilizwi labazali liyamanyelwa kwisigqeba esilawula usikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
8. Ungaba uyayithatha inxaxheba kwi sigqeba esenza iipolisi zesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Uyazihamba na iintlanganiso ezidibanisa ootishala nabazali [parents' teachers' association (PTA)] ?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Kukangaphi uthatha inxaxheba ekukhethweni kwesigqeba solawulo lwesikolo (SGB)?	5	4	3	2	1

#### **Icandelo D: Ukuvolontiya, nokusebenzisana nabahlali**

##### Imiyalelo:

Faka uphawu u-X kwi bhokisi enempendulo echanekileyo

<b>Ukuvolontiya, nokusebenzisana nabahlali</b>	<b>Ngalo lonke ixesha</b>	<b>Rhoqo</b>	<b>Ngamanye amaxesha</b>	<b>Manqapha nqapha</b>	<b>Nakanye</b>
1. Uvolontiya kangaphi kumatheko esikolo anje ngoke camp, okanye uncedise kwimini yezemidlalo?	5	4	3	2	1

2. Ingaba ootitshala bayazazi iziphiwo zakho nomdla wakho kubantwana besikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Ungaba umntwana wakho uthabatha inxaxheba kwizinto zasekuhlaleni zokuphuhlisa izakhono e.g. Zip Zap, Cycling etc.?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Ungaba uyi nxalenye yemfundo yomntwana wakho? Umzekelo: ufundise bantwana ngokuthabatha izigqibo, ikisombulula iingxaki, ukuba ngu somashishini, okanye uncedise kwizakhono ezifundiswayo apha kwesi sikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Uyazi ukuba intsapho zivumelekile ukuba zancedise kwii nkqubo zesikolo umzekelo: intsuku ezinjenge ukuthengiswa kwemisebenzi yezandla eyenziwa ngabantwana (open day), undlelantle kubafundi, ukukhutshwa kwamabhaso abantwana ababalaseleyo, kwakunye nokufundisa kumagumbi okufundela?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Ungaba uyayithabatha inxaxheba kwiinkqubo zokhuseleko lwesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Uyawaxhasa na amalinge okanye iinkqubo zesikolo, umzekelo iphepha ndaba lesikolo okanye utyalo lwemithi?	5	4	3	2	1
8. Ingaba uyayithabatha na inxaxheba okanye umntwana wakho kwiinkonzo zasekuhlaleni ezinjengo mnyhadala webhaysikile, umculo, umdlalo weqonga, nezinye inkonzo zasekuhlaleni?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Uyazivolontiya na ngoku thetha nabantwana besikolo nge miba karhulumente nenkonzo zomphakathi ?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Ingaba uyancedisa ngenkonzo yezempilo esikolweni okanye uncedise ngoku qeqesha kwezemidlalo?	5	4	3	2	1



**Icandelo E: Ingxaki odibana nazo**

Imiyalelo:

Faka uphawu u-X kwi bhokisi enempendulo echanekileyo

**Part F: Attitude of parents**

<b>Ingxaki odibana nazo</b>	<b>Ngawo onke amaxesha</b>	<b>Rhoqo</b>	<b>Ngamanye amaxesha</b>	<b>Manqapha nqapha</b>	<b>nakanye</b>
1. Ingaba ubanawo na amathuba okukwazi ukuza ezintlanganisweni zesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Ingaba uhlobo okanye ukumila kwemisebenzi yasekhaya ethi ayinikwe umntwana wakho iyakuvumela ukuba uthabathe inxaxheba? (umzekelo: uyakwazi ukuyiqonda ngokwemeko zobomi benyani)	5	4	3	2	1
3. Ingaba ulufumana ulwimi lususithintelo na ekubeni uncedise umntwana wakho kumsebenzi wesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Unayo na indlela yokufumana ezona ndlela ezingundoqo zokunxibelelana nesikolo ezinjengephephandaba lesikolo, inkcazelo yomntwana neentlanganiso zesikolo... nezinye indlela?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Ingaba ootishala bakhe babameme abazali ukuba bazoku volontiya apha esikolweni?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Ingaba lukhona na uqeqesho ulufumanekayo apha esikolweni oluthi lufundise abazali nge ndlela zoku volontiya besebenzisa iitalente zabo ukuxhobisa abafundi?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Uyazi ukuba yeyiphi na imigaqo elandelwayo ukukhetha isigqeba sesikolo?	5	4	3	2	1

8. Ukufumana kulula ukwabelana nesikolo ngolulwazi; amasiko nenkcubeko, intsusa, iitalente kwakunye nezidingo zomntwana wakho?	5	4	3	2	1
9. Ingaba imfundo yakho iyakuvalela ukuba ungabi yinxalenye yemfundo yomntwana wakho?	5	4	3	2	1
10. Ingaba isikolo siyakubandakanya wena nomntwana wakho kwizigqibo ezibalulekileyo ezidibene nemfundo?	5	4	3	2	1

Imiyalelo:

Faka uphawu u-X kwi bhokisi enempendulo echanekileyo

<b>Attitude of parents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
11. Ukholelwa umntwana wakho uqhuba ngcono kwesi sikolo?		
12. Ukhetha ngcono esi sikolo kuneso umntwana wakho ebekuso ngaphambili?		
13. Ukuba nomntwana olapha koluhlobo lwesikolo kukukhuthaza ngakumb nai ukuba uthabathe inxaxheba kwizifundo zomntwana wakho kunakwesingaphambili isikolo somntwana wakho?		
14. Ingaba esi sikolokolo siyayiphucula umfundo yomntwana wakho?		
15. Ingaba uyinxalenye yemfundo yomntwana wakho na? Are you involved in the education of your child		
16. Uyayikholelwa na into yokuba udinga ukubayi nxalenye yemfundo yomntwana wakho?		

Enkosi ngoku thabatha inxaxheba kwesisifundo.

# FACULTY OF EDUCATION

## APPENDIX D

### INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

My name is Ayabulela Dick. I am a Master's degree student at the Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. I am conducting a research study on "**Parental involvement in a School of Skills in the Western Cape, South Africa.**". The main objective of this study is to investigate the nature and the characteristics of parental involvement in the education of their children at a School of Skills in Cape Town, South Africa. The study is informed by the notion that learners in Schools of Skills have special education needs and to appropriately address these needs parents need to work closely together with those schools.

By **parental involvement** it is meant the participation of parents in various activities and or actions that indicate the parents' direct or indirect involvement in the education of their children. Such activities and or actions may be like when a parent is providing information on education, discussing about school and motivating or inspiring a child in matters related to education, when parents are helping children to complete homework assignments, helping children to manage time and study at home and communicating with children's schools. Parental involvement also include parents helping out in school to maintain the school environment, the buildings or classrooms, helping with the school shops, volunteering to teach, give talks to learners or be a member of the school governing body. Parents may also be involved in activities like advocating for the rights of children to education or appropriate educational facilities and as public relation persons for their children's schools.

People to be involve as participants of the study are parents, care givers or guardians whose children are currently registered at the selected School of Skills. The nature of participation in this study by the parents is by involvement in interviews, focus group discussion or in completing questionnaire. The parents will be requested to provide information on the nature and characteristics of their involvement in their children's education at the School of Skills. Participation in the study is voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw their participation at any stage during the study. Participants will be expected to sign consent form to indicate that they are participating in the study out of their own volition. The information the participants will provide will be kept in strict confidence and questionnaire will be completed anonymously. Participants' names will not appear on the questionnaires and no name will be mentioned in the writing up of the study report. **Every attempt will be made to ensure that no harm will come to the participant as a result of their participation in the study.**

If you have any query, do not hesitate to contact me [2644479@uwc.ac.za](mailto:2644479@uwc.ac.za) or [0732612358](tel:0732612358); or contact Professor **O. Bojuwoye**, my Supervisor, at: [obojuwoye@uwc.ac.za](mailto:obojuwoye@uwc.ac.za) or 021 959 3887



## APPENDIX E



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**REFERENCE:** 20140828-35526

**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Ayabulela Dick

M2KJ3 HPR

UWC

Bellville

7585

**Dear Ms Ayabulela Dick**

### **RESEARCH PROPOSAL: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A SELECTED SCHOOL OF SKILLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA**

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

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **08 August 2014 till 26 September 2014**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).

7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

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

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

**Directorate: Research**

**DATE: 02 August 2014**

## APPENDIX F

Faculty	Department	Res_Proj_Title	Res_Proj_Reg_#	Stud_Number	Title	StudentSurname	Stud_Name	Ethics Clearance	Sup
	Education	Educational Psychology	Parental involvement in a selected School of Skills in the Western Cape, South Africa	14/5/43	2644479	Ms	Dick	Ayabulela	