# PARENT'S ACTIVE ROLE AND SPECIFIC INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD EDUCATION: A SOUTH AFRICAN TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

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## Abstract

This study sought to investigate parents' particular and active involvement in their children's education from the viewpoint of a South African teacher. Three different schools' high school teachers participated in the study. The study examined parental engagement in a child's education using a quantitative research methodology and an interpretive paradigm. Teachers who were not included in this study participated in a pilot study. The 62 teachers who were purposively selected as the study sample. A qualitative case study technique has been employed in the research design to provide a thorough investigation of the issue in the context of South Africa. Frequency tables and graphs were used to present the manually examined data. Semi-structured interviews were used as data collection instruments, and a wide range of teachers from different topic areas and grade levels participated in the interviews. Purposively choosing the participants allowed for a complete representation of viewpoints and experiences. Tables and graphs were used to analyze the data. The data's recurrent themes and patterns were found using thematic analysis. The study's findings revealed that educators generally agree that parents' active involvement in their children's education is beneficial. Educators consistently emphasize that parental involvement in their child's education—both online and offline—as well as assistance with homework and assessments, play a major role in fostering academic achievement, social and emotional growth, and a positive outlook on learning. The findings show that educators generally agree that parents' active involvement in their children's education may be beneficial. Educators consistently emphasize that parental involvement in their child's education—both online and offline—as well as assistance with homework and assessments, play an important part in fostering academic achievement, social and emotional growth, and a positive outlook on learning. The study attempts to benefit learners, teachers, parents, school administrators, and policymakers in education by providing insights into creating a cooperative atmosphere that could support and promote active parental involvement. The study suggests that stakeholders and teachers, who have valuable viewpoints, ought to develop strategies and programs that support productive home-school collaborations, thus improving children's education. By offering a teacher-centric viewpoint on the novel and open concept of active parental involvement in education, the research adds to the body of knowledge already in existence and clarifies the precise degrees of involvement that educators believe are most advantageous for the child's overall development.

*Keywords:* Active role, child education, engagement, specific involvement.

## 1. Introduction

Parental involvement is vital for academic success in South Africa (Smith & Ndlovu, 2020). This study delves into parents' roles in education, as perceived by South African teachers. Employed parents often prioritize education, enrolling children in urban schools (Smith & Ndlovu, 2020). Some families near schools convert homes into boarding houses due to limited facilities, covering expenses like fees and transportation (Jones, 2018). Patel and Dlamini (2022) note the evolving nature of parental involvement, influenced by societal factors. Educators offer insights into parental engagement's impact on student outcomes. This study explores diverse parental support forms, aiming to enhance parent-teacher partnerships and education holistically in South Africa.

## 2. Literature review

To fully understand parents' active role and specific involvement in child education from a South African teacher's perspective, this part reviewed theoretical and empirical literature.

## 2.1. Theoretical literature review

The theoretical literature on South African parental involvement in child education highlights its impact on academic outcomes and considers socio-cultural contexts (Jones, 2018; Patel & Dlamini, 2022). Theoretical frameworks like social capital theory stress community networks (Smith & Ndlovu, 2020), while ecological systems theory examines family, school, and community roles (Smith & Ndlovu, 2020). Parental efficacy affects involvement, crucial for student success (Jones, 2018; Patel & Dlamini, 2022), guiding educational practices and policies.

## 3. Research methodology

This section discusses methodological issues such as the research approach, design, population and sampling, data, and analysis methods.

### 3.1. Methodological design

The study of parental involvement in South African child education employs qualitative methods which was a case study research design. Quantitative survey involvement prevalence across socio-economic backgrounds, measuring dimensions like communication. Document analysis supplements data, informing educational strategies (Jones, 2018; Patel & Dlamini, 2022; Smith & Ndlovu, 2020).

### 3.2. Population and sampling

A purposive sample was utilized, encompassing three high schools and sixty educators, to guarantee a rich exploration of perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A purposive sample of 62 teachers was used as the participants of this study. This approach made it easier to deliberately choose participants based on their knowledge and experiences in the South African education system, guaranteeing a range of viewpoints from important stakeholders like educators. A deliberate selection of sixty educators was made from three high schools.

### 3.3. Theoretical literature

Theoretical literature on South African parental involvement in child education is diverse (Jones, 2018), highlighting its impact on academic outcomes (Patel & Dlamini, 2022). Frameworks stress socio-cultural contexts, community networks (Smith & Ndlovu, 2020), and reciprocal parent-teacher relationships (Patel & Dlamini, 2022). Scholars integrate theories, informing educational practices (Jones, 2018; Patel & Dlamini, 2022; Smith & Ndlovu, 2020).

### 3.4. Empirical literature

Parental involvement in South African child education offers crucial insights into engagement dynamics (Jones, 2018). Jones highlights parental contributions to academic achievement through surveys and interviews, emphasizing homework assistance and communication with teachers. Patel & Dlamini (2022) explore evolving parental engagement, identifying socio-cultural barriers and proposing collaboration strategies. Smith & Ndlovu (2020) address challenges and facilitators, stressing tailored approaches for diverse families. Synthesizing findings, this literature emphasizes parental roles and informs educators, policymakers, and parents in fostering supportive learning environments (Jones, 2018; Patel & Dlamini, 2022; Smith & Ndlovu, 2020).

### 3.5. Data collection and data analysis

To investigate parental involvement in South African child education, qualitative methods like semi-structured interviews with teachers captured detailed perceptions and experiences (Jones, 2018). Additionally, focus group discussions facilitated interaction and rich insights (Patel & Dlamini, 2022). These surveys were measured dimensions like communication and participation (Jones, 2018).

### 3.6. Data collection procedure

Data collection for exploring parental involvement in South African child education was structured and ethical. After securing approval, diverse teachers voluntarily participate (Govender & Nkosi, 2020). Qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups, were conducted with consent, ensuring minimal disruption (Nzimande & Dube, 2018). Quantitative surveys gathered data anonymously (Ramasamy & Vilakazi, 2022). Coding schemes and triangulation enhanced reliability and validity. The procedure aims for comprehensive insights into teachers' perspectives on parental involvement (Govender & Nkosi, 2020; Nzimande & Dube, 2018; Ramasamy & Vilakazi, 2022).

### 3.7. Data treatment and analysis

To make sense of the information gathered on parental engagement in children's education from the viewpoint of South African teachers, a methodical approach to data treatment and analysis was used. Graphs were drawn and presented the findings.

## 4. Findings and discussions

Findings unveil insights into South African teachers' perspectives on parental involvement in child education (Ramasamy & Vilakazi, 2022). Themes like socioeconomic factors and cultural beliefs emerged (Ramasamy & Vilakazi, 2022).

### 4.1. Positive parental support in the education of a child

*Figure 1. Parental support of children as much as any parent would do.*
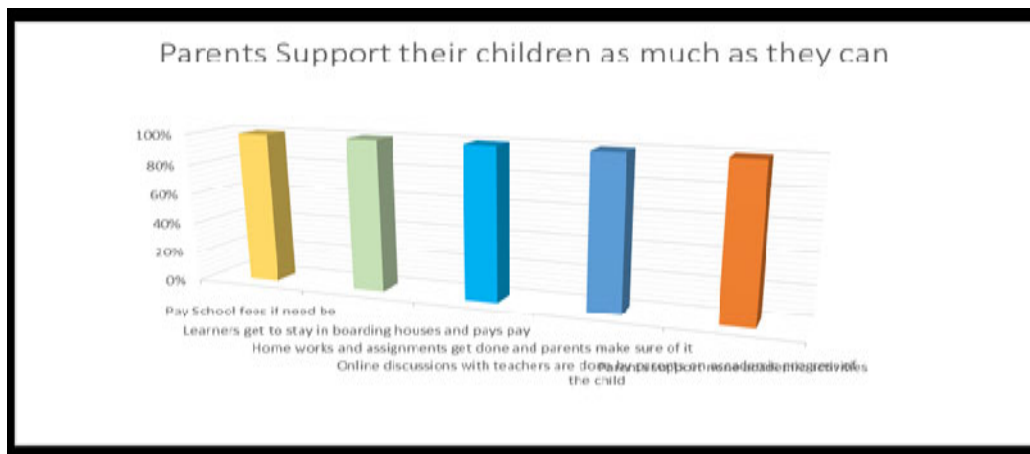


According to participants, Figure 1 depicts 100 % of parental support for their children's education. Every participant (100%) stated that their parents helped their children with homework, assignments, or projects; paid for boarding houses so that their children would stay closer to school; paid for extra classes outside of school; attended parent-teacher conferences; and had online discussions about their children's academic progress. The findings are supported by Jones (2018) who stated that parental involvement in South African child education offers crucial insights into engagement dynamics (Jones, 2018). Jones highlights parental contributions to academic achievement through surveys and interviews, emphasizing homework assistance and communication with teachers. Patel & Dlamini (2022) explore evolving parental engagement, identifying socio-cultural barriers and proposing collaboration strategies.

### 4.2. Children taking advantage of their parents and getting into misbehavior

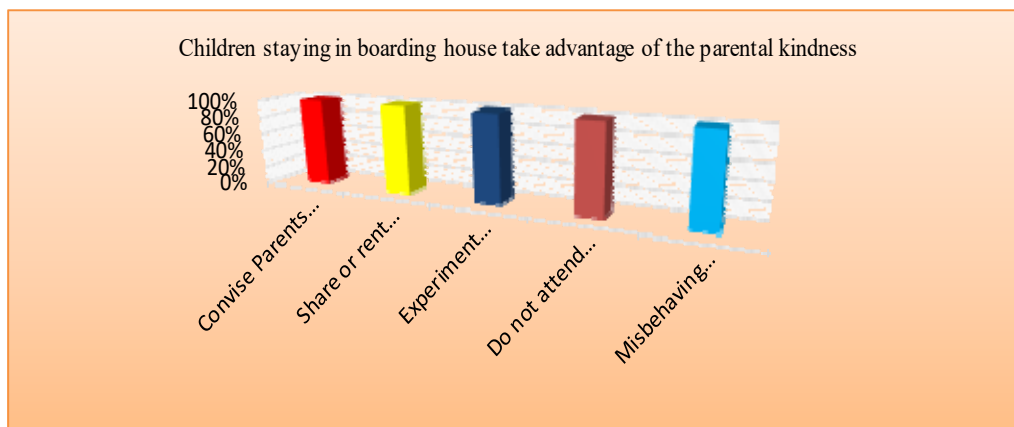*Figure 2. Children staying in boarding house taking advantage of their parents' kindness.*

Figure 2 reveals that 97% of parents reported that their children persuaded them to live in a boarding home, rent with friends, or remain near to school. As a result, parents are unaware of their children's misbehavior; they also skip school, experiment with alcohol, and sometimes throw weekend parties. When the school calls parents about a child's misbehavior, the child doesn't tell the real parent and instead pays a stranger to act as a stand-in for the parents. The findings are supported by Jones who say that, some families near schools convert homes into boarding houses due to limited facilities, covering expenses like fees and transportation (Jones, 2018).

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into parental involvement in child education from the perspective of South African teachers. The findings underscore the critical role parents play in shaping their children's educational journey and the significance of fostering strong parent-teacher partnerships. Through both qualitative and quantitative analysis, the study has elucidated various factors influencing parental engagement, including socioeconomic status, cultural beliefs, and institutional barriers.

## 6. Recommendations

To enhance parental involvement in South African education, several recommendations arise from the findings:
- **Strengthen Communication Channels:** Establish effective channels for updates on students' progress and school activities.
- **Promote Inclusive Engagement:** Adopt approaches considering diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.
- **Provide Parental Support Programs:** Offer programs to equip parents for active engagement.
- Foster Collaborative Partnerships: Encourage partnerships among parents, teachers, and communities.
- **Address Institutional Barriers:** Tackle issues like language, transportation, and financial constraints.
- **Conduct Further Research:** Explore longitudinal studies to sustain engagement and measure outcomes. Implementing these recommendations can create an inclusive, supportive system fostering student success in South African schools.

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