PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN FACILITATING THE LEARNING PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF STANDARD EIGHT PARENTS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS OF EGOSI-MERU, KENYA.

MURIITHI CIRIAKA

A project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master of Education (Educational Psychology) in Kenyatta University.

2003
DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or any other award.

.............................  23/6/03
CIRIAKA MURIITHI             DATE

DECLARATION BY THE SUPERVISOR

This project has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor.

.............................  20/6/03
DR. EDWARD M. KIGEN             DATE
SENIOR LECTURER
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
DEDICATION

To my dear sons Mutuma and Mwenda.
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I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Kigen without whose guidance this work would not have been realized.

A special mention goes to Pamela Asule for the patient support and criticism that helped me develop this work. I appreciate Bojana, A.D. for proofreading the work.

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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement refers to the interest a parent shows in their children's schooling by encouraging them to do well in school, helping them with the schoolwork, appreciating when a child does well in school, talking with the teachers about the child's progress among others. Involvement may vary from one family to another and can take different forms from communicating with teachers about children's progress and helping children with homework, to participating in the school policy-making. By getting involved, parents can reduce children's risk of failure and dropping out of school. Parental involvement improves student's morale, attitudes and academic achievement across all subject areas. Children's behaviour and social adjustment improves when parents' are proactive with schools and neighbourhoods to cultivate an environment that promotes learning.

Parents' role is very important for any meaningful learning to take place. This study investigated seeks to find out the role of rural parents in the formal schooling programme. The nature of involvement is examined to establish how the parents help their children in the process of learning. The tools used to gather data were; questionnaires and interview schedules. Tables were used to present the data. Chi-square was used to establish the strength of relationship between the factors that influence the level of parental involvement.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Parental involvement may refer to the interest a parent shows in their children’s schooling by encouraging them to do well in school, helping them with the school work, appreciating when a child does well in school, talking with the teachers about the child’s progress among others. Involvement may vary from one family to another and can take different forms from communicating with teachers about children’s progress and helping children with homework, to participating in the school policy-making. By getting involved, parents can reduce children’s risk of failure and dropping out of school. Parental involvement improves student’s morale, attitudes and academic achievement across all subject areas. Children’s behaviour and social adjustment improve when parents are proactive with schools and neighbourhoods to cultivate an environment that promotes learning.

Parents have been educators since time immemorial. Children learn how to walk and talk from their parents. The initial learning that a child gets from the parents is very important because it is the
foundation for future learning. Formal schooling however seems to rob the parents this noble function (Majoribank, 1979).

Parents are important in providing environmental, social and economic factors, which have powerful effects on the students’ performance. These factors, if not provided for adequately, place the child at great risk of underachieving in school. Some of these factors include poverty, inadequate learning opportunities, exposure to drugs and/or violence at home or school, lack of after school care, dysfunctional families, inadequate healthcare, rundown schools, neighbourhood distress, poor role models and poor nutrition. When children are insecure both at school and at home, they cannot do well. This may result to stress that will impede academic progress. Such children may even drop out of school or get involved in disruptive behaviour or become dangerous to other students and the teacher (Kapila 1976).

Parents are in a position to have great influence on the above factors. Mothers and fathers can contribute significantly in creating a nurturing environment in which their children can grow and learn. Parents willingness to contact teachers’ on a regular basis about their children’s progress is perhaps the first step to becoming
involved in their children’s education. When parents have first-hand information about a child’s performance, they can proceed in both direct and indirect ways to influence the child’s progress. This can be done in a number of ways;

- By overseeing the child’s homework.
- Setting a time for study everyday.
- Checking the child’s work for completeness and understanding.
- Limiting time spent with friends and watching television.
- Providing support for educators, essential leadership for programme and ideas for improvement in the education system.
- Taking advantage of opportunities to become involved with school administration and policy development for example attending meetings and joining Parents Teachers Association.

When a parent becomes a familiar face in the school, natural environment may arise for communicating with the teachers and may break the barriers that hinder free communication between the parents and the teachers. Parents therefore become the children’s best advocates. They know the children better than the teachers and they are able to choose the best for them. When they get involved, they will therefore ensure that their children get the best in the best way possible (Finn 1972).
The expectations of parents can have a strong influence on a student’s performance. This is because of the way the parents are perceived by the children. Children view their parents as being important by virtue of the status they occupy. They are perceived to be quite knowledgeable and experts in academics especially that they possess. A parent’s influence is more profound than that of the school structure. Research has shown that parents can increase children’s academic success through involvement with the schools.

A study in the U.S.A. by the Department of Education (1996) showed that children’s success in reading comprehension is directly related to the availability of reading materials in the home. This study also showed that when parents set high realistic goals, children responded positively. It also reported that positive encouragement by parents in forms of praise, interest expressed and rewarded effort enhanced good results. Monitoring pupils’ homework showed increased academic achievement even if parents did not know all the answers. When parents showed interest by providing a quiet, well-lit place for doing homework, encouraging children’s effort, being available to answer questions and being willing to discuss materials that the child is learning improved academic performance.
While research has documented the positive effects of parental involvement for children's academic performance, less is known about how to elicit productive participation and which practices schools should use to maximize their investment in family and school connections (Williams P 1976). From a casual observation, majority of the parents in the rural schools do not seem to know what is expected of them. In the urban areas, a number of the schools have diaries, which the parent is required to sign every evening when a child carries home homework. This is not common in the rural areas. Majority of the parents in the rural areas are not able to provide the materials needed for learning, buy uniforms and pay school fees. With the government providing free primary education, the parents may find themselves not taking any other role in schools. They may leave the education of their children entirely to the government.

In the rural areas, the common practice is that the children are sent to school and it is up to the teacher to ensure that the child is clean, acquires good mannerisms, is not late for school, and acquires ability to read and write as well as attend to the emotional needs of the child. Parents in the rural areas tend to leave schooling activities
to the teachers. Bali (1984) stated that proper supervision, active assistance and appreciation by parents are being important to a child’s performance. The families are said to play vital role in the education of their children. What families do is more important to students’ success than whether the parents are rich or poor, whether the parents have finished high school or not, or whether children are in primary or secondary schools.

Research in Kenya does not tell us much on parental involvement. A lot has been done on parent’s level of education and occupation in academic performance. Parental involvement is crucial if we want our children to succeed in school and throughout life. A parent’s interest can spark enthusiasm in a child and will help teach the most important lesson of all that learning can be fun and is well worth the effort.

The process of learning entails acquiring skills in these domains; the cognitive domain; the affective and the psychomotor domain. A child can demonstrate the cognitive ability by the nature and amount of knowledge he/she has attained. This will be shown by the abilities such as comprehension, analysis and the application of this knowledge in problem solving. A child will demonstrate the
psychomotor abilities by being able to perform a given task that requires mechanical action or a particular skill. A child is also required to demonstrate certain attributes of the affective domain by being able to demonstrate certain attitudes or dispositions in a given situation. An informed parent can play a role in helping the child acquire these skills Taylor (1977).

Parents expect their children to gain knowledge, acquire skills and attitudes that can make them useful members of the society. Studies have shown that the home environment, school environment, individual students characteristics, the nature of curriculum and its implementation process as being key in the achievement of success in the academic progress of students (Maundu 1988, Rees 1989, Plowden et all 1967, Koller 1976). Parents should ensure that the home environment is conducive for learning. The specific factors that can influence the attainment of these abilities include high IQ, proper nutrition, good health, reduced anxiety, provision of necessary learning materials, proper school environment, motivation, among others. A lot of studies have been carried out to support these factors. For example Arodho (1992) recommended that parents should be encouraged by school administrators to take an active role in educational pursuits of their children.
1.2 Statement of the problem

With our government declaring free primary education in Kenya, the role of parents ought to be clearly defined. In the past, parents provided the learning materials and left the teaching to the teachers, especially in the rural areas. Now that the government is set to provide the materials and the teachers, parents need to know that they still have a significant role to play in the learning process of their children. Hewison (1982), states that parental involvement improves children’s performance so long as the involvement is well-planned, comprehensive, long-lasting and serves to integrate the children’s experiences. Cullen (1969 p 103-104) states;

“One part of school learning is carried into the home—the evening homework. This is a time when parents who are interested can find out for themselves how the child is progressing and can offer him help and encouragement with his lessons as well as the discipline which is often necessary to make him spend reasonable amount of time studying ....

A lot of research has been carried out on parental factors affecting academic performance in various schools in the country. Factors such as parent’s level of education and occupation have been extensively studied (Maundu, 1988,. Orodho, 2000,. Arasa, 1995,. Muola 1991). However, very little has been done to identify how parents can be involved in our schools.
Generally public schools do not involve parents in the actual learning activities unlike the urban centres where parents are required to sign the diary of their children after checking the homework. The parents in the rural areas view the teachers as the ocean of knowledge and they may not be aware of what role they can play other than sending the child to school and providing the basic minimum materials that are required. This study therefore sought to answer questions such as: How are the parents in Egoji-Meru involved in the learning process of their children? Do the parents know the areas they ought to be involved in? How do the teachers in the primary schools involve parents?

1.3 Purpose of the study.

The purpose of the study was to find out ways in which parents are involved in the academic work of their children to enhance learning. The second purpose was to find out how parents are aware of their role in the learning process of their children. The third purpose was to find out the factors that influence parental involvement.

1.4 Specific objectives.

1. To find out if parents in Egoji are involved in learning process of their children.
2. To find out how the parents are involved.
3. To find out factors that influence parental involvement.
4. To investigate the relationship between level of involvement and the sex, educational level and occupation of the parents.

1.5 Research questions.

1. Are the parents involved in the learning process of their children?
2. In what ways are the parents involved in the learning process?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and the sex, educational level and occupation of parents?

1.6 Basic assumptions.

- Parental involvement influences the academic performance of their children.
- Parents are actively involved.
- There is gender difference in parental involvement.

1.6 Limitations

Due to time factor and costs involved the study is limited to only three primary schools in Egoji Location, Meru District.
1.8 Definition of terms

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: The interest a parent may show in the academic performance of the child. This includes reading for the child, checking homework, attending school functions, asking questions to do with learning, relationship with the school, provision of the required environment and material.

LEARNING PROCESS: This includes ability to read and write, achievement scores, organizational abilities, problem solving techniques, hygiene practices, attitudes and values acquired and then moral outlook of a student.

PARENT: This may include biological parents guardians, sponsors or older siblings who are involved in the academic progress of the pupil.

INVOLVEMENT: This includes providing materials, checking homework, attending school function, consulting with the teachers, rewarding the child for doing well, being aware of the child’s weaknesses and attending to child’s questions.

REWARD: This includes all the tangible gifts that a parent can give to motivate the child. It also includes the positive remarks made by the parent.
SCHOOL FUNCTION: This includes activities like school meetings, sports, and disciplinary meetings prize giving ceremonies etc.

HOMEWORK: This is the assignment given by the teachers to be done at home.

ASSISTANCE GIVEN IN HOMEWORK: This includes any form of help. It includes asking whether the child has homework, answering questions, providing materials needed for homework.

PTA. This stands for Parents Teachers Association
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, parental level of involvement in relation to academic performance is discussed. The first part reviews the theory of interactionism. The second part looks at parental involvement in academic performance and related literature. The third part looks at the factors that enhance parental involvement and the related literature. Finally, the formulation of hypothesis from the literature reviewed.

2.1.2 Theoretical framework

Interactionist model of analysis in social psychology proposes that human behaviour of individuals is a result of a continuous interaction between persons and the situations that they encounter. These situations will determine the type of human behaviour manifested. Because human relations are characterized by interactions, the person one interacts with will influence the behaviour patterns. According to Lewin, who developed the interaction framework in his field theory of personality, he proposed, "the dynamics of environmental influences can be investigated only simultaneously with the determination of individual differences and the general psychological
laws'. Therefore, to understand or predict the psychological behaviour (B), one has to determine for every kind of psychological environment (E), the whole situation and the state of the person (P). Therefore, \( B = f(P, E) \). This implies that human behaviour is a factor of state of the person and the surrounding environment. The interaction between these elements will have effects on the performance of an individual at any given time. The interaction model is typically described by a simple equation.

\[ B = f(P, E). \]

The assumption in this model is that not only do situations influence individuals but also individuals select and subsequently affect the situations with which they interact. The home in this case influences the child. Even though the child may have limited ability to influence the home environment, the parents are in a position to do so. The nature of the environment that they create will determine the behavioural tendencies of the child.

Marjoribanks (1979) adapted Lewin's model and suggested that family environment surrounding an individual may be conceived as a set of nested environments ranging from distal social environments and distal family structures. The influence the family has on an individual in enhancing healthy individual interactions is
very vital. He states that children's performance in school is explained most approximately by examining the social interactions in the background. This theory tries to explain behaviour of individuals as a result of a continuous interaction between the persons and the situations they encounter. A family therefore lays the foundation for these interactions, which will definitely affect the way the child interacts with others out of the home. The nature of these interactions will naturally affect academic performance of the child. Marjoribanks (1979) says that achievement motivation depends on parent-child interactions in early childhood. Independent training in this case entails self-reliance, autonomy, and decision-making, insisting on high achievement, imposing high standards and setting high goals.

From this theory, it is clear that the nature of family relationships a family establishes will lay the foundation for interactions. In a family, each member should be allowed to share their opinions freely. The members should get positive responses and they share freely. On other hand, if the nature of interaction that is laid does allow this, then the members of the family may feel intimidated. Parents are key in establishing an environment where their children can easily express a need and this need is met. If this environment
exists then a child will freely request for academic help from the parents and the parents will feel obliged to give the help required.

Bloom (1964), provided an impetus of the nature of interactions that help in moulding an individual. He looked at the sub-environment that influences an individual’s character formation. The figure below shows the nature of these interactions.

Figure 1. Family Environment

ABCD is a total set of family conditions surrounding an individual. EFGH may represent a sub-environment of social psychological process variables related to say verbal abilities, emotions, temperaments or learning abilities.

JKLM may represent another sub-set environment associated with the development of achievement motivation, which is required for learning process.
From the above figure, the family sets the conditions in which an individual interacts with. If the family provides a healthy environment, then the individuals who grow in it are also well-adjusted. However, if the family environment is not conducive then, the individuals who grow out of it may be maladjusted. From the family, an individual will interact with other sub-environment, which has effects on behaviour acquisition. If the child is well-prepared at home, the other environments only add up to assisting the child form a more all-rounded up individual who functions well in the society. A healthy family environment provided by the parents may include parents’ aspirations, parents’ interests, support for schooling, initiative and responsibility taken by parents for the child’s education, literacy of the home, parental help in schoolwork and parents’ knowledge of school environment. If the parents enhance these factors, then the learning environment is enriched and children can enjoy the learning process.

The following show the effects of various types of interactions.

A. Emotionally positive responses.

1. Shows solidarity, raises other’s status, gives help, rewards

2. Shows tension release, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction
3. Agrees shows passive acceptance, understands, concurs, and complies.

**B. Problem solving responses/answers**

4. Gives suggestions, direction, implying autonomy for others.

5. Gives opinions, evaluation, analysis, expresses feelings/wishes.

6. Gives orientation, information, repeats, clarifies, confirms

**C. Problem-solving responses/questions**

7. Asks for orientation, information repletion, and confirmation.

8. Asks for opinion, evaluation, analysis, and express feelings/wishes.

9. Asks for suggestions, direction, and possible ways of action.

**D. Emotionally negative responses**

10. Disagrees, shows passive rejection, formality withholds help.

11. Shows tension, asks for help, withdraws out of field.

12. Shows antagonism, deflates other’s, status defends or asserts self.

*Interaction process adapted from Bales (1950).*

Parental involvement is characterised by interactions between the parents and their children, parents and the teachers, parents and the entire school community for the benefit of the child. It is evident
that proper forms of interaction will produce a child who can easily adjust in a new school environment and learn effectively. The forms of interactions will enhance positive responses, which are necessary in a learning environment.

2.1.3 Parental involvement.

Parental involvement means providing an environment that helps develop a child’s intellectual and creative talents. The nature of the parental involvement will be influenced by the nature of interactions a child has with his parents at home. When parents get involved in the academic affairs of their children, the academic performance also improves; there is reduced absenteeism and improved behaviour. Parental influence is more profound than that of schools. Parental encouragement helps a student to succeed by increasing one’s confidence, development of positive attitudes towards school and hence lead to increased achievement motivation.

Parents inculcate attitudes in their children when they are growing up. The learnt dispositions help to respond to an object than actual behaviour. Therefore, parental attitudes towards education will affect their involvement and their children’s view of education. A
successful parent tends to provide early independence training necessary for the motivation achievement motivation.

Okwir-Acana (1983), found that parental encouragement among other factors was significantly related to the child’s academic performance. Kapila (1976) also reported positive association between parent’s participation in the child’s schoolwork and academic performance. When a parent is involved in their children’s education at home, they take their children to good schools, and the schools where their children go to perform better. When parents get involved, their children go further in schools reducing drop-out rates. He concluded that the home environment that encourages learning is more important to students than income, level of education of parents and the cultural background. He farther stated that involvement helped send a message to the student that school is important and the family expected the child to take school seriously.

Parents ought to discuss school issues with their children to be aware of what is happening in schools. Williams (1976), stated that when children and parents talk regularly about school, children performed better academically and when parents were involved
children stayed longer in school. Finn (1972), stated that involvement in school included participating in helping with homework, discussing school matters and actively organizing and monitoring a child’s time. This involvement should start early to enhance good performance. The earlier the involvement begins in a child’s educational process, the more powerful the effects it has on a child.

Orodho (1992), recommended that parents should be encouraged by school administrators to take an active role in educational pursuits of their children. He added that parents should prioritise their meagre resources to purchase instructional resources such as textbooks for their children.

Cooper Smith (1975), found that "home environment may enhance positive self-esteem which may improve the academic performance especially the parents’ view and their social status." Parents enhance self-esteem by providing warmth, respectful treatment and clearly defined limits. Other factors that may affect students‘ performance from home include general atmosphere, cleanliness or order, type and severity of discipline, possession of books and
papers. These factors are quite important in academic performance and show the interest that the parent takes in the schoolwork.

Koller (1961), stated that the parents who were disconcerted tended to train their sons from their earliest years of grammar to take school seriously and use education as the means of climbing into the middle class. Only sons who internalised such values were significantly motivated to overcome the obstacles that faced the common man boys in schools. They are the only ones who saw a reason for good school performance and college aspiration. This means that the way a parent views education and verbally encourages their child can encourage the child to perform well. This would mean that the level of education and occupation of the parents are not the only determinants of good academic performance.

Unfavourable homes or the maladjusted homes will manifest frequent parental quarrels, insecurity, child abuse, and divorce among other forms of maladjustments. If the child comes from a favourable, encouraging home environment then such a child will perform well. However, there are certain contradictions that may be cited where a child from an enabling home environment may not be
dong well in school. If intelligence is defined as the all-round ability or mental efficiency which children or adults display in everyday life at school or at work. Then, the nature of the interactions of the innate potential with environment influences the intelligent behaviour is an acquired. The characteristics of the children’s interaction at early stage and reaction to its environment may encourage its performance.

The efficiency of learning depends on the level of innate potential and the amount and quality of stimulation, which the environment provides. A superior environment must be provided early to have high IQ. Parents play a key role in the provision of this. The two main determinants of intellectual growth are the innate potential and stimulating environment. These two factors are highly related to the parents. For instance, a child born with a high IQ can perform poorly if the parents are not able to provide an enabling environment i.e. a stimulating environment. Parent’s role is critical in the development of well-balanced individual.

Fraser and Kellaghan (1977), reported that home environment has more influence on academic performance than intelligence. Craft (1970), says variation in academic performance is influenced by
other factors other than student’s ability. The nature of these interactions shows how a parent is involved in the early learning experiences of a child. If then a parent is key in the early learning, it may also mean that a child can also benefit a lot if the parent is involved in academic progress at the primary level. In the United States of America, roots of parental involvement can be traced back to the early 19th century.

In the United Kingdom, research conducted by Enwall (1947) analysed the views of 262 head teachers on the subject of the parent-teachers cooperation. 66% of the response rate was attained in which 85% reacted positively toward parental involvement. The main benefit of this study showed that leading parents took greater interest in the schools; they helped teachers to understand the child and were encouraging the child in his/her lessons.

The publication of Plowden Report (1967) interviewed 3000 parents in their own homes about their attitude towards their children’s education and their relationship with the teachers involved. Conclusion of the report indicated that there was a relationship between parental encouragement and children’s academic performance, but it was difficult to extricate the direction
of causality. Recommendations about action to promote partnership between home and school were made which served to create a wider acceptance of the principle of parental involvement.

Sharrock (1980) in United Kingdom agreed that there was accumulated evidence that parental encouragement was a causative factor in children's learning of more profound significance than intelligence quotient, social economic status or other school variables. Taylor Report (1977), strongly recommended about the involvement of parents in the governance of schools. Teachers ought to allow the presence of the parents in the classroom. This can be beneficial in that it may enhance that status of the teacher.

Mittler (1982), found that there was a need for parental involvement in the assessment and diagnosis of the child's skills, abilities and teaching requirements. Parents should have access to school records and the facility for commenting on these. In United States of America report (1979) on parental involvement scheme attached to a pre-kindergarten programme incorporated school visits, group meetings, home visits and auxiliary contacts e.g. telephone communication with the parents. The results showed that parental involvement had a positive effect on all three measures, which was
independent of the child’s age, mother’s educational background or
family financial status.

The extent of parental interest and involvement in school activities
positively relates to pupil’s achievement. Parents’ who are involved
in decision-making and are able to relate to teacher’s well
experience greater satisfaction with the school. Fantini (1980),
reviewed evidence on the effects on academic achievement of
different kinds of parental involvement in schools. He concludes
that parental involvement in instruction has been shown to improve
pupil achievement, while involvement in school enhances pupil’s
self-esteem.

2.1.4 Hypotheses

1. There is no relationship between parents’ level of
   education and parental involvement.
2. There is a relationship between the level of parental
   involvement and the sex of the parent.
4. There is no relationship between parental involvement
   and occupation of parents.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Described in this section are research design, sample and the sampling techniques, instruments for data collection and the procedures that were used in data analysis.

3.1.2 Research design and methodology

This was a survey research design on the parental involvement in facilitating learning process: A case study of standard eight parents in selected schools of Egoji-Meru. Scult (1996), defines survey as the method used in obtaining information through responses that a sample of individuals give to questions presented. Coolican (1994), describes a survey as a method that enables one to gather data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time. It therefore consists of asking people information concerning them and adopting the use of a structured questionnaire, with answers open or closed and procedures that are fully standardized.

The survey design in this study adopted and used a descriptive research model, which aimed at describing factors that explain the level of parental involvement as well as its effects on the learning
process. Best and Kahn (1992) states that descriptive research seeks to establish factors associated with certain occurrence, outcomes, conditions, or types of behaviour. This research attempted to determine the degree in which factors exist and tried to discover the links or relationships that exist between them. This study sought to uncover the role of parents in the learning process and aimed at establishing whether their involvement has any added advantages. The study used three main sources of data collection. These are mainly the field research, data analysis and review of literature. See figure 2 for the summary of the research design.

3.2 Research variables

3.2.1 Dependent variable

The dependent variable of the study is the academic performance of the standard eight pupils.

3.2.2 Independent variables

The independent variable in this study is parental involvement.
Figure 2 Summary of research design

Formulation of study problem

Target population

Sample

Piloting

Data collection

Data analysis and report writing

Development of instrument

Revision of instruments

Dissemination

Source: Adopted from Cohen and Mannon (1994:8)
3.3 Population and sample

The target population of this study consisted of standard eight pupils from three primary schools, teachers of three primary schools and parents of these pupils in Egoji sub-location, Meru Central District. Egoji was chosen because the academic performance of standard eight pupils has been dropping in the last four years. The standard eight pupils were chosen because:

- They are an examination class therefore they need a lot of support from the parents and the teachers
- The age differences can be controlled.

Boys and girls in these schools were purposively selected. The schools were randomly selected from a total of six schools in the sub-location. In each school all the standard eight pupils were included in the sample. A questionnaire was administered to pupils and teachers. An interview schedule was used to solicit views from parents. It was anticipated that a total of 60 students would respond to the questionnaire.

3.4. Sampling techniques

By random sampling, three schools were selected. All the schools were day schools with class eight candidates. From each selected the student population was found to be as follows St Joseph’s a had 10 pupils, Egoji primary had 17 and Gikurune primary had 13 pupils in standard eight.
Random sampling is a technique in which every member of the target population has as equal chance of being selected. Teachers included in the sample were purposively selected. In purposive sampling technique, the members selected must meet a predetermined condition before they are included in the sample.

The pupils in standards eight were selected because they need more support from their parents because they are already registered for the examinations. The examination period can be very stressful and in order for the student to learn well certain conditions need to put in place. The parents of these pupils were selected in order to see whether they are assisting their children in any way. The teachers were selected to test whether they value the assistance of the parents and see whether they get the help they need. These schools were selected because their performance has not been so impressive despite the fact that they all have qualified teachers and the necessary materials needed for learning.
Table 3.1 Sampling Grids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study area</th>
<th>Egoji Location</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Instrumentation

3.5.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was used to collect data from the children. A questionnaire is a document developed by a researcher for the respondent to enter information. Questions that are asked relate to the topic under study. Two types questionnaire were used to gather data namely, closed-ended questionnaire and a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires are easy to construct, easy code, good for collecting large data and they are free from interviewee bias. The respondent has adequate time to respond to the questions. However, questionnaires are inflexible in that one cannot change them easy. They can only be used with people who are literate. The informant has no chance of airing his or her own views.
3.6 Interview schedule

An interview schedule was used for the parents. An interview schedule is similar to a questionnaire only that the researcher asks the questions and fills the questionnaire. An interview schedule was chosen because majority of the parents in the rural areas are either semi-illiterate or illiterates. The interview schedule allows for detailed information and they are ideal where respondents are not educated. It is ideal in gathering detailed and specific information. It allows the researcher to assess the truthfulness of the answers given and the reliability of the answers given. However, it is very easy to put words in the informant’s mouth as well as giving a lead or guide to the answers.

3.7 PILOT STUDY

The pre-test of the instruments on pupils, teachers and parents in one school randomly selected were carried out. The subjects of the pre-test were 10 students, 5 parents and 5 teachers. The pre-test subjects were encouraged by the researcher to make comments and give suggestions concerning the items. The pilot study helped the researcher to identify ambiguous items that were considered irrelevant to the study and to delete them, without compromising
the aim of the questionnaires. The aim of the pilot study was to identify major deficiencies and suggestions for improvement to check if the instruments would elicit data for in the study and whether they can be meaningfully analysed in relation to the stated hypotheses.

3.8 Validity and reliability.

After pilot study, the researcher validated and evaluated the items and made the necessary adjustments. The indicators were accurately measure the concepts I want to measure. The reliability check was performed separately for data collected. The unreliable items were dropped.

3.9 Data collection procedures

First, a list of all the schools in Egoji location was obtained. Then a list of registered standard eight candidates and a list of teachers teaching standard eight class was also obtained. The school also provided a list of parents with children in class eight. Afterwards, permission from the District education officer's office was sought. A formal visit to the schools was done to brief the head teachers of the intended exercise. A courtesy call was paid to the chief before I interviewed the parents of these students. During the data collection
exercise, I explained to the respondents how to respond to the items. Then administration of the questionnaire to the pupils and the teachers followed. After that, parents were interviewed.

3.10 Administration

During the administration, instructions were read and the students were required to respond to the given questions systematically. Parents were interviewed to verify what the children had stated. Teachers were required to respond to the questionnaires to show ways in which parents were involved.

3.11 Data analysis and report writing

Upon completion of data collection, the questionnaires were scored and data coded for analysis. Since some of the data involved could be reduced to numerical value, quantitative method of data analysis that involves computing total scores for each subject of the study was utilized. The rest of the data was analysed using qualitative method. Descriptive method was used in reporting the results of such data. Correlation was used to determine the strength of the relationships.
3.12 Scoring procedure

The following were the indicators of involvement:

- Help given to homework
- Attendance to school functions
- Participating in electing PTA members
- Consulting the teachers
- Forms of reinforcement given by the parents.
- Provision of materials.

A maximum of 6 scores were attained by the parent who does all the above. This signified the highest level of parental involvement. The parent who does one of the above-mentioned indicators attained a minimum of one score. This signified least level of involvement. The higher the score, the higher the level of involvement, and the lower the score the lower the level of involvement. The total score obtained in this case would give a single measure of parental involvement.

3.13 Data analysis techniques

After scoring, data were coded. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, variances and standard deviations were used to describe the data obtained for each variable under
study. This provided a basis for discussions and conclusions that would be used to test the hypothesis. Chi-square was used in testing significance of relationships between variables at $\leq 0.5$ level of significance. Chi-square was used to show the strength of these relationships. Chi-square $\chi^2$, allows one to analyse frequency data to answer questions that seek to explain the significance of relationships. The chi-square of the deviations of a score from its population means divided by the population variance, where the population is normally distributed.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

4.0 Introduction

The study set out to investigate whether parents of class 8 pupils in Egoji- Meru are involved in the learning process and whether there is a relationship between levels of involvement and the learning process. In this chapter, demographic data for each of the variables under study are presented using descriptive statistics. Each of the considered hypotheses is tested in relation to data analysed using Chi-square to determine statistical relationships between variables. Results are presented based on the objectives of the test.

4.1 Results based on the objectives.

4.1.2 In what ways are the parents involved?

The following indicators of involvement were used to establish parental involvement.

1. Assistance given to the child during the homework.
2. Attendance of school functions.
3. Participating in electing PTA members.
4. Giving rewards as forms of reinforcement.
5. Consultation with the teachers
Assistance given to the child during the homework

In assisting the child with homework, the following ways were used to assess parental involvement.

Table 4.1 Indicators of parental involvement and the percentage scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators for assistance given during homework</th>
<th>Parents who did give the assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiring whether the child had homework</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answering questions when asked by the child</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing materials needed for homework</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing distractions during homework</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking exercise books occasionally</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, 70% of the parents inquired whether the children had homework. By inquiring, the parents were indicating that they were interested in knowing whether the child had attended school and if so was there learning. Parents' interest in the
schoolwork would make the child develop some accountability. 
30% of the parents did not inquire whether the children had 
homework. This may imply that the parents were not aware if the 
children were supposed to carry homework. It may also imply that 
the parents were busy attending to other duties.

Out of the 70% of the parents who inquired if the children had any 
homework, 67% of them expected their children to do the homework 
immediately after finishing the household chores that they were 
assigned. The parents supervised the household chores to ensure 
that the children spent little time on them. The remaining 33% of 
the parents who had inquired if the child had any homework did not 
require the child to do it immediately.

From the above, it is evident that after inquiring whether the child 
had homework, a large percentage of the parents encouraged their 
children to do it immediately. This implies that the parents showed 
concern and they supported their children in home studies. It is also 
evident that 33% of the parents did not encourage their children to 
do homework.
The other form of assistance that the parents were required to give to the children was answering questions, when their children experienced difficult tasks in the course of assignments. By answering questions parents would enhance understanding of difficult concepts. This would also enhance more interaction with their children, which is good for proper development. This interaction will help the parent understand the difficulties that their children were experiencing in various subjects. This study established that only 57% of the parents were able to assist their children in this aspect. The remaining 43% were not able to give assistance.

From the children's responses on this indicator, it was established that other people were consulted when a child experienced difficulties in doing homework. The table below shows who else was consulted.
Table 4.2 People consulted by children other the parent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People consulted</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, 25% of the children preferred to ask their siblings difficult questions/tasks. This is possibly because they felt free with the siblings and the fact that the siblings were with them at home. 10% of the children asked relatives who lived with them or within the neighbourhood.

20% of the children consulted their teachers when their parents were not able. This means that 80% of the children found it difficult to approach the teachers. Maybe the children feared the teachers and they preferred to keep away. This is not healthy in a learning environment and children should be encouraged to consult their teachers regularly. It is a good indication that in the rural areas, there is a distance between the teachers and the children.
15% of the children consulted nobody. This means that if the homework was difficult, they would ignore the hard tasks and do what they could or fail to do the homework altogether. This percentage of children is not too small to be ignored. Possibly in this group of students are the learning disabled ones who prefer to be left on their own and who possibly go unnoticed. This group of children possibly did not even attempt to do the homework. Parents and teachers of such children should find ways of helping them.

In providing materials needed for homework, only 33% of the parents were able to provide adequate materials. 67% of the parents were not able to provide. The materials that were needed included exercise books, textbooks, pens, geometrical sets, pens pencils, rubbers and a good reading table. At the time of gathering the data, the government had declared free primary education. Therefore, most of the parents were waiting for the government to supply the reading materials.

For learning to take place, pupils must have adequate provision of the needed materials. It is difficult to learn without textbooks, exercise books, pens and other tools required. What parents failed to
realize was that their children were already candidates and they wasted a lot of time waiting for the government’s provision.

The other things that the parents were supposed to supply were adequate lunch and uniforms. It was observed that only one school had a lunch programme supported by the parents. The pupils from the other two schools had to go home for lunch or wait up to the evening. A few of them however carried lunch when it was available. It was also observed that most of the children did not have good uniforms. Most of them had uniforms that were in a state of disrepair and they did not have sweaters. Majority of the children did not have school shoes.

The other way the parents were expected to help their children during homework was in checking the exercise books. By so doing, the parents would be able to know whether the child does the work given by the teachers. The parents would also know the difficulties the child was experiencing. The parents would also ensure that the child had all the required books. This would help prevent loss of these books. By checking the books, the parents would know whether the child does the homework and how well is the work
done. The parents would also know whether the teachers mark the assignments given.

In this study, 93% of the parents checked the exercise books occasionally. This means that they were not completely in touch with what the child was doing in school. 7% of the parents said that they check the books of their children regularly and they were able to know what they child was doing in school.

In reducing the distractions during study, very few parents were able to provide a quiet study place in the home. Very often, the children were sent by their parents while studying. All the children were required to do certain household chores before could settle down for homework. Among these chores they were required to fetching water, fetching firewood, feeding animals and cooking supper. The source of light for study that was provided was a tin lamp. This implies that instead of the child settling to do his/her studies using the daylight, they would have to clear the household chores and later do the homework using the tin lamp or fireplace as a source of light.
The duties they were required to do were also tiring considering that the children had spent the day in school reading. It was evident that there was no snack offered after school as it is practised in the urban centres. Sometimes, when there was no kerosene, the child had to study near the fireplace, which was full of smoke. The study area was often the sitting room where everyone else was and therefore there was a lot of noise. The parents failed to provide this very important factor for their children’s studies.

Monitoring children’s homework increases the rate of learning. A parent may not necessarily know the correct answers. However, even if a parent who is seemingly illiterate get involved in the child’s work, the child develops a feeling that my parents know how to read and write even when they do not because parents occupy a position of authority in the life of the child. It is for the parent to demonstrate interest by providing a quiet, well-lit place for doing homework, encouraging children’s efforts by being available for questions and being willing to discuss material the child is learning even if it is in mother tongue. Children whose parents inquired on homework were more motivated to learn because on a daily basis their parents were involved. Children whose parents did not were
either left on their own to work and consequently may not have performed well in school.

**Attendance of school functions**

The school functions that were considered included prize-giving ceremonies, parent-teachers meetings, fund-raising and class meetings. From the teachers' report majority of the parents did not attend the meetings voluntarily. All the schools in spite of sending meeting notices early, they had to send the children to collect their parents on the material day set for meetings or else very few parents would attend. 60% of the interviewed parents indicated that they attended the meetings after the children were sent back. 40% however reported that they hardly attend meetings because they are busy elsewhere.

Attending school functions is important in that the parents become familiar with the daily operations of the school. It is during these meetings and functions that opportunities arise when teachers can communicate with parents and vice versa. It is during these functions that the effort of the children can be rewarded publicly thus creating or enacting a forum to encourage hard work. During such meetings, disciplinary measures can be discussed and implemented.
Parents can enhance good partnership with the teachers in this kind of forums. When parents fail to attend such meetings, the head teacher and teachers cannot effectively operate. When parents attend school functions the mistrust and hostility that exist between the teachers and the parents will be minimized. The traditional distance between parents and the school needs to be minimized for the benefit of the students. The belief that the education of the children should be carried out far from the interference of parents is an ancient one.

By getting involved in school functions, parents will gain autonomy, which is important for the successful running of school. This will help in developing a school where the input of parents will be useful and the natural belief in teachers as experts be reduced to enhance a good partnership.

Parental involvement in the school functions will also help the teachers to accept the role parent’s play in the learning process. It will also help break the barrier between the teachers and the parents. The main barrier that is cited for lack of involvement is usually lack of understanding. Musgrove and Taylor (1965) reported that there
were major differences between what teachers thought parents regarded as important and what parents actually thought. Parents are most concerned with the qualification for their children. Even though the parents' do not have enough knowledge about the school as an organisation to express any opinions on school matters in the rural areas, they still have a lot of influence on their children.

In this, the role of the parents is a fairly silent one when it comes to meetings. In this study, more mothers seemed to be more responsive to attending meetings. This is possibly because they are the ones at home when the child is sent back to call the parent. 57% of the interviewed parents were mothers. The remaining 43% were fathers.

**Participating in electing PTA members**

Parents-teachers Association is charged with the responsibilities of managing day-to-day affairs of the school. Members of this association determine modes of discipline, control financial aspects, and act as watchdogs over the teachers. The members of PTA are the parents representatives, in this study 93% of the parents participated in electing the members. Only 7% did not participate. Majority of the parents were involved. It is clear that electing the members of the PTA attracted more parents than the other
indicators. This is possibly due to the campaign that goes with the election. What was interesting is that despite the fact that the majority of the people who attended meetings were mother's, more fathers were elected members of the PTA. This result showed gender imbalance in parent's representations.

**Consulting with teachers**

Parents ought to consult teachers often in order to develop a good working relationship. During such consultations, parents will be able to know how their children are performing in class. A parent consulting with teachers will know the problems his/her children are experiencing. The teachers on the other hand, will know the strengths and weaknesses of the child as reported by the parents. When parents and teachers are able to develop a good working relationship with the parents, they can be able to influence the child in the learning process.

In this study, parents rarely consulted the teachers. Only 40% of the parents reported that they consulted the teachers when they noticed their child was not doing well. 60% did not consult the teachers at all. This is a large number of parents. They claimed that they were not aware that they could consult the teachers and thought that the
child was able to talk to the teachers. It was established earlier that every children consulted the teachers when they had difficulties.

**Giving rewards and other forms of reinforcement**

To motivate a child when he/she has done well in school, a parent can give various forms of rewards to supplement reinforcements given by the teachers. When a child is rewarded he/she feels that the parent is appreciating his/her efforts and the child get encouraged to work even harder anticipating a reward from the parents. In this study, majority of the parents were giving rewards to their children. 90% of the parents gave rewards such as gifts or encouraging remarks. Only 10% of the interviewed parents did not give any form of rewards. Possibly, this is the group of the parents who did not inquire about schoolwork from their children nor did they take any interest in the school activities. The 90% who gave gifts also took some time to discuss the report form results with the child at the end of every term.

75% of the children reported that they received gifts from their parents but they had to give the report form first. 25% of the children reported that their parents did not ask for the report forms. This means majority of the parents were interested in getting to know the position of their children in the class. In the report forms
the parents were mainly interested in the position of the children not the marks. The positions were however not a good reflection of the child’s performance because there were very few children in the class. For instance in one of the schools, there were only 10 children. A child who was position eight did not sound very poor yet the total marks attained were very low. When parents rewarded such a child, they did it out of ignorance and the child may not see the need for improving the grade because the parents recognized it as a good score.

4.2 To find out whether the parents are involved

To establish the level of involvement, a six score grid was established. A parent who was very involved scored a total of six scores and the least score was one. The indicators of involvement were:

- Help given during homework
- Provision of materials
- Participation in election of PTA members
- Consultation with the teachers
- Forms of reinforcement given by the parents
- Attendance of school functions.
Table 4.3 Using the above indicators the following results were attained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>Not involved</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Functions</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electing PTA</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting teachers</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Provision</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, the following observations are made;

- The most preferred form of involvement was electing the members of the PTA. There were 93% of the parents who participated in the voting. Only 7% did not participate in the voting exercise.

- The second preferred form of involvement was giving rewards to the children with 90% of the parents involved. Only 10% of the parents did not reward their children in any way.
The third indicator was assistance in homework, which scored 87%. Only 13% of the parents were not involved in any way in giving homework. Even though the score indicates a high level of involvement, the nature of involvement did not contribute directly to the learning process. From the study, it was established that the majority of the parents inquired on the homework but very few encouraged their children to settle down and do it immediately. It was also established that many parents were not able to provide all the materials needed for homework. It was also established that most of the children could depend on the parents for assistance when they had difficult tasks to tackle in the homework. This area is quite crucial in the learning process because children will always be given homework. Homework ought to be done at home and this is the time a parent can offer an input into the learning process.

The fourth indicator was attendance to school functions. Here we find that 60% of the parents attended the school meetings. Knowing the importance of school meetings more parents should have been attending. 40% however did not attend meetings often. It was observed that most of the
parents attended meetings only after the children were sent back to call after an earlier notice had been sent.

- The fifth indicator was consulting teachers and was among less preferred forms of involvement. Only 40% of the parents consulted the teachers when they realised that their child had difficulties. 60% of the parents did not consult the teachers and they indicated that they were not aware that the teachers could be consulted. This group of parents treated the teachers as experts and they felt they had nothing to offer. This is a very important area of involvement and parents can only know the weaknesses of their children if they talk with the teachers and work together. Teachers can also gain a lot from the parents in the area of understanding the parents.

- The least preferred form of involvement was provision of learning materials. Only 33% of the parents were able to provide the learning materials despite the fact that no meaningful learning can take place without an adequate supply of these materials. The remaining 67% of the parents had not provided the needed materials for their children.
Each of the parents was awarded one score for each of the involvement indicators that they were able to engage in. Two levels of involvement were decided upon to be able to state whether the parents in these schools were involved or not.

Table 4.4 Scores for parental level of involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Level 1 with score between 1-3 indicates that the parents in this category were able only to be involved in one, two or three ways implying low involvement.
- Level 2 with a score of 4-6 indicates that the parents were able to be involved in four, five or six ways implying highly involved.

The above two levels were arrived at because it is impossible for parents to be entirely uninvolved in the education of their children. What may vary is the nature and method of involvement in relation to academic performance.
From the above, the parents in Egoji Location were involved in various ways, only that the areas that they gave a lot of premium in their involvement did not directly contribute to actual learning process. The areas that needed a lot of emphasis in the involvement were provision of learning materials, consultation of teachers and attendance of school functions because these are the areas that directly affect the learning process.

4.3 To find out if there is a relationship between parental level of involvement and sex, level of education of parents and the occupation of parents

4.3.1 Parental involvement and occupation

The majority of the parents in the rural areas are self-employed. They are peasant farmers with few of them involved in small-scale businesses. They did not have a source of constant income and they were not able to provide the needed materials. Most of them were in the economically at lower level. Therefore, the high poverty level could have affected involvement. 50% of the teachers interviewed reported that poverty influenced involvement. 50% however reported that poverty was not a good reason for not being involved. 93% of the parents in this study were involved in peasant farming. Only 7% were involved in small-scale businesses in the rural areas.
Chi-square was used to establish the relationship between level of involvement and occupation of the parents. The null hypothesis was there was a relationship between the occupation of the parents and their level of involvement.

Table 4.5 Contingency table on occupation and level of involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>Not involved</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Computation formula.

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (fo-fe)^2}{fe}$$

fo is the observed frequencies
fe is the expected frequencies

$\Sigma$ (sigma) stands for sum of.

To determine the expected frequencies for each cell multiply the two marginal frequencies related to the cell then divide by grand total. Adopted from (Ingule, F. and Gatumu, H. 1996).
The expected frequencies for each cell are:

A  \[ \frac{28 \times 22}{30} = 20.53 \]

B  \[ \frac{2 \times 22}{30} = 1.47 \]

C  \[ \frac{28 \times 8}{30} = 7.47 \]

D  \[ \frac{28 \times 2}{30} = 0.53 \]

\[ \chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2 \]

E

\[ = (20-20.53)^2 + (2-1.47)^2 + (8-7.47)^2 + (0-0.53)^2 \]

\[ = 20.53 \quad 1.47 \quad 7.47 \quad 0.53 \]

computed \( \chi^2 = 0.62 \)

\( df = 1 \)

Testing \( H_o \) at 0.01 level of significance the theoretical \( \chi^2 = 6.635 \)

Testing \( H_o \) at 0.05 level of significance the theoretical \( \chi^2 = 3.841 \).
If the computed $X^2$ is greater than the theoretical $X^2$ reject the null hypothesis and if the computed $X^2$ is less than the theoretical $X^2$ accept the null hypothesis.

From the above results the null hypothesis is accepted. There was no significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and the occupation of the parents.

4.3.2 Level of education and parental involvement

Studies carried out by various scholars indicate that there is relationship between level of involvement of parents and their level of education. In this study, majority of the parents were primary school graduates, a few of them having attended college and a few had no education.

Table 4.6 Parent’s level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
75% of the teachers reported that the illiterate parents were very difficult to involve. 25% of the teachers interviewed felt otherwise. 78% of the teachers interviewed reported that the educated parents were more involved and were cooperative with the school policies. Majority of parents interviewed had attained primary level of education; most of them dropped out of primary school. Teachers felt that the level of education of parents influenced their involvement. The semi-illiterate parents were reported to be quite difficult involve. Majority of the teachers responded favourably that the parents who had either secondary and college education were more cooperative and were able to assist their children better.

To establish the strength of the relationships chi-square was used. The $H_0$ that was being tested was that there is no relationship between parents’ level of education and parental involvement.

Table 4.7 Contingency table on parental level of education and involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>Not Involved</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Computation of the $\chi^2$

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2$$

$$E = (13-11)^2 + (5-7.33)^2 + (4-2.93)^2 + (0-0.73)^2 + (2-4)^2$$

$$= 11 \quad 7.33 \quad 2.93 \quad 0.73 \quad 4$$

$$+ (5-2.67)^2 + (0-1.07)^2 + (1-0.27)^2$$

$$= 2.67 \quad 1.07 \quad 0.27$$

Computed $\chi^2 = 8.22$

$$\text{df} = 3$$

Testing the $H_0$ at the level of significance 0.01 the theoretical $\chi^2 = 11.345$

Testing the $H_0$ at the level of significance 0.05 the theoretical $\chi^2 = 7.815$

If the computed $\chi^2$ is greater than the theoretical $\chi^2$ reject the null hypothesis and if the computed $\chi^2$ is less than the theoretical $\chi^2$ accept the null hypothesis.

At the significance level 0.05 level the null hypothesis is rejected, while at the significance level 0.01 the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there was a significant relationship between parents’ level of education and their level of involvement.
4.3.3 Parental involvement and the sex of the parents

Majority of the involved parents were females. Few fathers/males attended school functions and did not ask whether the children had homework. Fathers were said to be earning for the family and mothers were to attend to the needs of the child at school. Since most of schools selected forced the children to go and get their parents, it happened that the mothers were at home and easily accessible so they were brought to school. Therefore mothers tended to be more informed on school issues and child performance than fathers. There was a sex difference in the number of parents who participated in the study. It was evident that more mothers were involved than fathers.

Table 4.8. Sex of the parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The null hypothesis was a relationship between the level of parental involvement and the sex of the parents.
Table 4.9 Contingency table on sex of parents and involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>Not Involved</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2 \]

\[ \begin{align*}
E &= (13-12.47)^2 + (9-9.5)^2 + (4-4.43)^2 + (4-3.47)^2 \\
&= 12.47 + 9.5 + 4.43 + 3.47 \\
\text{The computed } \chi^2 &= 0.19 \\
\text{df} &= 1 \\
\text{Testing at the level of significance 0.01 the theoretical } \chi^2 &= 6.635 \\
\text{Testing at the level of significance 0.05 the theoretical } \chi^2 &= 3.841 \\
\text{If the computed } \chi^2 \text{ is greater than the theoretical } \chi^2 \text{ reject the null hypothesis and if the computed } \chi^2 \text{ is less than the theoretical } \chi^2 \text{ accept the null hypothesis.} \]
The null hypothesis is accepted at both levels. There is no significant difference between the sexes of the parents with regard to parental involvement.

4.4 Summary of the findings

1. Majority of the parents were involved in the learning of their children. Most of them scored 4-6 in the indicators of involvement.

2. There was a significant relationship between the levels of education of parents to the level of involvement. This was possibly due to the fact that majority of the parents in the rural areas had primary level with only a few having secondary and college training. This is because most graduates in the rural areas are able to send their children to better schools and especially boarding schools. A few parents had no education at all.

3. There was no significant relationship between the sex of the parents and their involvement in school. However, more mothers attended the school functions than the fathers even though the difference was insignificant.

4. There was no significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and the occupation of the parents.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

5.1 Introduction
This chapter is divided into three parts. Part one is the discussions of the findings based on the hypotheses. Part two has the recommendations based on the discussions of the findings and suggestions and the final part has conclusions of the research. The research hypotheses were as follows;

❖ There is no relationship between parents’ level of education and parental involvement.
❖ There is no significant difference between level of parental involvement and occupation.
❖ There is a significant relationship between the sex of the parents and parental involvement.

5.1.1 There is no relationship between parent’s level of education and parental involvement

From the findings, there was a significant relationship between level of education of the parents and parental involvement. At 0.05 level, $\chi^2$ score achieved was 8.22, at the df 3, the score was 7.815. Therefore, by chance level of education of parents had influence on the level of parental involvement. This is because majority of the parents were primary school graduates with a few having secondary and college education. From the scores attained, it is clear that majority of the parents were involved in one-way or another. What
is not clear is the quality of the involvement in relation to learning. Table 4.4 shows that majority of the parents were involved in the areas that were identified for this study. The null hypothesis was accepted.

5.1.2 There is a relationship between the level of parental involvement and the sex of the parent.

On the significance level 0.05, there was no significant relationship difference between the sex of the parents and their involvement. Even though most of the parents involved were mothers, the difference was not great. The null hypothesis was accepted. This is possibly because the mothers were the ones who were at home most of the times.

5.1.3 There is no significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and occupation.

There was no significant difference between the level of parental involvement and occupation of the parents. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. The results do not agree with those of other researchers possibly because the majority of the parents who were included in this sample were small-scale farmers. However the results presents the nature of the rural parent involvement.
5.2 Discussions on indicators of involvement

5.2.1 Assistance given during homework

Children who spend more time on homework, on average do better in school and the academic benefit increases as children move into the upper grades. When assignments are completed successfully, they can help children develop wholesome habits and attitudes. Homework helps parents to learn about their children’s education and communicate both with their children and the schools. Homework can encourage a child to develop a life-long love of learning. Homework provides an opportunity for the parents to be involved.

When a parent shows interest in the child’s work they desire to perform well. Parents ought to know that homework helps a child to review what was learnt, to practise what the skill acquired, to teach a child how to use resources available, to create independence, to encourage self-discipline and time management.

From the findings, the nature of the assistance given to children was very limited. Most of the parents were not able to provide guidance in the homework because of their level of education.
Even though a good number of them inquired on whether the children had been given homework, few of them were able to give assistance in form of answering questions. Few parents were able to check the children’s books occasionally but a few were able to notice mistakes or work that was poorly done.

Cullen (1969) state that “a part of school learning is carried into the home in the evening homework” This is the time when an interested parent can find for him/her self how the child is progressing and offer himself/herself help and encouragement. From the findings of this study, the parents were interested but they lacked the knowledge of the nature of help to give to their children during homework. Since the majority of them inquired whether their children had homework, it means that they were interested. There was a group of parents who did not even inquire and therefore they can be said to have been uninterested.

5.2.2 Provision of reading materials.

Majority of the pupils reported that they did not have adequate materials required by the school. They reported that they had to borrow what their parents could not provide. The reason why the children lacked these materials was the fact that the parents did not have formal employment and most earn very low incomes. By the
time this study was being conducted, majority of the children did not have some of the basic materials because the government had just declared free primary education. It was evident that even the parents who had previously made an effort to provide the materials needed, did not make an attempt because they were waiting for the government to supply. Therefore, during the first term most primary schools experienced a lot of problems with materials needed for learning because the parents refused to provide, waiting for the government to do so. Those who did provide were only but a few.

Lack of adequate materials for learning has significant effects in the learning process. It leads to lagging behind because if a child does not have books to read or write on, it will be difficult for the child and the teacher to achieve the objectives of the lesson. Orodho (1992) stated that parents should prioritise their meagre resources to provide the materials needed for the child at school. Cooper Smith (1967) stated that home environment might enhance positive self-esteem, which may improve the academic performance. Parents enhance self-esteem by providing warmth, respectful treatment and catering for/meeting the personal needs of a child. A child who is not clean and orderly may feel inferior to others. These factors depend on the ability of a parent to provide.
5.2.3 Attending school functions

Majority of the parents attended school meetings only after the children were sent back to collect them. In the study, what came out clearly is that the parents had to be forced to come to school functions by the head teachers sending the children back to call them. Most of the parents also reported very late for the functions. Caudrey (1985) stated that teachers believe the presence of parents in the school and classroom can be beneficial and may even enhance the status of the teachers in addressing the needs of the child. If this is true then, majority of the parents in the rural areas and especially in the area where this study was conducted did not even consult the teachers regularly even when their child had a problem.

Studies show that when parents are present in school, they will know the problems being experienced by the teachers and the urgent needs in the school. When parents are present, situations will arise where a parent can easily discuss with the teachers about their children. Herman (1980) stated that parent’s interest and involvement in the school activities result in increased pupils’ achievement. When the parents are present in school, they will be
involved in decision-making. Presence of the parents in the school will enhance good relationships with the teachers, breaking the barrier that exists between them. Presence of the parent will create unplanned for opportunities when issues that concern their child can be discussed. This quality of involvement was not found in this study. The parents were involved but not to a degree that would influence good academic performance.

5.2.4 Participation in electing PTA members

Since the PTA acts as the governing body of the school then most of the parents participated in elections. The duties of the PTA include supporting the school; requires accountability from the head and teachers; advising the school; mediating between the school and community. PTA works to support and to speak on behalf of children, assist parents, develop skills they need to raise and protect their children and to encourage parental involvement in schools. This does not seem to happen however.

5.2.5 Giving rewards as forms of reinforcement

Parents ought to set high but realistic standards of achievement for their children. With the help of the teachers, a parent can be made aware what good grades are and they ought to reward only the good grades. Children on the other hand respond positively to the
parent’s expectations. When the parents’ expectations are high, the child works hard to meet the goal set. Children need positive encouragement in form of praise, expressed interest and rewarded efforts in order to succeed. When the parent know the abilities of the child, they can be able to set achievable goals without discouraging the child.

5.2.6 Consulting the teachers

Parents are their children’s best advocates. A parent’s willingness to contact teachers on a regular basis about their children’s education will enhance good performance. Consulting the teachers will ensure that the parent is armed with good information about a child’s performance. Using this information a parent is in position to directly and indirectly influence the child’s progress.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendations are made based on discussions followed by suggestions for further research.

The main purposes of the study were to find out:

- Whether parents are involved
- How parents are involved
- Whether there is a gender difference in involvement.

The main instruments that were used to gather data are:

1. Questionnaires
2. Interview schedule.
The statistical tools used for data analysis were:

1. Descriptive statistics.
2. Inferential statistics such as chi-square to test strengths of relationships.
3. Tables were used to present data collected.

Recommendations

1. Parents need to be informed on how they can be more effectively involved in the learning process of their children. This can be done through seminars and workshops organized by the schools especially in the area of homework.
2. With the provision of free primary education, the government needs to outline the role of parents in education of their children at the primary level.
3. Schools should provide flexible program for parents in order to be effective in involving them. Schools should be releasing more information to parents highlighting areas for involvement.
4. Parental advocacy groups should be formed to educate parents on their responsibilities in the education of their children.
5. Most parents in rural areas value the education of their children. There is need to enlighten the parents on the most fruitful forms of involvement to enhance good academic performance. This is because the nature of parental involvement is what counts. If the parents are guided and told what help to give to their children, then there will be good support from home leading to better academic performance.
5.4 Suggestions for further research

Even though it is clear that children achieve more when parents provide good reading materials, supervise homework and hold reasonably high expectations of their children's performance, more research is needed to understand what types of involvement are more beneficial to academic performance. Based on the recommendations made and results obtained, the following suggestions are made for consideration in any other future research.

1. A study similar to this one can be carried out to investigate areas of involvement that would contribute most to the learning process. The findings of this study were too general and did not zero in one area of involvement.

2. Due to limited time, the study involved only three primary schools in Egoji, Meru. A similar study can be carried out in the larger district to cover a larger population to allow for generalization of results.

3. There is a possibility that only one parent is more involved than the other. There is therefore a need to conduct a study to establish whether there is gender difference in parental involvement.
4. This study only looked at parental involvement in rural day schools. A study needs to be conducted to establish how parents of children in boarding schools are involved.

5.5 Conclusion

Research shows that parental involvement increases children’s academic performance. It is also evident that parental involvement also improves the students’ morale, attitudes and it reduces risk of academic failure and dropping out of school. This being the case, parental involvement is a very crucial factor in the learning process. Family involvement for academic excellency of students should be encouraged.

Parental involvement in the rural schools however, seems to revolve around electing the members of PTA and giving rewards. Areas that directly influence the learning process are not greatly taken into consideration. Parents in the rural areas need to be made aware of the importance of involvement in the children’s homework, consulting the teachers and providing the learning materials because these areas affect the learning process more directly.

Certain factors affect parental involvement in the rural areas. These factors include the level of education and low income. The fact that
majority of the parents in the rural areas have low levels of education makes them shy away from active involvement. Low-income levels hinder the parent's ability to provide the required materials. Teachers ought to open more channels to encourage parental involvement.
REFERENCES.


Plowden Report (1967). *Parental Involvement in Learning*. (CACE)


Taylor Report (1967). Advisory Centre for Education. P.222


APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CHILDREN.

Instructions. Please answer all the questions in the spaces provided. The answers that you will give are all correct. The answers that you give will be used to answer research questions and will not be shown to anybody else.

SECTION 1. PERSONAL INFORMATION.

1. Name 

2. Age 12-14 [] 15-16 [] 17 and above []

3. Sex Female [] Male []

4. Name of your school 

5. Name of your parents 

6. Position in class last term _______out of________

SECTION 2. LEARNING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Are you given homework to carry home? Yes [] or No []

2. What time do you start doing your homework?
   Immediately I get home []
   After doing work given to me by parents []
   I do not do any homework []

3. Do your parents ask whether you have any homework?
   YES [] NO []

4. When they do, do they encourage you to start doing it immediately?
   YES [] NO []

5. Do your parents send you while you are studying to go and do something for them? YES [] NO []

6. Do you have a good reading table? YES [] NO []
7. Do you have a functional lamp?
   Always [] Sometimes [] not at all []

8. Have your parents provided all materials needed by the school? YES []
   NO []. List down what they have provided; ------------------------------
   List down what they have not provided. ------------------------------

9. If you have difficulties with your homework whom do you normally
   ask to assist you?
   My parents [] Brothers and sisters []
   My relatives [] I ask my teachers []
   I ask nobody []

10. Do your parents come to school for any functions?
    YES [] NO []
    If yes, state functions they attend. -------------------------------
    If no, what reasons do they give for not attending?
    -----------------------------------------------

11. When you do well in school, are your parents able to reward you?
    YES [] NO []

12. What rewards do they normally give you?

13. When you take the report form home do your parents take time to go
    through the report form with you? YES [] NO []
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS.

Instructions: The purpose of this interview is to get information on how parents get involved in the academic performance of their children. The information collected will be treated as confidential.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION.

1. Name

2. Age 30-35 [] 36-40 [] 41 and above []

3. Sex Female [] Male []

4. Occupation

5. Level of Education: Primary Level [] Secondary Level [] College level [] University [] None []

6. Name of your child in standard eight

7. Name of the school where your child attend

SECTION 2.

1. Why did you choose this school for your child?

2. Are you a member of the Parents Teachers Association? YES [] NO []

3. What is the role of Parent Teachers Association in the school where your child goes?

4. Do you participate in electing members of the Parents Teachers Association? YES [] NO []
SECTION 3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND LEARNING

5. Do your children come home with homework on a daily basis? YES [] NO []

6. What time do you expect them to start doing the homework?
   Immediately after school [] After doing the work I have given []
   I don’t know []

7. What help do your give to your child concerning schoolwork?
   I answer question when asked []
   I provide all materials needed []
   I explain difficult tasks []
   I give none []

8. Do you normally check your child’s books to see what he/she is doing?
   YES [] NO []
   If no why don’t you check the books?

9. What materials have you provided your child with for schoolwork?

10. The ones you have not been able to provide, what does your child do
    He/she borrows [] I don’t know []

11. Where does your child do his/her homework at home?
    In the sitting room [] Outside [] I don’t know []

12. When your child performs well in examinations, what do you normally do?
    I give gifts [] I tell them well done []
    I do not do anything []
14. Do you visit the school where your child goes? Yes [ ] No [ ]. If yes, what reasons normally take you to school? If No, why don’t you visit the school?

15. When your child performs poorly in school, what do normally do to help the child improve?
   - I discuss the matter with the teacher [ ]
   - I discuss with the child whatever problems he/she has [ ]
   - I employ a tutor [ ]
   - I stop them from doing any work at home [ ]
   - I create more reading time [ ]
   - I do nothing [ ]

16. Are there times when your child misses school? YES [ ] NO [ ] If yes, what are the reasons?

17. Do you think your child will help you after finishing his/her education?
APPENDIX 3

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE.

INSTRUCTIONS. This questionnaire seeks to get information on how parents are involved in the academic performance of their children. The information obtained will be confidential and will be used for purposes of research. Please fill in the spaces provided.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name ---------------------------------------------

School ---------------------------------------------

Sex Female [] Male []

Age: 20-30 [] 30-35 [] 36-40[] 41 and above

Experience 1-5 [] 5-10 [] 11 and above []

Teaching subjects: English [] Math's [] Science [] Kiswahili [] GHC []

Others------

SECTION 2: INVOLVING PARENTS

1. There are a number of ways a parent can be involved in the learning process of their children. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false regarding parental involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Parents should not check the homework.</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents should attend meetings</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when they are called</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. All parents should not show interest schoolwork.</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The statements below give some of the reasons that can make a parent not get involved in the academic performance of their children. Please by putting a tick indicate whether you Strongly agree (SA); Agree (A); Undecided (U); Disagree (D); or Strongly Disagree (SD) with the given statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents are not involved because they are poor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are very busy working to be involved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are involved because they value education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The illiterate parents cannot be involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers find it difficult to involve parents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school does not allow parents to be involved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of our parents are not interested.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our parents are not usually cooperative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The level of parental involvement is determined by a number of factors. These factors may include the level of education, occupation and attitudes of the parent. Put a tick in the table below to indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), or
Strongly Disagree (SD) with the statements below to show which parents are more involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated parents are least involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated parents shy away from school involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed parents are not able to get involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parents show a lot of interest in school activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed parents are the most involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Providing reading materials and paying fees are not all a parent can do to enhance learning. True [ ] False [ ]

5. If parents get more involved the results of our school would get better.
   True [ ] False [ ]

6. Indicate any other ways in which you have tried to involve parents in the children's work.