**ASSESSING SCHOOL INITIATIVES IN INVOLVING PARENTS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN TEMEKE MUNICIPALITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THEDEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION, PLANNING AND POLICY STUDIES (MED-APPS)**

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# CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, certifies that she has read the entire work and hereby recommends for acceptance the dissertation entitled ***“Assessing School Initiatives in involving Parents in School Activities in Temeke Municipality Primary Schools*”** in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

…………………………..

Dr. Mary Ogondiek

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Date……………………

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# DECLARATION

**I, Minja Anna Joachim**, declare that this is my own original work and that has not been presented by anybody else and will not be presented to any other University for a similar or other degree award.

Signature……………………

Date..................................

# DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my beloved husband Mr. Jonathan Ndunguru and our child Jayden Ndunguru for their support to successfully accomplish my study.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In conducting this study, different institutions and individuals participated in assisting me to come with the final draft for the dissertation. I would like to express my sincere thanks for the cooperation, assistance, criticism and encouragement from a list of persons. It is very difficult to mention them all.

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**ABSTRACT**

The study assessed school initiatives in involving parents in school activities in Temeke Municipality. The objective of the study were, to examine the extent of parental involvement in school activities; to assess initiatives used by schools on involving parents on school activities; to find out challenges schools face in involving parents; and to explore views on better strategies that could be used by schools’ management in involving parents in the school activities. The study employed a qualitative research approach whereby, a descriptive research design was applied to collect data, using a study sample of 24 participants, from four primary schools. Semi-structured interview guides and documentary review were employed to collect relevant data. Data collected were subjected to content analysis and presented descriptively in form figures and tables. Findings revealed that community involvement in school activities is a valuable option in improving quality delivery of education services in schools. The study found out those schools involved parents in school activities through different initiatives, including involvement in school progressive activities, school meetings, consultation sessions, welfare and charity exercises; school governance and students’ academic support. However, the level of participation was revealed to be at an average level while attendance in school meetings and financial support were worse. Hindrances that were found to affect effective involvement of parents in school initiatives included parents’ financial problem, lack of time to attend school meetings and political influence, other hindrances included Misconception on contributions, ignorance and loss of trust among parents towards school personnel. The study therefore recommends, among other things, reasons and benefits of community participation have to be clearly addressed in order to encourage the community participate in school developments.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ETP Education and Training Policy

MA Master of Arts

MOEC Ministry of Education and Culture

NCES National Centre for Education Statistics

NELS National Education Longitudinal

OUT Open University of Tanzania

PEDP Primary Education Development Programme

PTOs Parent-Teacher Organizations

RAS Regional Administrative Secretary

TDAS Temeke District Administrative Secretary

UNESCO United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization

URT United Republic of Tanzania

# 

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

# 1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents introductory information on the study, which focuses on school initiatives that are used to involve parents in school activities in the selected schools in Temeke Municipality. The chapter contains background and statement to the problem, purpose of the study, specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study and conceptual framework. The chapter ends with definitions of key terms.

# 1.2 Background to the Problem

Parents’ involvement in school activities is an essential effort to school development and students’ academic progress in schools. Patrikakouet al. (2005), for example argues that there is a positive school academic outcomes stemming from parents’ involvement in school activities by school management. Regardless of difficulties in operationally defining parental involvement, Epstein *et al.* (1997), being guided by the theory of overlapping spheres of influence between the school and home, argued that parental involvement has six dimensions, which are: parenting, communicating with the school, volunteering at school, learning at home, participating in school decision making, and collaborating with community. These dimensions are rooted in a number of activities and behaviors such as establishing daily family routines, monitoring out-of-school activities, establishing supportive home environments for children, encouraging parents to play meaningful roles in school governance, expressing high expectations for achievement, awareness of the children’s progress in school and valuing of learning and encouraging self-discipline and hard working. Furthermore, Epstein *et al.* (1997),explains that home and school involvements are the major two loci of parental involvement.

Global evidence shows that the home-school partnership model is characterized by practices within homes in which parents and children can be involved, when engaging in educational activities at home, school support by parents, and involvement in school and community agencies (Shumow & Miller, 2001). The home-school partnership manifests children’s interest for their work, confidence, respect, and obedience towards schooling. Parental involvement in school activities is determined by several factors which may differ from one family and social context to another. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) revealed that variability in parental involvement in school activities is predicated on parental sense of efficacy, literacy level, role construction, and the school’s level of willingness to involve them. However, parents’ economic conditions (Grolnick *et al.,* 1997), and educational level of parents (Georgiou & Tourva, 2007) cannot be left out, as they may condition and determine the level and the style of parental involvement.

More evidence shows that in the United States of America (USA) and some European countries for example, parents’ involvement emerged as compensation program since 1960s (Bakker & Denessen, 2007). In USA and Europe, involvement of parents in school activities such as parents’ day, monitoring students’ academic progress and school attendance had positive impact on school success and students academic performance(Bakker & Denessen, *ibid*). This means that if parents are aware of their children academic progress at school, there expected to be positive impact on children’s academic performance.

African scholars like Fagbemininyi (2011) and Nyarko (2011) argue that parents’ interest and commitment on their children education in early age determine students’ academic achievement. World Education Forum Conference held in Dakar in 2000,in recognizing the importance of parents’ involvement in school activities and their children education, came up with an agreement for all governments to enhance partnership with all education stakeholders including parents. This partnership suggested that the mission had to go beyond financing education and cost sharing but overseeing children academic progress (UNESCO, 2000).

In Tanzania reports show that parents’ involvement in the education sector has a long history and has passed through various phases (Njunwa, 2010). Phase one started from 1961 to 1963 where by parents were involved in their children education by paying schools fees while the government dealt with building of infrastructures such as supplying school facilities like classrooms, toilet, laboratory and teachers houses. The second phase was from 1964 to1980s when the governments introduced the concept of free education from primary up to tertiary level. During this era, parents’ role was to build classrooms and buy school facilities for their children. During this phase the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) was adopted in the year 1967 to correct weaknesses of colonial education that emphasized on bookish learning and was for foreign interests. In implementing ESR, parents were involved and took part in school activities such as participating in decision-making related to education through village committees that were established under decentralization policy of 1972. Mushi(2012) asserts that decentralization aimed at transferring power from central to local levels. The third phase was between 1980s and 1995 when the government experience difficulties in financing education. As a result re-introduced school fees in form of cost sharing and user fees where parents played part in paying school fees and meeting other costs in education.

Parent’s involvement in education comes to be affiliated in Education Training policy (ETP) of 1995. ETP was developed to fit within the new free-market economy and the framework of neo-liberal policies spearheaded by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Tibatengeza, 2010). As far as the role of parents and community is concerned, ETP affirmed the central role of the parents in supporting education, The policy intends to decentralize education and training by empowering regions, districts, communities, parents and educational institutions to manage and administer education and training”(MOEC, 1995 p ii).

Similarly, MOET(2000)and(2010) in its documents on Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) advocates the roles of parents in education through direct community participation in activities like building classrooms and teacher’s houses, providing chairs and desks in schools or involving them by paying money for purchasing building materials.Ishumi (1994) and Malekela (1994) see the necessity of parents to be responsible on child’s health and protection, to provide parenting, to respond to continual need, to supervise discipline and guide children at each age level, and to build positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior appropriate for each grade level. Specifically, parents help in provision of school supplies, supervision of out of school activities, and creating good learning home environments. Schools can help in this area by providing parenting classes, seminars, conferences, workshops, home visits, or social services assistance (Horby 2001; Ajayi,Ekundayo and Arongundade, 2009).

Despite the benefits accrued from parents involvement in school activities, there seems to be limited information with regard to current school initiatives towards involving parents in school activities, this justified the need of this study. Therefore, the study assessed initiatives used by schools in involving parents in school activities, by using Temeke Municipality as a study area.

# 1.3 Statement of the Problem

Berger (1991) and Epstein (1995) noted that, sharing responsibilities is a powerful tool for improving schools and means for bringing teachers, parents, and community together. In Tanzania, different initiatives have been taken to involve parents in schools’ activities. Njunwa (2010) asserts that in 1961 to 1963 the government involved parents in their children education by paying schools’ fees. In 1964 to1980s parents’ role was to build classrooms and buy school facilities for their children when the governments introduced the concept of free education from primary up to tertiary level. Moreover, MOEVT(2000)and(2010) in its documents on Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) advocates the roles of parents in education through direct community participation in activities like building classrooms and teacher’s houses, providing chairs and desks in schools or involving them by paying money for purchasing building materials. Parents are involved in their children education through parenting, providing learning materials to children and supporting them financially. At primary level, whether government or private, schools rely heavily on parents’ financial and managerial contributions. Stakeholders need to be involved, and if not, school activities and provision of quality education in primary schools may not be realized.

However, despite such all efforts by the government and parents, the children educational outcomes especially in public primary schools are not pleasing. For example, a study conducted by Haki Elimu (2012) among household in Tanzania, revealed that there was low achievement in literacy skills to pupils in primary schools. The study shows that less than half of the pupils surveyed could read Standard 2 English and one in four could not read Standard 2 level Kiswahili. Furthermore, according to UWEZO(2013) the Standard Seven National Examination results of 2012 indicated that some pupils graduated without skills of reading, writing, and numeracy. The mentioned situations suggest that school initiatives in involving parents in schools activities in Tanzania and Temeke municipality in particular seem to be uncertain. It also seems that there is limited study on the level of initiatives for parents to be involved in schools activities. This is due to array on aforementioned assumptions for them to be involved. This study therefore, explored parameters of parental involvement on school activities, and initiatives school take in involving parents in different school activities.

# 1.4 Research Objectives

# 1.4.1 General Objective

The study generally aimed at assessing school initiatives in involving parents in school activities by using the selected primary schools in Temeke Municipality.

# 1.4.2 Specific Objectives

This study specifically was intended to:

1. Assess initiatives used by schools in involving parents in school activities
2. Examine the extent of parental involvement in schools’ activities in Temeke Municipality
3. Find out challenges affecting effective involvement of parents in school activities
4. Explore better strategies that can be used by schools’ management in involving parents in the school activities

# 1.5 Research Questions

1. What initiatives do schools use towards involving parents on school activities?
2. To what extent parents have been involved in school activities in Temeke Municipality?
3. What are challenges affecting effective involvement of parents in school activities?
4. What are the stakeholder’s views on better strategies that can be used in involving parents in the school activities?

# 1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to help policy makers, parents, teachers, and curriculum developers to be aware of initiatives school use in involving parents in activities that may improve provision of quality primary education. Furthermore, the information might be used to develop and implement school-family-community involvement programs. It is also anticipated that the findings of the study will be an eye opener for other researchers who will be interested in studying other related phenomena.

# 1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

**Parent** refers to mother or father of a person who is responsible in rising of children and all the responsibilities and activities that are involved in it.

**Communities** can be defined by characteristics that the members who share, such as culture, language, tradition, law, geography, class, and race. Shaeffer (1992) argues that, some communities are homogeneous while others are heterogeneous; and some united while others conflictive. Some communities are governed and managed by leaders chosen democratically who act relatively autonomously from other levels of government, and some are governed by leaders imposed from above and represent central authorities.

**School** is a place where children go to be educated

**Involvement/Participation** it is when you take part and become involved in something. It can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the context.

**Participation in education**: Education takes place not only in schools but also within families, communities, and society. Communities and society must support parents and families in the upbringing, socializing, and educating of their children

Shaeffer (1994) clarifies different degrees or levels of participation, and provides seven possible definitions of the term, including:

* *involvement* through the mere use of a service (such as enrolling children in school or using a primary health care facility);
* *involvement* through the contribution (or extraction) of money, materials, and labor;
* *involvement* through ‘attendance’ (e.g. at parents’ meetings at school), implying passive acceptance of decisions made by others;
* *involvement* through consultation on a particular issue;
* *participation* in the delivery of a service, often as a partner with other actors;
* *participation* as implementers of delegated powers; and
* *Participation* “in real decision making at every stage,” including identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

# 1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher encountered some limitations while conducting the study. The use of qualitative approach whereby interview technique was employed posed a challenge of collecting data at the right time, as well as gathering data that could also provide quantitative information for making conclusions. Sampling procedures to attain appropriate and precise number of respondents, which could assist in collecting valid and reliable data, was also a challenge. The researcher was also constrained by financial difficulties. Moreover, Further, some informants provided ineffective cooperation to the researcher during interview sessions which consumed lot of time in collecting data.

# 1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The researcher applied different techniques and initiative to overcome those challenges and accomplish the study. Firstly, the study under qualitative approach used semi-structured interview in collecting data whereby qualitative and quantitative data well collected. The researcher employed simple random and purposive sampling technique to select respondents to include in the sample. The technique ensured equal chances of selection with proportional representation of the subjects. Only 24 respondents were selected for collection of valid and reliable data in time. The selection of appropriate and affordable sample size of 24 respondents assisted a researcher in coping with the financial challenge.

Moreover, the researcher established good rapport with respondents by making consultations on the date and time for interview and was agreed with both sides. During the data collection, the researcher focused only on assessing school initiatives on involving parents in school activities. A few but important questions were asked so as to save time while measuring what a study wanted to measure, to reduce financial limitations.

# 1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was developed by considering areas in which parental involvement concepts are centered, in regard; Epstein’s (1987) spheres of parental involvement have been adopted. According to Epstein (1995) theoretical model, the extent of overlap and shared responsibility in the spheres of influence is determined, which implement practices of the six types of involvement. These types include parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and community collaboration. Each practice which is implemented, offers opportunities for varied interactions of parents, teachers, pupils and others cross contexts (Epstein and Sheldon, 2005 cited in Mwaikimu, 2012).

The conceptual framework of this study has independent, intervening and dependent variables.

**The independent** variable in the conceptual framework is the school initiatives involving school committee meetings, parent day meetings, resources mobilization, and consultations. These initiatives are expected to make the community participate in improving delivery of education at schools.

**Intervening variables** may mean the variables that explain relations or provide a causal link between other variables. Intervening variables of this study are the number of **c**hildren, marital status, occupation and parent’s education level. These intervening variables are expected to influence the interaction of the independent and dependent variables. The intervening variables affect the independent variable directly, and or indirectly. This means that small size of the number of the people in a family, a kind of occupation of parents and high education level, may lead to effective participation of parents/communities in school initiatives and activities to improve delivery of education in schools. However, when parents and community in general experience high number of family members, indefinite work or low level of education, their participation in school activities will be low, which in turn willharm the independent variable(s) and affect negatively the dependent variables. Therefore, the researcher tried to find out to see if the mentioned variables had an influence on parental involvement on children’s primary education.

**Dependent Variables** are the outcomes of the interaction between the independent and the intervening variables. The dependent variable for this study is parental involvement in school activities, which consists of six concepts namely; parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and community collaboration. Therefore, the level of involvement in school activities due to parental participation in schools’ issues depends on the level and status of the intervening factors that interact with the dependent variables. The predictions have been summarized in figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: A conceptual Framework on the School Initiatives in Involving Parents in School Activities

**Independent variables**

School initiatives

* School committee meetings
* Parent day meetings
* Mobilization of resources
* Consultations

**Dependent variables**

Parental involvement in children’s education

* Parenting
* Communication
* Volunteering
* Learning at home
* Decision making
* Community collaboration

**Intervening variables**

* Number of **c**hildren
* Marital status
* Occupation
* Parent’s education level

**Source:** Adopted from Epstein conceptual framework (1987) and Modified by the Researcher, 2017.

The conceptual framework indicated above explains the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. In this study, school initiatives are the independent variable, while parental involvement in children’s education is the dependent variable. It should be noted that parental involvement in children’s education depends on the influence of intervening variables on the independent variable(s).

# 1.11 Organization of the Chapter

The study comprises five chapters. Chapter one presents the background and statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, Definition of key terms and limitation delimitation of the study. It also involves conceptual framework, organization of the chapter and conclusion. Chapter two focuses on the review of literature relevant to this study whereby the major concern of this chapter was to identify the knowledge gap. Chapter three has dealt with research methodology. Chapter four has presented, analyzed, discuss and interpreted the research findings. Chapter five provides the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. References and appendices inform the end part of the organization format of the study.

# CHAPTER TWO

# 

# LITERATURE REVIEW

# 2.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates theoretical and empirical literatures related to the study. It gives an overview on the concept of parental involvement as given in Epstein (1986) model of overlapping spheres of influence, and types of parental involvement in school activities. To provide a clear understanding, the empirical literature has been divided into related literature and studies and discussed to provide knowledge to amplify the understanding on different phenomena including the importance, determinants, and barriers to parental involvement in the schooling of children. It also reviews suggestions on how to get parents more involved in their children school activities. Lastly, the knowledge gap that has been filled by the study findings is identified.

# 2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

A theoretical framework positions in research is the discipline or subject area in which one is working, and provides orientations to the study (Mcmillan and Schumacher, 2006 in Mwaikimu, 2012). In order to have better understanding of the research topic, this part presents theories related to the study. The study was guided by, Epstein’s theory of parental involvement, ecological theory and socio-cultural theories, which are among the learning theories. Theories specifically refer to parents’ whose children attend primary school. The researcher starts by giving explanation on the concept of parental involvement and goes on elaborating other theories that guided the study.

# 2.2.1 The Concept of Parental Involvement and Children Schooling

The child’s first place of contact with the world is the family. The child, as result, acquires initial education and socializations from parents and other significant persons in the community. The parents are in short, the child’s first teacher. They are the first and primary source of support of young children. They are involved in the education of their children; children tend to model their parents’ attitude and actions (Berger, 1991; Georgiou, 2007).

Parental involvement has been defined as representing many different behaviors and practices at home and at school, including parental aspirations, expectations, attitudes and beliefs regarding child’s education (Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp 2002: Hong & Ho, 2005). Singh *et al.* (1995), explain that parental participation is a school activities and programs, home structure that supports learning, and communication with children about school. Grolnick *et al.* (1997), included dedication of resources by parents to the child within a given domain.

Fan and Chen (2001), Georgiou (2007), Henderson and Mapp (2002), and Hong & Ho (2005) pointed out that the operational use of parental involvement has been somewhat vague and at times inconsistent, despite the intuitive meaning of the concept. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002) parental involvement is a concept that can include many different activities. They can range from an impersonal visit to school once a year, to frequent parent-teacher consultations, to active school governorship. It can refer either to parental expectations (Fan & Chen, 2001) or to the ways parents help their children develop attitudes (Berger, 1991), or to homework supervision (Keith *et al.,* 1993), and monitoring children’s school progress (Ho Sui-Chu, 1996).

stated by Epstein *et al.* (1997, 2002) that parental involvement has six dimensions: Good parenting at home, helping with homework, communicating with the school, volunteering at school, learning at home, and participating in school governance and decision making. Learning at home involves homework assignments or interaction involving academics related to school.

Despite of the lack of specific and agreed upon definition, parent involvement can have an influence on student learning. The family is critical in describing the effect of parental involvement on student achievement. Henderson and Berla (1994) concluded that the specific form of parent involvement does not seem to be as important as the amount and variety of involvement.

# 2.2.2 Epstein’s Theory of Parental Involvement

Epstein, (1987) proposed the theory of overlapping spheres of influence. This theory helps to configure out the role of the environment in promoting academic success of a child. The theory looks at the interrelationship between the school, family and community. In this light, the significance of this theory to the study cannot be overlooked. It is a coordination of sociological views on the social organizations. It also studies about how educational outcomes are impacted by the environments of family, school and community (Epstein, 1987). Epstein identified three perspectives, which guide the researchers and practitioners in their thinking about family and the school relations. The three perspectives include separate responsibilities of families and school, shared responsibilities of families and school and sequential responsibilities of families and schools (Epstein, 1987 cited in Bridgemohan, 2001).

**(a) Sequential responsibilities of families and school**

This approach emphasizes on the order of responsibilities of the family and school, and the critical stages of parents and teachers’ contributions to the development (Van Wyk, 2008, in Mwaikimu, 2012). Parents teach the needed skills to children until their formal education around the age of five or six years of age. At that time, teachers assume that the primary responsibility for children’s education is the duty of the school. Epstein (1995) notes that if schools see pupils as students they are likely to see families as separate from the school and the families are expected to do their job and leave the child to school.

According to the Epstein’s (1995) theoretical model, the extended overlap and shared responsibility in the sphere of influence is determined, by which practices of the six types of involvement are implemented. These types include parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and community collaboration.

**(b) Separate responsibilities of families and school**

This perspective puts emphasis on different tasks of role players, parents should work with their children at home and teachers must keep professional distance from parents. Teachers and parents ought to achieve their roles best separately and indecently in order to limit the inherent conflicts, competition and incompatibility between them (Esptein, 1987).

**(c) Shared responsibilities of families and school**

Shared responsibilities place its emphasis on coordination, teamwork, collaboration and harmonizing schools and families unlike the sequential and separate responsibilities of families and school. Both families and schools share the responsibility for socialization of the child as teachers and parents work jointly each recognizing their shared interest in any duty for the pupils to build better programs and opportunities for the children (Epstein, 1987). In this light, an overlap of responsibilities between parents and teachers is expected.

**2.3 Empirical Literature Review**

This sub-part discusses different views related to parental involvement activities in school development. The discussion involves contributions from scholarly works and related studies from different areas globally.

# 2.3 .1 Related Literature

Scholars’ views have shown different types of parental involvement in related school’s activities. Parents can become involved in their child’s education in many ways. There are many different opportunities in which parents can play a part in their child’s schooling. Bauch (1994) provided a comprehensive summary of the levels of parental involvement. Parents can be involved in many levels of the school hierarchy. They can be on councils, parent-teacher organizations (PTOs), attend school meetings, parent-teacher conferences (PTCs), and facilitate learning at home. Home activities include support student achievement, such as schoolwork supervision and discussions about school issues between parents and children.

Epstein’s (1986, 1995, & 2002) work provides the guiding theoretical framework for parental involvement. Epstein has developed a six-part model for parent involvement which is the most cited in parental involvement literature. The six types of involvement include: assisting parents in child-rearing skills, school-parent communication, involving parents in school volunteer opportunities, involving parents in home-based learning, involving school decision making, and involving parents in school-community collaborations. Epstein (1995) views these typologies mainly from the perspectives of schools, and the research was usually concerned about what schools can do to stimulate more active parental involvement. According to Epstein, there are six forms of parental involvement in school activities as delineated.

Parenting is the most and basic involvement of parents in their child’s schooling. Parents were needed to provide basic needs and establish the home environment that supports their children in learning. Epstein *et al.* (1997), argued that parents are responsible to ensure child’s health and safety; to provide parenting and child-rearing skills needed to prepare children for school; to respond to continual need, to supervise discipline and guide children to each age level and to build positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior appropriate for each grade level. Specifically, parents help on provision of school supplies, supervision of out of school activities, and home environments that are learner friendly. Schools can help in this area by providing parenting classes, seminars, conferences, workshops, home visits, or social services assistance (Epstein, 1995; Bauch, 1994).

The next form of involvement involves the school’s ability to communicate, and the parent’s ability to respond to that communication and vice versa. The school and parents should establish a two way channel of communication about the child they share. A bond of ownership is formed between the parent and the school, and parents can become comfortable communicating with the school. When parents are comfortable with the school’s expectations, they are willing to communicate with their child’s teacher (Epstein *et al.,* 1997). Effective communication between school and home is the goal of parental involvement. Parents should be aware of their role in the communication partnership, communicating needs of their child in a clear manner.

Volunteering is another parental involvement practice at school. Parents assist teachers in classrooms or in other school based activities. It also includes parents who come to school to support sports activities, attend workshops and to improve themselves so that they are able to assist their children in their learning. Hence, schools benefit from the extra helping hand with daily tasks, and parents benefit by learning new skills that can be transferred to other workplaces. Similarly, Ho Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) findings proved that, when parents volunteer in the school, or participate in Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO) enrich the overall learning environment, strengthen social networks and improve the learning norms for all children in the school. On the other hand, teachers get awareness of parents’ talents and interests in school and children.

Participation in school activities is the fourth type. Parents can also participate in school committees, parent-teacher organizations, advisory councils and other groups involved in decision making for the school. It is also refers to parent and community activists in independent advocacy group that monitor the school and work for the school improvement. Parents feel a sense of ownership at school when they know they were involved in creating a policy, providing an activity for students, or changing a policy. They also develop knowledge of local and state laws and rules that govern the education of their child (Epstein, 1995, Epstein *et al.,* 1997).

Collaboration with the community represents the fifth type of involvement at school. Epstein *et al.* (2002)states that community includes not only families with children in the schools, but also all who are interested in and affected by the quality of education. Moreover, communities are rated on economic qualities, strength, and talents available to support children, families, and schools. Epstein *et al.* (1997)suggests that educators should encourage the practices that make possible schools to have connections with agencies, religious groups, and other groups to share the responsibilities for the children’s education and future successes. Consequently, parents can organize business, community members, and resources in ways that benefit their child’s school (Epstein, 1995, Epstein *et al.,* 1997). In fact, parents and community members provide very important contribution to the education of children (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Learning at home represents the sixth type of parental involvement whereby parents monitor and assist their own children at home on learning activities that are coordinated with the children’s schoolwork (Epstein, 1995, Epstein *et al.,* 2002). Epstein (1995) and Bauch (1994) reported higher levels of academic achievement for children whose parents participate in their learning at home. They further emphasize that when learning occurs at home children see that learning is possible everywhere. Berger (1991) ably capped on it by stating that, simple activities such as reading to children, talking about school life, homework tutoring, and problem solving activities helps children see that learning can occur anywhere. Though, learning at home is not necessarily to be teacher directed activities.

**2.3.2 Related Studies**

Studies conducted in different parts of the world (in developed countries, in Africa and in Tanzania) in searching the reality on issues related to school initiatives in involving parents in primary school activities. This sub-section reviews different studies on the issues related to Importance of Parental Involvement in School Activities; Challenges to Parents Involvement in School Activities, Strategies in involving Parents in School Activities, implementations, impacts and challenges explored, related teachers’ professional development, which in turn has been made as point of reference in identifying the knowledge gap to be filled by the current study.

**2.3.2.1 Studies Conducted in Developed Countries**

Different studies have revealed the importance of parental involvement in school activities. The school, family, and community partnerships are associated with positive effects on students’ outcomes. Schools and districts found forging partnerships evidences of an increase in student attendance rates, reduction in dropout, delinquency and pregnancy rates, and improved discipline practices. Obviously, all these are largely associated with long term student’s academic achievement.

Globally, the action of involving parents in the education of their children has been found to be associated not only with students but also with teachers, schools, and districts (Epstein *et al.,* 2002). Muller (1993) studied the association between the types of parental involvement and the achievement test scores and grades to discern if there was a pattern using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS, 1988). The sample contained 24,599 eighth graders. To measure parent involvement and student self reported grades; students, parents, teachers, and principals completed surveys. The researcher used reading and mathematics achievement test scores compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Data analyses showed that parental involvement in the home and community, including after school supervision and talking with the child about current school activities were positively and strongly associated with students’ achievement test scores, whereas involvement in the school including PTO participation and volunteering at the school were positively and strongly associated with students’ grades. Thus, the multiple dimensions of parent involvement are all important in relation to students’ academic achievement.

The relationship between parental involvement and educational achievement also was examined by Stevenson and Baker (1987). They hypothesized that parents who participate more in school activities have children who do better in school than children whose parents participate less. The researchers drew a sample from 620 households, 179 children and their teachers. Using a cross-sectional analysis of teachers’ ratings on parent involvement and student achievement based on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5 levels of agreement, results showed that parental involvement was a significant predictor of school achievement (*R* = .41). From the researchers’ conclusion, it is true that parental involvement has positive correlation to children’s academic achievement and, actually, parental involvement mediates almost all the influence of mother’s education on the child’s school achievement.

Sheldon and Epstein (2002) conducted a longitudinal study using 29 elementary and 10 secondary schools to examine whether family and community involvement helps to improve the rates of students’ school attendance. Results indicated that school, family, and community partnership practices significantly decreased chronic absenteeism, even after school level and prior rates of absenteeism were taken into account. In particular, communicating with families about attendance, reduced students’ school chronic absenteeism from one year to the next. In fact, truancy is associated with main indicators of student failure and poor adjustment.

Similarly, Fan and Chen (2001) examined parental involvement using multiple measures. The researchers identified four constructs of parent involvement: communication, supervision, parental expectations, and parenting style. Communication refers to parents’ frequent and systematic discussions with their children about schoolwork. Supervision includes monitoring when students return home from school and what they do after school, overseeing time spent on homework and the extent to which children watch television. Parental expectations and parenting style were found to have the strongest relationship, whereas parental home supervision has the weakest relationship, with students’ academic achievement. These include the manner and extent to which parents communicate their academic aspirations to their children. They also found that high expectations of parents and student perceptions of those expectations are associated with enhanced achievement.

Keith *et al.* (1993) conducted a study using eighth grade subjects from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 to determine if the earlier findings would hold for middle-school students and if the influence of parent involvement would be reflected, not only in students' school grades, but in their achievement on standardized tests. The results of this investigation indicated that parent involvement exerts a powerful effect on the achievement of middle school students and that this influence is independent of family background effects. The effect of parent involvement crossed all academic areas and positively impacted student performance on standardized achievement tests. The findings also suggested that parental involvement and academic achievement may have reciprocal effects on each other, leading the researchers to note; when it appears that higher academic performance results in greater involvement which in turn, leads to still higher academic performance.

Singh *et al.* (1995) compared the degree of influence and weight of impact of parental academic aspirations and expectations for children, participation in school activities and programs, home structure that supports learning, and communication with children about school on student achievement. They found that parental aspirations and expectation have the strongest influence on achievement and others followed. They also found that parents who have strong and vocal academic aspirations for their children do not necessarily have a more structured home environment or participate more in school activities than parents with lower aspirations. However, parents with high aspirations do typically have more communication with the school.

Stone (2006) conducted a study on parental involvement to estimate relative influence of home communication about school, parental monitoring of students’ time and direct interactions with school on students academic achievement. The study employed 2174 students from 174 schools. The findings reported that, the form of parental involvement decline over the transition of the high school. Also the findings showed that sustained home communication is related to higher grades and lower livelihood of dropout.Rafiq, et al,. (2013) did a study concerning to the effect of parental involvement in the academic achievement of children in Pakistan. It was found that parental involvement has significance effect in better academic performance of the children. The study proved that parental involvement enhanced the academic achievements of the children*.*

Collectively, parental involvement is associated with the following outcomes: leads to improved academic achievement (Epstein *et al.,* 2002), fosters better student classroom behavior (Fan & Chen, 2001), and fosters great feelings and commitment in supporting school’s mission (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Furthermore, it improves school attendance (Epstein *et al.,* 2002;Sheldon & Epstein, 2002), creates a better understanding of roles and relationships between and among the parent-student-school triad (Epstein *et al.,* 2002), improved teacher morale (Berger, 1991) and improves student emotional well-being (Epstein *et al.,* 2002). Particularly, the types of parent involvement and quality of parent involvement affect results for students, parents, and teachers (Epstein, 1995).

Studies conducted in developed countries have also revealed challenges to effectively involve parents in school activities. The literature reviewed from Amundson (1988), Becker-Klein (1999), Burns (1993), Henderson (1988), Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995) and McWayne & Owsianik, (2004) noted several challenges against parental involvement. The parents reported factors that precluded their involvement to include lack of knowledge and skills about successful collaboration between parents and teachers, lack of time and increased number of working parents, teacher resistance, work responsibilities, lack formal education, and poor quality of schools and its management. Others were lack of parenting training and family stress.

According to Henderson (1988), educators worry that untrained parents might interfere with today’s teaching techniques, or disrupt the learning environment. This is due to the fact that many parents believe that inadequately skilled in many subject areas they tend to shy away from becoming involved with school related matters. Unfortunately, many educators lack the necessary knowledge and skills to work with parents (Burns, 1993; Hoover-Dempsey &Sandler, 1995).The parents’ level of education was found to determine the nature and quality of parent-child and parent-teacher schooling practices (Muller, 1995). Low level of parents’ formal education was revealed to limit the quality of parent-child relationship such as helping with homework, amount of time spent on chores and homework, and monitoring and awareness of child’s school progress. Moreover, it limited the nature and quality of parent-teacher practices such as parent-teacher communication about child’s learning and behavior progress (Epstein *et al.,* 1997 and 2002). Also, low level of education, less parents’ income and learning resources devoted to their child’s schooling were shown as challenges.

Job and family demands, as well as changes in family structure, leave little free time for many parents to involve themselves in their children’s schooling. According to Burns (1993) the proportion of women in the work force with children bellow age 18 was noticed to rose from 40% to 65% between 1970 and 1988. This increase in working women was revealed to have a significant impact in maintaining communication with school and assisting their children with school work at home.

Teacher resistance is another factor that inhibits successful parental involvement in the education process. Extensive interview by Swap (1990) discovered that while parents were eager to play all roles at school, educators were more comfortable in relegating parents to insubstantial bake sale roles, leaving them feeling frustrated, belittled, and left out. Amundson (1988) asserts that though the original impression held that parents are responsible for the lack of involvement, it is the school practices that discourage and sometime completely avoid the use of parent participation. This can evident even in the current situation at schools. Although, most school officials say they want parent participation, in practice they may offer parents only limited opportunity for involvement.

In the same vein, Becker-Klein (1999) studied the influence of family and school variables as possible barriers to parent involvement at home and in school. The researcher’s sample included 151 parents of second grade students. The family involvement in children’s learning survey was used to measure family involvement and the school climate survey was used to measure parents’ perceptions of the school’s atmosphere. An analysis of the correlation results indicated that parents reported more participation in their children’s education when they perceived a more favorable climate at the school and reported better home-school communication.

Work responsibilities is the another barrier to parental involvement. Martinez (2004) study found that school personnel were in need to have more parental involved in school activities but they did not have the time to contact with parents on what their children do. On the other hand, the researcher found parents claiming that their work schedules does not allow them to attend school meetings such as committees, conferences and workshops during the day even if they were interested in helping their school children in a positive way.

The poor quality of the school and its management were among factors which hinder parents from being involved in their children’s education. Schools with poor infrastructure and teaching and learning facilities tend to discourage parents to be involved in their children’s education since always performed poorly. Herman and Yeh (1980) noted that school managers with no well-articulated parental involvement strategies, poor communication with parents, and poor disbursement of the resources discouraged not only parents but also the whole community to be engaged in the school related activities. Thus, school leadership plays an important role in fostering relationships that lead to generative learning and positive outcome of children.

Studies showing strategies to be used in improving parental involvement were also reviewed. The researchers (Berger, 1991; Epstein, 1995) noted that sharing responsibilities is a powerful tool for improving schools and means for bringing teachers, parents, and community together. Having fulfilling this, there will be less blaming and finger pointing at each other in the children’s education. Moreover, the concept of separate responsibilities among the parents, community, and schools must be transformed into overlapping responsibilities of schools which emphasize the coordination, cooperation and compatibility among the spheres (Epstein, 1986).

Epstein *et al.* (2002) noted that through establishing open and two ways communication for thoughtful and reflective conversation can bridge the patterns of partnership to centre on the children’s schooling. Perhaps when schools show concern for parents’ need for information, they are rewarded with more help and support for their schools. Open up communication channels, consequently, increases parents’ awareness of the involvement opportunities in schools (Berger, 1991). Furthermore, effective administrative leadership makes parents feel welcome, maintain open-door policy, arranges parent-teacher meetings and school functions, and workshops.

**2.3.2.2 Studies Conducted in Africa**

In Africa, for example in Nigerian researchers (Olatoye & Ogunkola, 2008) conducted a study in twelve secondary schools using a sample of 360 students. The students’ parent questionnaire and students’ science academic achievement tests were used to collect data. The findings reported a marginal but positive relationship between parental involvement and science achievement (r=+0.167, p<0.05). They recommended that parents should make sure that they complement teachers’ efforts in school by monitoring and supervising their children’s academic activities, provide learning materials to their students to remove frustration in the process of learning in order to enhance science achievement.

Adewumi, olojo and falemu (2012) studied roles of parent on the academic performance of pupils in elementary schools in Nigeria. Their study findings informed that parent has vital roles to play in the life of a child. The involvement of a parent on a child education determines the future of such child. Parenting involvement is a catch-all term for many different activities including at ‘home,’ good parenting, helping with home work, talking to teachers, attending school functions, through to taking part in school governance. The conclusion from the study indicated that parental involvement in children’s education has a powerful impact on their attainment. In Kenya, a study was conducted by Ngigi (2014) to assess the influence of parental involvement in the implementation of curriculum in public primary schools in Ndeiya zone. The study revealed that the sorry state of education standards at Ndeiya zone mainly was attributed to the fact that there was little parental involvement.

Erlendsdóttir (2010) conducted a study in Zambia, entitled “Effects of Parental Involvement in education”. The main findings showed that all interviewed parents were highly involved with their children’s education. They had high expectations towards their children’s education and their future. They found conscious on the importance of staying involved with their child’s education and participate fully. The study shows that most of the parents considered themselves to have a good relationship with their child’s teachers and the school and their children experienced good academic achievement. Thus, it may be said that by staying involved with their children’s education in this way the parents do impact positively on the academic achievement of the children.

**2.3.2.3 Studies Conducted in Tanzania**

Tanzanian researchers have also studied issues related to parental involvement in schools activities. The study conducted by Mpiluka in 2014 who assessed parental involvement and its effect on pupils’ academic performance in primary schools, in Matamba ward, Makete district, revealed that parental involvement alone significantly explained 13 percent of the variation in academic performance *(F = 19.65; p < 0.001).* The results suggested that parental involvement in school matters had positive impact in children academic performance. Mauka (2015) in her study, parental involvement and its effects on students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Korogwe, showed that majority of parents had low level of education and were less responsible for children schooling which led to children’s poor academic performance. The results also showed that low income of parents made them unable to provide sufficient home needs and school requirements for their children.

Ishumi (1994) and Malekela (1994) in their works show the necessity of parents to be responsible on child’s health and protection, to provide parenting, to respond to continual need, to supervise discipline and guide children at each age level, and to build positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior appropriate for each grade level. However, the document by MANTEP asserts that poor organizational structure that fails to define roles and power relationships and lack of regular meetings to facilitate exchange of ideas are some of barriers of communication to involve parents in school activities (MANTEP, 1991). This inability often contributes to less success among students in daily school progress.

Study conducted by Jackson and Andrews (2004) have proposed strategies that if employed may enhance parental involvement in school activities. The study emphasizes establishing and maintaining mutual trust, respect and less optimal relationships with families as a means to support the interaction of ideas and experiences centered on learning of young people. What all good parent-teacher relationships have in common is the “absence of conflicts”. Consequently, use of a variety of meeting spaces for equitable access, clearing ambiguity in areas of cooperation and non threatening environment is imperative (MANTEP, 1991).

# 2.4 Synthesis of Literature and Knowledge Gap

Generally, the chapter has reviewed several studies related to parental involvement in the school activities. The above studies have shown diversity assumptions on ways of parents/community involvement, effects of parental involvement in education and challenges towards effective community involvement in school activities. Studies reviewed include those from Western Europe, Asia and American countries (for example Epstein et al,. 2002; Muller, 1988; Steven & Baker, 1987; Henderson, 1988). Studies from African countries include Olatoye & Ogunkole (2008), Ademuwi, Olojo and Falemu (2013). In Tanzania few studies for example Mpiluka (2014), Mauka (2015), Ishumi (1994) and Malekela (1994) have also been reviewed to explore issues related to the topic. However, those studies conducted in different areas including Tanzania seem to concentrate on the impact of parental involvement on children academic performance. This notifies that, there was limited information on initiatives used by primary schools in involving parents in school activities and the extent of the involvement taken. It is true that a lot about initiatives of school in involving parents in school activities was not yet been explored in Tanzania. This is the knowledge gap which has been filled by findings explored in this study.

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# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

# 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes research approach and design. The chapter proceeds through describing the data collection methods that have been used. It also explains study setting, the target population, sample selection procedures and data analysis plan employed.

# 3.2 Approach of the Study

This study employed a qualitative research approach in assessing school initiatives by involving heads of schools and ordinary teachers from selected primary schools in Temeke Municipality. Creswell (2005) asserts that Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Hiatt (1986) adds that qualitative research focuses on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants-that is, qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality.

Specifically, a qualitative approach is warranted when the nature of research questions requires *exploration* (Stake, 1995). For the current study, the researcher explored participants’ experiences about school initiatives in involving parents in school activities.

Through this approach the researcher collected holistic, natural and contextual data that have explained the reality on (a) patterns and trend of parents’ involvement on school activities (b) initiatives taken by schools in involving parents in school activities and (c) challenges school faced in involving parents in school activities. As little was known about initiative schools were taking in involving parents in school activities, this study has explored what was hidden and the reality about the topic in question have been exposed.

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# 3.3 Research Design

Research design can be thought of as the *logic* or *master plan* of a research that throws light on how the study is to be conducted. According to Mouton (1996, p. 175) the research design serves to "plan, structure and execute" the research to maximize the "validity of the findings". It gives directions from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design, and data collection. Yin (2003) adds further that “colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from *here* to *there*, where ‘here’ may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and ‘there’ is some set of (conclusions) answers”. The research design employed for this study was a descriptive research design that enabled the collection of data that produced qualitative and quantitative data. White(2000) asserts that the descriptive research design allows collection of data from the variables with the nature of producing data, required for qualitative and quantitative analysis which allow simultaneous description of views, perceptions and beliefs at any single point in time.

# 3.4 Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Temeke Municipality in Dar-es-Salam. The reasons for selecting Temeke district are two. First, Temeke Municipality has quite a good number of primary schools and therefore has relative higher number of the students and parents with children in these public primary schools. Temeke has both urban and rural environment which provided rich information with regards to study matter.

# 3.5 The Target Population

The target population for this study included heads of schools, ordinary teachers and parents from selected schools in Temeke Municipality as a study area.

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# 3.6 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

# 3.6.1 Sampling Procedures

Sampling procedure is the process of selecting a given number of the subjects (Best & Khan, 2006). In this study simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used in the selection of schools and subjects of the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ordinary teachers randomly from among study population. Simple random sampling entails selection where each element has equal chance of being selected (Cohen et al., 2003). The technique was used to avoid bias in data collection and enhance validity of data.

Purposive sampling technique was also employed. It is one of the techniques in which cases are deliberately selected in the basis of specific qualities which they illustrate (Cohen et al., 2003). This is to ensure equal chances of selection and proportion representation of subjects of the study by schools, streams, and grade levels. In this study heads were purposefully selected to provide in-depth information on the topic in question. Therefore, the sample of the study involved head teachers and ordinary teachers.

# 3.6.2 Sample Size of the Study

The sample size of this study included four schools; with four (4) heads of schools and twenty (20) ordinary teachers that made a total number of study participants to be twenty four (24).

**Table 3.1: Distribution of Sample Size**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category of Respondents** | **No. of Schools** | **No. of Respondents from each school** | **Sample Size** |
| Head Teachers | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Ordinary Teachers | 5 | 20 |
| Total | 4 | 6 | 24 |

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# 3.7 Data Collection Methods

In order to collect relevant and reliable data that allows in-depth understanding of the problem, qualitative data collection methods were employed to gather both primary and secondary data. The study used semi-structured interview and documentary review methods in data collection. The researcher used research instruments to collect required data from respondents. Research instrument employed in this study involved questions or interview guides and checklist for documentary reviewing. Interview guides were utilized to collect data which were descriptively explained and those answered in short statements from heads of schools and teachers. Besides, check list guided a researcher on assessing the information related to initiatives documented that were used to involve parents in school activities.

# 3.7.1 Interview Guide

The general interview guide approach is more structured than the informal conversational interview although there is still quite a bit of flexibility in its composition (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Semi-structured interview is done in the partial pre-planning of the questions, although it still allows for replication of the interview with others, but are be less controlled (Woods, 2011).Semi-structured interview is used to collect data from study participants of different groups in the society who were the heads of schools and teachers from selected schools in Temeke Municipality. The use of semi-structured interview method assisted the researcher to gather in-depth, holistic and in- context data of the similar case. It also allowed comparison with other data from documentary reviewed in the study for enhancement of validity of the findings. Through semi- structured interview, the data collected provided unique example on how parents were involved in school activities initiatives and challenges schools face in involving them.

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# 3.7.2 Documentary Review

Using official documents which McMillan and Schumacher (2001:451) note are abundant in an organisation help to provide an internal perspective of the organisation and can describe its functions and values, and how various people define the organisation. It could be very difficult to get vivid examples and data that are correct without having a look at what has been documented about the study under investigation **(**Kothari, 2004). For this study institutional data were collected and then the route of analysis and interpretation was done. The documentary review technique was utilized to extract natural secondary data from the stored documents of the schools’, from heads of schools about parents contributions towards school developments and parents attendance in school meetings so as to nourish the primary data collected through interview research tools.

# 3.8 Data processing and Analysis Procedures

Qualitative data collected from semi -structured interviews were subjected to thematic content analysis. Using thematic analysis approach, the content of data were analyzed to generate and categorize recurring themes. Essentially it involves a through and repeated reading of all the written and recorded Reponses of each respondent, underlying the main ideas and then extracting the core meaning (Creswell, 2004). This approach has been used to analyze data from ordinary teachers and heads of schools. Some of the data collected from teachers had short answers were analyzed based on contents and coded for statistical presentation, while those from heads of schools were put into descriptive analysis to explain the reality of the topic studied. The collected information was arranged in line with the research objectives and questions. The findings analyzed in a systematic way which generated a conclusion, recommendations and the way forward on how parents can be involved in school activities. Data derived from reviewed documents have been used to nourish the data collected from interviews.

# 3.9. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Patton (2002) suggests that, reliability and validity are the two most important quality control objects in research design. It is important for researcher’s results to be reliable and valid. The researcher therefore, ensured validity and reliability of the research findings through different techniques.

**3.9.1 Validity**

According to Patton (2002), validity refers to the degree to which the study accurately reflects or assesses the specific concept, the researcher is attempting to measure. Research instruments are considered valid when they allow for a meaningful and defensible conclusions to be drawn from the data collected (Leedy & Omrod, 2001). Construct and content validity has been established. Construct validity was established through the assistance of my supervisors Dr. Mary Ogondiek, who administered my study in all stages including research tools, where indeed some commendable corrections were offered by her. Reliability of data was also ensured through the use of more than one data collection tools. Data were collected through semi- structured interview guides and were checked though the information gathered from reviewed documents. Moreover, other measures to ensure validity like avoiding identification of the respondents, the use of questions that focused on the topic in questions were used.

**3.9.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency with which repeated measures produce the same results across time and observers (Patton, 2002).Reliability was observed through the use of appropriate sampling techniques through random and non-random sampling techniques which were simple random and purposeful sampling techniques.

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# 3.10 Ethical Consideration

In this study, the researcher adhered to the following ethical issues:

**Research Clearance Letters:** The permission to conduct this study was obtained from relevant authorities including: Director of Postgraduate Studies of OUT, Dar es Salaam Administrative Secretary (RAS) and Temeke Administrative Secretary (TAS). These letters were used to introduce the researcher to the respondents.

**Assurance of Confidentiality:** The researcher assured confidentiality by maintaining anonymity of the respondents. The respondents’ names have not been mentioned in the report**.** Furthermore, the researcher clarified to the respondents that the information that were to be collected was only for research purpose, thus no any respondents could be victimized for providing needed information.

**Informed Consent:** The researcher clearly explained on the purpose of the study to the participants. The research problem was clarified purpose of the study, the short term and long term benefits and loss due to their participation in this study. The researcher asked for the participants’ consent if were ready to be recorded their voices during interviews. Again, the researcher informed the participants that their participation was free, and they had the right to withdraw at any time with no repercussions.

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# CHAPTER FOUR

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# DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

# 4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter three delineated the methodological procedures used in collecting and analyzing data with regard to the research problem. Chapter one and two explained literature reviewed related to the research problem, which therefore a knowledge gap was established in those chapters. This chapter contains presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings on the schools initiatives in involving parents in school activities. The presentation is arranged in line with the specific objectives that guided the study. Data obtained have been presented, analyzed and discussed qualitatively to a large extent. Data from twenty (24) teachers from four (4) schools, involving four heads of schools and twenty ordinary teachers have been presented, analyzed and discussed. For the purpose of ethical issues schools have been named School A, B, C and school D. Data collected which their patterns or themes were in short statements were identified, coded, and categorized for analysis, and their information have been statistically presented.

The key issues which this chapter addresses are, the results reflecting the assessment of school initiatives in involving parents in school activities in Tanzania. The examined parental involvement initiatives are based on specific research objectives and their measured variables. The specific objectives presented in relation with the measured variables including; (1) initiatives used by schools on involving parents on school activities; this specific objective aimed at assessing variables, which are; acceptance on whether effectiveness of community involvement enhances school academic performance, and initiatives applied by schools in involving parents in school activities; (2) the second specific objective examined the extent of Parental involvement in schools’ activities which was examined through variables, efforts contributed by parents in improving provision of quality education at schools, and the extent at which parents have been involving in school activities at school; the next third (3) specific objective was to find out challenges affected effective involvement of parents in school activities, and it was examined by finding out challenges hindering effective involvement of parents in school activities, and how explored constraints affected quality delivery of education. The forth (4) and last specific objective aimed at exploring strategies in involving parents in the school activities.

# 4.2 Initiatives Used by Schools on Involving Parents in School Activities

The main focus of this specific objective was to identify initiatives used by schools in involving parents on school activities in primary schools in Temeke municipality. The investigation on this task was carried out through the use of semi- structured interview guides. The technique was used to interview four (4) heads of schools and twenty (20) teachers from four schools which are primary school A, primary school B, school C, and primary school D.

**4.2.1 Acceptance on whether Effectiveness of Community Involvement Enhances School Academic Performance**

The Respondents who were both the heads of schools and ordinary teachers exposed their perceptions on whether effective community involvement in schools’ activities had positive impact on school academic performance. The findings from the field show that most of the respondents 22 (92 %) agreed with the notion that effective community involvement enhances school academic performance. Only a few 2(8 %) of them were against, as they disagreed. Table 4.1 below shows the responses on the acceptance of the notion.

Table 4.1: Informants Responses on whether Effectiveness of Community Involvement enhances School Academic Performance

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | Acceptance | Respondents by School (%) | | | | |
| School A  (n=6) | School B  (n=6) | School C  (n=6) | School D  (n=6) | Total  (n=24) |
| Effective community  involvement enhance  school academic  performance | Yes | 100% | 100% | 67% | 100% | 92% |
| No | - | - | 33% | - | 8% |

**Source:** Field Data (2016)

The data articulated by respondents and displayed in Table 4.1 involved all 24 informants (100 %) of both teachers and the heads of schools. Majority of the respondents92 % affirmed that effective community involvement enhances school academic performance; except only 8 % who disagreed. The findings imply that educational practitioners are aware of not only involving parents enhances schools’ academic performance but also involving the community in school activities. This assumption is in agreement with the views by Velez & Jones (1997) whose research concluded that parent-school interaction lays a firm foundation for child academic achievement. The stronger the relationships, especially as they relate to educational issues, the higher the academic achievement of the children. Johnston (1998) asserts that attribute of student’s achievement, school adjustment, and good behavior is the product of parent/family involvement in the educational process.

# 4.2.2 Initiatives Applied by Schools in Involving Parents in School Activities

The study explored initiatives which were applied by schools towards involving parents on school activities. On responding to the questions, 20 ordinary teachers mentioned several initiatives which were used in their schools to make parents involved in school activities. The mentioned initiatives with their explanations were thematically coded and categorized into seven programmes. The categorized initiatives include involvement in school development activities, consultations on a particular issue and school meetings. Other initiatives are welfare and other services, school governance, children academic support and charity exercises programmes (refer figure 4.1 below).

Figure 4.1: Ordinary Teachers’ Responses on Initiatives applied in Involving parents in School Activities

**Source**: Field Data, (2016).

Referring to the analyzed initiatives in figure 4.1, heads of schools when interviewed explained in detail their experiences on how those initiatives were used to involve parents in school activities.

**School development activities**: Field data have shown that, all four heads of schools agreed that their schools have been involving the community in school development activities like construction of the needed school infrastructure such as classes, toilets, and systems of water services. The head teacher of school A had the following to say;

*“In my school, parents are involved in contributing on school development issues. They are involved through contribution (or extraction) of money for construction of classrooms, toilets and buying desks”. In addition to that, Parents are also involved in school activities by advising them to buy learning materials for their children”.*

Head teacher of school B responded that;

*“.... at my school, apart from cash contributions, parents are involved by letting them contribute their labor force to improve school infrastructure. This is done when there is construction of classrooms and toilets or any other activity that need labour. Those who fail to contribute through cash, participate through labour”. Currently, we have arranged the cleanliness day in every Saturday at the end of the month, whereby parents and the school staff participate to clean the school campus so as to make the teaching and learning environment hygienic”.*

**Consultations on a particular issue**: consultation as an attempt to create effective partnership between a school and parents was explained by head teachers. Head teacher of school C said;

*“I always call parents for discussion on problems facing pupils in order to find a way forward; when I see pupils’ academic performance is deteriorating. Not only that but also I call parents to discuss on the change of behaviour to students who commit mistakes several times”.*

The head teacher from school D also explained;

*“My team work (teachers) and I have established a principle of meeting with parents when there is any problem…… I always insist parents to see appropriate personnel at school if they encounter any problem. I have told them if an issue is concerned to academic issues they have to consult an academic teacher, if it is a disciplinary matter; they have to meet a discipline teacher. I have assured them to meet my office for the progress of the school. So the door is open at my school for any parent with any problem, opinion or contribution to improve academic achievements to our school ".*

**School meetings**: was another initiative described by teachers as a tool used to involve parents in school matters and development issues. The head teachers from different schools replied to the question. Head teacher of school B said that;

*“My school uses general school meetings to involve not only parents but also the community at large in discussing school development activities. For instance when there is a demand of increasing more class/classes according to enrollment, I call a general meeting to discuss with the community on what should be done to achieve it”.*

Head teacher of school C postulated that;

*“A school has a time table of holding parents’ day twice a year to discuss school academic progress of the children. Parents are informed on the academic achievement and challenges that affect quality delivery of education at school. At meetings, parents are given room to question on unpleasing issues and also to recommend what should be done to improve the situation. I can guess that attendance of parents at parents’ meetings at school, imply passive acceptance to the community as decisions being made by them*”.

In addition to the above points, the head teacher of school D proclaimed that;

*“At each end of the term, on the closing day, parents are invited to participate in such event. The event is associated with different functions including reading a report for school academic achievement and challenges, announcing best students and the worse ones, and explaining future plans and goals for better academic achievement. Therefore, through such event parents are requested in one way or another to participate in school development activities.”*

**Welfare and other services:** were also discussed and it was asserted by the head teacher of school B;

*“The school I supervise involves parents as well as the community in general through the mere use of service such as enrolling children in school or using a primary school campus as health care point when receiving health services like vaccination. The community also uses school compound for community matters like public meetings. In so doing, the community and the staff communicate each other and create conducive atmosphere between them”.*

Another head of school A contributed that;

*“The school creates proximity with the community by allowing them to attend in school events like in sports and games, various workshops and the use of school campus and facilities for community gains like use of classroom for internal meeting when discussing about VIKOBA”.*

**School governance**: Findings show that, school governance in collaboration with the community is among initiatives used by schools as a way of making parents involve in school activities. The findings revealed that parents were involved in school decision making whereby some of them were part of the school management. Parents as members of the school committee were involved in planning, coordinating and monitoring of school development activities. One of the informants, the head teacher of school C, once answering the question on how the school involves parents in school activities, said that:

*“Parents are involved in school administration through the school committee. Members of the school committee come from among parents to represent others on school management issues. They are elected to participate with the school in planning, coordinating and monitoring development and academic issues for the prosperity of the school. Through school committee, parents are involved in decision making, governance and advocate school activities”.*

**Children academic support**: Data revealed that, teachers have been involving parents to support their children academically as a way of involving the community in school activities. The head teacher of school C spoke out that;

“…. *We teachers try to involve parents indirectly in children’s learning. Teachers provide home works to pupils to be done at home under the supervision of their parents or guardian. Teachers also communicate with parents when they find that a certain pupil has something wrong to be corrected (guiding or counseling), in collaboration with his/her parents*. …..*moreover, teachers provide information and ideas to families about how to help pupils at home with home-work and other curriculum-related activities”.*

**Charity exercises**: moral practices were found to be applied by teachers as a way of making parents closer to their school. The head teacher school A said that;

*“It happens some of the teachers visit children’s home to communicate with parents and know the reality of the child’s environment. However, this practice is very difficult to be achieved due to lack of trust among of the parents to teachers. Moreover, due to economic challenges, most of the parents are not easily available at home at a reasonable time”.*

Findings collected under this variable show that, schools were taking different initiatives to make parents and the community in general involve in school activities through involvement in school development activities to support schools financially, materially and ideally. Teachers affirmed to apply school meetings and consultations sessions with parents in discussing development issues for the benefit of the school. Moreover, welfare and charity exercises programmes were identified by teachers as tools used also. Involvement of parents in school governance through school committee and actions in supporting pupils to enhance their learning were techniques discovered to be employed with schools in involving parents in school affairs.

Some of the above initiatives seem to concur with that of Colletta and Perkins (1995) who illustrated various forms of community participation initiatives including; (a) dialogue with policymakers; (b) school management; (c) curriculum design; (d) development of learning materials; and (e) school construction.

# 4.3 The extent of Parental Involvement in Schools’ Activities

The objective aimed at investigating efforts contributed by parents and the level of such contributions in improving the quality of education in their schools. Interview questions were respondent by both head teachers and ordinary teachers but in different approaches as analyzed.

# 4.3.1 Efforts Contributed by Parents in Improving Provision of Quality Education at Schools

Contributions from parents to their schools have been explained by heads of schools during interview sessions. Findings from teachers interviewed showed that parents’ efforts mentioned include parenting, financial and material contributions to school, school governance, attending school meetings and material support to children. The head teacher of school D while responding to the question about parents’ contributions, asserted that;

“…… *In some extent parents and the community in general have been working together with my school in delivering education whereby parents have been supporting the school in some areas such as in parenting, and provisional of financial support for achieving school objectives. ….. For example some of the parents have been monitoring pupil’s academic progress by making follow up on the tasks given to their children, such as home works and class activities which need to be accomplished by a pupil when at home”.*

The analysis above reflects the information by Heneveld and Craig (1996) who recognized parent and community support as one of the key factors to determine school effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa. They insisted that for effective delivery of education families have to establish home environments that support children’s learning at schools. Children should come to school prepared to learn. Also community financial and material support to the school enhances education delivery, and creates conducive environment for learners to learn and teachers to teach.

Head teacher of school A asserted that;

*“We have been discussing with parents as well as the community about school development strategies in improving teaching and learning environment. The community attends and participates in discussing school matters in school meetings, although their attendance is a challenge”.*

The head of school C contributed that;

*“ …… Parents have been support my school in managing it by utilizing some of the school committee members’ leadership skills in governing the school. Within my school committee, I have two retired teachers who were headmasters in certain secondary schools, a retired education officer and other wise people elected by parents. The committee provides a valuable support in terms of school management. Committee members also persuade the community to contribute on school development activities”.*

He continued explaining that;

*…… However, Madam, it is only few parents especially those who are aware on the importance of education and who have strong feelings on their children’s education, supports schools financially to achieve initiatives like construction of school buildings, buying desks and collection of teaching and learning materials. This is because, financial contribution has been mostly affected negatively due to the speech of the president on prohibiting financial contributions and insisting free education for primary and ordinary secondary education levels*”.

Further another head teacher from school B stressed that;

“*Parents have been participating in school in different events like graduations and volunteering in events for school development…….. I have developed a programme of providing porridge children of lower classes and parents have at least been contributing on that. In addition to that parents with children in standard IV and VII have been decided in contributing money for extra studies to the needy pupils”.*

Field data show that parents were cooperating with schools to enhance delivery of education to children. Parents’ participation in school activities have been through financial and material contributions, advising and administering school activities, attending school meetings for the discussion of school academic development and material support to children.

# 4.3.2 The extent of Parents Involvement in School Activities

This task measured the extent of contributions provided by parents in supporting schools’ activities, which could enhance delivery of quality education to children. The task was responded by both heads of schools and ordinary teachers.

# 4.3.2.1Teachers’ Responses on the Extent at Which Parents have been Involving in School Activities at School

The semi- structured interview conducted to 20 ordinary teachers to evaluate the level of parents’ contributions in school activities, brought answers which were coded and categorized into four levels which are; highly contributed, moderately, low and very low contributed as illustrated in Table 4.2 below;

Table 4.2: Teachers’ Responses on Levels of Parents’ Contributions in School Activities (n=20)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Level of Contribution | Respondents by School (%) | | | | |
|  |  | School A  (n=5) | School B  (n=5) | School C(n=5) | School D (n=5) | Total (n=20) |
| Parenting | high | 60 | 20 | 20 | - | 25 |
| moderate | 20 | 40 | 80 | 60 | 50 |
| low | 20 | 20 | - | 40 | 20 |
| very low | - | 20 | - | - | 5 |
| Financial and material contribution to school | high | - | - | - | - | - |
| moderate | - | 20 | 60 | 20 | 25 |
| low | 60 | 60 | 20 | 60 | 50 |
| very low | 40 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 25 |
| School governance | high | 40 | 60 | 20 | 40 | 45 |
| moderate | 20 | 40 | 60 | 60 | 45 |
| low | 20 | - | 20 | - | 10 |
| very low | - | - | - | - | - |
| others | - | - | - | - | - |
| Attendance in school meetings | high | - | - | - | - | - |
| moderate | 20 | 20 | - | 40 | 20 |
| low | 80 | 40 | 10 | 60 | 70 |
| very low | - | 40 | - | - | 10 |
| Material support to children | high | 40 | 60 | 40 | 20 | 40 |
| moderate | 60 | 40 | 40 | 60 | 50 |
| low | - | - | 20 | 20 | 10 |
| very low | - | - | - | - | - |

**Source**: Field Data, (2016).

Table 4.2 indicates teachers’ views in evaluating the extent at which parents contributed in school activities. Teachers from four schools each rated parents’ contributions in his/her respective school.

**Parenting**: field data have revealed that parenting was generally made by parents at an average level as a half of the respondents 10 (50%) perceived that parenting was done by parents at moderate level, who rated higher were 5(25%), for low were 4(20%) and who valued parents’ contribution to be at very low level was 1(5%). This implies that task of caring children at home was neither bad nor good. However, it should be noted that effective parenting of children at home is so important to raise learning culture to pupils for desirable academic outcomes. Poor parenting of children is one of the factors towards poor academic performance to pupils. All families should establish home environments that support children’s learning at schools.

**Financial and material contributions to school**: findings from teachers’ views have shown that an average of 5(25%) of the respondents valued parents contributions as moderate, while 10(50%) valued contributions at low level and again 5(25%) of the respondents valued efforts of parents as very low contributed in school activities, financially and materially. the inference from the findings suggest that parents were providing little financial and material support to their schools as 75% affirmed so (50% mentioned low contributions and 25% very low contributed). These poor financial and material contributions must have affected negatively provision of education in those primary schools. Deduction from data collected suggests that schools committees have to work hard to make the community closer to school.

**School governance**: Results show that 9 (45%) of the respondents valued leadership assistance were performed at higher level while another 9 (45%) valued at moderate level, while it was only 2 (10%) of the respondents considered leadership assistance was lowly contributed.

**Attendance in school meetings**: Field data show that only a few 4(20%) out of 20(100%) of the respondents valued parents attendance in school meeting was moderate, 14 (70%) valued as low, while 2(10%) of them regarded parents attendance in school meetings as very low. The analyzed findings imply that parents and the community in general do not consider getting information on their schools’ development. School B was discovered to be the mostly affected by poor attendance of parents in school meetings as it was confirmed by all five teachers represented others at school. It is true that school meetings with the community are one of the best ways in creating good relationship between parents and the school staff. It is through meetings, the community can be informed about school’s educational goals, strategies, achievements and challenges.

**Material support to children**: findings have shown that parents had been supporting their children with materials like pens, exercise books and supplementary books. This was revealed by the field data which showed that 8(40%) of the respondents regarded provision of material support to children by their parents to have been done at high level, 10(50%) considered to have been provided at an average level, while 2(10%) of the respondents regarded as lowly provided.

The results have shown that teachers have leveled parents’ contributions on assisting school governance through school committees, parenting, and material support to children at higher and moderate level. While initiatives related to financial and material support and attendance in school meetings were revealed to be at low level.

# 4.3.2.2 Information from Interview with Head Teachers on the extent at which Parents have been involving in School Activities at School

The findings from the interviews conducted to four head teachers showed that the level of parents’ contributions was generally at moderate level, although findings revealed poor attendance in school meetings and inadequate financial support. All four heads of schools claimed to have financial deficit in their budgets for running school programmes. They also claimed on limited attendance of parents in school meetings. This means schools activities were affected with lack of enough funds and ideas from parents. The situation seems to hinder effective improvement of delivery of education in schools for desirable outcomes.

Poor financial support and limited attendance of parents in school meetings imply poor existence of delivery of education in schools. This is because in order for schools to prosper academically, they need collaborative efforts of both school management and the community. The need for community participation in schools’ decision making and development is also supported by Belfield and Levin (2007). Their work on “*The Price we pay: Economic and Social Consequences of Inadequate Education”*, found that parents, families and community involvement in education, correlates with higher academic performance and school improvement. They commented that when schools, parents, families and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enroll in higher level programmes. However when those stakeholders do not work together, the vice versa is true.

# 4.4 Challenges Affecting Effective Involvement of Parents in School Activities and their Impact to Education Process.

The primary purpose of this objective was to examine factors that hindered effective involvement of parents in school activities and how such factors affected quality delivery of education in primary schools. Schools initiatives were revealed to be negatively affected by some challenges which therefore affected the intention of enhancing quality provision of education services in primary schools. Questions in semi-structured interview were employed independently to probe such hindrances from the participants. Teachers responded to the questions by mentioning possible challenges while head teachers went deeper in providing detailed information on the explored challenges as well as their impact.

# 4.4.1 Challenges Hindering Effective Involvement of Parents in School Activities

The researcher employed semi-structured interview to collect factors affected effective involvement of parents in school activities. Research findings have been collected from both ordinary teachers and the head of schools.

# 4.4.1.1 Teachers’ Responses on Challenges hindering Effective Involvement of Parents in School Activities

Field data collected from teachers were coded and thematically analyzed into five categories which include; parents’ economic difficulties, Misconception on what parents/ community have to contribute, political influence in school initiatives, poor parents’ attendance in school meetings, and ignorance on the importance accrued from education. Another challenge mentioned is parents lost trust to school management. Figure 4.2 has displayed distribution of responses on challenges contributed by respondents.

Figure 4.2: Identified Challenges for Effectives Involvement of Parents in School Activities

**Source:** Field Data, (2016).

The displayed data in figure 4.2 above show that parents’ financial problem was recognized with 6 (30%) of the respondents out of 20 teachers, as a challenge towards effective parents involvement in school activities, 5(25%) of them mentioned poor meetings attendance of parents as an hindrance, 3(15%) mentioned political influence, while Misconception on contributions for school development, ignorance and parents lost trust to school management were mentioned by 2 respondents each, whereby each variable was mentioned by 10% of the respondents respectively. The exposed findings imply that economic difficulties existed in the families, poor attendance in meetings and political influence are the main hindrances that affect negatively effective involvement of parents in school activities which directly or indirectly affected quality provision of education to pupils in schools.

# 4.4.1.2 Head Teachers’ Information on Challenges hindering Effective Involvement of Parents in School Activities and their impact to education

Interviews with head teachers explained challenges the same to those were mentioned by ordinary teachers. It has also been revealed that, such challenges have affected quality delivery of education due to lack of enough funds for the improve teaching and learning environment (insufficient teaching and learning materials, inadequate classrooms, lack of houses for teachers, and insufficient toilets), lack of teachers’ motivation, poor community-school relationship and lack of collective school development strategies in improving standard of education delivery.

Head teachers explained them on how they hindered effective involvement of parents in school activities. Statements made by teachers affirmed that economic difficulties experienced by most of the parents, hindered them to effectively participate in school development activities. The head teacher of school A had the following to say;

*“…… I have been at this school for at least seven years now, what I can say is that, most of the parents are of low economic status. When the school committee decides to involves parents in school development activities, becomes so harder for them to collect funds according to the agreed project. …. the school cannot get even a half of the prospected contributions. At past a school had a problem of insufficient toilets and the school committee decided to construct it through parents support. Each parent was required to contribute 10,000/- in order to collect approximately Tsh. 4,000, 000/- from 400 parents. …..you can’t believe madam, we only collected Tsh. 800, 000/- from parents, and this is the list of parents and those who have contributed until now. Therefore, the school decided to find funds from other sponsors including Temeke municipality, so as to accomplish the project*. *However, due to lack of enough funds, only a half the prospected number of holes of toilets was built, and we still need other toilets to solve the problem. We still facing toilets problem, which then affect pupils’ concentration in their study”*.

Another head teacher of school B also said that;

*“…. researcher it is true that the school need funds to pay for essential needs in order to deliver quality education. School needs funds to pay for security at school, water and electricity bills, construction of classes and toilets, and for buying teaching and learning resources. For instance a school had a contribution scheme of 1000 in every month to every parent, special for payment of security, water and electricity bills. But instead of collecting 7,000,000/- from 700 parents, the school ended in collecting an average of only 2,500,000/- each month. Most of the parents were not supporting the school financially. This has been affecting pupils’ cleanliness and lead to poor pupils’ hygiene as a result the situation disturbs children learning hence poor academic performance”.*

*“Further, it is well known that sources of funds at my school are the central government through capitation grants and contributions from the community/parents. However, grants from the state and contributions from the community/parents are insufficient to run school activities like buying stationery essential for instruction in class which lead to inappropriate teachings. In addition to that, most of the families with children at my schools are earning low income. The majority participates in petty business and sometimes uses their children (pupils) to go to street for begging or sell vegetables, packets of water or fruits like oranges and banana so as to earn a living. This practice has lead to pupils’ absenteeism which affects their academic achievement”.*

Those statements by head teachers suggest that most of the parents were experiencing poor financial status that hindered effective provision of support in schools’ development activities as well as pupils’ education development hence poor teaching and learning environment.

Another challenge which was delineated by head teachers was which can be perceived as “misconception on what parents/ community have to or not to contribute to support education process at the school level”.

The head teacher of primary school D sadly said;

*“Currently, I experience minimal contributions as most of the parents do not consider as they are supposed to participate in improving teaching and learning environment, with the belief that education is essentially the task of the State. Some of the parents articulate that the government has announced now a primary education are free; no parent is required to contribute even a shilling. This conception has lowered parents’ morale in contributing towards children education, and it has negatively affected a school in the provision of required education services”.*

Another heads teacher of school C asserted that:

*“Honorable President of Tanzania soon after his presidential inaugurate in 2015, he abolished financial contributions from parent as a cost sharing attempt in education at primary and ordinary secondary education levels. This has led some people to be reluctant in contributing for education services. …. at the school level it is often not clear as to what has been abolished and what has not been. Parents are confused on one hand to hear on the radio President saying that parents have no longer to pay fees but at the same time schools require them to make cash contributions for various activities like construction of desks. Inadequacy in parents’ contributions has led to poor education services and pupils learning”.*

The same challenge was also affirmed by Haki Elimu (2007) in the study “*What has been Achieved in Primary Education*?” Haki Elimu found out that implementation of PEDP and SEDP plans brought confusion on contributions. The document explains that there were enormous confusion about which types of contributions were still required from parents, and how schools might or might not have to use the funds made available from the government.

Political influence in school activities was blamed by teachers as a drawback that hampers parents’ effective support in education. The head teacher of school A postulated that;

*“…. now days it has come tendencies of associating school development activities with party affiliation. …. when a school held a meeting with the community to discuss on a certain issue especially which is related to school financial support, different views based on party affiliation raises. …at the end no valuable suggestion is reached for bright future of the school”*.

Basing on the same complaint, head teacher of school B informed that:

*“Politics in school administration had negative influence towards parents’ involvement in school activities and consequently, schools’ academic development deteriorates. …… some of political leader, mayor and councilors have been using school activities as political weapons to succeed in fulfilling their own interests rather than the public, hence poor community participation in school development activities. ….for instance we had a task of desk fundraising, but some politician are against it, which has lead to poor contributions and consequently my school experience poor education services to pupils”.*

The information above proves that, political influence play a significant role in either improving or hindering effective involvement of not only parents but also the community at large in school development activities. This is because it is political official who communicate with people, assigned tasks to work for the people and have political authority to make decision for their people.

Furthermore, all head teachers blamed on poor attendance of parents in school meetings. They said the community does not attend in meeting in a good number as a result information which is paramount for school development is not received with the intended receivers. The head teacher of school C was quoted saying:

*“I have an attendance list here of the last meeting, just see it. …. only 155 people attended on that meeting out of 1100 expected parents. How can we now discuss issues for the benefit of the children of 1100parents with only 155 people? Poor attendance in school meetings has created another problem of parents loosing trust towards school management on different activities as they are not aware of what have been suggested in the prior meetings. This has led to antagonistic relationship between the community and the school”*

Another head teacher of school B said;

*“I have experienced now of being conducting a meeting with few people. What I do is just to conduct a meeting with my school committee to present to represent others. …Failure to that the school cannot move forward”.*

Ignorance on the importance accrued from education was also noted by the researcher from findings as a hindering factor towards parents’ involvement in school development activities. The head teachers of school A said that;

*“….when you see a parent or a guardian allows a child to participate in petty business rather than attending school that is a sign of either a family is poor or it does not consider the importance of education for children future. There are parents in my school are not aware with their children education progress, and when you call them to come to school for the sake of his/her child education he/she does not care”.*

A teacher of school D said;

*That some parents do not recognize education as important, they consider more contributing in wedding parties rather than education for their children. I have been witnessing a number of wedding parties in every week. there is more than 4 wedding parties in those streets were pupils come from, which consume a lot of money, but when it comes on contributing for education, many run off to take responsibility for his/her child.*

An issue on loss in trust among parents and negative attitude towards school personnel was discovered as among the factors that reduce morale of parents to effectively participate in school activities.

The head of school A asserted that;

*…. Madam remember, most of the school’s activities are associated with the use of money in accomplishing them. Some of the parents do not trust teachers by believing that we have been embezzling their cash contributions. whatever you tell them that no any contribution will be misused as any programme is monitored by the school committee, … some do not believe …… such mistrust behaviour have lowered volunteering spirit to most parents. …. may be in the previous years had happened corruption cases on the misuse of public funds thus why the spirit has changed, am just guessing…….*

The head teacher of school B informed that;

*“.... Not all parents and community members are willing to get involved in school activities. Some have had negative schooling experiences themselves, some are illiterate and don’t feel comfortable talking to teachers, and getting involved in any kind of school activities. .... They feel they don’t have control over the school. Some parents and families are not willing to collaborate with schools because they cannot afford to lose their economical labor by sending their children. Even though they see the benefits to send children to schools, opportunity costs are oftentimes too high to pay”.*

A World Bank study of social assessment on EDUCO, community managed-schools, in El Salvador by Pena (1995),also revealed that even though the parents valued education and had a positive attitude regarding the teachers, they were suspicious about the government. This wariness, combined with lack of communication, fostered the fear that education would be privatized and parents would have to pay for education services.

This chapter was concerned with data analysis, presentation and discussion. Results in this chapter therefore have been collected from respondents through Semi-structured interview guides whereby both ordinary and head teachers were interviewed. The findings collected have revealed parents involvement in school activities improve the quality of education service delivery in schools. The surveyed schools identified initiatives used to involve parents in school affairs which include involvement in school development activities, school meetings for majority decisions, consultations on a particular issue, welfare and other services, school governance, children academic support and charity exercises programmes. Findings from teachers interviewed showed that parents’ efforts mentioned include parenting, financial and material contributions to school, school governance, attending school meetings and material support to children and their level of parents’ commitment was averagely valued at moderate level.

However, research findings have revealed drawbacks that affected negatively effective parents’ involvement in school activities regardless effort done by schools. The challenges explored include; parents’ economic difficulties, Misconception on what parents/ community have to contribute, political influence in school initiatives, poor parents’ attendance in school meetings, parents lost trust on school management and ignorance on the importance accrued from education. Study findings also show that, the explored challenges have led to poor parents/community participation in school activities, inadequate funds for running school educational services, insufficient teaching - learning materials, poor teaching-learning infrastructure, students truancy and worse education services in schools. The next chapter explains the proposed strategies that if will be effectively implemented may enhance parents involvement in school activities. The proposed strategies have been discussed in chapter five as recommendations for actions, and area for further study has been recommended.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# 

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The recommendations are proposed as a means of improving parents’ involvement in school activities in public primary schools in Tanzania, which in turn the quality services of education, will be realized throughout desirable academic performance of pupils. Summary and conclusions on the other hand, involve salient issues found out in the study.

# 5.2 Summary of the Study

The study was guided by the conceptual framework adopted from (Epstein, 1987) which emphasizes on the interaction of variables (dependent and independent) in explaining the impact of parental involvement in school activities for quality delivery of education. The interaction of variables explains the practices of the six type of involvement. These types include parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and community collaboration. Each practice which is implemented, offers opportunities for varied interactions of parents, teachers, pupils and others cross contexts. The conceptual framework shows that the parental involvement enables the fulfillment of the six concepts to the child. However, the number of children, marital status and occupation are intervening factors that can influence negatively or positively parental involvement in children primary education.

The literature related to the research problem was reviewed. It encompasses issues associated with schools initiatives in involving parents in school activities. Study objectives guided the researcher in delineating relevant literatures. The literature discussion has been based on types of parental involvement in school activities, the importance of parental involvement in school activities. Other issues include challenges to parents’ involvement in school activities and the ways parents may be involved in school activities. The researcher exposed what was known from the reviewed literature and therefore the research gap was identified. The study has been conducted in Temeke municipality in Dar-es-Salaam involving a sample of 24 participants who were 4 head teachers and 20 teachers from four primary schools. Purposive and simple random techniques were used to select the study sample. Semi-structured interview guide were employed to collect relevant data. Qualitative data collected from heads of schools, were subjected to content analysis and presented descriptively in exposing the reality of the situation. Data from ordinary teachers, their patterns or themes were identified, coded, and categorized for analysis, and their information were statistically presented in figures and tables to obtain frequencies and percentage for generalization.

# 5.3 Summary of the Main Study Findings

The study assessed the effectiveness of schools initiatives in involving parents in school activities in Temeke municipality. The study focused on the specific objectives

# 5.3.1 Initiatives in Involving Parents in School activities and their acceptance on Quality Delivery of Education

Teachers also mentioned and delineated initiatives which were mostly used with schools to make parents and the community in general involve in school activities which include involvement of parents in school development activities to support schools financially, materially and ideally, the use of school meetings and consultations sessions with parents in discussing development issues for the benefit of the school. Moreover, welfare and charity exercises programmes were identified by teachers as tools which were also used. Other initiatives mentioned were involvement of parents in school governance through school committee and actions in supporting pupils to enhance their learning.

# 5.3.2The extent of Parental Involvement in Schools’ Activities

Findings discovered that there were efforts contributed by parents in schools in improving quality delivery of education which were parenting, financial and material contributions, participating in school governance, attending school meetings and material support to their children. The findings revealed that the level of parents’ contributions was averagely at moderate level provided, although attendance in school meetings and financial support were worse as 15(75%) out 20(100%) showed that funds were lowly contributed and 16(80%) for low attendance in school meetings. Informants claimed to have financial deficit in their budgets for running school programmes. They also claimed on limited attendance of parents in school meetings. This means schools activities were affected with lack of enough funds and ideas from parents. The situation seems to hinder effective improvement of delivery of education in schools for desirable outcomes.

# 5.3.3 Challenges affecting Effective Involvement of Parents in School Activities and their Impact in Teaching and Learning

The discussed data show that challenges found out to hindering effective involvement of parents in school initiatives include parents’ financial problem, poor attendance in school meetings and political influence. Other challenges identified were Misconception on contributions for school development, ignorance and parents lose of trust towards school personnel. Findings revealed that economic difficulties existed in the families, poor attendance in meetings and political influence were the main hindrances that affect negatively effective involvement of parents in school activities which directly or indirectly affected quality provision of education to pupils in schools. It has also been revealed that, such challenges have affected quality delivery of education due to lack of enough funds for the improve of teaching and learning environment (insufficient teaching and learning materials, inadequate classrooms, lack of houses for teachers, and insufficient toilets), lack of teachers’ motivation, poor community-school relationship and lack of collective school development strategies in improving standards of education delivery.

# 5.4 Conclusion

Findings of this dissertation have revealed that community involvement in school activities is a valuable option in improving quality delivery of education services in schools. The findings show that schools applied different initiatives to involve the community or parents in school activities, and the level of participation was at an average level. According to the field data, parents were involved in schools’ activities in different ways including participation in school progressive activities, involve in school meetings and consultations sessions in discussing school and students matters, participation in welfare and charity exercises. They were also involved in school governance through school committee and actions in supporting students in learning.

Findings discovered that parents put their effort to support schools in improving quality delivery of education through parenting, financial and material contributions, participating in school governance, attending school meetings and provision of learning material to their children. However, the level of contributions was explored to be low. Moreover, the study explored challenges which led to ineffective parents’ involvement in school activities which include parents’ financial problem, poor attendance in school meetings, political influence, Misconception on contributions for school development, ignorance and parents lose of trust towards school personnel.

It has also been revealed that, such challenges have affected quality delivery of education due to lack of enough funds for the improve teaching and learning environment (insufficient teaching and learning materials, inadequate classrooms, lack of houses for teachers, and insufficient toilets), lack of teachers’ motivation, poor community-school relationship and lack of collective school development strategies in improving standard of education delivery. Since each group plays a different role in contributing to children’s education, there must be efforts to make a bridge between the community and the school in order to maximize the contributions. Education takes place most efficiently and effectively when these different groups of people collaborate. Accordingly, it is important to establish and continuously attempt to develop partnerships between schools, parents, and communities.

# 5.5 Recommendation

Basing on the findings and conclusions of the study, recommendations suggested have been divided into two parts, recommendations for policy action and recommendation for further studies.

# 5.5.1 Recommendation for Action

The following recommendations are directed to the government organs, political leaders, schools and the community and other education stakeholders for action as follows;

1. In order to exercise any kind of community participation, there is a need of raising the importance of parental involvement in school issues among all stakeholders, all people who are targeted. Reasons and benefits of community participation have to be clearly addressed and understood by the people. In addition, a continuing dialogue between schools and community is essential because it usually takes a long period of time to yield any benefit. Also all the stakeholders need to share the understanding that responsibility to educate children cannot be taken by single group of people. Political leaders at the local level have to conduct a *social marketing campaign,* and an *awareness campaign*, in order to promote community involvement in children’s education.
2. There is a need to reduce the dependency syndrome among community members while changing the people’s mind set from a willingness to contribute more for weddings to contributing more for education and we need to develop a hardworking spirit among the people.
3. The government should educate its agencies on the need and ways to influencing parents and the community to involve in school activities. When the agencies are not willing to collaborate with communities in achieving the objectives, it is important to help them understand why community participation is important. If they disagree, but implement the plans because they are told to, the results will be unfavorable. Communities, as well, need to have a good understanding of why they need to collaborate with schools, what benefits can be yielded.
4. It also requires teachers and other school staff to have political will not only to work with parents and communities but also to attempt to involve them in school operation. Implementing agencies are required to have the technical capability to carry out active community participation, encouraging and involving communities in a great range of school management.
5. The government should raise the funding level for the schools, both to the government and to individuals. The government should strive to boost the national economy and eventually that of each citizen which will make them able to offer effective support to schools. Adequate funds should be provided to schools.
6. The government should practically implement the technique of decentralization by devolution in a real sense, rather than applying decentralization by deconcentration in the name of devolution. Separation of political issues from technical matters in solving education problems should be observed.
7. Cooperation among all stakeholders including the communities, local governments, charity organizations, NGO’s and donors are important aspects, that will ensure the sustainability of availability of teaching and learning resources as well as improved infrastructure, which implies external actors are paramount in education projects success.
8. Transparency on schools’ development projects have to be maintained. Schools and essential education institutions should ensure timely access of information, using effective communications tools that address various community structures, and should be translated in languages that all stakeholders understand.

# 5.5.2 Recommendation for further Studies

The results of the study have revealed ineffective involvement of parents in schools activities which have lowered quality delivery of education. This implies that studies to investigate strategies that can be implemented to improve community involvement in school activities in a broad way are necessary. Researcher recommends more studies to be done on the effectiveness of education decentralization in improving teaching and learning environment in public primary schools.

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# APPENDICES

**Appendix I: Interview Guide for Heads of Schools**

1. How does effective community involvement enhance school academic performance?
2. What initiatives your schools use towards involving parents in school activities?
3. Explain efforts which have been contributed by the parents in improving provision of quality education at your school.
4. To what extent parents have been contributing / involving in school activities?
5. What are the challenges school face in involve parents in school activities?
6. How lack of effective involvement of parents in school activities affect quality delivery of education?
7. What should be done to effectively involving parents in the school activities?

**Appendix II: Interview Guide for Teachers**

1. How does effective community involvement enhance school academic performance?
2. Would you please, mention initiatives your school use towards involving parents on school activities?
3. What efforts have been contributed by the parents in improving provision of quality education at your school?
4. To what extent parents have been contributing in the mentioned efforts in question 3 to improve provision of quality education at your school?
5. Outline challenges your school faces in involving parents in school activities
6. How lack of effective involvement of parents in school activities affect quality delivery of education? (Please mention).
7. Mention strategies which can be employed by the school management in involving parents in the school activities?

**Appendix III: Documentary Review Checklist**

1. Community or parents contributions information
2. Attendance list for school meetings from school minutes

