

**A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in Foundation
Phase quintile one and quintile five schools**

By

Maisela Mologadi Lucia

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

In the Faculty of Education

At the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SUPERVISOR: Dr Nkhensani Susan Thuketana

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr Joyce West

2022

DECLARATION

I, **Maisela Mologadi Lucia**, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signed

Date

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER: EDU031/20

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd

A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in Foundation Phase quintile one and five schools

INVESTIGATOR

Ms Mologadi Lucia Maisela

DEPARTMENT

Early Childhood Education

APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

06 July 2020

DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

10 December 2021

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'F. Omidire', written over a horizontal line.

CC

Ms Thandi Mngomezulu

Dr N.S. Thuketana

Dr J. West

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Wordplay
Editing

WORDPLAY EDITING

Copy Editor and Proofreader

Email: karien.hurter@gmail.com

Tel: 071 104 9484

Website: <http://wordplayediting.net/>

5 April 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that *A Comparative Study of Teacher-parent Relationships in Foundation Phase Quintile One and Quintile Five Schools* by Maisela Mologadi Lucia was edited by a professional language practitioner. It requires further work by the author in response to my suggested edits. I cannot be held responsible for what the author does from this point onward.

Regards,



Karien Hurter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the following people:

- My grandmother, who always taught me the importance of education. May her soul rest in peace.
- My supervisors, Dr N.S Thuketana and Dr J. West, who walked with me throughout my academic journey.
- My husband Timothy, who encouraged me to study.
- My children, Gloria, Emmanuel, Tshegofatso and Mogau, who sat with me at the table in solidarity.
- My colleagues who gave me all the support.
- The Department of Education for granting me permission to conduct research in Sekhukhune South District.
- The principals who allowed me to conduct research at their schools.
- All the teachers and parents who participated in my study.

ABSTRACT

Teacher-parent relationships are essential because Foundation Phase education is critical for young learners' holistic development. Teachers and parents should share information about learners' academic and social difficulties to enhance school curriculum access and learner retention. However, developing sound teacher-parent relationships in rural areas is difficult because of embedded socioeconomic and cultural factors and parents' low literacy levels. This study aimed to compare whether teachers and parents in identified rural Foundation Phase schools have a relationship that advances learners' social and academic development. The researcher investigated the benefits of sound teacher-parent relationships and recommended strategies for teachers in rural schools to strengthen relationships with learners' parents. The study used Epstein's six types of involvement and Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theories. The researcher targeted quintile 1 and 5 schools to compare the results and ascertain the contextual factors stifling and advancing teacher-parent relationships formulation. The study adopted a qualitative, multiple case study design within an interpretivist methodological paradigm. Three teachers and two parents from each quintile school were purposefully selected as study participants. The recorded data were collected using focus group interviews and document analysis. The results are presented using a descriptive analysis technique.

Keywords:

Social development, Academic development, Teachers, Parents, Foundation Phase, quintile 1, quintile 5

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DoE	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EYFS	EARLY YEARS FOUNDATIONN STAGE
HOD	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
NEAP	NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY
NEPA	NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT
NIECDP	NATIONAL INTERGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY
SA	SOUTH AFRICA
SASA	SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT
SPFSGB	SENIOR PHASE AND FETSCHOOL GOVERNNG BODY
STD	SECONDARY TEACHERS DIPLOMA
USA	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Teacher- and parent-based barriers to teacher-parent relationships	48
Table 2.2: Epstein's (2001) six types of parental involvement framework	53
Table 2.3: Ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner	58
Table 4.1: Parent participants	84
Table 4.2: Teacher participants	84
Table 4.3: Themes, categories, codes, and research questions	86
Table 4.4: Outlines for the theme, categories, codes and research questions	122

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1. Makhuduthamaga local municipality	74
Figure 3.2. Google map showing the location of Makhuduthamaga local municipality	74
Figure 3.3. Process of data analysis and interpretation (Miles and Huberman, 1994)	79

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	ii
CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY	3
1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY	5
1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	6
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
1.7 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS	7
1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION	7
1.8.1 Enhance	8
1.8.2 Social development	8
1.8.3 Academic development	9
1.8.4 Foundation Phase	9
1.8.5 Teacher-parent relationships	10
1.8.6 Rural context	10

1.9	PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW	11
1.9.1	Foundation phase teachers' role in educating learners	11
1.9.2	Parents' role in educating their children	13
1.9.3	Strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase	16
1.10	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	18
1.10.1	Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement	18
1.10.2	The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner	19
1.11	RESEARCH PARADIGM	20
1.12	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	20
1.13	METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	20
1.14	RESEARCH DESIGN	21
1.15	SAMPLING METHOD	21
1.16	DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION	22
1.17	DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION METHODS	22
1.18	TRUSTWORTHINESS	22
1.19	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	24
1.20	OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	25
1.21	SUMMARY	26
	CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	27
2.1	INTRODUCTION	27
2.2	INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ON TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS IN QUINTILE 1 AND 5 SCHOOLS	28
2.3	SOUTH AFRICAN STUDIES ON TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS	29
2.4	CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY	31
2.5	HOW DO TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS ENCOURAGE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?	32

2.6	TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS OF AND PERSPECTIVES ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	34
2.7	PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS FROM TEACHERS	36
2.7.1	Personal characteristics	36
2.7.2	Professional characteristics	37
2.8	PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR	40
2.9	FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS' ROLE IN FACILITATING TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS	42
2.10	PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN	43
2.11	FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS	44
2.11.1	The effect of parents' socioeconomic status on learners in the foundation phase	45
2.11.2	The effects of parents' literacy status on children's education	46
2.11.3	Parents' and learners' culture	47
2.12	BARRIERS TO TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS	48
2.13	STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE	49
2.13.1	Professional development of teachers	49
2.13.2	Parental involvement in curriculum issues	49
2.13.3	Home visits	50
2.13.4	Teacher-parent games	50
2.13.5	Parent meetings	51
2.14	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	52
2.14.1	Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement	52
2.14.2	The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner	58
2.15	THE THEORIES' APPLICABILITY TO THE STUDY	62

2.16	SUMMARY	63
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		65
3.1	INTRODUCTION	65
3.2	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	66
3.3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	66
3.3.1	Research approach	67
3.3.2	Research paradigm	68
3.3.3	Research design	69
3.4	RESEARCH METHODS	71
3.4.1	Sampling and selection of participants	71
3.4.2	The role of the researcher	75
3.4.3	Data collection strategies	76
3.5	DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	78
3.6	TRUSTWORTHINESS	79
3.6.1	Data storage	80
3.7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	81
3.8	SUMMARY	82
CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS		83
4.1	INTRODUCTION	83
4.2	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	84
4.2.1	Participants' demographic information	84
4.2.2	Presentation of findings from focus group interviews	85
4.2.3	Theme 1: Comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools	87
4.2.4	Theme 2: Factors affecting the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools	100

4.2.5	Theme 3: Benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase	112
4.3	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	122
4.3.1	Theme 1: The roles and responsibilities of parents	123
•	<i>Category 2: The responsibilities of parents to provide a safe environment for learning</i>	128
4.4	DISCUSSION OF THE KEY FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	133
4.4.1	Theme 1: Comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools	134
4.4.2	Theme 2: Factors affecting the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools	136
4.4.3	Theme 3: Benefits of teacher-parent relationships	138
4.5	DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	141
4.6	CONCLUSION	143
	CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	145
5.1	INTRODUCTION	145
5.2	OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS	145
5.3	SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS	146
5.3.1	Sub-research question 1: What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?	147
5.3.2	Sub-research question 2: Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quantile 1 and 5 rural schools?	149
5.3.3	Sub-research question 3: How do teachers and parents in the rural context collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?	153
5.4	RECOMMENDATIONS	154
5.4.1	Recommendations for future research	154

5.4.2	Recommendations for practice	155
5.4.3	Recommendations for policies	155
5.5	LIMITATIONS	155
5.6	CONCLUDING REMARKS	156
5.7	CONCLUSION	157
	REFERENCES	158
	ANNEXURE A: STUDENT REQUESTING RESEARCH APPROVAL	178
	ANNEXURE B: PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH	180
	ANNEXTURE C: CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPALS	181
	ANNEXURE D: CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS	184
	ANNEXTURE E: CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS	187
	ANNEXURE F: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR PARENTS	190
	ANNEXURE G: FOCUS GROUP GUIDES WITH TEACHERS	193

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Research shows that teacher-parent relationships are essential to enhancing learners' social and academic achievement in the Foundation Phase (Peters, 2012; Blair, 2014; Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014; Ochoa & Torre, n.d.). A relationship between teachers and parents requires communication that reinforces engagement for positive learning in learners (Epstein, 2003). In the South African (SA) rural contexts, various factors perpetuate the lack of parental participation in learners' education (Okeke, 2014). Parents' literacy level and socioeconomic status impede teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase (Mason, 2017). Sigh et al. (2004) agreed that poverty, unemployment, single parenthood, culture, and parents' attitudes can negatively affect teacher-parent relationships. Okeke (2014) argued that parents' participation in learners' schooling is crucial, and the non-participation of most parents, particularly in rural areas, affects teacher-parent relationships. According to Sapungan and Sapungan (2014), effective parental participation embraces academic and social activities in which learners participate.

Considering the above, as early as 2009, the Australian government developed the Family-School Partnership Framework. According to the framework, teachers and parents must collaborate toward the holistic development of learners in the Foundation Phase (ages 6–8; Epstein, 2001). The framework included having secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships, partnerships with families, high expectations of teachers and parents, equity, ongoing learning, reflective practices, and respect for diversity

(Family-School Partnerships Framework, 2009). In Swaziland, teacher-parent relationships are a way to integrate family culture and traditions into teaching and learning (Okeke, 2014). Moreover, in Burundi, education policies require parents to make financial contributions to the school, while in Uganda, despite primary education being a public service that is free and mandatory, the Universal Primary Education Policy of 1997 stipulates parents' role at home and school in support of children's learning (Echaune et al., 2015). In Kenya, governments have recognised the need to improve the learning environment by involving parents. Recently, the Basic Education Act of Kenya (2013) has required the school boards of management to assess school needs with the full participation of parents (Echaune et al., 2015), which means that parents are seen as essential stakeholders in the education of their children.

In light of the above, before the transition into democracy era in SA, principals of schools carried the mandate of the Department of Education (DoE) to make decisions on parents' behalf regarding learners' education (Felix et al., 2008). Transformation in SA began after 1994 when the apartheid government was removed and SA became a democracy (Felix et al., 2008). The SA government developed new policies and acts to address the inequalities within the education sector, such as the South African Schools Act (SASA) no. 84 of 1996, which explicitly stipulates the participation of parents as an essential aspect of enhancing learners' academic performance. The SASA (1996) clearly states that parents must encourage every child between 7 and 15 years old, or Grade 9, to attend school. Parents of children who attend school should follow up on their children's progress by constantly communicating with teachers (Lemmer, 2011). When teachers and parents communicate effectively, a sound teacher-parent relationship is created.

In this study, I investigated and compared teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 Foundation Phase schools, especially rural schools. The reason for the comparison was to establish if there are teacher-parent relationships in the quintile 1 and 5 schools, and to explore their benefits on learners in the Foundation Phase.

1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Relationships between teachers and parents must be strengthened and consistently improved if students are to succeed socially and academically (Jeynes, 2011; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013; Erdener, 2016). Teachers are the ones who interact with learners the most in the classroom (Semke & Sheridan, 2012; Ma, Shen, & Krenn, 2014; Venter, Joubert, & Chetty, 2014), and research from both local and international sources has linked effective teacher-parent relationships to lower rates of dropout and grade retention, learner absenteeism, and disruptive behaviour. Grant and Ray (2013) contend that having a teacher-parent relationship benefits the child in many ways and that parents who are interested in their children's education have a tendency to have a more positive attitude toward schools and teachers.

Given the significance of parents in a child's education, the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996) mandates the decentralization of school governance to allow different members of the community, including parents, to be involved in the management of primary and secondary schools. Although dealing with parents presents numerous problems, teacher-parent interactions are beneficial to students' social and academic development. Teacher-parent relationships are complicated and contextualized by socioeconomic conditions, racial origins, and the conventional division of labor between parents and professionals, claim Brien and Stelmach (2009), who write from a developed setting. Initiatives to improve teacher-

parent relationships might run against a number of difficulties in South African schools. For example, unfavourable socioeconomic conditions may widen the gap between parents and teachers, making such attempts ineffective (Matshe, 2014; Mncube, 2010; Modisaotsile, 2012; Msila, 2012; Botha, 2013). Schools are tasked with addressing challenges associated with interacting with outside parties, particularly with parents, among other things (Bhengu & Myende, 2015).

As a parent of a child in the Foundation Phase, I realised that a relationship with teachers is vital as it enhances the child's social and academic development. My child struggled with his studies in Grade 1. The teacher in his class contacted me to help him with his studies, and this is how the relationship between the teacher and me developed. The relationship with the teacher improved my child's social and academic life. He performed better in his studies and was promoted to the next grade. I learned that having a relationship with your child's teacher as a parent can improve a child's academic life. Hence, I wanted to compare teacher-parent relationships to enhance Foundation Phase learners' social and educational development.

The benefits and factors affecting teacher-parent relationships are established in the literature (Sapungan, & Sapungan, 2014; Selangan, 2015). Therefore, this study investigated and compared teacher-parent relationship challenges, strategies, and benefits in the Foundation Phase, especially in rural areas.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There is a lack of adequate research in SA, especially in rural areas, on teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase (Chindanya, 2011). Factors such as poverty, single parenthood, culture, socioeconomic factors and the literacy status of parents

affect the relationship between teachers and parents (Geske & Ozola, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Ecahune, et al. 2015). Lack of teacher-parent relationships in rural areas contributes to the poor performance of learners in the Foundation Phase, and research shows that good teacher-parent relationships can positively affect learners' social and academic achievement in early childhood education (Donoghue, 2014; Herrel, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to compare whether there are teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase and establish strategies that teachers can use to create sound teacher-parent relationships. The study plays a role in establishing strategies to help teachers cultivate positive, sound teacher-parent relationships. The study may also inform the Department of Basic Education's policies for Early Childhood Education. Better informed guidelines could help teachers implement teacher-parent relationships that enhance learners' social and academic performance. For this reason, I studied teachers in the identified rural schools to compare and suggest strategies that can enhance learners' academic and social development.

With the study's results, I aim to initiate academic debate and contribute to the strategies that can empower teachers in rural quintile 1 and 5 schools to cultivate positive relationships with parents to benefit learners in the Foundation Phase.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to compare and determine the challenges, strategies, and benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase, especially in rural areas.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study had the following objectives:

- To compare whether there are teacher-parent relationships in Foundation Phase quantile 1 and 5 rural schools;
- To compare challenges that affect the formation of sound teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase in quantile 1 and 5 rural schools.
- To explore strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase in quintile 1 and 5 rural schools; and
- To establish the benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions guide a research project and help the researcher conduct orderly research from inception to completion (Maree, 2012). Based on the contextual gap I identified in the literature concerning the lack of teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase, the following primary research question foregrounded the study:

- How do quantile 1 and 5 rural schools compare with regards to cultivating a positive teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase?

The secondary research questions were:

- What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?
- Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase?

- How do teachers and parents in rural contexts collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?

1.7 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made while conducting this study:

- The participants in the study would freely provide the researcher with honest responses to the questions that were asked.
- The instruments for data collection used would elicit reliable answers from the participants.
- The participants would understand the questions asked.
- Teachers and parents in rural contexts do not have a relationship that enhances learners' social and academic development in schools.

1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

Concept clarification clarifies how a concept is used in a study against the background of many definitions in the literature (Maree, 2012). After presenting the descriptions of two or three authors, researchers can synthesise their view of the concept and provide their understanding of the concept concerning the background and the context of the study (Maree, 2012).

1.8.1 Enhance

Campbell and Roszyn (2002) defined 'enhance' as taking deliberate steps to improve the effectiveness of students' learning experience. According to the Cambridge English Dictionary (1995), enhance means to improve the quality, amount, or strength of something. To enhance is a way to increase or improve value, quality, desirability, or attractiveness (Merriam-Webster Collegiate, 1999). In this study, I used Campbell and Roszyn's (2002) definition because it agrees with how teacher-parent relationships can improve learners' social and academic development.

1.8.2 Social development

Social development is referred to how people develop social and emotional skills across their lifespan, focusing on childhood and adolescence (Social Development, n.d.). Darling-Churchill and Lippmann (2016) defined social development as the ability of young children to form close and secure adult and peer relationships; experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and explore the environment and learn. The Department of Education in Washington defined social development as a process of gaining the knowledge and skills needed to interact successfully with others. For this study, I adopted Darlin-Churchill and Lippman's (2016) definition because it aligns with the topic as teacher-parent relationships enhance learners' academic development.

1.8.3 Academic development

Academic development is referred to developing skills and knowledge to perform well in school (Geary, 2016). Educational development is the creation of conditions supportive of teaching and learning (Leibowitz & Taylor 2014). Fremstad et al. (2020) defined academic development as improving teaching with the hopeful aim of subsequently enhancing student learning. Within the context of my study, I used Geary's (2016) definition because teacher-parent relationships develop children's skills and knowledge to perform well at home and school.

1.8.4 Foundation Phase

In Wales, the Foundation Phase is the statutory curriculum framework for learners aged three–seven years (Thomas & Lewis, 2016). In SA, the Foundation Phase is defined as early learning for Grades R–3, during which ethics, manners, and fundamental learning skills are developed (DoE, 1996). SA defined the Foundation Phase as the first phase of formal schooling (DoE, 1996). In this study, I used a definition that defines the Foundation Phase as Grade R–3, teaching learners ranging from five to eight years of age, during which ethics, manners, and fundamental learning techniques are developed. Parent involvement enhances learning outside the classroom and improves children's social and academic performance. The reason for my choice is to compare whether there are teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools.

1.8.5 Teacher-parent relationships

Teacher-parent relationships are a shared effort that requires mutual trust between the teachers and the parents of learners in the Foundation Phase (Keyes, 2012). Sunar (2015) defined teacher-parent relationships as a connection mediation between parents' motivation and competence for helping their children succeed socially and academically. According to Ellis, Lock and Lummis (2015), teacher-parent relationships interact between teachers and parents to enhance a child's academic performance. Witte's (2015) explanation aligns with the purpose of my study since my research investigated the benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase and also investigated strategies teachers can use to cultivate good relationships with parents of Foundation Phase learners. Therefore, the study adopted Witte's definition.

1.8.6 Rural context

Ogdul (2010) defined the rural context as areas outside urban development and economic centres in the national territory. The Oxford Dictionary defined rural as "in, relating to, or characteristics of the countryside rather than the town: remote rural areas". On the other hand, Collins (2010) defined rural as places far away from town. I used the Oxford Dictionary definition for this study because the study was conducted in rural areas.

In the next section, I discuss current literature on aspects such as the roles of teachers and parents in the education journey of learners in the Foundation Phase and research-based strategies to improve the teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase.

1.9 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a critical evaluation of past research about the topic of study (Maree, 2012). Researchers use the literature review to find the gaps in the discussed and trending topics related to the phenomenon under investigation (Onwuegbuzie & Frels 2016). Onwuegbuzie and Frels (2012) supported that a literature review allows researchers to move from the known to the unknown (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016). I conducted a literature review to identify the gaps in the literature relating to teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase.

In the literature review, I discuss Foundation Phase teachers' roles, parents' roles, and existing strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase.

1.9.1 Foundation phase teachers' role in educating learners

A professional teacher fulfils several roles, such as learning mediator; interpreter; designer of learning programmes and materials; leader; administrator and manager; scholar; researcher; lifelong learner; community, citizenship, and pastoral roles; assessor; and learning area, subject discipline, and phase specialist (DoE, 2000). The functions of the teacher do not limit the teacher to forming positive teacher-parent relationships. Teachers should play another vital role in facilitating teacher-parent relationships because they enhance learners' social and academic development in the Foundation Phase (Stelmach, 2009). Teachers are responsible for understanding the communities they serve (DoE, 2000). Teachers' role is to understand the cultural

diversities, social statuses, and economic statuses of the communities they serve in order to be able to form positive teacher-parent relationships (Selolo, 2018).

Teachers are considered the pioneers in building effective parental relationships (Blitch, 2017). However, for teacher-parent relationships to thrive, teachers must initiate the connection as soon as they realise the need (Mncube, 2009). Page (2016) stated that contacting parents early on in their children's learning process allows parents to know their children's strengths and weaknesses, creating a robust platform for teachers and parents to collaborate and support learners.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that they communicate effectively with the parents of the children in their classrooms (Blitch, 2017; Epstein, 2001). Communication methods such as texting, emailing, daily updates at drop-off and pick-up, phone calls, or face-to-face communication are mentioned in the literature (Morrison et al., 2015; Blitch, 2017; Swick, 2004; Epstein, 2001). However, teachers find it challenging to select effective methods of communication because of the diverse profiles, such as the socioeconomic status, of the parents of learners in their classrooms. Blitch (2017) showed that formal written communication between teachers and parents is inadequate, especially for illiterate Black parents in rural areas. UNESCO (2014) defined illiteracy as the inability to read and write. According to Okeke (2014) and Page (2016), factors such as communication and understanding learners' culture can contribute to ensuring a good relationship between parents and teachers. When teachers understand and acknowledge the culture of the communities that learners reside in, they can avoid a communication breakdown and create a reciprocal positive relationship between teachers and parents (Hornby, 2011).

Teachers are not the only ones who have a role in children's education journey, and it is the duty of parents to ensure that they collaborate with teachers in this regard. When parents work with teachers, learners perform better in the classroom (Rouse, 2012). This leads to a good relationship between the teacher and the parent.

The following section discusses parents' roles in their children's education journey according to the literature.

1.9.2 Parents' role in educating their children

Parents are the immediate teachers of children as they grow in front of them before going to school (Yunus & Dahlan, 2013). Parents play a critical role in their children's lives, such as encouraging, supporting, and providing children with access to social activities that enhance their development (Yunus & Dahlan, 2013). Parents should adopt positive child-rearing styles to support their children at home (Bukaliya & Mapuranga, 2015). Bukaliya and Mapuranga (2015) argued that child-rearing could affect children's academic performance.

Parents play a significant role in their children's education journey (Page, 2016). Parents who actively participate in their children's education have a good relationship with their children's teachers (Sigh et al., 2004). Parents are, among other things, expected to help children with homework, attend meetings when invited, and regularly communicate with teachers to check their children's progress (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013).

El Nokali et al. (2010) and Powel et al. (2010) found that parental involvement during the Foundation Phase has a positive impact on the development of children's cognitive, social, and literacy skills (Lemmer, 2017). One of the parents' essential duties is ensuring that children attend school every day (Okeke, 2014). In 2017, the DoE in England developed a national policy called Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017) that clearly stated that parents whose children do not attend school would be prosecuted. Likewise, the SASA encourages parents to participate in their children's education journey. Parents participate in their children's education by supporting their children, motivating children to learn, creating a conducive environment at home, monitoring their learning, and helping children with homework (SASA, 1996). Parents who actively participate in their children's education have a good relationship with their children's teachers (Sigh et al., 2004). The parents are, among other things, expected to help children with homework, attend meetings when invited, and regularly communicate with teachers to check their children's progress (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Active participation of parents reassures teachers that the parents view education as an essential aspect of their children's lives, enhancing teaching and learning (Rouse, 2012).

Parents' socioeconomic factors can arguably hinder their active participation in their children's academic journey. The following subsection discusses the effect of socioeconomic factors on parents of learners in the Foundation Phase.

- ***The effect of socioeconomic factors on parents of learners in the foundation phase***

Parents' socioeconomic factors such as poverty, affects how teachers and parents associate in the Foundation Phase (Page, 2016). In rural areas, most parents depend on government grants, which are insufficient to cover families' basic needs and support children's school activities (Peters, 2012). The high poverty rate makes it difficult for teachers to form sound teacher-parent relationships with parents of children in the Foundation Phase (Peters, 2012).

- ***Parents' literacy status***

Parents' literacy levels can positively or negatively affect parental involvement in schools (Kurtulmus, 2016). According to Ghanney (2018), illiterate parents can participate in their children's education. When parents participate in their children's education, it is easier to form positive relationships with their children's teachers in the Foundation Phase. On the other hand, illiterate parents find it challenging to support their children's education (Selolo, 2018). They find it frustrating as they cannot make their homes conducive to learning, monitor their children's schoolwork or form positive relationships with their teachers (Selolo, 2018).

Children whose parents did not finish high school or have difficulty with reading are more likely to be illiterate themselves and are more than five times as likely to drop out of school (Tsolou & Babalis, 2020). Illiteracy also places a significant load on the individual's family or support system as illiterate adults are dependent on others to operate and exist because they cannot do things such as read letters or fill out bank forms. Illiterate parents may lack the knowledge and skills needed to act and respond

to issues they face in their everyday life, such as reading school letters and supporting their children with schoolwork (Okeke, 2014; Bower & Griffin, 2011).

In the Foundation Phase, proper planning and commitment are needed from both the teachers and the parents to form the base for a good relationship (Rouse, 2012). Therefore, teachers need to develop strategies to encourage teacher-parent relationships in the Foundation Phase.

1.9.3 Strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase

There is a need for teachers and parents to work together effectively to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase. Teachers must develop strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. According to Okeke (2014), teachers can initiate strategies to strengthen relationships with parents. The following subsections discuss curriculum issues and strategies to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase.

- ***Parent involvement in curriculum issues***

Parental involvement in curriculum issues is a strategy that ensures parents know what role to play to help their children with schoolwork (Felix et al., 2008). The teachers have to involve parents in curriculum-related matters such as planning, evaluating, and implementing the curriculum (Felix et al., 2008). Schools need to develop policies for parents to participate in the curriculum and assess learners' academic progress (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2006). During this time, teachers may listen to parents' opinions and expectations of their children in school (Okeke, 2014). They can also discuss the roles they need to play to help learners achieve expected outcomes

socially and academically (Okeke, 2014; Rose, 2012). Chindanya (2011) argued that parents sometimes fail to help their children with homework because, as parents, they do not know what schools expect.

- ***Home visits***

Home visits are an effective way to build teacher-parent relationships (Okeke, 2014). Teachers and parents can discuss learners' academic performance and other school-related activities (Robins & Searby, 2013). Furthermore, home visits serve a social purpose because it allows teachers to evaluate the social background of the learners that they teach (Lemmer, 2017). When teachers visit parents at home, parents are assured of a caring element and a good relationship that will benefit the teaching and learning of children in schools (Okeke, 2014).

- ***Communication***

There are multiple ways for teachers and parents to communicate. For communication to be reinforced and effective, teachers should adopt various communication methods and consider the social statuses of the parents of learners in their classrooms. The methods that teachers adopt will ensure constant communication between teachers and parents. According to Durisic and Bunijevac (2017), effective communication allows a flow of information from teachers to parents and vice versa about learners' progress. Epstein (1999) described communicating with parents as one of the effective strategies teachers can use to develop good teacher-parent relationships. Teachers can use various modes of communication, such as short message services, WhatsApp, phone calls, and written letters, to update parents about their children's progress and other related school activities.

Involving parents in the curriculum, home visits, and communication are strategies identified in the literature and discussed in more detail in the thesis.

1.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Fouche and Schurink (2009) explained a theoretical framework as “a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that informs a research study.” Anfara and Mertz (2015) defined a theoretical framework as any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and psychological processes at various levels. A study uses a theoretical framework to allow the researcher to present a unique view of the phenomenon being studied (Anfara & Mertz, 2015).

I aligned my study with Epstein’s (2001) framework of six types of parental involvement and Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological system theory. These two theories explain how teachers can successfully implement relationships with parents of learners in the foundation phase. For a complete discussion on the theoretical frameworks, see section 2.14.

1.10.1 Epstein’s framework of six types of parental involvement

Epstein’s (2001) framework of school-family-community partnerships enables teachers to develop effective programmes to bring schools, families and communities together. I selected Epstein’s theoretical framework as a guiding theory for the study because parental involvement impacts children’s learning. The theory is crucial as it investigates parental involvement issues that may enhance teaching and learning. The lack of parental involvement may affect learners’ social and academic development in rural foundation phase contexts (Epstein, 2001). I used Epstein’s framework of six types of parental involvement to identify a framework that helps teachers develop strategies that ensure sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in

the rural context. Epstein (2001) presented a framework of six types of parental involvement to establish good relationships between teachers and parents.

1.10.2 The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner

The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner (1992) states that the environment influences children. The theory is divided into the following five levels: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). The microsystem encompasses direct contact of the learner, such as family, school and neighborhood. The mesosystem of the ecological system theory encourages the interaction between the teachers and the parents (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). The exosystem defines the larger social systems that indirectly influence the learner, such as parents' work schedules. The macrosystem encompasses cultural believe and influences the interaction of all other systems in the child's life.

According to Bronfenbrenner, the mesosystem influences the relationship between the teacher and the parents (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). Hence, children are influenced by their parents at home and by teachers at school (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2013). Since teachers and parents have immediate contact with children at home and school, it is essential to form sound teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development. Therefore, teachers and parents are encouraged to collaborate to form positive teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase.

The two theories allowed me to understand and make meaning of the data collected by providing insight into how teacher-parent relationships are integrated. The two theories highlight strategies teachers should develop to cultivate a good relationship with parents.

1.11 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm seeks to define approaches to social science research (Taber, 2013). My study was guided by the interpretivism paradigm, which has an in-depth understanding of how human beings relate to the environment (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivism believes that human beings construct reality socially. According to Creswell (2017), participants seek to understand the world they live in, and the interpretivist paradigm allowed me to view teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase through the eyes and experiences of teachers and parents.

1.12 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology explicitly outlines the process used to investigate the identified phenomena (Long, 2014). Research methodology encompasses relevant designs and instruments followed during the inquiry, including selecting appropriate data collection methods and strategies for interpreting the data (Long, 2014).

1.13 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Researchers can choose from three main research approaches when conducting a research study (Long, 2014). These are the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach (Maree, 2012). The approach selected for this research was qualitative. Maree (2012) defined the qualitative approach as a process of constructively answering the 'what', 'how', and 'why' questions by exploring participants' everyday lives in a natural setting. Using the qualitative approach in this study allowed me to probe and understand teachers' and parents' experiences and behavior concerning teacher-parent relationships. I used the qualitative approach because it allowed teachers and parents to describe their experiences concerning teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. This approach provided me with

detailed descriptions of the teachers' and parents' feelings, opinions, and experiences in rural areas about teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Capturing the data helped me understand how the participants view teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase (Maree, 2012).

1.14 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used a descriptive case study research design. A case study is a detailed, in-depth investigation and analysis of a unit (Maree, 2012). Simons (2009) stated that the purpose of a case study is to understand the case in its natural setting and to acknowledge its complexity and context. Case studies can document participants' perspectives, engage them in the process, and represent different interests and values (Maree, 2012). See Chapter 3 for a detailed description of an explanatory case study.

1.15 SAMPLING METHOD

I used purposive sampling to select the participants. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which researchers rely on their judgement to choose population members to participate in the study (Dudovskly, 2019), and as a result, the participants can give rich data. I used purposive sampling in this study because I looked for critical participants with adequate knowledge of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. To generate potential participants, I spoke with the principals of the schools to find out who would be valuable participants. The participants were chosen because they were accessible and parents and teachers to learners in the foundation phase. Purposive sampling is discussed in detail in section 3.4.1.

1.16 DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

Data collection is gathering data from different sources to present and interpret the data for the topic under study (Maree, 2012). Various data collection and documenting techniques and instruments can be used in case studies. In this study, I used focus group interviews and a document review. The documents reviewed were the minute book and the school policy. Four parents and six teachers participated in focus group interviews. Data collected during focus group interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed.

1.17 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION METHODS

Data analysis and interpretation are essential elements of a research project (Maree, 2012). I conducted an inductive thematic analysis of the data captured in the research journal from document analysis and focus group interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I used Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model in this study. The model has three stages: data reduction, data display, and data drawing and conclusions. Miles and Huberman's model allows researchers to orderly organise and compress valuable data. Various data display techniques were used, such as quotes, texts, and tabulation of differences and similarities (Alhojailan, 2012). I used this model because it allowed me to know when data saturation has been reached during data analysis. Section 3.5 elaborates on inductive thematic analysis.

1.18 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Anney (2014), trustworthiness is a criterion to ensure the rigor that provides reliability and quality in the findings of a study. Stahl and King (2020) argued that trustworthiness has four key elements, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility has to do with the truthfulness and correspondence of the study (Morse, 2015). To ensure credibility in this study, I recorded data according to participants' responses. I also used several data collection instruments, like focus group interviews, research journals, and document analysis, to ensure credibility.

Transferability has to do with the applicability of the results to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The study does not guarantee transferability as the study was conducted in rural areas with few participants, and therefore, it may not be transferable when completed in urban areas.

Dependability refers to the consistency of the study over time (Rule & John, 2011). I allow the reader to evaluate the research practices by reporting and recording the research process in detail to ensure this study's reliability. I included a trail of evidence in the appendixes (Maree, 2012).

Confirmability looks at whether the study reflects participants' responses and whether there is an element of subjectivity (Shenton, 2004). To ensure confirmability in this study, I confirmed that the responses reflected the experiences and opinions of the participants and not my interests. I also performed member checking by asking other participants the same questions to see if the responses were the same. Throughout the study, I ensured that the analysis process was systematic and transparent to allow for scrutiny by the reader (Ellis, 2017).

In terms of the National Archives and Record Services of SA Act (Act 43 of 1996) and the Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act 2 of 2000), the University of Pretoria has the responsibility of permanent preservation of historically significant material that is important for research related to the University. The policies state that all documents and other records created or received during the undertaking of its duties by

administrative, academic, and student offices are the property of the University and may become archival material. Therefore, the University of Pretoria will store data and results for safety in the archives of the University of Pretoria.

1.19 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research refers to the moral behavior of researchers (Maree, 2012). Fundamental ethical aspects relating to human participants include confidentiality, anonymity, right of privacy, voluntary participation, protection from harm, and trust (Creswell, 2007). Researchers need to adhere to research ethics to allow studies to be conducted in a sensible manner (Maree, 2012). I applied for ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to ensure that the risk of harm was minimal, that the research results would be beneficial, and that I would conduct the research ethically.

Since I was working with teachers and parents from the identified schools, I asked permission from the Department of Basic Education and the principals of the schools to interview the identified teachers during the second and third terms of the year 2020. During data collection, all Covid-19 protocols were adhered to. Participants were asked to wear their face masks, social distance, and sanitize regularly.

I sought informed consent from the participating teachers and parents before the interviews commenced. Informed consent involves getting participants' participation and explaining what the research is about, the process I followed during the study, and their expected role (Creswell, 2009).

Participation was voluntary as participants could withdraw at any time they wanted. During focus group interviews, participants may feel threatened and want to pull out of the research and think that they are not safe and that their identity may be

compromised (Maree, 2016). I therefore reassured the participants that their identities would be kept anonymous and that I would not mention their names in the study.

I ensured the participants' anonymity and the confidentiality of the information given during the research by signing confidentiality contracts. I used pseudonyms for participants. I also informed participants that their data would only be shared with the supervisors and used for academic publications. I protected the information by signing a contract between the participants and me; however, I may share the study results with the participants on request.

1.20 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 provides the study's introduction and rationale, purpose, aims, and objectives. The chapter also outlines the primary and secondary research questions and concept clarification.

Chapter 2 focuses on the national and international reviewed literature on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase to enhance learners' social and academic development.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including research design, sampling, data collection, analysis, and ethical clearance to ensure that the research is done in a responsible and ethical manner.

Chapter 4 discusses the analysis and presentation of data findings. Data was analysed using Miles and Huberman's model of data analysis.

Chapter 5 focuses on a summary of key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.21 SUMMARY

Teacher-parent relationships are seen as necessary, especially in the foundation phase, as they enhance learners' social and academic development. Educational stakeholders such as teachers and parents acknowledge the importance of teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and intellectual development. The teacher-parent relationship becomes effective when teachers and parents work together because teacher-parent relationships can help learners perform better to achieve good academic results. However, factors such as the socioeconomic status of parents, poverty, culture, literacy level, and single parenthood can impede effective teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, schools should develop strategies to cultivate sound teacher-parent relationships, especially in the foundation phase.

As discussed in the preliminary literature review, home visits, communication, and parental involvement in the curriculum are strategies teachers can use to cultivate a positive teacher-parent relationship. I discuss these strategies in detail in Chapter 2. The following chapter discusses the literature review on teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase. The main reason for literature review is to study existing literature related to the current study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, I discussed and outlined the main research methods and the structure of the study. Chapter 2 provides the literature review. A literature review is a critical evaluation of past research on the topic of the study (Maree, 2012; Onwuegbuzie, 2012; Onwuegbuzie, 2016). With the literature review, a researcher seeks to find the gaps in the discussed and trending topics related to the phenomenon under investigation (Winchester & Salji, 2016). A literature review allows the researcher to move from the known to the unknown (Onwuegbuzie, 2016). I conducted a literature review to identify the gaps in the literature relating to the relationships between teachers and parents of foundation phase learners.

This literature review overviews international and national studies on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. I discuss parents' role in educating their children and factors affecting teacher-parent relationships. Furthermore, I elaborate on the contextualisation of the study, and discuss how teacher-parent relationships encourage parental involvement, teachers' expectations and perspectives on parental involvement, parents' expectations of teachers, parents' perspectives on teachers' attitudes and behavior, and foundation phase teachers' role in facilitating teacher-parent relationships. Finally, I elaborate on barriers to teacher-parent relationships, strategies to improve teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, the theoretical framework, and the study's applicability to the theories. This chapter concludes with a summary and concluding remarks.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ON TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS IN QUINTILE 1 AND 5 SCHOOLS

Nationally and internationally teacher-parent relationships are acknowledged as critical factors that enhance learners' social and academic development (Manilal, 2014; Saltmarsh et al., 2014; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Lau et al., 2012; Lee, 2012). Teacher-parent relationships were shown to be significant in education (Bacon & Causton-Theoharis, 2013; Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011). Many studies (i.e., Bacon & Causton-Theoharis, 2013; Gonzalez & Jackson, 2013; Lemmer, 2013; Landeros, 2011; Blackmore & Hutchison, 2010) reported the complexities of teacher-parent relationships and the pressure it places on teachers and parents. Teachers' difficulties in forming relationships with parents necessitate the development of programmes to help them develop skills and knowledge to establish successful teacher-parent relationships (Martinez, 2015).

Epstein and Sanders (2009) argued that teachers should be held accountable for establishing effective relationships with parents. However, Mandarakas (2014) showed that teacher-parent relationships require shared responsibilities, which have been proven difficult because of teachers' and parents' different expectations and perceptions. Hence, teacher-parent relationships should involve both teachers and parents (Durand & Perez, 2013).

As a strategy to encourage collaboration between teachers and parents, the USA signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which stipulate that by the year 2000 every school must have developed a partnership with parents to promote social, emotional and academic growth in young children (Walker et al., 2011). This act aimed to improve teacher-parent relationships in America. The same happened in SA: The SASA was developed to encourage parents to participate in their children's education.

The SASA (1996) provides parents with responsibilities to help teachers and play their roles to support teachers by helping young children with homework (Mashburn & Serpell, 2011). Moreover, it is vital to note that parents should provide guidance and serve as role models at home (Durand & Perez, 2013). The lack of teacher-parent relationships is a cause of concern, especially in the foundation phase (Stelmach, 2009). The lack of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase impedes learners' social and academic development (Lemmer, 2013). Effective teacher-parent relationships reinforce parental involvement in their children's learning. Therefore, for parents to be involved in their young children's education, teachers must develop strategies to encourage parents to participate in their young children's education.

2.3 SOUTH AFRICAN STUDIES ON TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

Before democracy in SA, parental involvement was limited to governance as school governing bodies (Lemmer, 2017). Parents were only allocated duties to conduct interviews, employ staff members, and manage school finances (Mncube, 2009). The apartheid system limited parents to school governance rather than participating in school decision-making, sharing accountability, and collaborating in other intervention programmes that enhance young children's education (Lemmer, 2017; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mncube, 2009). Principals of the schools carried the DoE mandate and took decisions on behalf of parents regarding young learners' education (Felix et al., 2008).

After 1994, the apartheid government was removed and transformation in SA began (Mncube, 2009; Felix et al., 2008). The SA government developed new policies and acts to address the inequalities within the education sector, especially in the foundation phase. Some of the policies that were developed are the Education White

Paper 5 (Republic of South Africa, 2001), the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (2015), the Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development, and the SASA (1996).

The Education White Paper 5 (Republic of South Africa, 2001) defined early childhood development as a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age with the participation of their parents. From the definition, parental participation is a core element that encourages teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, which enhances learners' social and academic development.

The government developed the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy to prioritise early childhood in the National Development Plan 2030 (National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy, 2015). One of the aims of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy is to identify the relevant role players and their duties and responsibilities in the delivery of early childhood development services, which means that teachers and parents are regarded as significant role players in advancing the early years of the learner.

In September 1996, the SA government released the Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development (Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development, 1996). The policy is aimed at children aged naught to nine years old and fosters children's holistic development through interdepartmental teamwork. Therefore, the policy encourages and forges teacher-parent relationships through which the social and academic development of the child will be taken seriously by the education stakeholders. The SASA (1996) explicitly stipulates the participation of parents as an essential aspect of improving learners' academic performance. The SASA (1996) states that parents must

encourage every child between seven and 15 years old, or Grade 9, for whom they are responsible to attend school. Parents of young children who attend school should follow up on their children's progress by constantly communicating with the teacher (Lemmer, 2017).

The SASA (1996) allows parents to be fully involved in decision-making and policy-making processes concerning their young children's education. The effective involvement of parents in their young children's education help teachers collaborate with parents and have successful teacher-parent relationships (Lemmer, 2017). Teacher-parent relationships help both teachers and parents collaborate and share helpful information from home to school and from school to home. The information transmitted between the teacher and parent enhances learners' social and academic development (Powel et al., 2010). Therefore, teacher-parent relationships should not be overlooked and should be established and nurtured at schools to enhance young learners' social and academic lives. The following section discusses the contextualisation of the study. It is crucial to contextualise the study to link it to rural and urban schools.

2.4 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

When investigating teacher-parent relationships in SA and focusing on the challenges and strategies, it is necessary to consider the unequal status of society (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). SA is an unequal country in regard to socioeconomic classes, level of education, race, and gender. Schools in rural areas can find it challenging to cultivate sound and positive teacher-parent relationships because of poverty, parents' low literacy level, and their socioeconomic status. However, this may be different in urban

schools as they are developed and accommodate learners of literate parents who are more involved in their children's education (Lemmer, 2017).

Terms often used in this study include rural area, urban area, quintile 1, quintile 5, parents, teachers, learners, enhancement, and foundation phase. As defined in section 1.8.6, the term rural area refers to areas outside urban development and economic centres in the national territory. Urban area refers to the place-based characteristic that incorporates elements of population density, social and economic organisation, and the transformation of the natural environment into a built environment (Lemmer et al., 2012.). My study compares how the teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase of parents in quintile 1 differ from that of parents in quintile 5. Comparing the different quintile groups of schools helped me establish teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas. I was also able to establish strategies that teachers can use in the foundation phase to cultivate good teacher-parent relationships.

2.5 HOW DO TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS ENCOURAGE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

Parental involvement is an activity in which parents work closely with teachers to understand their children and maximise efficiency by directly participating in their learning activities. The main aim of parental involvement is to intervene in the educational field by playing various roles, such as decision-maker, supporter and assistant (Lee, 2012). According to Park et al. (2013), parents and teachers need to work together, connect, and learn skills and activities to participate in programmes with children and make decisions.

In South Korea, parental involvement has been highlighted as significant in education due to several young children enrolling in early childhood education (Lee, 2012). In the USA, parental involvement is considered a national priority because many schools performed poorly due to lack of parental involvement (Walker et al., 2011). Dusi (2012) indicated that teacher-parent relationships in Europe are inadequate because of scarce parental involvement and a lack of communication between teachers and parents. The same is the case in Australia: All the Australian governments saw the need to increase learners' education quality by improving parental involvement in child learning (Council of Australian Government, 2013). Arguably, SA developed the National Education Association Policy (Republic of South Africa, 2013). The National Education Association Policy points out that when schools, parents, and communities work together to support learning, learners earn higher marks, attend school more regularly, stay longer, and enroll in higher-level programmes.

Studies showed that parental involvement creates a connection between home and school (Drajea et al., 2020; Simweleba, 2020; Ghanney, 2018; Selolo, 2018). Page (2016) agreed that school connections with parents positively impact young learners' social and academic success. Parental involvement in the foundation phase has proven to significantly impact the performance of young learners when they go to secondary schools and higher institutions (Seni & Onyango, 2021). Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) showed that the children of parents who are involved both at home and at school perform well at school.

Establishing parental involvement is necessary for functional and meaningful teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase (Durand, 2011). Sibanda et al. (2015) argued that parental involvement is influenced by a school culture that values and works hard to establish respectful and reciprocal teacher-parent relationships.

Furthermore, teachers cannot involve parents if teachers negatively perceive parents of low socioeconomic status and low literacy levels (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Therefore, teachers must encourage parental involvement and develop essential strategies to cultivate teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

Teachers' and parents' parental involvement expectations and perspectives can significantly affect teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, I first elaborate on teachers' expectations of and views on parental involvement and then on parents' expectations and perspectives in the following sections.

2.6 TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS OF AND PERSPECTIVES ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Gestwicki (2015) showed that teachers expect parents to be involved in their young children's education journey as they are critical to enhance children's social and academic life. Furthermore, teachers expect parents to communicate with them even when they report no problem with a learner (Lemmer, 2012). However, teacher expectations of parental involvement are different in rural and urban areas. In rural areas, teachers find it challenging to communicate regularly with the parents because of the socioeconomic status of the parents, unlike in urban areas (Lemmer, 2012). However, active communication with the teachers by parents reassures teachers that parents value them and the education of their children (El Nokali et al., 2010). Therefore, teacher-parent relationships are formed when there is open, active, and regular communication between the parent and the teacher (Brooks, 2011).

Furthermore, teachers expect parents to help young children with homework, especially when they are struggling at school. Studies showed that children who are not performing well do better when their parents frequently help them with homework

(Semke & Sheridan, 2012; Altschul, 2011; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). Moreover, parents who frequently help their young children with homework are literate (Powell, 2010). Illiterate parents find it hard to help their children with homework as they cannot read or write. Therefore, teachers need to help parents help their children with homework (Mwonga & Wanyana, 2012).

Teachers' perceptions of parents can positively or negatively impact parental involvement and how relationships between teachers and parents are formed (Barker, et al., 2016). Teachers can perceive parental involvement differently. Some teachers invite and promote parental involvement and teacher-parent relationships, while others do not (Herell, 2011). When parents are involved in their young children's education, some teachers report that their professional duties are being scrutinised and challenged. Van Wyk (2010) agreed that teachers might feel judged, critiqued, attacked, or undermined as parents become involved.

Studies showed that teachers are not confident about having teacher-parent relationships (Higgins and Katsipataki, 2015; Mapp and Kuttner, 2013). Mandarakas (2014) agreed that teachers' self-efficacy and confidence affect how they relate to children's parents in the foundation phase. More importantly, teachers may feel insecure about parents' views of them as teachers (Butcher & Pletcher, 2015). Teachers' perspectives of parental involvement can be shaped by whether they view teaching as collaborative or individual (LaRocque et al., 2011). Epstein (2018) showed that teachers view parents as passive rather than active participants in their children's education. LaRocque et al. (2011) agreed that teachers tend to view parents in three broad categories: Those who complain, those who are supportive, and those who do not want to participate in their children's education. However, it remains vital to cultivate sound and positive teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social

and academic development (Mbokodi, 2011). Therefore, schools must empower and prepare teachers to work with parents of diverse cultures. Thus, teacher training and development must be intensified to help teachers understand their professional role in establishing good parental relationships (Saltmarsh et al., 2014; Lau et al., 2012; Lee, 2012).

2.7 PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS FROM TEACHERS

In the same way teachers' expectations can affect teacher-parent relationships parents' expectations of teachers can negatively or positively affect how they relate with teachers. Parents expect teachers to display personal and professional characteristics when they arrive at school. Teachers can form good teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase (Rubie-Davies et al., 2019). The following subsections outline the personal and professional characteristics teachers should portray to school parents.

2.7.1 Personal characteristics

The first characteristic that teachers can show is being welcoming to parents. When parents arrive at school, they expect teachers to be welcoming. Parents become active and more involved in their young children's education when they feel that their contributions are valued and are not looked down upon by the teachers (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). In SA, most parents find it difficult to have relationships with teachers as they feel they are not valued; hence, their expectations are not met (Manilal, 2014). Ntekane (2018) agreed that parents in rural areas become withdrawn from teachers because they feel teachers are not giving them the attention they need.

Considering the above, most parents think that teachers display personal characteristics that make them stay away from school (Maluleke, 2014). Mncube

(2010) agreed that a lack of passion in teachers makes parents shy away from forming sound teacher-parent relationships. Parents expect other personal characteristics from teachers are listening and being trustworthy (Gonzalez & Jackson, 2013). Herell (2011) and Lemmer (2017) argued that parents in rural areas have social problems, such as poverty, that affect how they relate with teachers. Therefore, it is difficult to have a relationship with the parents of learners who live in poverty. However, it becomes easier if teachers offer their time to listen to parents and give necessary advice (Kayombo, 2017). Most parents in rural areas dislike the notion of relating with teachers as they think the relationship might expose their social lives to teachers (Savacool, 2011). Hence, teachers should provide support to parents who share their family issues and help such families get involved in their young children's education (Bryan & Henry, 2012; Dor & Rucker-Naido, 2012). Furthermore, teachers must assure parents that they can trust them with sensitive information regarding young learners' social backgrounds. The information that teachers get from parents about their children, can help teachers form a good relationship with parents (Bryan & Henry, 2012).

2.7.2 Professional characteristics

Teachers' professionalism allows parents to trust that they know what they are doing and can teach their young children. Professional teachers display characteristics such as curriculum knowledge, innovation, open-mindedness, decision-making, and communication (Coleman, 2012). Teachers should display these characteristics and more beyond the classroom.

- ***Knowledge of the curriculum***

Adequate knowledge of the curriculum by the teacher leaves room for improvement in learners' education, subsequently allowing parents to be involved (Ellis et al., 2015). Parents are interested when the teacher can provide adequate education to their children.

- ***Innovative***

An innovative teacher can initiate educational activities that allow learners to explore their talents (Martienze, 2015). Humphrey-Taylor (2015) found that an enthusiastic teacher promotes learning and allows young learners to enjoy their stay at school, allowing learners to socialise with others in the school environment. As children in the foundation phase are still young, teachers need to be proactive to enable them to explore different activities (Martienze, 2015). In rural areas, unlike in urban areas, it is sometimes impossible for teachers to implement some of the required activities that can entice young learners (Magoro, 2010).

- ***Open-minded and decision-making***

Parents feel more secure and assured by an open-minded teacher teaching their children on social issues (Kayombo, 2017). When a teacher takes into account the social statuses of the families of learners and accommodates them at school, it allows parents to be free and have a relationship with the teacher (Kayombo, 2017). However, as most parents in rural areas are not educated, they expect teachers to be able to make positive decisions that will positively affect the lives of young learners both at school and at home. Parents in rural areas hope teachers to solely make decisions regarding the education of their children even when not consulted (Martinez, 2015). Unlike in rural areas, parents in urban areas expect teachers to make collective

decisions concerning their young children's education. Urban parents hope teachers listen to them and do not judge them based on their social status. Gestwicki (2012) agreed that teachers should avoid being biased and judgmental toward learners based on parents' social and education. Even though parents' social and intellectual status can derail the social and literary life of learners, teachers must keep an open mind and help learners achieve the best results at school. Lemmer (2011) stated that teachers need to form sound teacher-parent relationships to help learners achieve educational and social goals.

- **Communication**

Teachers should open a line of communication to keep parents updated on their children's education and success (Gestwicki, 2012; Lemmer, 2012). Gestwicki (2012) agreed that communicating with parents helps form sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Moreover, communication allows teachers and parents to update one another on the progress of learners at school and at home (Lemmer, 2012). Any form of communication, such as phone calls, is better than just dishing out a progress report at the end of the term or year (Epstein, 2011). Parents expect teachers to constantly update them on the progress and behavior of their children at school (Gonzalez-Mena, 2010). Constant communication may help the teacher and parents to deal collaboratively with identified struggles of a learner to help improve their grades or behavior (Leenders et al., 2016; Epstein, 2011).

In conclusion, if teachers do not meet parents' expectations and vice versa, the teacher-parent relationship can be negatively affected. When teachers' and parents' expectations are not met, teacher-parent relationships are impeded, and this influences how parents and teachers perceive each other. Moreover, if teachers' and

parents' expectations are not met, the child's social and academic development will not be enhanced.

2.8 PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

Parents' perceptions of teachers can negatively or positively influence the type of teacher-parent relationships they have. Hornby (2011) argued that parents in rural areas see teachers as superiors, unlike their urban counterparts. When parents see a teacher as superior to them, it makes most parents reluctant to get involved in their children's education. It prevents teachers and parents from forming a good teacher-parent relationship.

Several studies reported that parents feel incapable of influencing the school decision-making process (Coetzee, 2014; Gardiner, 2017; Humphrey-Taylor, 2015; Munje & Mncube, 2018). Parents in rural areas who think that they are uneducated especially feel that their input is not valued. Parents feel that they only have to raise a child at home (Robbins & Searby, 2013). Lafaele and Hornby (2011) found that parents feel like they are interfering when they try to ask questions about the progress of their children. Rural parents think teachers do not want them to ask about the education of their children or anything regarding the curriculum, as teachers will feel they are being scrutinised or undermined (Ellis et al., 2015). As parents feel powerless, they opt to leave the daily running of academic activities to teachers and only help their children with homework (Jafarov, 2015).

Apart from seeing teachers as superiors, parents' self-perception can negatively or positively affect how they relate with teachers in the foundation phase (Leenders et al., 2016). Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, literacy, and the socioeconomic status

of parents, especially in rural areas, can prevent having a good relationship with the teachers of their children in the foundation phase (Mbokodi & Sigh, 2011; El Nokali et al., 2010; Magoro, 2010).

Furthermore, parents' mental health can also affect how they relate with teachers. Stress due to poverty places pressure on parents as they struggle to meet the needs of their families (Lemmer, 2011). As poverty affects parents, it also affects children who cannot perform well at school. Simweleba and Serpell (2020) agreed that children's academic performance is affected when there is a lack of parental involvement. Parents' experiences as learners also influence how they perceive and relate to teachers (Maluleke, 2014). Parents who were previously mistreated at school may fail to be involved in their children's education and not have a teacher relationship (Page, 2016). However, if a parent have a supportive school experience, they are more likely to be involved in their children's education and have a good relationship with the teacher (Luxomo & Motala, 2012; Larocque, 2011).

However, considering the above, some parents still want to participate in their young children's education. Parents feel responsible for their children's academic and social life (Mncube, 2010). Therefore, they can play a role in the educational journey of their young children and have the ability to influence the school. Such parents have a strong desire to relate with the teachers of their children (Gatilogo & Tan, 2019). Parents who actively participate in their children's education see teachers as equal partners in the social and academic development of their children (Gatilogo & Tan, 2019). Therefore, teachers need to develop strategies that encourage teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

2.9 FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS' ROLE IN FACILITATING TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

A professional foundation phase teacher needs to fulfil several roles, including learning mediator; interpreter; designer of learning programmes and materials; leader; administrator; manager; scholar; researcher; lifelong learner; community, citizenship, and pastoral roles; assessor; and learning area, subject discipline or phase specialist (DoE, 2000). These functions of teachers do not limit them to forming positive teacher-parent relationships, but it can enhance how they cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Facilitating teacher-parent relationships is another vital role of teachers because it enhances young learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase (Lafaele & Hornby, 2011).

Teachers are responsible for understanding the communities they serve (DoE, 2000), and for this, they need to understand the cultural diversities that exist in the communities and their social and economic statuses. As teachers understand the communities they teach at, they are able to form positive teacher-parent relationships (Lexumo & Motala, 2012).

Teachers are considered pioneers in building effective relationships with parents (Blitch, 2017). For teacher-parent relationships to thrive, teachers must initiate the connection as soon as they realise they need to benefit young learners in their classrooms (Ghanney, 2018). Teachers also have a responsibility to ensure that they communicate effectively with the parents of children in their classrooms (Blitch, 2017; Epstein, 2001). The literature mentioned communication methods such as texting, emailing, daily updates at drop-off and pick-up places, phone calls, or face-to-face communication (Blitch, 2017; Morrison et al., 2015; Swick, 2004; Epstein, 2001). However, teachers find it challenging to select effective methods of communication

because of the diverse profiles, such as socioeconomic status, of the parents of learners in their classrooms. According to Blich (2017), formal written communication between teachers and parents is inadequate, particularly for black parents who are illiterate and live in rural areas.

According to Bailey (2017), Okeke (2014), and Page (2016), factors such as communication and understanding learners' culture can contribute to a good relationship between parents and teachers. Cultural practices such as language and religion can positively or negatively affect teacher-parent relationships (Ntekane, 2018). Teachers with a different culture from the community they teach in can have difficulty having a sound teacher-parent relationship in the foundation phase. However, when teachers understand and acknowledge the culture of young learners' communities, they can avoid a communication breakdown because a reciprocal positive relationship between teachers and parents is created (Bailey, 2017). However, teachers' expectations and perceptions can also influence how they relate with the parents of learners in the foundation phase. Hence, teachers should cultivate excellent teacher-parent relationship between the teacher and the parent if they know their vital role in facilitating teacher-parent relationships in different communities.

2.10 PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN

Parents play a significant role in the education journey of their children (Page, 2016). According to Yunus and Dahlan (2013), parents are the immediate teachers of young children as they grow in front of them before going to school (Lemmer, 2011; Maluleke, 2014). Parents' critical role in their young children's lives is to encourage, support, and provide them with access to social activities that enhance their development (Yunus

& Dahlan, 2013). Parents should teach their children good morals and values that will help them grow into respectful members of the community and school.

Parents are, among other things, expected to help young children with homework, attend meetings when invited, and regularly communicate with teachers to check the progress of their children (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). El Nokali et al. (2010) and Powel et al. (2010) found that parental involvement during the foundation phase positively impacts the development of cognitive, social, and literacy skills of young children (Rubie-Davies et al., 2010).

According to White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education, parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and have the right to be consulted by the state authorities concerning the form that education should take and take part in its governance. The SASA states that parents have the right to choose the best form of education for their children, particularly in the early years of schooling. As mentioned in section 4.7.2 of the SASA, education is compulsory for children from the age of seven until the last school day of the year in which they turn 15 or Grade 9, whichever comes first. Therefore, parents are responsible for making it possible for children to learn both at home and at school. Furthermore, parents have the right to fully participate in the decision-making process of their children's education (SASA, 1996). Active participation in the decision-making process reassures teachers that they view education as an essential aspect of their children's lives, which leads to enhanced teaching and learning (Rouse, 2012).

2.11 FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

According to the literature, socioeconomic factors, poverty, the low literacy level of parents, and distance can negatively impact how parents relate to teachers of their

children (Page, 2016). In the following subsections, I discuss the factors related to teacher-parent relationships.

2.11.1 The effect of parents' socioeconomic status on learners in the foundation phase

Parents' socioeconomic status affects how teachers associate with the parents of learners in the foundation phase (Page, 2016). According to Altschul (2011), socioeconomic status can be measured using the following three factors: parental income, education, and occupation. Parental income impacts the academic achievement of young children in the foundation phase (Drajea, 2014). Studies indicated that young children from high-income families perform better in class than those from low-income families (Maluleke, 2014). In rural areas, most parents depend on government grants, which are not enough to cover basic needs and support children's school activities (Lemmer, 2017; Page, 2016; Sibanda, 2015). The poverty level of parents in quintile 1 schools make it difficult for teachers to form sound teacher-parent relationships with parents of children in the foundation phase because parents are dealing with how to provide for their families at home (Ghanney, 2018). Parents with low socioeconomic status find it challenging to have a relationship with teachers or attend meetings as they are working during the week to meet the basic needs of their children (Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2013). Socioeconomic status, therefore, can contribute to lacking teacher-parent relationships. However, in the same way, a low socioeconomic status can affect teacher-parent relationships, a high socioeconomic status can also negatively affect teacher-parent relationships. For example, Yunus and Dahlan (2013) found that parents with high socioeconomic levels are unable to participate in their children's education because of their busy work schedules.

Therefore, parents in quintile 5 schools are unable to have a good relationship with teachers as they are working to provide for their families.

Furthermore, parental education also affects their children's social and academic achievements because educated parents can positively influence their children to learn (Magoro, 2010). According to Luxomo and Motala (2012), children whose parents are professionals perform better than children whose parents are illiterate. However, parental education and occupation directly correlate with parents' literacy level. Parents' literacy levels, therefore, significantly affect teacher-parent relationships. In quintile 1 schools, the indication is that there is a high level of illiteracy in parents (Tsolou & Babalis, 2020). As a result, there are no teacher-parent relationships as parents cannot communicate with teachers. However, in quintile 5 schools, parents are illiterate and therefore able to communicate with teachers, which makes a good teacher-parent relationship possible.

2.11.2 The effects of parents' literacy status on children's education

Parents' literacy levels can positively or negatively affect parental school involvement (Sibanda, 2015). More literate parents can more easily participate in their children's education because they understand the importance of education (Ghanney, 2018). Parents' literacy level makes it easier for them to form a positive relationship with their children's teachers in the foundation phase. In contrast, illiterate parents in quintile one schools find it more challenging to support their children's education (Selolo, 2018). Therefore, low literacy levels can negatively affect how parents relate with teachers and impede learners' social and academic development (Ghanney, 2018; Selolo, 2018). Teachers must consider parents' literacy levels and develop strategies

that can help cultivate sound teacher-parent relationships even if the parents are illiterate (Majerus, 2011).

2.11.3 Parents' and learners' culture

Culture influences how children behave and relate to other people. According to Harris and Robinson (2016), culture entails a totality of traits and characteristics peculiar to people to the extent that it distinguishes them from other people or societies. Teachers must acknowledge and understand the cultural differences of the communities that they are working with (Nelson & Guerra, 2014). Furthermore, teachers need to show interest in the cultural background of the families of children in their classrooms (Bailey, 2017). Teachers who are aware of cultural diversities within their classroom understand parents better and can form meaningful relationships that enhance young children's social and academic achievement (Bailey, 2017; Rouse, 2012). Gardiner (2017) argued that understanding the cultural background of children contributes to a sound relationship between teachers and parents. Bailey (2017) further argued that mutual understanding and acceptance of different cultures could help create effective and positive teacher-parent relationships.

Gardiner (2017) argued that cultural differences could challenge nurturing an effective teacher-parent relationship. Parents who feel that teachers undermine their culture may withdraw from having a meaningful relationship with the teachers of their children (Bailey, 2017). However, cultural differences are only one of many barriers to forming a meaningful relationship with learners and teachers. In the following section, I discuss other barriers that have been reported to affect teacher-parent relationships.

2.12 BARRIERS TO TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

Teacher-parent relationships can enhance young learners' social and academic development. However, various factors can act as barriers to forming sound teacher-parent relationships. There are two types of barriers that can negatively affect teacher-parent relationships: teacher-based barriers and parent-based barriers (Baker et al., 2016; Ozmen et al., 2016). Teacher-based barriers are considered barriers that hinder teachers from cultivating positive teacher-parent relationships with parents. On the other hand, parent-based barriers are defined as barriers that hinder parental involvement in the foundation phase, such as socioeconomic status, low literacy level, and parents' perspectives and expectations. Table 2.1 shows the two types of barriers that can hinder teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

Table 2.1: Teacher- and parent-based barriers to teacher-parent relationships

TEACHER-BASED BARRIERS	PARENT-BASED BARRIERS
Lack of support by the school management	Socioeconomic status
Self-efficacy	Parents' self-efficacy
Teachers' expectations and perspectives	Parents' perspectives and expectations
Lack of adequate training in forming sound teacher-parent relationships	Poverty
Lack of communication	Single parenthood
Teachers' negative attitude towards parents	

Table 2.1 shows that teacher-based barriers and parents-based barriers can negatively affect cultivating positive teacher-parent relationships. When considering Table 2.1, it is essential to notice how teachers can initiate various strategies to overcome some of the listed barriers and form good teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Employing different techniques where teachers and parents collaborate and engage can help bridge the gap between teachers and parents. A

study conducted by Hornby and Lafaele (2011) agreed that when teachers and parents work together towards positive, sound teacher-parent relationships strategies, it enhances learners' social and academic life.

2.13 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

The following subsections discuss strategies relating to the professional development of teachers, parent involvement in curriculum, home visits, teacher-parent games, and parent meetings.

2.13.1 Professional development of teachers

Teacher professional development in establishing teacher-parent relationships is essential. Teacher professional development gives teachers knowledge and understanding of the skills necessary to form good relationships with parents (Barnes et al., 2016). With adequate training, teachers can empower parents, gain strength and have self-confidence when relating with parents (Coleman, 2012). Teacher development also helps accommodate parents of diverse cultures (Coleman, 2012). Lack of adequate training can contribute to a lack of teacher-parent relationships, affecting young learners' social and academic success.

2.13.2 Parental involvement in curriculum issues

Parental involvement in curriculum issues is a strategy that ensures parents know what role to play to help their children with schoolwork (Munje & Mncube, 2018). The teachers must involve parents in curriculum-related matters such as planning, evaluating, and implementing the curriculum (Felix et al., 2008). Schools need to develop policies for parents to participate in the curriculum and evaluate learners' academic progress (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). During this time, teachers may listen

to parents' opinions and expectations of their children in school (Okeke, 2014; Powell & Sanchez, 2013). During meetings, teachers and parents can discuss the roles they need to play to help children achieve expected social and academic outcomes in a way that is aligned with family cultural inclinations (Okeke, 2014; Rouse, 2012). Bailey (2017) argued that parents sometimes fail to help their young children with homework because they do not know what is expected.

2.13.3 Home visits

Home visits effectively build teacher-parent relationships (Okeke, 2014). During home visits, teachers and parents can discuss learners' academic performance and other school-related activities and how the parent can assist with homework (Robins & Searby, 2013). Home visits can also serve a social purpose by allowing teachers to evaluate learners' social backgrounds (Ellis et al., 2015). Furthermore, when teachers visit parents at home, parents are assured of a caring element and a good relationship that benefit the teaching and learning of children in schools (Gatilogo & Tan, 2019; Okeke, 2014; Bower & Griffin, 2011).

2.13.4 Teacher-parent games

Organising sports activities between teachers and parents can help form positive and sound teacher-parent relationships. Sport is one strategy that can unite people (Ntekane, 2018; Lemmer, 2011). Therefore, the more teachers and parents meet to play, the more they can interact and form productive relationships that benefit not only to them but also the learners in the foundation phase (Mncube, 2010). Once a semester, teachers can organise a sports day that accommodates all parents where they play different games such as soccer and netball, depending on the availability of resources.

2.13.5 Parent meetings

The teachers' role is to build a good relationship with parents through consultative meetings (Kayombo, 2017; Okeke, 2014; Lemmer, 2011). Teachers must invite parents to discuss year programmes, listen to parents' opinions, and allow them to make decisions about their children's learning progress (Bailey, 2017). When teachers and parents agree on the content to be taught, there develops an alignment between school activities and parents' expectations (Simweleba & Serpell, 2020; Okeke, 2014; Lemmer, 2011; Rouse, 2012; SASA, 1996). In this regard, Abdu (2014) recommended a continuous evaluation of the teacher-parent relationship to ascertain agreement between the two stakeholders.

Teachers should schedule meetings with parents for the whole year. It is advisable to have discussions with parents of learners in the foundation phase so that teachers are informed about learners' backgrounds (Topor et al., 2011). Moreover, teachers can have one-on-one meetings with the parents of learners (Okeke, 2014). Teachers should not wait to first see that a learner experience learning difficulties before meeting with the parents, but should instead have regular meetings where a learner's future is discussed.

Considering the above, Lemmer (2011) stated that parents should extend school activities to activities they do with their children to help with homework. Blitch (2017) commented that parents who actively participate in children's schoolwork could identify areas where their children are struggling. When an area of difficulty has been identified, the teacher and the parents can work together to outsource support and plan possible intervention strategies to help the child perform better (Blitch, 2017).

2.14 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Schurink (2009) explained a theoretical framework as “a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that informs a research study”. Anfara and Mertz (2015) defined a theoretical framework as any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes at various levels. A study uses a theoretical framework to guide the researcher to present a unique view of the phenomenon under study (Anfara & Mertz, 2015).

I aligned my study to Epstein’s (2001) framework of six types of parental involvement and Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological system theory. These two theories guided the study on how teacher-parent relationships can be formed and implemented in the foundation phase and were used to compare teacher-parent relationships in the context of rural quintile 1 and 5 schools. Epstein’s framework of six types of parental involvement allowed me to establish the strategies teachers can use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Children grow in different contexts and this affects their social and academic development. The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner guided the study on how the social status and background of parents affect the social and educational development of children.

2.14.1 Epstein’s framework of six types of parental involvement

Epstein’s (2001) framework of six types of parental involvement enables teachers to develop effective programmes to bring schools, families, and communities together. I used Epstein’s framework of six types of parental involvement in this study to suggest a framework that can help teachers develop strategies to ensure sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in the rural context. I selected Epstein’s theoretical framework as a guiding theory for the study because parental involvement

impacts children’s learning. The theory is crucial as it investigates parental involvement issues that can enhance teaching and learning. The lack thereof may affect learners’ social and academic development in rural foundation phase contexts (Epstein, 2001).

Epstein (2001) presents a framework of six types of parental involvement to establish good relationships between teachers and parents. Table 2.2 shows Epstein’s (2001) framework of parental involvement.

Table 2.2: Epstein’s (2001) six types of parental involvement framework

TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Parenting	Help all families establish home environments to support children as learners.
Communication	Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about the school programme.
Volunteering	Recruit and organise parental help and support.
Learning at home	Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
Decision-making	Include parents in school decision-making and develop parent leaders and representatives.
Collaboration with community	Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programmes, family practices, and student learning and development.

The following sections discuss the types of parental involvement listed in Table 2.2.

- **Parenting**

Schools can assist parents with child-rearing skills, support families, help parents understand young children, and help parents create a home environment conducive to learning (Getwicki, 2015). Practically, this requires providing helpful information to parents in need and not only to the few parents who attend parent meetings (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017).

Moreover, this type of involvement allows parents to share their concerns, cultural background, and valuable information on their children's behaviours, talents, and needs. Parenting skills are essential as they allow parents to develop child-rearing skills that enhance children's social development (Maluleke, 2014). Parenting styles may differ between parents in rural and urban areas because of contextual factors such as the socioeconomic status of parents and level of literacy. As parents differ in levels of parenting, it can affect how they relate with the teachers of their children in the foundation phase. Parents in rural areas face social factors that negatively affect how parents in quintiles one and five relate with teachers. Factors such as unemployment, socioeconomic status and illiteracy can negatively influence how parents relate with teachers.

- ***Communicating***

Communication in teacher-parent relationships entails communicating with parents of children about school activities and the progress of the learner from school to home and vice versa (Sheridan & Moorman Kim, 2015). Schools should consider parents' different social statuses and choose suitable methods of communication (Graham-lay, 2005). Teachers should choose convenient communication methods to keep in touch with all parents (Mwapwele, 2019). Therefore, teachers should review communication methods like print and non-print to meet the needs of all parents. This type of involvement is significant to my study because when teachers adopt effective communication methods with parents, it leads to a sound and positive teacher-parent relationship (Getwicki, 2015). Communication between teachers and parents in rural areas is not practical because parents cannot afford cell phones, are illiterate, and do not have access to other communication measures from the school (Pholotho, 2016).

However, in urban schools where parents are socially and economically stable, communication is effective and constant.

- ***Volunteering***

Schools can encourage parents of children to volunteer at school by assisting in school activities both at school and at home. Parents' participation in school activities can enhance the social and academic success of children (Coleman, 2012). In this regard, volunteering should be encouraged to help learners achieve the best results at school and grow well socially. Volunteering should be done by working and non-working parents (Epstein, 1995). Therefore, all types of parents should be presented with an opportunity to volunteer at school to assist in school activities. Volunteering is vital as it gives teachers a chance to update parents about the progress of their children, enhancing teacher-parent relationships (Lemmer, 2017). Parents in quintile 1 schools only volunteer to participate in the SGB, which is insufficient to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships, but volunteering at school means that parents can help teachers in the classroom. The case is different with rural area parents as their focus is not on their children's education. The socioeconomic status of parents in rural areas can make it difficult for parents to have a relationship with teachers. In this case, parents are more focused on providing for their families rather than volunteering in school events that may help cultivate a positive teacher-parent relationship.

- ***Learning at home***

Parents should support their children to learn at home. Schools should encourage parents to assist young children with homework (LaRocque et al., 2011). Teachers can involve parents in curriculum-related issues and send learners home with homework (Jeynes, 2010). Teachers should allow parents to organise a regular

schedule for school activities that enable parents to assist young children with homework and become involved in their children's education (Jeynes, 2010). The latter can or cannot be accessible due to the literacy level in rural and urban areas. An increase in the level of illiteracy of parents in rural areas can negatively affect how parents assist their children with school activities and homework. Parents who cannot read and write, especially in rural areas, lack interest in creating a conducive environment for learning. Such parents do not have an interest in the education of their children (Tsolou & Babalis, 2020). Subsequently, illiterate parents fail to understand their roles in the education of their children. However, urban parents who are literate may develop an interest in their children's education. Such parents interact with teachers on how to assist their children with schoolwork and provide them with social support. Therefore, teachers should train parents to create a conducive learning environment at home.

- ***Decision-making***

Parents can be helpful and informative when allowed to make decisions about school's activities. Parental involvement in school decision-making processes gives parents a sense of school ownership (Gonzales & Jackson, 2013). Parents are made aware of the school, district, and state policies that govern the education sector. Therefore, teachers should allow parents to represent the community by acting as school governing bodies and making collaborative decisions. Furthermore, teachers should provide training for parents serving in the governing bodies on how to have positive teacher-parent relationships.

The characteristics and settings of rural and urban areas affect how parents view education and life in general. The decision-making process in rural areas is limited to

parents who participate in the SGB. Participation of parents in the SGB is not enough, as the SGB is limited to governance instead of management (Preston et al., 2018). As a result, decision-making in rural areas is generally less effective as parents do not actively participate.

However, parents in urban areas participate in the decision-making process by attending meetings, meeting up with teachers for progress reports, and attending other related school activities that require input from parents (Schafft, 2016). Thus, teachers play a significant role in allowing parents to have a sense of ownership by enabling them to develop policies to run the daily activities of the classroom. Generally, the decision-making process enables parents to have a sense of ownership and increase parental involvement, subsequently enhancing a positive teacher-parent relationship.

- ***Collaboration with the community***

Collaboration with the community means that the school works together with the community to provide the community with educational services for children. Collaborating with communities benefits the school by strengthening, supporting, and transforming teachers and parents, resulting in higher programme quality, more efficient resource allocation, and better alignment of goals and curriculum (Preston et al., 2018). Community collaboration is vital as the community has the cultural and societal responsibility to care for and raise young children.

According to Epstein (2001), schools should integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programmes, family practices, and students' learning and development. Therefore, teachers must be aware of the resources available in the community to enrich the curriculum and instructions.

Collaborating with the community helps both the teachers and the community develop learners' social and academic life. Poor rural communities cannot collaborate with schools as there are no resources, parents are poor, and parents face unemployment (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012). However, schools situated in urban areas collaborate with the communities in which they are located by having businesses adopt them. Businesspeople volunteer to be co-opted as members of the SGB to advance the school (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012). As a result, urban schools are more equipped and developed, and rural schools have fewer activities to develop infrastructures and other school-related resources.

2.14.2 The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory views child development as a complex system of relationships influenced by several layers of the surrounding environment, including home, school setting, and overall societal values, laws, and practices (Scotland, 2012). The ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner states that children are influenced by their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory is divided into five levels: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Table 2.3 shows the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner.

Table 2.3: Ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner

LEVEL	DEPICTION IN THE THEORY
Microsystem level	Depicts the immediate environment setting that influences the development of a child.
Mesosystem level	Depicts the interaction between parents and teachers, which influences the communication and may influence the development of a child.
Exosystem level	The external environments indirectly influence the child.

LEVEL	DEPICTION IN THE THEORY
Macrosystem level	Children are influenced by cultural elements such as socioeconomic status, poverty, and ethnicity.
Chronosystem level	As the child transitions from home to school, their social life is affected.

Table 2.3 shows that the mesosystem of the ecological system theory is relevant to this study because it encourages the interaction between teachers and parents (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). Hence, it is argued that children are influenced by their parents at home by their teachers at school (Lemmer, 2017). Therefore, since teachers and parents have immediate contact with children at home and at school, it is vital to form sound teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development. Conceptually, rural and urban areas have different characteristics that influence how parents relate to teachers. In rural areas, parents are faced with unemployment, low income, poor living conditions, and disorganised family structures, which affect the growth and performance of children in the classroom (Selolo, 2018). However, parents can provide for their families in urban areas as they are well organised and can positively influence their children's social and academic development.

I chose the ecological system theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979) as a theoretical framework because it has consequences for educational practices in teaching and learning and teacher-parent relationships. In the following subsections, I elaborate on the individual systems that collaboratively influence children's academic and social development.

- ***The microsystem***

The microsystem is defined as the immediate environment of children. The microsystem of a child includes their relationships with family, extended relatives, and

schools. The Family Solution Institute (2015) defined a family as a system in which each member of a family is a unit that cannot operate in isolation. A family is a system of elements that continuously affect each other and operate towards a common purpose. The illustration in this definition is that children's families are units that comprise members who work together to positively impact the lives of children and shape their developmental behaviours (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). Bronfenbrenner (2019) believed that teachers should establish a strong relationship between children and parents. As discussed in the introduction above, the impact of family structure between rural and urban parents can negatively and positively affect the social and academic life of children. The parents' child-rearing skills at home depict how best children behave in life and perform at school. Therefore, parents who adopt positive child-rearing skills at home positively impact children. The mesosystem is significant to my study because the compelling relationship between parents and children allows parents to participate in their children's education, activities and reinforce learning at home (Clarke et al., 2010).

- ***The mesosystem***

The mesosystem encompasses the interaction between the child's microsystems, such as the child's parents and teachers (Guy-Evans, 2020). According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the mesosystem influences the relationship between teachers and parents (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). Therefore, teachers and parents are encouraged to collaborate to form positive teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase. Parents' and teachers' collaboration in rural areas may differ slightly from collaboration in urban areas. The difference is that parents in rural areas are marginalised because of poverty, unemployment, and low literacy level (Sibanda, 2015). Therefore, when

parents and teachers do not collaborate, it can harm children as they cannot perform better in the classroom.

- ***The exosystem***

The exosystem is a more significant level where a child is indirectly functioning or affected. The exosystem extends to the community in which children stay. Bronfenbrenner (2019) argued that schools should establish sound relationships within the community to meet families' basic needs. For example, parents' unemployment can indirectly affect how parents relate to teachers, and as a result, teacher-parent relationships cannot be cultivated. The community is responsible for providing families with resources and support to live a peaceful life (Smith & Squirk, 2018). Significantly, children whose parents are not educated perform worse at school because their parents cannot help them with homework. Such parents do not have a good relationship with teachers. Therefore, addressing teachers' issues that indirectly affect children can help teachers cultivate sound teacher-parent relationships. Both rural and urban communities are faced with crime, social instabilities, high levels of unemployment, and violence that affect the education of children. These factors can negatively impact schools situated in the community. Some rural schools face theft issues that leave schools to deal with resource shortages for teaching and learning. Therefore, the education of the learner is negatively impacted. Comparatively, quintile 1 schools face a lack of resources due to theft, while quintile 5 schools have financial resources and securities.

- ***The macrosystem***

The macrosystem is the child's behaviour, morals, culture, values, and laws that affect the young child. This level influences all lower levels of the ecosystem

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Although morals, culture, and values are not immediate in children's lives, they can be significant in the development of children (Hart, 2014); for example, child-rearing practices in the family can impact children's development.

Moreover, rural area parents are faced with inconsistent family structures as they are of single mothers raising children alone. Parents fail to teach children values, morals, and culture as they do not have a positive influence. Parents can instill a culture of education in their children's lives. Families' inconsistent moral values can negatively affect the behavior of children (Heffernam, 2014). The applicability of the macrosystem to my study is that when teacher-parent relationships are cultivated, children's social life is enhanced. In addition, parents who have a positive attitude towards education are able to have a sound relationship with teachers. Teachers and parents can collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development.

- ***The chronosystem***

The chronosystem level adds the helpful dimension of time. The chronosystem of a child is influenced by change and consistency in their life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For this study, specifically with rural area parents, numerous cultural factors that impact teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase can be present (Rosa, 2013). It is important to note that teachers should recognise the dominating culture as significant because it dominates and governs the education system (Rosa, 2013). The chronosystem is significant to this study because as children transition from home to school, teachers and parents can help children adjust to a new school environment.

2.15 THE THEORIES' APPLICABILITY TO THE STUDY

As drawn from Epstein's (2001) theory of school-families-community partnerships and Bronfenbrenner's (1978) ecological system theory, teachers should develop strategies

that allow parents to be involved in the education of their children. Parental involvement in children's education increases the need for teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development. However, many teachers do not know how to get parents involved and form sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Kivunja (2018) found that teachers admit that they do not get enough training to involve parents in their children's education and form sound teacher-parent relationships. Epstein's (2001) six types of parental involvement theory and the ecological system theory can guide teachers on the framework to draw strategies that will help them form sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. The theories allowed me to make sense of the collected data. The comparison helped me establish what sound, positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase look like.

2.16 SUMMARY

It is clear from the above discussions that teacher-parent relationships are essential elements that schools should embrace because they enhance learners' academic and social development. As the SASA No 84 of 1996 stipulated, the full participation of parents in their children's education improves teaching and learning. Research showed that teacher-parent relationships help teachers and parents and enhance the social and academic life of children (Lemmer, 2011; Maluleke, 2014; Selolo, 2018). It is time that SA takes the importance of teacher-parent relationships seriously, especially in rural areas, because there are no adequate teacher-parent relationships (Selolo, 2018; Đurišić, 2017; Manilal, 2014; Venter, 2013). Teacher-parent relationships can be seen as a way to keep children in school and improve their academic achievements of children throughout their lives.

By successfully implementing the discussed strategies, such as professional development of teachers, parent involvement in curriculum issues, home visits, teacher-parent games, and parent meetings, teachers can form good teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Teachers and parents in rural areas must work harder to form functional teacher-parent relationships than their urban counterparts.

This chapter discussed the literature review from recent articles and journals on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. In Chapter 3, I discuss the study's methodological perspectives and outline the research design, sample size, data collection methods, data capturing, and analysis process.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed relevant literature on teacher-parent relationships. This chapter focuses and elaborates on research methodology. According to Creswell (2012), research methodology is a way to address the research issue systematically. It can be understood as studying how scientific research is conducted. Research methodology is an investigative technique that moves from the underlying assumptions to research and data collection (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). In the formal process of conducting a study, research methodology is a collective concept. Several different methodologies can be used in various forms in the study, and the term generally includes research design, data collection, and data analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The term research methodology explains how a research study was performed. Research methodology explicitly outlines how the research issue or problem was identified, why the theory was developed, what data was collected, what particular approach was implemented, and why specific data analysis methods were used (De Vos, 2002).

This chapter outlines the primary and secondary research questions. The chapter describes and outlines the research designs and methods used in the study, including data collection and analysis methods, explaining the phases and processes involved in the study. The chapter further outlines the research methods, sampling and selection of participants, the role I played as the researcher, the methods used to collect data, the research and data collection instruments, and the data analysis

strategies. Finally, this chapter also elaborates on the research's trustworthiness, the data storage, the ethical considerations of the study, and the concluding remarks.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Mattick et al. (2018) defined a research question as a question the study sets out to answer. The research questions guided this research project and helped me conduct orderly research from inception to completion (Maree, 2012). Maree (2012) stated that a good research question provides the researcher with a focus for data collection, preventing them from deviating from the original purpose.

The following primary and secondary research questions guided this study:

- Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quantile 1 and 5 rural schools?
- What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?
- How do teachers and parents in rural contexts collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology explicitly outlines the process used to investigate the identified phenomena in a research study (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Research methodology encompasses relevant designs and instruments followed during the inquiry, including selecting appropriate data collection and interpretation methods (Creswell, 2012). Researchers also need to understand the theories that underlie different techniques and the parameters by which they can determine which methods and procedures apply to some issues and which not to (Sileyew, 2019). Research methodology implies

that the researcher needs to design their approach to investigate or address the problem.

In the following subsections, I elaborate on the study's research approach, paradigm, and design.

3.3.1 Research approach

The research approach can be defined as the plans and processes that determine the steps from broad and underlying assumptions to comprehensive data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods (Cresswell, 2014). It is centred on research production and the tools and processes used during the investigation. There are three types of approaches, namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. According to Maree (2012), during the quantitative research, the investigator relies on numerical data to assess the relationships between the variables. The quantitative approach is used to quantify the problem by generating numerical data or transforming data into usable statistics (Grover, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (2011) described a qualitative approach as providing tolerable knowledge by producing qualitative data on detailed views and opinions.

I used the qualitative approach for this research. Maree (2016) defined the qualitative approach as a process of constructively answering the 'what', 'how', and 'why' questions by exploring participants' everyday lives in a natural setting. Eyisi (2016) stated that this research approach attempts to understand underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations.

Using the qualitative approach in this study allowed me to probe and understand the teachers' and parents' experiences and behaviour concerning teacher-parent relationships to enhance the development and learning of foundation phase learners.

I used a qualitative research approach because teachers and parents had to describe their experiences with teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. This approach provided detailed descriptions of the teachers' and parents' feelings, opinions, and experiences relating to teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in rural areas (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.3.2 Research paradigm

A research paradigm seeks to define approaches to social science research (Taber, 2013). It is an interrelated practice and thought that determines the essence of investigation in these three dimensions (Creswell, 2012). Perera (2018) described a paradigm as a collection of shared beliefs and agreements among scientists about how problems should be understood and treated. According to them, the word paradigm refers to a research culture with a collection of principles, values, and assumptions about the existence and conduct of research that a group of researchers has in common. Therefore, a model means a trend, structure, and framework or system of concepts, principles, and assumptions that are empirical and academic. There are three commonly used research paradigms: positivism, interpretivism, and critical postmodernism. These paradigms are strands of qualitative research.

This study was guided by interpretivism (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivists believe that human beings socially construct reality. According to Creswell (2017), participants seek to understand the world they live in, and therefore, the interpretivist paradigm allowed me to view teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase through the teachers' and parents' perspectives and experiences.

3.3.3 Research design

Cresswell (2017) defined research design as the study plan of how the researcher will determine the relationship between the variables. Uyangoda (2015) defined research design as a set of guidelines and instructions to collect and analyse evidence that enables the researcher to answer the research question. Research design includes the relevant selection of data collection and analysis instruments used during an inquiry (Grover, 2015).

Research design can be considered the rationale or master plan of a study that sheds light on how to perform the research (Cresswell, 2012). The research design illustrates how the samples, classes, tests, therapies or services and the main sections of the research analysis work together to answer the research questions (Cresswell, 2012). Research design can be seen as the actualisation of logic in a series of procedures that maximise data validity for a given research issue. The research design helps to plot, organise and conduct the study to improve the validity of the findings (Maree, 2016). The research design guides the study design and data collection with underlying conceptual assumptions. Yin (2012) added that “colloquially, a research design is an action plan to get from here to there, where” here “can be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and” there is “a certain set of conclusions”.

The research design selected for this study is a case study. A case study is a detailed, in-depth investigation and analysis of a unit (Maree, 2016). A case study is one of many ways of doing research, whether related to social science or even socially connected, since its purpose is to understand human beings in a social context by interpreting their behaviour as a single entity, culture, or event. Simons (2009) described a case study as an investigation to address specific research questions by finding various additional evidence from the case settings. Yin (2012) described a case

study as an empirical investigation that, in its real-life context, investigates a contemporary phenomenon and that is used mainly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined. In circumstances where the contextual conditions of the event being observed are essential and where the researcher has little influence over the affairs as they occur, the case study approach is beneficial. Bless et al. (2009) listed a case study's vital distinguishing features as a "multiplicity of viewpoints embedded in a single context". Simons (2009) stated that the purpose of a case study is to understand the case in its natural setting by acknowledging its complexity and context. Case studies can document participants' perspectives, engage them in the process, and represent different interests and values (Maree, 2016). Therefore, I was able to burrow deeper into understanding participants' perceptions on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

The case study design employed in this study is an explanatory case study. An explanatory case study clarifies causal ties between the case and its meaning in a real-life situation. Lelissa (2018) noted that an explanatory case study should be employed if the goal is to explain why a phenomenon occurs. A detailed overview of the facts of a case is given in such explanatory studies, along with a discussion of alternative interpretations that are congruent with the particulars (Strydom, 2013). An explanatory case study emphasises the research design to dramatically limit any unintended knowledge about bias. The advantages of an explanatory case study are that it allowed me to provide deep insight into a specific theme, brought to light more themes, and allowed me to study new things and ask further questions. Therefore, an explanatory case study allowed me to understand the concept of the teacher-parent relationship through the participants' perceptions.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The different techniques, schemes, and algorithms used in a study are called research methods (Cresswell & Poth, 2018; Cresswell, 2012). Research methods help to gather samples, data and find a solution to a problem. Scientific research methods call for hypotheses based on evidence, measurements, and observations, not reasoning alone. They consider only specific theories that studies can verify. In short, research methods seek answers to research problems (Maree, 2016). Qualitative methods usually provide rich and detailed results and offer ideas and concepts to inform research (Cresswell, 2009). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative researchers use their eyes, ears, and intelligence to collect in-depth perceptions and descriptions of targeted populations, places, and events. Qualitative methods are more flexible as participants can respond freely during focus group interviews (Pandey & Pandey, 2015).

3.4.1 Sampling and selection of participants

Sampling is the process of selecting a small number of elements from a more extensive defined target group of elements. The information gathered from the small group allows judgement to be made about the large group (Shaheen et al., 2019). Maree (2016) conceptualised sample size as the sample size chosen from the total population under analysis. The sample size represents how small or large the selection is. I used purposeful sampling, a non-probability method of sampling, to select the sample size of respondents for this analysis. Dudovskly (2019) defined sample size as the sample size chosen from the total population under study. I used purposive sampling to select the participants and the research site for this study. According to Suri (2011), purposive sampling enables the researcher to explore

people with specific characteristics to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. Researchers rely on their judgement when choosing population members to participate in a study (Dudovskly, 2019), and as a result, the participants can give rich data on the phenomenon. I used purposive sampling because I looked for crucial participants with adequate knowledge of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. The principals will serve as the 'gatekeepers' (Creswell, 2014). To generate potential participants, I requested the principals of the two schools to recommend participants who will provide teacher-parent relationship information that will assist to address the research questions..

Purposive sampling allowed me to implore individuals with unique characteristics to participate in the research (Johnson & Christenson, 2014). Purposeful sampling was used because in the rural context, I was looking for the primary respondents with ample knowledge of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Purposive sampling refers to selecting participants because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of the data needed for the study (Maree, 2012). Ten participants in this study were purposefully selected to gather rich, rigorous data.

The participants constituted six purposely selected teachers, and three teachers were from School A (quintile 1) and three from School B (quintile 5). The main aim of selecting teachers and parents from quintile 1 and 5 was to compare teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in the two quintiles. Teachers shared more information on their strategies to form sound teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

I further purposefully selected four (4) parents of children in the foundation phase. Two (2) parents were from School A and two were from School B. The teachers helped

select the parents as they knew them. I selected three (3) teachers and two (2) parents from quintile 1 and three (3) teachers and two (2) parents from quintile 5. All the parents speak Sepedi. This selection was done to establish whether the parents have a relationship with their children's teachers in the foundation phase.

The study was conducted within the boundaries of Sekhukhune South District in the Limpopo Province. Limpopo province is one of the nine provinces in SA and has an estimated population of 5 852 553. The capital city of Limpopo is Polokwane. Limpopo is divided into five districts: Mopani, Vhembe, Capricorn, Waterberg, and Sekhukhune. Limpopo consists of four population groups, namely Black, white, Indian, and Coloured. The province has seven spoken languages: Sepedi, Tsonga, Venda, Afrikaans, Tswana, English and Ndebele. Traditional leaders and chiefs form part of the political landscape of the area. The education department strives to deliver quality education and training for people living in Limpopo. Institutions of higher learning are set to deliver quality education for all, including TVET colleges and universities. There are educational policies, procedures, and systems put in place to deliver quality education. Hence, I selected Sekhukhune South District for my study.

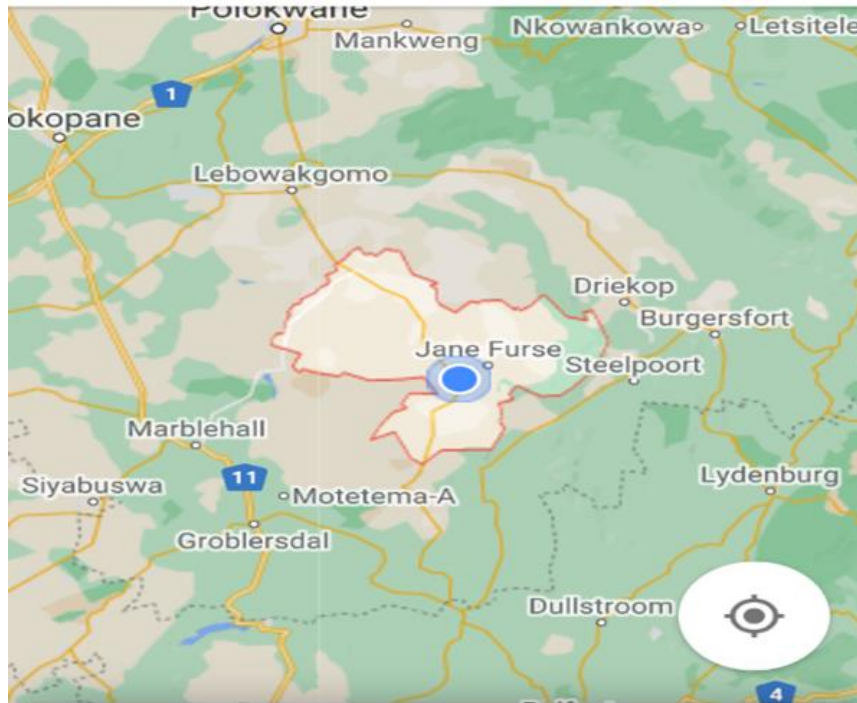
Sekhukhune South District is one of the five districts. Sekhukhune South District is situated in Groblersdal and has a population of 1 076 840, and 82,2% of the inhabitants speak Sepedi.

Within Sekhukhune South District, I selected Glen-Cowie circuit and Mmashadi circuit located in the Makhuduthamaga municipality. Makhuduthamaga has employed and unemployed community members, and the municipality is dominated by the retail and wholesale sector, which contributes significantly to the growing economy of the

municipality. Figure 3.1 shows the Makhuduthamaga municipality offices and Figure 3.2 shows its location on Google Maps.



Figure 3.1. Makhuduthamaga local municipality



Makhuduthamaga Local
Municipality

Figure 3.2. Google map showing the location of Makhuduthamaga local municipality

A circuit is an educational landscape that comprises pre-primaries, primaries, and secondaries. I selected one school in each circuit. In the Glen-Cowie circuit, I picked school A located at Ga Moloi. Ga Moloi is a rural village made up of primarily unemployed inhabitants who are poverty-stricken, have low literacy levels, and have low socioeconomic status. The language spoken in Ga Moloi is Sepedi. The school is a quintile 1 school and has 688 learners enrolled. Quintile 1 is schools that cater to the poorest 20% of schools (SASA, 1996). The language of teaching and learning is English. I selected three teachers and two parents from school A to participate in the study.

School B is in the Mmashadi circuit. The school is a quintile 5 schools and has 2 267 learners enrolled and 73 teachers. Quintile 5 is schools that cater to the least poor (SASA, 1996). The language of learning and teaching is English. The school is in Jane Furse town. Jane Furse town is a semi-urban town that is made up of a primarily working-class and literate community. I selected three teachers and two parents from school B to participate in the study. This selection was done because not enough research is done on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas.

3.4.2 The role of the researcher

I am a teacher at a secondary school in Ga Moloi in Limpopo. Three of my children attend Mpelegeng Primary School. I regularly attend school meetings and realised that teachers do not have a relationship with parents, especially in the foundation phase. Hence, I became interested in studying teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. According to Creswell (2012), the researcher is considered a data collection instrument. Data for this study was collected from participants and a document review.

My role was interviewing participants and reviewing the documents from quintile 1 and 5 schools. The role of the researcher in qualitative research is to attempt to access the thoughts and feelings of participants in the study. However, the researcher's primary responsibility is to safeguard participants and their data. As the researcher, my role was to monitor and reduce bias during the study by avoiding asking leading questions to participants. I kept a research journal to record opinions, emotions, and feelings during data collection. During the study, my emotions could have clouded my judgement, and I guarded against my emotions by putting my thoughts and present data according to the participants' views.

Before the study commenced, I sought permission from the district senior manager to research the selected schools. I sought permission from the principals of the schools and wrote letters of consent to teachers and parents. The letters informed the participants of the research details and ensured them that I would follow ethical considerations (see section 3.7).

3.4.3 Data collection strategies

Data collection is gathering data from different sources to present and interpret the topic under study (Maree, 2016). Johnson and Christensen (2014) defined data collection as the construction of an appropriate, accurate instrument or tool to measure and collect data and the way it was recorded. Various data collection and documenting techniques and instruments can be used when conducting explanatory case studies, such as observations, interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis. I used focus group interviews and document analysis to collect data for this study. A group of four parents and six teachers participated in focus group interviews.

I hosted four focus group interviews. The rationale for conducting two focus group interviews was to compare the data collected from the first interview session to that of the second interview session. In the first two focus groups, three (3) teachers and two (2) parents participated; in the second group, three (3) teachers and two (2) parents participated. The focus groups interviews were hosted separately because the participants live in different areas. Therefore, I travelled to meet them at their schools as it was convenient for the participants. The interview sessions were conducted after school hours to accommodate teachers and parents who are working. I chose to do focus group interviews because a researcher can collect rich and more information during focus group interviews. Focus group interviews save time and are cost-effective for the researcher and the participants. Procedurally, I interviewed teachers first then parents. During the interviews I recorded the responses and later transcribed them. The researcher can investigate the participants' perspectives as they interact during the discussion (Silverman, 2014). Participation was voluntary as participants could withdraw at any time they wanted. During focus group interviews, participants may feel threatened and want to pull out of the research and think that they are not safe and that their identity may be compromised (Maree, 2016). I therefore reassured the participants that their identities would be kept anonymous and that I would not mention their names in the study.

The second data collection method was a document review. A document review is defined as a valid research strategy with considerable merit as a methodology for policy evaluation and reform (Creswell, 2014). Bowen (2011) defined document review as a systematic procedure to review or evaluate documents. Harvey (2012) defined document review as analysing the content of documents. This study used document analysis by exploring the schools' policies on parent meetings, the frequency of the

meetings, parents' attendance, and the schools' expectations of parents. Thematic analysis was used for document analysis. During thematic analysis I coding of categories and came up with codes and themes. The schools provided the register for parents' meetings, record of the meeting minutes, and school policies.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis and interpretation are essential elements of a research project (Maree, 2016). Creswell and Clark (2012) stated that data analysis involves observing and questioning patterns in the data and asking additional questions based on the collected data from specifically selected individuals on targeted topics. Data analysis gives order, structure, and sense to the collected data. Data analysis is messy, vague, and time-consuming but innovative and intriguing (Creswell, 2017). Data analysis is when the researcher interprets information, identifies patterns, finds meaning and understanding, and makes sense of the collected data (Flick, 2013). According to De Vos (2002), data interpretation is when the researcher explains and finds meaning in the data collected by coding and identifying themes. There are two main types of data analysis: deductive and inductive.

Inductive thematic analysis identifies patterns or themes within qualitative data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Inductive thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify patterns, categories, and relationships portrayed in each case in the study. Deductive analysis refers to developing hypotheses based on existing theories and then designing a research strategy to test the ideas (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). I used inductive thematic analysis for the data from the focus group interviews and document analysis in this study.

I employed Miles and Huberman’s (1994) interactive model for inductive thematic analysis in my study. The model has three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusions. Miles and Huberman’s model allowed me to organise and compress valuable data orderly. Various data display techniques, such as quotes, texts, and tabulation of differences and similarities, are used (Alhojailan, 2012). Miles and Huberman’s model allowed me to know when data saturation was reached during data analysis. Figure 3.3 summarises the process followed for data analysis and interpretation.

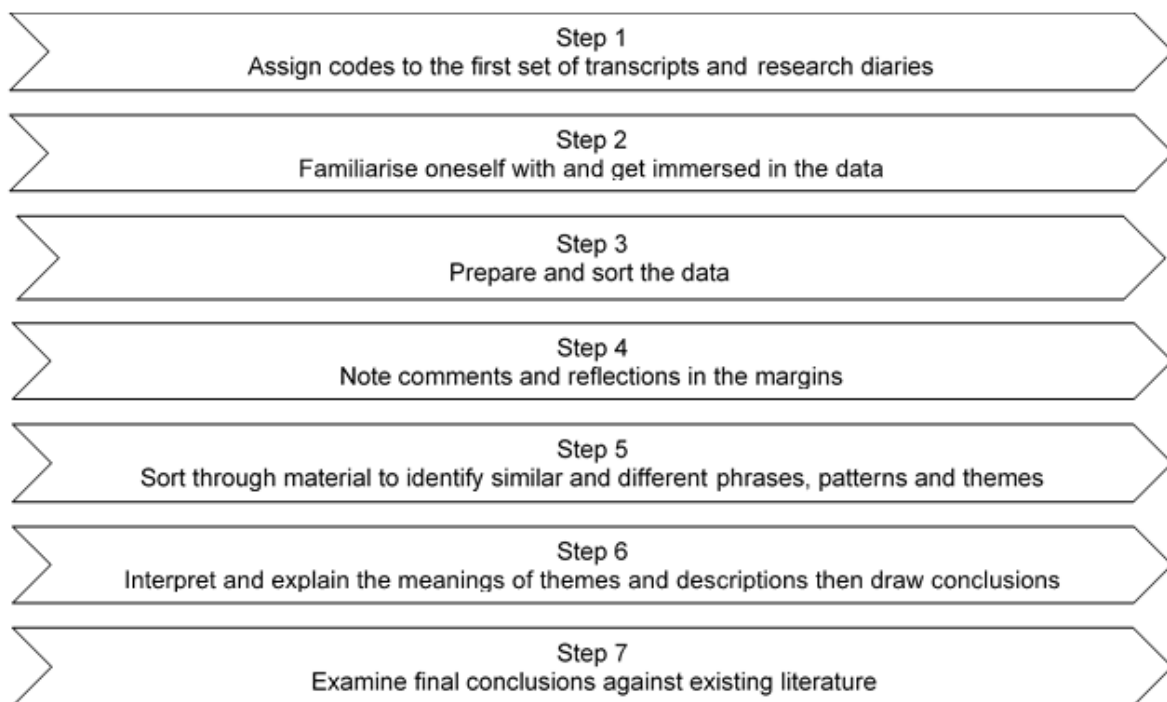


Figure 3.3. Process of data analysis and interpretation (Miles and Huberman, 1994)

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Anney (2014), trustworthiness is a criterion to ensure the rigour that provides reliability and quality in the findings of a study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness has the following four key elements: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility has to do with the truthfulness and correspondence of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). To ensure credibility in this study, I recorded the data according to the participants' responses. I did member checking during the process of interview to increase credibility of the study. Moreover, did member checking to see if the responses I got from participants were the same, and I used two data collection instruments, focus group interviews and document analysis.

Transferability has to do with the applicability of the results to other contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). I cannot guarantee transferability as the study was conducted in a rural context with a few participants. Therefore, it may not be transferable in other contexts, such as urban areas.

Dependability refers to the consistency of the study over time (Rule & John, 2011). I allow the reader to evaluate the research practices by reporting and recording the research process in detail to ensure this study's dependability. I included a trail of evidence in the appendixes (Maree, 2012).

Confirmability looks at whether the study reflects participants' responses and whether there is an element of subjectivity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To ensure confirmability in this study, I ensured that the findings reflected the experiences and opinions of the participants by conducting an audit trail (Satu et al., 2014). Throughout the study, I describe the analysis process in a systematic and transparent manner to allow scrutiny by the reader (Ellis et al., 2017).

3.6.1 Data storage

According to the National Archives and Record Services of SA Act (Act 43 of 1996) and the Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act 2 of 2000), the University of Pretoria is responsible for permanently preserving historically significant material that

is important for research related to the University. The policies state that all documents and other records created or received during the undertaking of its duties by administrative, academic, and student offices are the property of the University and may become archival material. Therefore, the University will store the data and results for safety in the archives of the University of Pretoria. The data will be code protected and stored in the Department of Early Childhood Education for 15 years. The researcher will submit an electronic and a book version of the dissertation.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research refers to the moral behaviour of researchers (Maree, 2012). Fundamental ethical aspects relating to human participants include confidentiality, anonymity, right of privacy, voluntary participation, protection from harm, and trust (Creswell, 2007). Researchers must adhere to research ethics to allow studies to be conducted safely (Maree, 2012). I first applied for ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to ensure that the risk of harm to the participants would be minimal, that the research results would be beneficial, and that I conducted the research ethically.

Since I was working with teachers and parents from the identified schools, I first asked for permission from the DoE, district office and the principals of the schools to interview the identified teachers. I asked the participants and peers to review the findings and results to circumvent bias issues.

I sought informed consent from the participating teachers and parents before the interviews commenced. Informed consent involved getting participants' participation and explaining what the research was about, the process being followed during the study, and their expected role (Creswell, 2009). Participants were expected to

participate in focus group interviews, which lasted for an hour. During the focus group interviews, participants were asked questions and their answers were audio recorded and later transcribed for analysis. I ensured participants' anonymity and the confidentiality of the information given during the research by signing confidentiality contracts. Throughout the study, I used letters of the alphabet as pseudonyms for the participants. Participants preferred not to be named in the study and were informed that the data they provided would be shared with the supervisors and further used for academic publications. I ensured information protection by signing a contract with them. However, the participants were made aware that I will share the study results with the participants on request.

3.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I discussed the research methodology of this study. I explained and elaborated on the research methodology, research methods, role of the researcher, data collection strategies and instruments, sampling and selection of participants, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations. I used focus group interviews and document reviews as data collection instruments. I issued letters of permission and consent forms before the commencement of the study to ensure that the participants understood what would transpire during the research and what was expected from them. In the following chapter, I present the focus group interviews and document review findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology for the study, including the research methods, sampling and selection of participants, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study and focuses on the research objectives and the study's primary research question:

- Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quintile 1 and 5 rural schools?
- What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?
- How do teachers and parents in rural contexts collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?

The study aimed to compare teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools in the foundation phase to establish strategies that teachers can use to cultivate good relationships with parents.

The findings discussed in this chapter are derived from focus group interviews and document analysis. Section 3.4.3 gives detailed information on how data was collected for this study. Parents were asked 10 questions during the focus group interviews and the teachers were asked nine questions. After the focus group interviews were transcribed, thematic data analysis was used to analyse school policies, attendance policy, and data minute books.

This chapter commences by presenting the findings from the focus group interviews followed by the document analysis. After that, a summary follows where the key findings are discussed, and finally, a conclusion is provided.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

This section is divided into the participants' demographic information and the findings from the focus group interviews.

4.2.1 Participants' demographic information

Four parents and six teachers participated in the study. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide the demographic information of all the participants.

Table 4.1: Parent participants

Parent	Age	Gender	Home language	Highest qualification
Quintile 1				
A1	25	Female	Sepedi	Grade 12
A2	31	Female	Sepedi	Grade 10
Quintile 5				
B1	45	Female	Sepedi	Grade 12
B2	30	Female	Sepedi	Fet ¹ certificate

Table 4.2: Teacher participants

Teacher	Age	Gender	Home language	Highest qualification	Years of experience
Quintile 1					
A1	48	Female	Sepedi	Std ² +hons ³	20 years
A2	55	Female	Sepedi	Std	26 rears

¹FET: Further Education and Training

² STD-Secondary Teachers Diploma

³ HONS-Honours

Teacher	Age	Gender	Home language	Highest qualification	Years of experience
A3	40	Female	Sepedi	Bed+hons	12 years
Quintile 5					
B1	35	Female	Sepedi	Bed+hons	15 years
B2	57	Female	Sepedi	Std+ace+hons	26 years
B3	49	Female	Sepedi	Std	19 years

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show that all participants are Sepedi speaking women aged 25–49 years. Looking at parent participants in Table 4.1, three of the four parents have matric certificates. Two of those who have a matric do not have higher education qualifications, but one parent has a further education and training certificate in electrical engineering. One teacher has a Bachelor of Education and an honours degree with 15 years of teaching experience. The second teacher has a secondary teacher’s diploma and honours degree with 26 years of experience. The last teacher only has a secondary teacher’s diploma with 19 years of teaching experience.

4.2.2 Presentation of findings from focus group interviews

The data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman’s (1994) interactive model. The model allowed me to follow the following three stages during data analysis: data reduction, data display, and data drawing and discussions. I also used the inductive thematic analysis process during data analysis, and during it, codes, categories, and themes emerged. The themes that emerged from the semi-structured focus group interviews are presented in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Themes, categories, codes, and research questions

Themes	Categories	Codes	Research question
Comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools	Factors that promote effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools	Open communication Two-way communication School visit Attend meetings	Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quintile 1 and 5 rural schools?
	Communication challenges between teachers and parents in quintile 1 and 5 schools	Parents' working schedules Negative experience of parents with the school Limited knowledge of technology use Lack of communication	What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?
Factors affecting the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationship in quintile 1 and 5 schools	Constraints on teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools Comparing parental involvement as a factor that affects teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools	The socioeconomic status of parents Lack of interest by parents Parents' attitude and perceptions Parents' literacy level Commitment of parents Poverty	
Benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase	Characteristics of positive teacher-parent relationships Factors that promote teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools	Academic improvement Social enhancement and adaptation Consistency Enhance teaching and learning Warmth Attention Creation of welcoming environment Trust Sensitivity	How do teachers and parents in rural contexts collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?

4.2.3 Theme 1: Comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools

The first theme identified from the data is comparing factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools. Research showed that communication and interaction by teachers affect the quality of their relationships with parents (Ozmen et al., 2016). Epstein (2019) also identified communication as one factor that can help establish good teacher-parent relationships. The communication between teachers and parents should focus on the children's interests.

The data shows that both parents and teachers in this study view communication as vital because they believe it will help form sound teacher-parent relationships. Teacher A2 stated the following:

I always think that we need to communicate with parents as teachers. It is important to communicate because we discuss the future of the child.

Parent B1 agreed by arguing that,

It is a good thing to talk to teachers. We can share how we can help our children. I am one person who believes that I should discuss how my child is doing. It helps to know how to help her with schoolwork.

Furthermore, both parent and teacher participants believed communication promotes positive teacher-parent relationships. This is shown in the following comments by teachers and parents:

It is essential to have a communication with parents because it helps in teaching and learning. (Teacher B1)

I think the more we talk with teachers, we are getting tips on how to help our children at home. After meeting with my child's teacher about her performance in the classroom, I started helping her with homework regularly. She improved in her performance. (Parent B2)

The above quotes show that teachers need to communicate with parents to have a positive teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, the following two categories emerged from the data as part of this theme:

- Category 1: Factors that promote effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools
- Category 2: Challenges to effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools

The following sections discuss the two categories and the codes that contributed to the two categories.

- ***Category 1: Factors that promote effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Epstein (1995) identified communication as a category that establishes good teacher-parent relationships. The category factors that promote effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools emerged during data analysis, and the following codes contributed to it:

- Open communication
- Two-way communication
- School visits
- Attend meetings

Open communication

Teachers should regularly communicate with parents to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships (Page, 2016). This quote dominated as a concern in School A as parents feel that they do not hear from teachers unless children have done something wrong. For example, Parent A1 indicated the following:

Teachers in this school do not talk to us. I only hear that I am wanted at school only when my child has done something wrong.

Parents and teachers in School B indicated that they have regular communication. For example, Teacher B2 said:

We always have parents' meetings regularly to update parents about the progress of their children.

It is evident from the above quotes that School A does not have good open communication; however, in School B there is open communication between parents and teachers. Therefore, positive teacher-parent relationships are cultivated in School B. According to Page (2016), face-to-face communication is always an effective method for teachers to have open communication with parents. The teachers agreed that constantly meeting with parents enhanced teaching and learning:

Meeting with parents allows us to discuss issues like how to help their children with homework and help them with other life problems. I have seen many children improving in how they behave and also in their education. (Teacher B1)

The above quote shows that successful home-school collaborations and teacher-parent relationships involve regular and constant communication. Ozmen et al. (2012) agreed that open communication between teachers and parents is crucial as it helps

parents be more involved in their children's education. Furthermore, parents get the opportunity to understand what teachers expect from them to support children in their education (Olcer & Kocer, 2015). However, communication can be complicated as it is a two-way street.

Two-way communication

There can be one-way and two-way communication (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Oostdam and Hooge (2013) explained that one-way communication is done by the teacher when sharing progress and school events with parents. In contrast, two-way communication is an interaction between teachers and parents. Epstein's (2001) framework encourages teachers to establish clear two-way communication between them and parents and vice versa. Two-way communication means that parents monitor their children's progress and that teachers appreciate and use parents' networks to gather more information about children's backgrounds.

In School A, one-way communication dominates as parents believe they only talk with teachers when they collect reports or when teachers want them to pay for school trips. For example, Parent A1 said the following:

I only hear from the teachers when they want us to pay for the trips or collect reports.

However, in School B, teachers and parents have two-way communication that enhances teacher-parent relationships. Parent B2 described it as follows:

Teachers constantly update us about the progress of our children. They allow us to have time to check our children's books and give inputs.

Moreover, teachers in School B believed that communicating with parents has helped develop excellent teacher-parent relationships, which has led to learners performing better in the classroom. Teacher B3 made the following comment:

In the foundation phase [it] is essential to communicate with parents. We always have special days to update parents about their children's progress and give input.

It is clear that School A does not have two-way communication to cultivate teacher-parent relationships; however, school B does have two-way communication between teachers and parents. Okeke (2014) stated that children benefit socially and academically from two-way communication between their teachers and parents. I, therefore, conclude that two-way communication enhances teacher-parent relationships. Teachers can establish two-way communication in different ways, such as through regular school visits.

School visits

Parents visiting the school can be a factor that enhances effective communication. Visiting the children's school allows the parents to communicate with the teacher on identified areas that need attention. For example, Teacher B1 said the following:

We have parents who voluntarily visit the school to ask about their children's progress in our school.

When parents fail to visit the school where their children attend, effective communication is impeded, and as a result, teacher-parent relationships are not cultivated. Teacher A1 explained it as follows:

In our school, parents do not come to school voluntarily to check on their children's work. They only come when they are called.

However, parents in the quintile 1 school claimed that their failure to visit the school stems from how teachers treat them. Parent A1 lamented:

I do not just go to school because teachers do not treat us equal. When you go to school, they look at you as if you are not a parent.

As a strategy to encourage effective communication, teachers should allow parents to visit the school by making appointments to discuss their children's progress. The above quotes show that parents in the quintile 1 school do not visit the school to discuss their children's progress because they think the teachers look down on them and they are not treated well by the teachers. On the other hand, in the quintile 5 school, parents voluntarily visit the school, which encourages and develops effective communication between teachers and parents.

Attend meetings

Regular attendance of meetings allows parents to meet with their children's teachers. Teachers expect parents to attend meetings as they share important information regarding school activities and how to assist children with homework. Teachers in School A claimed that fewer parents attend meetings. For example, Teacher A1 said:

Parents around this area do not attend meetings. Sometimes we postpone meetings because other parents do not come to the meeting.

However, the teachers indicated that parents attend meetings satisfactorily in School B. For example, Teacher B3 said:

Many parents make efforts to attend meetings. It is good to see them coming to the meeting because we can discuss important issues about our learners during meetings.

However, teachers in School A believed that parents are only interested in meetings about school funds and not in meetings about their children's progress at school. Parents attend meetings when they are promised food as they think the meetings take longer than necessary. For example, teacher A2 said:

Most parents see them during budget meetings and only because there is food. When we ask them for curriculum matters, they do not come.

A parent in School A indicated that they sometimes do not attend meetings as they take long and the school does not cater to the parents. They find it difficult to concentrate during meetings; therefore, when they go to the meeting, they do not stay until the end. For example, parent A1 said:

The meetings take along, especially at the beginning of the year and budget meetings. So, I sometimes do not attend as we end up being hungry.

Teacher-parent meetings bridge the gap of ineffective communication (Majerus, 2011). The above quotes show that School A parents do not attend meetings while School B parents do. Factors such as time make it difficult for parents in School A to participate in meetings, and therefore, the lack of meeting attendance impedes the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships.

- ***Category 2: Challenges to effective communication between teachers and parents in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Various challenges can affect effective communication between teachers and parents (Lemmer, 2017; Ozmen et al., 2016). Challenges to effective communication between teachers and parents in quintile 1 and 5 schools emerged as a significant category during the study. Four codes contributed to the emergence of the category and are discussed in the following subsections:

- Parents' working schedules
- The negative experience of parents at school
- Limited knowledge of technology
- Lack of communication

Parents' working schedules

According to Lemmer (2012), parents with stable and predictable work are more engaged and unable to attend meetings or other school commitments. Okeke (2014) also stated that parents could not participate in school commitments because they are at work or lack time. Parents in School B stated that they often send caregivers to attend meetings as they cannot ask for leave often and the only meetings they can attend are those held on weekends. Parent B2 indicated that her boss does not excuse her from work often, making it impossible for her to attend meetings:

My boss is strict and at times does not allow me to leave work during working hours. Even though sometimes he agrees but sometimes I am not free to ask to leave.

As parents cannot attend weekly meetings, teachers opt for weekends or after-work hours to accommodate parents. Teacher B2 said:

We always organise meetings to cater to parents who are working. Sometimes parents are working far from home; therefore, having meetings on weekends allows them to attend meetings.

The above quotes show that parents' working conditions should be considered by teachers when organising meetings or any other school event. School B is an example of how schools can consider parents' working conditions as they organise meetings after school hours or on weekends.

The negative experiences of parents

Parents' past schooling experiences can negatively affect how they communicate with teachers. Therefore, the school should develop strategies to encourage parents who have a negative attitude towards school to communicate with teachers. The negative experience of parents should not affect how teachers and parents relate, as it negatively affects learners' social and academic development.

According to Porumbu and Necsoi (2013), parents who previously struggled at school find it difficult to communicate effectively with teachers. Teachers in School A explained that most parents did not pass primary or secondary school. As a result, they have a negative attitude towards the school, and it is difficult for teachers to cultivate a sound teacher-parent relationship with them. Teacher A2 explained it as follows:

Some parents dropped out of school due to reasons known to them. That affects how they relate with us as teachers.

Teacher A1 agreed that most parents who did not progress academically do not want to come to school or help their children with homework. Some parents even tell their children that they cannot attend meetings because they (parents) are not attending

school. Therefore, teachers need to know parents' academic backgrounds create effective communication. Teacher A1 said:

Many parents around this area are young people who did not pass matric. They are not interested in communicating with teachers.

Parents in rural areas showed that they do not have a negative attitude towards the school and that they simply do not go to meetings as they think teachers do not value their contributions. For example, parent A indicated the following:

I think teachers have the final say since they do not talk to you like a parent when you go to school. Is like they are not taking us seriously.

The above quotes show that parents in rural areas have negative past experiences with the school. Parents' negative experiences with the school make it difficult for teachers to have a positive relationship with them. Parents who cannot read or write find it hard to relate with teachers, and they distance themselves and fail to communicate with teachers. For example, Parent 1 said:

My teachers at school during my time were strict and forcing us to read and write. They made us look at school with a different eye. As if it is not a good thing to be at school.

In such instances, teachers need to encourage parents and keep communicating to show them they are as important as the teachers in their children's education journey. Parents' negative experiences negatively impact teacher-parent relationships in rural schools because parents still have the mindset that the school is not a suitable environment for them to be in.

Limited knowledge of technology use

Schools in rural areas find it challenging to communicate effectively with parents. Parents cannot not be contacted because they do not have cell phones or smartphones, preventing parents from effectively communicating with teachers. This makes it difficult to invite these parents to meetings through SMS, WhatsApp, or email. Written or paper-based communication is still relevant in this regard (Epstein, 2019). However, teachers should consider parents who do not speak English, do not read well, or need large print to understand the message. The following comments clarify this:

I do not receive letters or messages that invite me to school meetings. (Parent A2)

We have created WhatsApp groups for each grade where we added parents, but for parents who do not have smartphones, we still invite them via messages or write letters. Parents still believe that we should ask them to meetings with letters. I think it is effective, but sometimes children do not give their parents those letters. (Teacher A3)

One of the parents from School A said that she sometimes hears about meetings after the meeting is over or does not receive letters of invitation. Thus, teachers need to consider parents' access to technological devices and plan to keep in constant communication with parents.

One parent suggested that teachers write letters to parents a few days before the meeting or send messages to parents beforehand. Parent B1 said:

Teachers need to inform parents on time about meetings. That makes it easy for us to prepare and ask for leave at work.

The above quotes show that the lack of technology resources is still a challenge for developing and cultivating teacher-parent relationships, especially in rural areas. Therefore, the data shows that if there is no effective communication between teachers and parents, sound and positive teacher-parent relationships cannot be cultivated, especially in rural schools. Therefore, parents' access to technology should be considered by teachers when planning their methods of communication.

Lack of communication

Effective communication is a way to understand the emotions and intentions behind information (Robins & Searby, 2013). Effective communication between teachers and parents leads to learner achievement and can promote a positive relationship between teachers and parents (Ozmen et al., 2016). Therefore, ineffective communication between teachers and parents impedes teacher-parent relationships, especially in the foundation phase. For example, Teacher A1 explained it as follows:

Communication with parents is essential because we can know the social background of the learners we teach. As a teacher, I discover that most learners need more attention than others because of the environment they grow in.

She further explained that communication from the parents' side is not convincing, which affects the relationship:

Parents don't bother in any way to ask about the progress of their children. They do not call or even talk with you like the class teacher about anything. This affects how we relate to parents.

Teacher A1's statements show that a communication breakdown often leads to teachers making decisions without involving the parents. Furthermore, teachers at School A indicated that they usually try to rope in parents, especially of learners who

are academically struggling. Still, they fail to do so as the parents do not take any steps to meet them halfway. For example, Teacher A3 said:

Sometimes I make decisions alone as parents around do not come to school for meetings or anything else. The only time you see some parents were when their children were involved in a fight or when they came to collect end-of-year reports. Then what am I expected to do as a teacher? I continue without their inputs.

However, the parents see it differently. Parents in School A indicated that the lack of communication between them and teachers is because teachers do not regularly consult them or call meetings. The following comments are examples of this:

I think teachers do not take meetings seriously because I attended one meeting for my child this year. (Parent A1)

I am trying by all means, to talk with the teacher of my child. I do this because our children need to know that their parents and teachers are talking about them. That helps in their behaviour at school. (Parent B1)

I established the lack of communication in School A from the above quotes, which affects teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. However, there is good communication between teachers and parents in School B. In the ecosystem of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, a person's microsystem does not function independently. For a child's social and academic life to be enhanced, the teacher and the parents should effectively communicate. The interconnectedness between teachers and parents influences how children grow and develop in the school and home environment. Though there are instances where parents cannot communicate with teachers, especially those working, overall, there is a positive outlook of communication that encourages teacher-parent relationships.

In conclusion, for Theme 1, it is evident that open communication, two-way communication, school visits, and attending meetings promote effective communication. However, in quintile 1 schools, these factors are not sufficiently implemented. Factors such as parents' working schedules, negative experience of parents towards the school, limited knowledge of technology, and lack of communication impede effective communication, leading to a lack of teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools.

4.2.4 Theme 2: Factors affecting the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools

The second theme identified in Category 1 is factors affecting positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools. Research showed that teachers should cultivate teacher-parent relationships at schools to enhance learners' academic and social development (Lemmer, 2017; Majerus, 2011). Researchers agreed that teacher-parent relationships are essential and should be cultivated. Teachers said that they must develop sound, positive teacher-parent relationships; however, some factors affect the cultivation of a sound, positive teacher-parent relationship. Different factors emerged as codes that led to the emergence of the following two categories:

- Constraints on teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools.
- Comparing parental involvement as a factor that affects teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools.

- **Category 1: Constraints to teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools**

Johnson and Christensen (2019) stated that constraints to teacher-parent relationships create a lack of communication between parents and teachers. The following four codes emerged that contributed to the emergence of Category 1:

- The socioeconomic status of parents
- Lack of interest by parents
- Parents' attitudes and perceptions
- Parents' literacy level

The socioeconomic status of parents

Children raised in poverty are at risk in areas of cognitive development and academic achievement because the lack of a stimulating and nurturing environment causes physical and emotional stress. According to Li and Qiu (2018) and Thomson (2018), the socioeconomic status of parents can affect how they relate with teachers. As mentioned in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, the macrosystem of children can affect how they grow. The hardships of the economy and poverty tend to cause a hostile living environment and increase parents' negative behaviours, such as lack of interest and negative attitude, that impede teacher-parent relationships. Teacher A1 said the following about how poverty affect teacher-parent relationships:

Our school is situated in a deeply rural area. That makes it challenging to have a relationship with parents because most of them are poor. Most parents do not think it is essential to attend meetings. They end up not knowing about the developments of the school or the progress of their children.

Most families living in poverty in rural areas are headed by older people and single parents or are child headed (Ankrum, 2016). According to Selolo (2018), parents with a low income cannot have a relationship with teachers as they focus on supporting their families. In cases where there are two parents with low income, there is a lot of stress to meet the family's needs. Teacher A2 described it as follows:

Many parents around are surviving on the social grant, which is not enough to support the families. That makes it impossible for us to have a relationship with parents because their focus is on how to support their families at home.

These quotes show that it is hard to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in communities where people face unemployment or are poor. According to Lemmer (2011), families living in poverty find it difficult to support their children's education and expect less from their children's performance at school. For example, teacher A2 said:

My experience as a teacher is that parents live in poverty and do not care about their children's education.

El Nokali et al. (2011) indicated that parents who are not working cannot support their children's social and academic needs as they are not financially stable. In School B, teachers suggested that parents are socially balanced and have a steady income to support their families. For example, Teacher B1 said the following:

Many parents who are working around can support their families and can encourage their children to learn.

The socioeconomic status of parents negatively impacts parents living in rural areas. In school B, parents have a higher income and can therefore influence the academic development of their children. As discussed in the literature review, the socioeconomic status of parents affects how parents relate to teachers, and therefore, teacher-parent

relationships are essential for children living in poverty to facilitate positive educational achievement.

Lack of interest by parents

Parents who lack interest in partnering with teachers do not have a relationship with teachers. According to Đurišić (2017), Lemmer (2017) and Okeke (2014), it demotivates teachers when parents who do not show an interest in a relationship with them. Teacher A3 explained it as follows:

Sometimes I feel shattered when I call a parent to come to school, and they do not come. It is like we are forcing them to go to school.

At times, teachers must make unilateral decisions about the promotion of learners they teach. Thus, parents' lack of interest compels teachers to make decisions regarding the future of their learners. One factor that shows that parents lack the desire to have a relationship with the teacher is failing to attend meetings. Teacher A2 lamented it as follows:

Some of the parents do not attend meetings even when they are contacted individually.

Another factor that shows a lack of interest is parents who do not visit the school to ask about their children's performance. Teacher A1 described it as follows:

At the beginning of each term, we do a results analysis. Most parents do not attend such meetings. Some parents come to school at the end of the year to collect the reports. Then they are surprised if their child has failed. Some ask why their child failed, and others do not ask.

However, the parents explained that they do not attend meetings or school events because they think teachers do not value them. Parent A1 explained it as follows:

Most of the time, I do not attend meetings because teachers do not take us seriously. It is like they have their favorite parents.

In School B, teachers indicated their satisfaction with parents' interest in their children's education. Even though some parents do not fully engage with teachers, parents generally have an interest in their children's education. Teacher B2 said:

Parents of children in this school are more interested in how their children are doing. I have parents that I know will ask about their children's progress reports before we can even issue them out.

The above quotes make it clear that some parents are not interested in their children's schoolwork. According to Galito and Tan (2019), teachers' attitudes towards parents contribute to their lack of interest. Furthermore, Hornby (2011) indicated that teachers should refine their attitudes to encourage parents to develop an interest in their children's education. As parents in the quintile 1 school showed an interest in their children's education, teacher-parent relationships are enhanced. According to Epstein's (2001) six types of involvement theory, parents should volunteer to participate in educational activities by helping in the classroom or at home with homework. Therefore, lack of interest by parents in their children's education makes it difficult for parents to volunteer at school, preventing them from having a relationship with teachers in the foundation phase.

Teachers' attitudes towards and perceptions of parents

According to Selolo (2018), teachers' negative attitudes and behaviours toward impoverished parents negatively impact involving such parents, further marginalising

them. It hampers efforts to increase parental involvement. Many parents are turned off by how certain teachers approach them (Altschul, 2011). Teachers' attitudes may be the result of insufficient teacher-parent relationships. Most parents do not have a relationship with teachers because they feel intimidated and threatened. They are reluctant because teachers do not create a welcoming environment when visiting the school. Parent A2 said the following:

I sometimes go to school to collect reports for my child, and teachers do not look at us as equal. There are those parents they greet with a smile.

Parent A1 agreed that most teachers at school do not value them, which is why they do not attend meetings:

I do not attend meetings because I think teachers are not welcoming us. They only need us just for record or something. But our input is not valued.

It is evident from the above quotes that parents in quintile 1 schools view teachers as unwelcoming and unfriendly. Parents have a negative attitude towards teachers who they feel they cannot approach to discuss their children's progress. The negative attitude of teachers is increased by parents' negative attitude towards teachers. For example, Teacher A1 said the following:

Parents do not think that we are essential. Most of the time, they do not even respect us. Their level of attitude towards us is not good.

This shows that parents do not put effort into having a relationship with teachers and getting involved in their children's education because of their attitudes towards teachers. Parents who display an attitude of arrogance resist change and refuse to adapt to changes in education. Teacher A2 said the following:

Most parents are ignorant because they are not educated. Parents think that the teacher is supposed to do everything. Now things have changed. It is no longer the teacher alone; parents must also be active in their children's education.

Some parents insult teachers when they try to discipline their children at school; as a result, learners end up disrespecting teachers because of how their parents communicate with teachers. When teachers develop a positive attitude towards parents and vice versa, it gives rise to parents appreciating the work that teachers do at school (Simwelemba & Serpell, 2020). Teacher B2 said the following:

Teachers consult with parents individually when they have issues with learners. For example, at the beginning of each term, all class teachers conduct results analysis with parents. Each parent gets the time to sit down with the subject teacher and discuss the child's progress.

Teachers say that when parents do not appreciate them, it demotivates them and impedes effective teaching and learning. Teachers cannot cultivate a positive teacher-parent relationship. Teachers in School A indicated that parents do not appreciate their efforts. Teacher A3 explained it as follows:

Some parents still see a teacher as someone who knows everything. As teachers, we believe that parents should be involved in their children's education to make teaching and learning easier.

I established that if teachers do not acknowledge parents, it is difficult to have a good relationship. Therefore, the data shows that some parents in rural areas may negatively affect teachers. In contrast, in School B, parents view teachers as crucial to their children's education, and therefore, a positive teacher-parent relationship is

formed. When parents have a negative attitude towards teachers, it becomes difficult to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships.

Parents' literacy level

The literacy level of parents also contributes to the lack of teacher-parent relationships, especially in rural areas (Selolo, 2018). Many parents take education seriously as they do not want their children to experience the same difficulties as they did. Still, others use low literacy to shift their responsibilities and avoid having teacher-parent relationships. Teacher A2 explained it as follows:

Parents in our areas are not educated; therefore, it is difficult to have a relationship with them as they shift their responsibilities to teachers. Some go to extend of telling their children that they have long finished schooling.

Vellmally (2012) claimed that even though parents do not want to play a role in their children's education, those who are uneducated want to participate in their children's education. However, in rural areas, some parents with low literacy levels do not have relationships with teachers because of their education status. Some parents feel that teachers do not value their contributions; therefore, they do not have good relationships with their children's teachers. Parents in the area in the quintile 1 school are often not literate, and as a result, they are unable to get involved in their children's education. Therefore, no positive teacher-parent relationship is formed. Teacher A3 said the following:

Most of the parents are youth around, so they do not participate in their children's education. Only a few joins in the education of their children. I have seen some parents who wish to see their children learning.

Some parents do not want to be involved in their children's education as they do not think their contributions will count because they are illiterate. Okeke (2014) found that most parents who are not actively involved in their children's education complained that they are afraid of being victimised by teachers; therefore, they have nothing to contribute to the school. In this study, parents in the quintile 1 school indicated that they do not have a good relationship with teachers because of their literacy level. For example, parent A1 said:

The reason I do not go to the meetings is that teachers do not treat us the same. Sometimes if you can go to school and ask questions, teachers will not treat your child well. If you are not educated, they do not treat you like parents who are educated.

This quote shows that some parents do not have a relationship with teachers because they think teachers do not treat them well because they are uneducated or illiterate. These findings align with a study conducted by Mbokodi and Singh (2011), who found that parents do not have a relationship with teachers as they think teachers do not value their contributions because of their literacy level.

To conclude this category, it is essential to note the contributing factors to cultivating positive or negative teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas. The theme 'Factors affecting cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5' answered the research question 'What are the challenges contributing to poor teacher-parent relationships in the rural context? I established that teachers in quintile 5 schools have better teacher-parent relationships than those in quintile 1 schools. Quintile 1 schools are affected by parents' socioeconomic status, lack of interest, attitude and perceptions, and literacy level.

These factors impede positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase and subsequently affect learners' social and academic development.

- ***Category 2: Comparing parental involvement as a factor that affects teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Parental involvement is one of the factors that can enhance teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Leenders et al. (2017) stated that parental involvement is vital for children's academic and social development. Two codes contributed to the emergence of the category related to parental involvement as a factor that affects the teacher-parent relationship in quintiles 1 and 5, namely:

- Commitment of parents
- Poverty

Commitment of parents

Parents' lack of commitment to their children's education can affect how they relate to teachers. Studies showed that lack of commitment to children's education affects how children perform at school, and therefore, the teacher-parent relationship is impeded. In the quintile 1 school, teachers indicated that parents do not commit to the agreements they reach during meetings. For example, teacher A2 said:

Parents do not do as we ask them. Like when you ask them to help children with homework, they only agree, but they do not attend to children when they live.

It is evident that some parents in rural areas lack the commitment to help their children with homework because of their literacy level. Lemmer (2012) explained that parents' literacy level can contribute to how they help their children with homework. Epstein's (2001) six types of parental involvement reinforce that parents should develop an

attitude toward helping children in learning at home. The applicability of the 'learning at home' type of involvement is that the teacher, parent, and learner benefit. Teachers respect the parents who are involved and guide curricular issues, while parents learn how to help their children with homework.

On the other hand, the parents acknowledge and appreciate the work done by the teachers in the foundation phase. However, teachers in School B indicated that parents show commitment to helping their children with homework and other school activities. Teacher B1 said the following:

In our first meeting with parents, we agreed that parents should sign the homework we give learners. They do so.

Parents' commitment in School B resulted in learners performing well and in improving teacher-parent relationships. However, teachers and parents do not have a relationship in School A as parents are not committed. Therefore, if there is no commitment from parents, a positive teacher relationship cannot be formed.

Poverty

Teachers find it hard to establish positive teacher-parent relationships (Okeke, 2014). Yunus and Dahlan (2013) showed that parents who live in poverty cannot relate with teachers as they are stressed about providing for their families rather than focusing on their children's education. Furthermore, children who live in poor environments do not always perform well in the classroom as they are affected by the poor conditions they live in. Numerous studies found that poverty and the socioeconomic status of parents are linked to learners' academic engagement and accomplishment (Lemmer, 2017; Okeke, 2014). Parents who live in poverty frequently struggle to provide for their families with basic needs, leaving little time to instill values, good habits, and morals

in their children (Selolo, 2018). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) mesosystem agrees that parents' culture and social status can negatively or positively affect children's development. For example, Teacher A3 said the following:

We have learners who are misbehaving in our classrooms. It is difficult to discipline them because they are not taught well at home.

Without collaboration between teachers and parents, learners' social development cannot be enhanced. However, parents from low-income families do not always participate in school activities as they think their efforts will be rejected and ignored because of their financial constraints. For example, Parent A1 said:

Teachers do not treat parents the same. If you are rich, they treat you well, but they do not see you as a human being if you are poor.

According to Vellmally (2012) and Ngwaru (2012), low-income, culturally diverse parents have traditionally been marginalised due to a lack of communication with the school. This history generated feelings of inadequacy, failure, and low self-worth, which are deemed the causes of parents' minimal engagement. In this study, I established that lack of effective communication is among the reasons that impede parents from participating in their children's schooling. Poverty and unemployment affect many South Africans. Ntekane (2018) connected poverty with unemployment, stating that if a family does not have work, the family is poor, and poverty influences children's performance. The inability of such parents to assist their children in school due to financial constraints leads to them developing a narrow view of education (Gestwicki, 2015).

As discussed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), the microsystem, which depicts the child's immediate environment, is the influential level that elucidates how a child grows.

Therefore, children growing up in low-income families do not perform well in the classroom. To mitigate the situation of poor performance of learners, the teachers should develop strategies that encourage parents in low-income families to participate in the education of their children. Similarly, teachers can coach parents on positive child-rearing skills and how to help their children with homework. Epstein's (2001) six types of involvement encourage parents to help children at home with school activities. Assisting children at home encourages parents to seek guidance from teachers on curriculum issues and other educational activities.

In conclusion, for teachers to cultivate sound teacher-parent relationships, they must know and understand parents' income level, literacy level, and level of support at home. This information help teachers choose the best teaching and learning methods and determine how to best form relationships with parents.

In Theme 2, it was evident that the socioeconomic status of parents, lack of interest, parents' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions, and parents' literacy level impede the cultivation of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas. Moreover, parents' commitment and poverty are proven to be factors that affect parental involvement, which subsequently impedes teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 schools.

4.2.5 Theme 3: Benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase

The third theme that emerged from the data is related to the benefits of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. The literature shows that teacher-parent relationships are essential to enhancing learners' social and academic development (Lemmer, 2013). The participants agreed that it is crucial to have teacher-parent

relationships because it makes teaching and learning easier. Teacher B3 said that teachers should initiate teacher-parent relationships and guide parents on how to help their children with homework. Lemmer (2013) stated that the relationship between teachers and parents serves as a partnership where teachers and parents come together to deal with social and academic issues that concern a child. Two categories contributed to the emergence of this theme and are discussed next.

- ***Category 1: Characteristics of a positive teacher-parent relationship***

The following codes contributed to the emergence of Category 1:

- Academic improvement
- Social enhancement and adaptation
- Enhance teaching and learning

Academic improvement

Teacher-parent relationships are seen as an essential element in education that enhance the academic development of learners. International studies showed that teacher-parents relationships benefit learners (Sibanda et al., 2015). According to Lemmer (2013), learners show substantial academic improvement when teacher-parent relationships improve. Most importantly, teacher-parent relationships improve learners' school attendance and results. As parents volunteer to help teachers, teachers can give attention to individual learners (Epstein, 2019). For example, Teacher B2 said the following:

Our relationship with parents has helped a lot because we do not have a problem with absenteeism. Learners come to school regularly.

However, in School A, teachers indicated that they are faced with absenteeism and do not have a positive relationship with their parents. Teacher A2 explained it as follows:

Our learners mostly are in and out of the school because we do not have communication with parents. Parents do not even report about the whereabouts of the learner.

From the above quote, it is evident that teacher-parent relationships can improve the attendance of learners as communication between teachers and parents influences attendance. Moreover, teacher-parent relationships improve learners learning skills, such as reading and writing. Okeke (2014) indicated that learners perform better in class when their parents become involved and have a positive relationship with teachers. Teacher A said:

I have seen learners whose parents are assisting them in improving and passing at the end of the year. We have complex learners in the classroom, but with the help of parents, they achieve the best results.

I therefore conclude that children perform better in the classroom when their teachers and parents work together. Epstein's (2001) theory of six types of involvement claims that teachers seeing learners as children because teachers will not separate parents from school. Teachers will encourage parents to have a relationship and provide parents with support and help in becoming involved in their children's education (Epstein, 2019). Baker et al. (2016) affirmed that when parents are involved in the education of their children, the children become motivated, attend school regularly and achieve the best results.

Social enhancement and adaptation

Teacher-parent relationships positively impact learners' behaviour and their ability to adapt to a new school environment as they transition from home to school (Chowa et al., 2012). Lemmer (2017) and Selolo (2018) indicated that solid teacher-parent relationships improve learners' ability to develop social and learning skills in the foundation phase. For example, Teacher B1 stated the following:

Our learners generally behave well because they know that we call their parents if they do not behave in the proper manner. No child wants to see their parents at school.

According to Landeros (2011), teacher-parent relationships are generally critical to enhancing learners' social and academic development. Arguably, the lack thereof can negatively affect the social advancement of learners. As children transition from home to school, teacher-parent relationships help children adapt to a new school environment and associate with other children and teachers. Epstein (2019) emphasised that parenting allows learners to develop positive personal qualities. As parents continue to be involved, parents develop child-rearing skills, which help them understand and be confident about parenting (Epstein, 2019). Teacher A3 explained it as follows:

Our learners are misbehaving is because their parents do not have a relationship with us as teachers. The learner behaves well if the teacher and parents can work together.

Lekli (2015) found that implementation of and participation in strategies that foster teacher-parent relationships, such as conferences, workshops and annual activities, enhances learners' social development and adaptation to the school environment.

Therefore, cultivating positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase is essential to enhance learners' social development.

Enhance teaching and learning

Teaching and learning become manageable in an environment where there is collaboration and partnership between teachers and parents (Vellmally, 2012). In Epstein's (2001) framework, learning at home encourages teachers to provide parents with a regular homework schedule. The schedule requires learners and parents to interact about what children are learning in the classroom. As a result, parents can assist their children, making teaching and learning easier. The foundation phase is critical in which teachers and parents must work together. Therefore, cultivating positive teacher-parent relationships is essential for more accessible teaching and learning. For example, Teacher A3 said:

When parents are working together with teachers, it becomes easier for us as teachers to teach and learners to learn faster.

Lemmer (2011) said that both teachers and parents should fulfil their duties in an effective relationship. Whereby teachers should properly educate the learner without putting undue strain on parents, and parents should effectively satisfy the school's expectations. Teacher B2 said the following:

We must never forget that these learners are still in the foundation phase. They need us as teachers to teach them here at school and for parents to assist with homework.

Therefore, when both teachers and parents meet their academic expectations about the learner, the learner's performance improves. The quintile 1 and 5 participants acknowledged that teacher-parent relationships are beneficial as they enhance the

social and academic development of learners. Therefore, it is important to cultivate a good relationship between teachers and parents of children in the foundation phase.

- ***Category 2: Factors that promote teacher-parent relationships in schools***

Recent studies showed that teacher-parent relationships are essential in schools to enhance learners' social and academic development (Hornby, 2011; Lekli and Kaloti, 2015). Teachers need to reinforce factors that promote teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. This section discusses the five codes that emerged related to factors that promote teacher-parent relationships. The codes are:

- Warmth
- Attention
- Creating a welcoming environment
- Trust
- Sensitivity

Warmth

Teachers should be warm and friendly towards the parents of learners (Ellis et al., 2015) because it encourages parents and assures them that the teacher values them. Parents expect teachers to greet them warmly when visiting the school. For example, Parent A2 said:

I do not go to the meetings at times because teachers do not greet us to welcome us. The way they look at people is like they do not see other human beings.

However, parents in School B indicated that they get the warmth needed from the teachers. For example, parent B1 said:

Teachers are warm, and they are very much patient. They know how to address us as parents.

The above quote shows that parents do not experience warmth from teachers in School A. Therefore, I conclude that parents in School A are reluctant to have relationships with the teachers because they do not have a warm attitude. In School B, parents have a relationship with teachers as they are friendly and patient.

Attention

Parents shy away when they feel neglected by teachers at school. Teachers need to give parents attention to encourage them to contribute to their children's education. Parents in School B showed that teachers provide them with attention when they visit the school. Parent B1 said:

When I go to school, teachers attend to me. They are patient and give you time.

The important part is that teachers should give all parents undivided attention and listen to them. This means that all parents should feel free to voice their concerns and experience the teacher as willing to solve it. Parent A2 explained it as follows:

Teachers do not give us the same attention as parents who are educated. That is why sometimes I do not come to meetings.

Creating a welcoming environment of respect

For teacher-parent relationships to thrive, teachers should create a welcoming environment for parents. Parents do not find it easy to have sound, positive relationships with teachers in a hostile environment. There is clear evidence that teachers who are warm and friendly to parents have an easier time cultivating successful teacher-parent relationships (Lemmer, 2017). Teachers who communicate

effectively and frequently and are friendly forge an environment that is welcoming to parents, thereby creating positive teacher-parent relationships. For example, Parent B1 said:

I have a good relationship with my child's teacher because she is always friendly and welcoming.

It is evident that a positive teacher-parent relationships are enhanced when teachers are welcoming. However, the parents in School A indicated that they do not feel welcomed when visiting the school. For example, Parent A2 said:

Sometimes teachers call you to come to school, and they do not attend to you. You take time to sit outside.

This quote shows that an unwelcoming environment cannot enhance a positive teacher-parent relationship. Parent A1 agreed by stating the following:

The reason for me not to attend meetings is because teachers do not give us attention or listen to us. Like when you are poor, they do not take your contributions.

I, therefore, conclude that parents need to feel welcomed and appreciated when they visit the school. Harris and Robinson (2016) established that parents feel welcomed when teachers regularly organise parent events.

Trust

Teacher-parent relationships cannot thrive in an environment where there is no trust. Like being welcoming, trust fosters an element of participation in children's education by parents. As parents become active participants in their children's education, a positive teacher-parent relationship is cultivated. According to Christenson (2019),

teachers build trust when they accept parents as they are, listen empathically and create opportunities to develop personal relationships with parents. Teacher B2 explained it as follows:

I always have time to listen to parents when they have problems. I believe they trust me as a teacher. It is important because I always assure them that their issues are safe with me.

In the quote above, it is evident that when teachers are open and warm to parents, parents trust them and discuss their problems. Literature showed that effective communication between teachers and parents fosters a positive relationship of trust (Cheng, 2018; Lemmer, 2017). Therefore, when parents trust teachers, they feel free to communicate with teachers and quickly develop a positive relationship. For example, Parent B2 said:

I find it easy to discuss my family issues with the teacher of my child. I just feel free because I trust her.

I established here that teachers should create a welcoming environment to develop trust so parents can relate well with the teachers.

Sensitivity

When parents express their concerns and issues, they look for someone who will listen to them and deal with their problems with the sensitivity they deserve (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). Parents experience social and emotional difficulties and need teachers' help. However, parents in School A think that sharing their family issues jeopardises them as they do not get any help. The parents believe that the teachers use their family background to gossip rather than help. Parent A1 said:

*I do not talk about my problems with teachers because they cannot help me.
When you tell them your problems, they discuss about you.*

Being sensitive towards parents can help teachers focus on issues that parents raise and support them, remembering that their shared objective is to enhance learners' social and academic development. Moreover, teachers should put themselves in parents' shoes to predict how parents feel and not pass judgement on their social issues. Furthermore, teachers should be sensitive to parents and acknowledge their backgrounds. Parent B2 said:

The teachers around me are very understanding because I share everything with them, and they are very supportive whenever I have family problems I share with the teacher of my child.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers to be sensitive to the needs of parents so that teacher-parent relationships are established. Teachers should be able to put themselves in parents' shoes to understand the concerns of families, conditions, and priorities. Teachers should recognise and acknowledge parents from different social backgrounds to motivate and reinforce learning and cultivate excellent teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase (Epstein, 2019). Epstein (2019) underlined that each sort of involvement is a two-way collaboration and ideally, a partnership that is co-developed by teachers and parents working together rather than a one-way opportunity that has been arbitrarily determined by a school. Moreover Bronfenbrenner (2019) agreed that the development of children's social and academic ability depends on both the home environment and school environment.

In this theme, it is evident that teacher-parent relationships can be cultivated when teachers are warm, give attention, create a welcoming environment, create trust, and are sensitive towards the parents of learners in their classrooms.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The previous sections discussed the themes that emerged from the focus group interviews. In this section, I discuss the themes that emerged from the document analysis. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic documents. The primary purpose of document analysis is to examine and interpret data to elicit meaning and understanding and to develop empirical knowledge of the study. The two schools presented their school policies, minute books, and agreements taken during school meetings with the parents. The policies included the attendance register, payment of school fees, registration, code of conduct, disciplinary procedure, and complaint policy. During document analysis I used coding system to organize themes. The following theme emerged from the documents presented: The roles and responsibilities of parents. Table 4.4. shows the outlines for the theme, categories, codes, and research questions.

Table 4.4: Outlines for the theme, categories, codes and research questions

Themes	Categories	Codes	Research
Roles and responsibilities of parents	The role of parents in supporting the education of their children	Learner attendance Discipline and conduct	How do teachers and parents in rural contexts collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?
	The responsibilities of parents to provide a safe environment for learning	School visits Communication Parental support and care	

4.3.1 Theme 1: The roles and responsibilities of parents

The theme ‘the role and responsibilities of parents’ emerged during the document analysis. Two categories emerged from the theme: The role of parents in supporting their children’s education and the responsibilities of parents to provide a safe environment for learning. In this theme, I outline how the school policies in quintile 1 and 5 schools encourage parents to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in the education of their children.

- ***Category 1: The role of parents in supporting the education of their children***

Parental support is one factor that encourages children to achieve the best result and grow socially. The following two codes contributed to this category:

- Learner attendance
- Discipline and conduct

Learner attendance

School attendance is critical to learners’ academic success. When learners miss school, they miss out on important lessons. Parents have control over their children’s attendance, including arriving at school on time and not taking students out during the school day. As discussed in the literature review (section 2.1), teacher-parent relationships enhance learners’ academic and social development. Thus, parents who ensure that their children attend school regularly communicate with the teacher about the child when they are absent from school. Reporting to the teacher indicates that parents are responsible and value their children’s education. The communication between teachers and parents harnesses a positive teacher-parent relationship. If the child is not at school, parents ensure that the child catches up by collecting and helping with homework. In this subsection, I analysed the two policies for Schools A and B to

find out whether the two policies align with the legislative framework of the DoE and whether the policies incorporate the cultivation of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

The following summary outlines the roles and responsibilities of parents in School B in the attendance policy:

- Ensure the child(ren) in their care attend school regularly and punctually.
- If the child(ren) is/are absent to, inform the school office or class teacher on the first day of absence and provide a reason for the absence.
- If the child(ren) is/are absent for more than one day, the parent needs to inform the school office of the continued absence and update the reason for the absence regularly.
- To avoid leave in term time wherever possible. Where this is not thought possible, contact the school as soon as possible before the first proposed day of absence to request authorisation.
- To advise the school by contacting the school office immediately if they become aware of problems with attendance.
- To co-operate with the school to promote and improve attendance, e.g., attending meetings, participating in parenting contracts, and supporting the school in agreed intervention/action plans.
- Adhere to systems for late registration, signing out, and signing in.

The above information makes it evident that reporting to the teacher about the whereabouts of a child or ensuring that the child attends school keeps both the teacher and the parent in a constant relationship to ensure that a child's academic development is enhanced. The school attendance policy states that parents are

obliged to ensure that their young children attend school. Furthermore, the policy mentioned reporting the child's absence to the school as the parent's responsibility to make sure that teachers know the whereabouts of the child. The relationship is maintained as teachers and parents communicate about the child's attendance. Teachers are updated if there is an issue that can cause a young learner not to attend.

The above points encourage parents to update the teachers about the learner if they do not attend school. Teachers cultivate a positive relationship between the teacher and the parents when parents play their role. The relationship is not one-sided, where the teacher is always the one asking about the whereabouts of the learner. Teachers feel that they are acknowledged and trusted by parents when parents report learners' absences.

The attendance policy for School A also outlines the responsibilities of parents in the education of their children. According to Lemmer (2013), parents who are available and involved in their children's education encourage children to perform well in the classroom. Therefore, the attendance policy for School A urges parents to always work with the school to ensure learners attend school. The following are the responsibilities of parents stipulated in the policy for School A (p. 6):

- Ensure that the learner attends school daily, on time for the whole school day unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- Inform the class teacher and the principal if the learner is late for school, with valid reasons.
- Co-operate with the school if the learner is absent for no valid reason.

Both attendance policies ensure that teachers and parents work together to ensure that learners attend school. Therefore, as teachers and parents work together, an

excellent teacher-parent relationship in the foundation phase is formed. Moreover, as the teacher-parent relationship is cultivated, learners' social and academic development is enhanced.

It is evident that when parents update teachers about the whereabouts of the learner, there is communication between the teacher and the parent. A positive teacher-parent relationship is enhanced as the parent communicates with the teacher. It is difficult for the quintile 1 school to implement agreed-on policies in the minute book because of the socioeconomic factors, poverty, and unemployment faced by the parents in the school. However, in the quintile 5 school, teachers and parents can implement the agreed policies because the parents are educated and show interest in their children's education.

Discipline and conduct

A code of conduct spells out the rules for learners' behaviour at school. It describes the disciplinary measures to be implemented by the school in reaction to transgressions by learners. I analysed the codes of conduct because they shape the behaviour of the learners. The codes of conduct focus more on the social development of learners. As stated in the literature review, parents are the first teachers of children at home (Lemmer, 2017). Therefore, they are the ones responsible for teaching young children how to live with other people at home and school.

Both schools presented their codes of conduct. The codes of conduct explicitly stipulate the responsibilities of parents, who should work with teachers to ensure that children adhere to the rules outlined therein. As parents and teachers collaborate, it enhances the social development of the learners at school.

The code of conduct of the quintile 1 school states that the responsibility of parents is to support the school and encourage young learners to observe the school rules and regulations and accept responsibility for their misbehaviour (p. 23). This code of conduct encourages parents to know what their children are up to at school and teach them to be responsible; however, good behaviour should start at home. The code of conduct further encourages parents to participate in the children's education and ensure they complete their schoolwork (p. 23).

The important part about this rule is that parents must ensure that their children do their homework. Thus, parents get involved in their children's education by showing that learning continues at home. Having a relationship with teachers helps parents assist their children at home as they have the necessary information about the curriculum. The codes of conduct for quintile 1 and 5 schools expect parents to be responsible for the discipline of their children. Parents teach their children how to conduct themselves and respect school rules; they teach them to be better family and community members. The implementation of the code of conduct in quintile 1 is hindered by parents' lack of desire to be part of their children's education journey. Parents in the quintile 1 school face social problems, poverty, and low literacy levels, affecting how they view the education systems and policies, such as the code of conduct, and how to implement them. However, in quintile 5 schools, parents are conversant with the policies and try to ensure the school's code of conduct is executed. In conclusion, codes of conduct in quintile 1 and 5 schools encourage parents to play a role in their children's social and academic development. The codes of conduct also allow parents to meet up with teachers and discuss discipline issues.

- ***Category 2: The responsibilities of parents to provide a safe environment for learning***

Category two emerged through the following contributing codes:

- School visits
- Communication
- Parental support and care
- Parents as role models

School visits

The minute book is a collection of all essential agreements made during meetings. It is a binding document for participants in the meetings. Schools A and B presented their minute books. I analysed both books and established that the principals of the two schools have regular meetings with the parents of children. The principals' responses were taken from the minute book. As discussed in section 3.4.1, School A is situated in a community of primarily unemployed parents affected by poverty. Such factors contribute to parents' poor attendance of meetings. The principal indicated that parents should attend meetings as their attendance makes a huge difference and that the school values their relationship with parents. When parents attend meetings, the school can communicate smoothly with parents and develop positive relationships. The headmaster made the following comment:

Your presence makes a difference because your contributions make the school grow. We need parents to support the school all the time.

In a meeting held on 20 February 2019, the principal indicated that the meeting addressed concerns about learners. She further showed that parents should make it a point to contribute to their children's education. Furthermore, the principal

encouraged parents to take responsibility by coming to school and checking their children's schoolwork. She made the following comment:

Parents need to go and monitor the result of their children, as children will improve academically if their parents assist these learners in reading and writing at home.

In one of the parent meetings held on 13 February 2019, the principal indicated her concern about most parents only coming to school at the beginning of the year to collect stationary and then again at the end of the year to collect reports. She told parents that their responsibilities do not end at home; they also have responsibilities at school. The principal advised parents to ask learners about their daily schoolwork and assist during the meeting. The principal indicated that most learners fail because their parents distanced themselves from their responsibilities to help teachers. According to the minute book, the principal said:

It is the responsibility of every parent to see to it that children continue to learn even at home. We plead with all parents to assist these learners with homework.

She also encouraged parents to regularly visit the school to discuss their children's progress. In one meeting the principal asked parents to report when a child is going to be absent because some learners skip school without a valid reason. Then parents think that the learner is at school only to learn that they went somewhere to play or are in danger. Parents may believe that the learner is in danger as children are vulnerable members of society. The principle said the following:

We encourage parents to report their children if they are not coming to school. Informing about the learner's whereabouts will help us be aware of the whereabouts of the learner.

School B also showed that they hold regular meetings. The parents were reminded of their roles and responsibilities in meetings held at the beginning of the year as the following comment shows:

Parents must always play their role by supporting their children with school activities. Please encourage them to study and achieve the best results.

One of the primary responsibilities of parents is to ensure they are involved in their children's education. The principal said that the responsibility of parents is to support their children emotionally and academically:

Parents must always help their children with homework and ensure that they have all the necessary care they need at home.

The second role that parents were encouraged to play is to help their children with homework. The principal outlined that children need a push from parents, and the principal said that children who are helped with homework perform better academically. The other important role discussed in the meeting is that parents must regularly visit the school to check how their children are doing. The following comment was made:

Our school is always open for you as parents to come and check on your children's progress.

Even though specific days are set for parents to come and check their children's work, parents are encouraged to do so at any time by making an appointment with the subject teacher. The principal said that an individual consultation allows a broad discussion not only on the learner's education but also on their social development. Lastly, the principal encouraged parents to create an environment at home that is good enough for children to learn at home.

From the minute book and the minutes discussed above, one can conclude that teacher-parent relationships are encouraged in quintile 1 and 5 schools. However, the implementation of resolutions during School A meetings is hindered by the factors discussed in Theme 1 (see section 4.2.3). Principals encouraged parents to play their role by encouraging their children to learn and support them on their education journey. Parents were also shown the importance of the teacher-parent relationship because it enhances learners' social and academic development.

In the quintile 1 and 5 schools, parents are encouraged to consult with teachers and regularly communicate and visit the schools. However, in School A, it is difficult for parents to have good relationships with teachers because of their literacy level, poverty, and unemployment.

Communication

Communication is a crucial element that help teachers and parents cultivate positive relationships (Lemmer, 2017). According to Ozmen et al. (2016), teacher-parent relationships provide multi-faceted benefits for teachers, parents, and the school. In a meeting held on 3 July 2019, the principal in School A encouraged parents to communicate with teachers about their children's education. During the meeting, the principal advised parents that she always encourages teachers to call parents if they encounter any challenges with the learners. Mbokodi (2011) stated that effective communication increases learner performance. In School B, in a meeting held on 13 February 2018, the principal indicated to parents that they would provide the contact details of all teachers so that they could communicate more often with the teachers. The principal further encouraged parents to have face-to-face discussions with teachers because it improves teaching and learning.

The above data makes it clear that both Schools A and B encourage communication between teachers and parents. Similarly, both quintile 1 and quintile 5 schools hold meetings with parents, enabling parents' participation in their children's education. Moreover, parents are encouraged to have relationships with teachers. Therefore, quintile 1 and 5 schools have open communication lines for teachers and parents to establish positive teacher-parent relationships.

Parental support and care

Factors outside the school, such as parental support and care, account for about half of a child's academic accomplishments (see section 4.3.1). This assistance includes ensuring that the child is well-rested, well-fed, and ready to learn when they arrive at school. The principals raised the following issues during meetings according to the minute books:

- Positive attitude towards teachers and the school: In a meeting held on 15 March 2018, the principal in School A advised parents to have a positive attitude toward teachers and the school in general. If the parents have a positive attitude toward teachers, the children will have the same attitude. Parents must be cautious when discussing school issues with their children. If they have a poor attitude toward teachers, their children may have the same attitude.
- Importance of education: To succeed, parents must make education a high priority, and therefore, parents must prioritise education over anything else children do after school. Children require parental assistance. When a youngster needs help with schoolwork or other endeavors, they turn to their parents. Parents must support and assist their children with homework so they

pass at the end of the year. They may even require assistance from outside the home; for example, they can ask neighbors who can read and write for help.

Parent as role model

Parents must be positive role models to help mould children's thoughts and attitudes toward learning. In a meeting held on 6 May 2019, the principal in School B indicated that parents need to act as role models to shape their children's behaviour because this will lead to children behaving acceptably in the classroom.

Therefore, it is evident that the quintile 1 and 5 schools have parents' meetings that encourage and give information about how parents should play their roles in their children's education journey. The school policies and the minute books from both quintiles 1 and 5 stipulate the roles of parents. As parents perform their roles, positive teacher-parent relationships are cultivated.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE KEY FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The study's key findings are informed by the three themes that emerged from focus group interviews and one theme that emerged from document analysis.

Teacher-parent relationships are described as a dynamic process involving parents and educators to benefit students (Lemmer et al., 2012; see section 2.1). According to the findings, both teachers and parents understand the term 'teacher-parent relationship' as described in Lemmer et al. (2012; see section 4.2.5). Teachers and parents view teacher-parent relationships as a way to collaborate or work together to enhance learners' social and academic development. Teachers should initiate teacher-parent relationships and encourage parents to be active in their children's education journey.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools

In this section, I discuss the key findings of Theme 1 according to two categories that emerged.

- ***Factors that promote effective communication in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Factors that promote effective communication include open communication with parents, two-way communication, school visits, and attending meetings. Most forms of communication, such as emails, text messages and WhatsApp, frustrate many parents because they do not have smartphones. At the same time, written letters are ineffective because most parents are illiterate and rely on their children to read the letters. Word-of-mouth communication is also often unreliable (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; see section 4.1). Parents in rural areas prefer letters, even though some children do not deliver them to their parents. It is important to have two-way communication as it is beneficial to the learner as both the teacher and the parent communicate and share the social and academic needs of the learner. In two-way communication, the child's social background is shared by the parents, who share the learner's academic needs. According to Epstein's (2001) theory of six types of involvement, communication bridges the teacher-parent gap.

A school visit is another strategy teachers can use to enhance effective communication. Parents who visit the school show availability and have sound, positive relationships with teachers. It becomes easier for teachers to communicate with parents who regularly visit the school. Such parents can track their children's progress and assist them when needed. Children whose parents visit the school perform better and behave in the classroom.

Parents of children in the foundation phase should attend meetings. It is beneficial for parents as essential issues, such as the child's progress, are discussed. Moreover, teachers learn what type of parents they are working with and cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. The factors mentioned earlier are seen as ways to develop positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools. However, factors such as poverty, the socioeconomic status of parents, literacy level, and unemployment in quintile 1 schools are hindrances to the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in a rural context. However, urban schools are not as affected by the aforementioned factors. The quintile 5 school indicated that teachers and parents cultivate excellent teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, the difference between quintile 1 and 5 schools is parents' interest and their collaboration with teachers, which determine whether teachers cultivate teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

- ***Challenges to effective communication between teachers and parents in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Parents working away from home, full or part-time, find it challenging to have sound teacher-parent relationships with teachers because their work schedules do not allow them to attend school events such as parent meetings. Therefore, it is teachers' responsibility to consider working parents when arranging meetings. Meetings can be held on Saturdays or in the evenings when most parents are available.

Parents who drop out of school find it difficult to have sound teacher-parent relationships. These parents are not interested in their children's education journey, and they might influence how children perform and relate with teachers at school. Therefore, it is significant for teachers to encourage parents and have a positive relationship with them.

Lack of communication between teachers and parents impedes positive teacher-parent relationships. Teachers should use available resources, such as social media and other communication measures, to communicate regularly with parents.

In conclusion, when comparing the factors affecting effective communication between parents and teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools, it is vital to consider and plan for the possible challenges that can hinder effective communication. Effectiveness between teachers and parents in the foundation phase increases positive teacher-parent relationships

4.4.2 Theme 2: Factors affecting the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools

According to Li (2016), families are essential as the primary and most significant environment children are exposed to, and children's social background impacts how they perform in the classroom. Low-income families cannot meet the needs of their children, and as a result, the parents do not have sound, positive teacher-parent relationships. Unlike low-income families, higher-income families can meet children's social and academic needs. Parents' socioeconomic status can affect how parents relate with their children's teachers at school.

Parents' lack of interest in their children's education can also impede teacher-parent relationships, especially in rural areas. According to the literature, parents who are not interested in their children's education cannot assist their children with homework and do not have a relationship with teachers. Such parents neglect their responsibilities and leave teachers as the sole participants in the education of learners.

Two parents can interact with a teacher, but the outcomes of those communications can vary due to the parents' attitudes and intentions toward the teacher. However,

some parents complained that the school does not accept them (Okeke, 2014). Others have an unfavorable opinion on essential issues brought on by current educational changes that they do not understand. It can be inferred from the results that parents in quintile 1 have a negative attitude toward the school because of their negative experience in school. Moreover, some parents who struggle with school are not interested in their children's education. On the contrary, educated parents take their children's education seriously and support them.

Parents' literacy levels can also impede teacher-parent relationships. As parents in rural areas are often not literate, it becomes difficult for teachers to initiate sound, positive teacher-parent relationships. Rural schools do not perform well academically because parents' lack of knowledge and understanding about education overshadows how they relate with teachers.

- ***Comparing parental involvement as a factor that affects teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools.***

Parental involvement is essential as it is one element that contributes to cultivating a sound and positive teacher-parent relationship. Parents' commitment to their children's education enhances parental involvement, improving the teacher-parent relationships. The lack thereof impedes the cultivation of sound, positive teacher-parent relationships in rural areas. However, in quintile 5 schools, parents show commitment to their children's education, which enhances teacher-parent relationships.

Many families in rural areas live in poverty, which is related to unemployment (Selolo, 2018). As parents are not employed, their families live in poverty. Thus, the family background can affect the academic performance of a child. As parents live in poverty,

they neglect their roles to help children with homework. Those parents do not care about academic needs and cannot have a sound, positive teacher-parent relationship. I can therefore conclude that lack of parental involvement contributes to the lack of positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Benefits of teacher-parent relationships

Teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase are significant as they enhance children's social and academic development. Theme 3 relates to the benefits of teacher-parent relationships. Two categories emerged, and I discuss the key findings in the following subsections.

- ***Characteristics of positive teacher-parent relationships***

A positive teacher-parent relationship benefits the learner both socially and academically. Studies showed that a positive teacher-parent relationship enhances the academic development of learners (Selolo, 2018; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011), and the lack thereof impedes how learners perform. Learners get low marks, fail to attend school regularly, and end up leaving school. In quintile 1 schools, a lack of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas, hinders learners' academic progress. Parents do not assist their children with homework or any school activities, and as a result, children do not perform well academically. However, in quintile 5 schools, positive teacher-parent relationships are formed and learners perform well academically.

Moreover, teacher-parent relationships have a more significant impact on children's social life. According to the findings in this study, if there is a positive teacher-parent relationship, children adapt to a new school environment and associate better with their peers and the teachers. Midraj and Midraj (2011) stated that if there is a teacher-

parent relationship, parental involvement at home is also enhanced, and therefore, children's social life is enhanced. If parents believe that they have power and influence, they are more likely to get involved and improve children's social life.

Collaboration and partnership proved influential and significant elements in cultivating sound, positive teacher-parent relationships. As teachers and parents collaborate and work together in a child's life, the teaching and learning activities in the classroom becomes more manageable. Teachers indicated that working with parents has enhanced teaching and learning. Children learn best when parents are assisting them at home and create a conducive environment for learning. However, practical teaching and learning do not occur in an environment without collaboration and partnership between teachers and parents. Teachers in quintile 1 and 5 schools said that working with parents makes it easier for them to teach in the classroom.

Most importantly, a good teacher-parent relationship allows teachers to share the social and academic progress of the learner in the foundation phase with the parents. However, rural schools still struggle to cultivate good teacher-parent relationships with parents in the foundation phase because parents in rural areas face challenges such as low literacy, poverty, and low socioeconomic status. However, teachers should develop strategies that help cultivate excellent teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.

- ***Factors that promote teacher-parent relationships in quintile 1 and 5 schools***

Different factors contribute to promoting positive teacher-parent relationships. As teachers become warm and friendly toward parents, teachers allow parents to be free and relate well with teachers. Teachers being friendly to parents leads to positive

teacher-parent relationships being formed. Parents expect teachers to talk to them in a friendly manner. How teachers address parents during meetings can also affect how parents relate with teachers.

Another essential characteristic of a positive teacher-parent relationship is that teachers should make parents feel as important stakeholders of their children's learning process. Irrespective of parents' social status, teachers need to give all parents the same attention level. As teachers give parents attention, it will bridge the gap and create teacher-parent relationships with marginalised parents in rural schools. Moreover, teachers should create an environment that welcomes parents because when they feel welcome, they relate well with teachers. In the quintile 1 school, it is evident that teachers are trying to create a welcoming environment, but it is difficult because they deal with parents from different social backgrounds. However, in the quintile 5 school, teachers have positive teacher-parent relationships because they create a welcoming environment for parents.

Moreover, teachers should have time for parents and listen to their opinions. Parents trust teachers when they know their contributions are valued. Confidentiality forges trust between teachers and parents because the parents know the teacher will not discuss any personal issues they share. Therefore, trust between teachers and parents cultivates positive teacher-parent relationships.

In addition, teachers should be sensitive when working with parents of different backgrounds. Being empathetic to parents makes it easier for parents to have a positive relationship with teachers. Sometimes parents need a shoulder to cry on as they face social issues that affect their lives at home. Moreover, empathy is an effective way to increase positive teacher-parent relationships.

In conclusion, how teachers relate with parents can negatively or positively affect how parents relate with teachers. Teachers need to display characteristics to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, the findings from Theme 3 make it clear that positive teacher-parent relationships have multiple benefits, such as social and academic enhancement, making it easier for learners to adapt to a new environment, and more straightforward teaching and learning. Teachers can promote positive teacher-parent relationships by creating a welcoming environment with trust, warmth, and sensitivity.

4.5 DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The key findings for the document analysis were discussed under the theme 'roles and responsibilities of parents. In the following subsection, I discuss the key results based on the categories and codes that emerged.

- ***The role of parents in supporting the education of their children***

The foundation phase is a critical phase that needs parent and teacher collaboration to enhance the social and academic development of learners. Like teachers, parents have the responsibility to oversee their children's education. One of parents' responsibilities is to make sure children attend school regularly. As children are monitored at school by parents, teachers can communicate with parents, which enhances teacher-parent relationships. Quintile 1 and 5 schools have policies encouraging parents to report and monitor their children's attendance regularly. The challenges quintile 1 schools face hinder the implementation of stipulated policies, such as attendance policies. As parents should ensure that their children are at school, some factors prevent parents from ensuring that they are learning. However, it is easy for parents in quintile 5 schools to implement the attendance policy they are interested

in their children's education. Parents regularly monitor whether their children are at school and constantly report to teachers when they are not coming to school. Therefore, policy implementation should be encouraged in rural schools to ensure the smooth running of the school. As parents monitor children's school attendance and communicate with teachers, the teacher-parent relationship is enhanced.

Teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase also enhance learners' discipline and conduct. Children who know their parents are involved in their education behave better in the classroom, unlike those whose parents do not have a relationship with the teacher. If children behave well, teachers do not have to deal with discipline but can focus on teaching and learning.

- ***The responsibilities of parents to provide a safe environment for learning***

Parents are expected to create a safe environment for children to learn at home and school. Parents should normalise regular and voluntary school visits. School A allows parents to visit the school to check on their children's progress. Moreover, it is the responsibility of parents to attend meetings that are arranged by teachers and ask about their children's performance. As discovered in the minute books of schools A and B, parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly. School visits are a strategy to foster good teacher-parent relationships because during school visits, teachers and parents can share their experiences of the social and academic progress of the learner.

However, parents from School A do not regularly visit the school because they are uninterested in their children's education. Addressing parents' lack of interest in their children's education can help teachers develop excellent teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase. Moreover, as parents show interest, it will allow teachers and

parents to take possible steps to help learners who are not performing well in the classroom. In contrast, in School B, parents frequently show interest in their children's education, which enhances teacher-parent relationships.

Theme 1 outlines that effective communication bridges a way for positive teacher-parent relationships. Parents' responsibility is to communicate more often with teachers to enhance positive teacher-parent relationships.

Taking care of a child requires a commitment by parents to look after their children. Parents should have a positive attitude towards teachers, act as role models to their children, and support their children's educational needs to help them perform in the classroom. Teachers can act as coaches for parents on how to help their children with homework and other life-related activities.

To conclude this theme, teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase require parents to be aware of their roles and responsibilities in their children's education journey. Parents' participation plays an important role in enhancing children's social and academic development. Additionally, it allows parents to develop positive child-rearing skills and become aware of children's educational needs. As mentioned in Epstein's (2001) theory of six types of parental involvement, parenting is one of the types that encourages parents to give their children support in their social and academic lives. Therefore, to ensure positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, teachers should help parents to best develop their children.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed and presented the data collected from focus group interviews with parents and teachers and the document analysis. The data analysis was presented in the form of themes, categories, and codes. The study's main findings

were also summarised and discussed in this chapter. The main results are related to the study's objectives and supporting literature. As a result, the next chapter includes a summary of the chapters, the study's limitations, the main conclusion and recommendations, and recommendations for future studies, practices, and policies.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the study's findings according to the research questions. It also outlines the previous chapters, the key findings, and the main conclusion and recommendations. This chapter also provides the study's limitations and recommendations for future research, practices, and policies.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 explicitly stated the rationale and purpose and outlined the aims and objectives of the study. The research questions and the preliminary literature review about other researchers' views on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase were discussed. I further discussed the keywords and the theoretical frameworks that guided the study. The research methodology was briefly outlined, including the design, sampling, data collection, and analysis. Trustworthiness and the code of ethics were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 focused on a literature review of research on teacher-parent relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development in the foundation phase. The literature was reviewed to compare teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quintile 1 and 5 rural schools. The study on teacher-parent relationships drew from international and SA studies. I also discussed how teacher-parent relationships encourage parental involvement. Teachers' expectations of and perspectives on parental involvement were explicitly discussed.

Moreover, parents' expectations of and perspectives on teachers and parents' and teachers' attitudes and behaviour were discussed. Furthermore, the foundation phase teachers' and parents' roles in educating learners and parents' role in educating their children were elaborated on in Chapter 2. Factors affecting teacher-parent relationships, barriers to teacher-parent relationships, and possible strategies to cultivate sound teacher-parent relationships were outlined. Lastly, the theoretical framework of the study was discussed.

The study's research methods were discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter elaborated on the purposive sampling method, the data collection methods, and the data analysis. I also addressed the trustworthiness and the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 presented the findings and outlined the themes, categories, codes, and evidence to answer the research questions posed for the study.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings presented and discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 also answers the study's three research questions. Additionally, I provide the main conclusion, recommendations, and concluding remarks and explain the study's limitations and shortcomings. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future studies.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The main results of the data obtained through the focus group interviews and document analysis are provided in the following subsections, which answer the study's three research questions.

5.3.1 Sub-research question 1: What are the challenges that contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in rural contexts?

From the literature reviewed (Lemmer, 2017; Brownlee, 2015; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011), it is evident that teacher-parent relationships are essential because they enhance learners' social and academic development. Participating teachers and parents agreed that teacher-parent relationships enhance learners' social and academic development. Teacher-parent relationships benefit the learners as teachers and parents share learners' social and academic information.

Factors such as the socioeconomic status of parents, lack of interest, parents' attitudes and perceptions, and parents' literacy level were all proven to contribute to poor teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in rural contexts. Moreover, parental involvement, which enhances teacher-parent relationships, is impeded by a lack of commitment and poverty. Quintile 1 schools are situated in rural areas, and parents do not participate in their children's education as poverty affects many families. Another related factor that affects the cultivation of positive teacher-parent relationships is lack of employment, which contributes to increased poverty. Due to the high unemployment rate in rural areas, parents find it challenging to have a relationship with teachers as they do not have transport fare to visit the school.

Furthermore, parents in quintile 1 schools often feel teachers do not value their views and contributions. Therefore, they neglect their responsibilities of participating in their children's learning. Some parents (especially those in quintile 1 schools) do not assist their children with homework because they do not have any interest in their children's education or are uneducated or illiterate. These parents often do not have relationships with teachers because they think they cannot assist their children with homework. Another reason parents neglect their responsibility is that they have a

negative attitude towards teachers. They think that teachers must teach their children at school, and therefore, do not help their children with homework. Since parents do not assist their children with homework, learners do not perform optimally in the classroom. Therefore, the lack of teacher-parent relationships impedes learners' social and academic development.

Parents in rural areas also do not honor the invitation from teachers to discuss their children's progress. Some parents disrespect teachers by not going to school when called to attend to issues that concern their children's education. Parental avoidance of school and conflicted teacher-parent relationships are the outcomes of recurring unpleasant encounters (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). The findings show that positive teacher-parent relationships carry much weight. Understanding the components that drive and challenge positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase is crucial.

Data from the quintile 1 school confirmed a lack of teacher-parent relationships, as stated in the literature review (Lemmer, 2017; Mcube & Mbokodi, 2017; Okeke, 2014). The lack of teacher-parent relationships impedes smooth teaching and learning at school. Thus, teachers find teaching learners who struggle academically challenging as their parents do not help them with homework. Parents are not interested in their children's education journey, so the teacher-parent relationship is impeded. Therefore, I conclude that there is a lack of teacher-parent relationships in the rural context due to socioeconomic issues, poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and the literacy level of parents in the area.

Quintile 5 school participants indicated that teachers and parents have good relationships. Parents mentioned that teachers have a welcoming, positive attitude

towards them, which paves the way for a good relationship with teachers. I established that quintile 5 school parents are educated and understand the importance of teacher-parent relationships.

5.3.2 Sub-research question 2: Which strategies can teachers use to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase in quantile 1 and 5 rural schools?

Teachers can use various strategies to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas. Open communication, two-way communication, school visits, and attending meetings contributed to effective communication. Parents who support their children with homework have positive, sound teacher-parent relationships.

The microsystem in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system explains that parents as the immediate family can influence how children learn and behave. Therefore, parents play a significant part in the education of their children. Open communication between teachers and parents is essential to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Parents are responsible for providing teachers with information about their children's health and educational background. Teachers and parents can interact with each other in several ways to communicate important information; for example, teachers can send WhatsApp messages and letters to parents to invite them to the meetings. According to Ozmen (2016), when teachers and parents communicate effectively, they can share information about children's progress at school and at home.

According to Epstein's (2001) theory of six types of parental involvement, communication can serve as a bridge to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Teachers must design effective methods to initiate communication with parents and

vice versa. According to Mazon (2017), effective communication is one of the strategies that can help teachers cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Moreover, as teachers and parents communicate effectively, learners' social and academic development is enhanced (Lemmer, 2017).

Two-way communication between teachers and parents helps parents understand teachers' expectations, and parents can communicate their concerns and address social and educational issues that need attention. Unlike one-way communication, two-way communication can help teachers cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships. Two-way communication is an interaction between teachers and parents (Chattimore, 2013). During this time, both teachers and parents share ideas, progress, and other related educational matters regarding the learner. When teachers and parents meet face to face, there is a chance to develop positive teacher-parent relationships.

According to Okeke (2014), school visits are another strategy that can help parents to develop positive teacher-parent relationships. However, teachers should create a welcoming environment by being friendly to parents (See section 4.2.5). Open communication is enhanced when parents regularly visit the school and positive teacher-parent relationships are formed. Parents should attend meetings because it was established (section 4.2.3) that parents who do not attend meetings do not have positive relationships with teachers. Majerus (2011) indicated that attending meetings is a way to bridge the gap of ineffective communication.

According to Okeke (2014), schools should call parents to meetings at the start of each academic year to discuss school-related issues, such as curriculum matters. Meetings ensure parents are informed about the content the school content offers to

their children. The teachers indicated that they call parent meetings to discuss learners' progress in the classrooms. Such meetings are productive as parents know what is expected from them and assist their children at home. In quintile 5 schools, parents can assist their children with homework, but in quintile 1 schools, parents cannot assist their children with homework because most are illiterate.

Okeke (2014) furthermore mentioned the possibility of a parent orientation and training session to familiarise parents with the best ways to ensure home-school partnerships. Teachers and parents are encouraged to collaborate in planning and decision-making to improve relationships and have time to spend with their children (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2016). Epstein (2001) stated that teachers should provide parents with information and ideas to help their children with homework. Positive teacher-parent relationships are created as teachers and parents collaborate to improve learning. Parents can be trained to assist their children with homework when they attend meetings.

However, some challenges can affect effective communication between teachers and parents, such as parents' work schedules, negative experiences with school, limited knowledge of technology, and lack of communication (see section 4.2.3). Addressing these communication challenges can help teachers cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships.

Furthermore, parents should be allowed to participate in the decision-making process in the school and have parent leaders and representatives at the schools. Parents collaborating in decision-making processes as school governance committees or joining groups such as the parent-teacher association improves teacher relationships. Other decision-making practices include leadership positions where they share information with other parents.

Teachers should also collaborate with communities by participating in community programmes and outsourcing resources to help and improve schools with learners and their parents. Teachers should have information for learners and families on community wellness, culture, recreation, social support, other programmes and community events related to improving learning. Epstein's (2001) theory of six types of involvement emphasises that schools should collaborate with the communities to integrate resources that enhance learners' social and educational development.

The above-outlined strategies can contribute to various outcomes for learners, parents, teaching methods, and the school environment. In addition, each consideration should involve a variety of partnering activities. Each challenge raised should include families and must be tackled. Epstein (2001) considered it essential for each school to choose which factors it believes are most likely to help it achieve its academic goals and build an environment of a partnership between home and school. While the primary goal of these six points is to encourage academic success, they also have several other outcomes for both parents and teachers (Epstein, 2003). According to Msila (2012), parents often develop a more optimistic outlook towards the school and teachers and gain more trust in helping their children with homework by being active in their education. In addition, they are more likely to gather support for the school and its programmes in the community and become more involved community members. Teachers can benefit from improved communication with parents, a deeper understanding of their learners' family and circumstances, and successful communication with both the home and the community (Epstein, 2009). Lemmer (2011) argued that schools would benefit from parental participation through moral instruction, family support, and higher academic achievement. In addition, Msila (2012) argued that children perform better when parents and the community are active

participants and have a sense of school ownership. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) exosystem suggests that an environment can directly affect how learners learn at school.

Therefore, I conclude that positive teacher-parent relationships can be cultivated in rural schools if teachers use a variety of strategies, such as partnering with communities, continuous communication, and addressing challenges that can hinder effective communication.

5.3.3 Sub-research question 3: How do teachers and parents in the rural context collaborate to enhance learners' social and academic development?

Learners gain emotionally, academically, and socially when communities, families, and schools collaborate. The social and academic development of foundation phase learners has been linked to existing teacher-parent relationships. Furthermore, parents with positive ties with their children's teachers are more inclined to participate in their children's education.

The answer to this research question is linked to the benefits of the teacher-parent relationship in the foundation phase (see section 4.2.5). Positive teacher-parent relationships are enhanced when parents portray teachers (especially in rural areas) as warm and sensitive, giving attention to parents, and creating a welcoming environment. It is therefore, evident that as teacher-parent relationships are cultivated, learners perform better academically (Đurišić, 2017; Lemmer, 2017).

There are numerous advantages to positive teacher-parent relationships. Parents who have had significant interactions with their children's teachers are more inclined to contact the school. On the other hand, parents who have had bad encounters with the

school and teachers are more likely to harbour negative views against the teachers and are less inclined to contact it or participate in school activities. Increased learner achievement is another necessary consequence of healthy teacher-parent relationships. According to Lemmer (2017), “a beneficial impact of a parent’s home participation on accomplishment may be strengthened by cultivating a positive teacher-parent relationship”.

As children migrate from home to school or preschool to the foundation phase, teacher-parent relationships become increasingly important. Children’s motivation to learn and develop critical emerging skills required for academic achievement benefit from positive relationships between teachers and parents. Learners achieve more, demonstrate increased motivation, and exhibit higher social and academic adjustment levels as parents become involved in their education. The relationships should be characterised by mutuality, warmth, and respect. Teachers must attempt to build trust with their learners’ parents. A positive school environment helps parents and teachers build trust. According to Lemmer (2012), creating trust between teachers and parents is a critical goal and outcome of a welcoming school environment.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study presents the following recommendations based on empirical evidence. The study categorises the recommendations for future research, practice, and for policies.

5.4.1 Recommendations for future research

- I recommend that more studies should be conducted in the senior phase and the further education and training phase, especially in rural areas, to establish how teacher-parent relationships can be improved and used to improve learners’ holistic performance.

- I recommend extending similar research to other districts and provinces in the country for a comprehensive view to provide contextual interventions.

5.4.2 Recommendations for practice

- To improve learners' academic success, I recommend that parental participation in the decision-making processes be enforced at the beginning of the year to enhance participation and positive teacher-parent relationships.
- I recommend that teachers and parents should implement open, continuous two-way communication and interaction to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase.
- I recommend that the Department of Basic Education form special task teams to evaluate and monitor the implementation of teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in the rural contexts.

5.4.3 Recommendations for policies

- I recommend that schools develop policies that recommend the cultivation and implementation of positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in the rural context.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

The study cannot be generalised to a bigger SA audience. The findings in this study are limited to the foundation phase and one circuit in the Sekhukhune district in the Limpopo province. I also propose that the research be extended to look at the extent of teacher-parent relationships in schools to assist and encourage schools to implement teacher-parent relationships.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

After the SA democratic government was formed in 1994, the government mandated teachers and parents to engage and support learners' educational activities in the SASA, which promoted teacher-parent relationships that enhanced parental involvement. Teacher-parent relationships are significant in children's education from infancy until maturity. Teachers and parents are the most critical stakeholders in the education journey of the learners. Therefore, teachers and parents need to have sound, positive relationships to enhance learners' social and academic development. Vellymalay (2012) and Lemmer (2017) pointed out that parent involvement is complex without teachers' participation since the relationships stimulate learning. The relationship must match the child's need for support and freedom to learn.

For parents and teachers to become partners in education, mutual trust, understanding and communication are needed to improve learner performance and create fruitful teacher-parent relationships. If teacher-parent relationships are strained, parents will be less likely to attend school meetings and teachers will be less likely to visit children at home.

According to Bhekimpilo (2015), positive teacher-parent relationships allow teachers to counsel parents on concerns regarding learners. Moreover, teachers have the opportunity to report to parents about situations that require immediate attention. Therefore, the teacher can learn about children from the parents' perspective and vice versa.

If there is an excellent teacher-parent relationship, teachers and parents can help each other with the social and academic development of the learners. The stakeholders

should encourage two-way communication between parents and teachers to ensure mutual dependency between the stakeholders.

Mbokodi and Singh (2011) believed that the power relationship between teachers and parents must accept parents as equal partners in their children's education, thus enhancing learners' social and academic development. Teachers in the quintile 1 school indicated that parents do not know their responsibilities as they entrust the responsibilities to the teacher. Parents think that their responsibilities end at home and that the teacher is the only one responsible for learners' academic success. Therefore, teachers and parents need to play their roles and work on positive teacher-parent relationships that will encourage them to develop holistically-developed learners (Okeke, 2014; Theoharis, 2013; Dusi, 2012; Lau et al., 2012; Lemmer, 2012).

5.7 CONCLUSION

From this study it was clear that parents and teachers experience many challenges in establishing positive teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase, especially in rural areas. The study findings also showed that various strategies could be implemented to cultivate positive teacher-parent relationships in rural foundation phase schools. The study furthermore emphasised many benefits of teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, teachers and parents must collaborate to establish positive teacher-parent relationships that will benefit learners.

REFERENCES

- Alholjailan, M.I. (2012). Thematic Analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 39-47.
- Alston, M., & Bowles, W. (2009). *Research for social workers*. Allen & Unwin.
- Altschul, I. (2011). Parental involvement and the academic achievement of Mexican American youths: What kinds of involvement in youths' education matter most? *Social Work Research*, 35(3), 159–170.
- Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria.
- Amatea, I., Mixon, K., & McCarthy, S. (2013). Preparing future teachers to collaborate with families' contributions of family systems counselors to a teacher preparation program. *The Family Journal*, 21(2), 136–145.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480712466539>
- Anfara, V. A., & Mertz, N. T. (Eds.). (2015). *Theoretical frameworks in qualitative research*. SAGE.
- Bacon, J. K., & Causton-Theoharis, J. N. (2013). It should be teamwork: A critical investigation of school practices and parent advocacy in special education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17(7), 682–699.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2012.708060>
- Baker, T. L., Wise, J., Kelley, G., & Skiba, R. J. (2016). Identifying barriers: Creating solutions to improve family engagement. *School Community Journal*, 26(2), 161–184.
- Barnes, J. K., Guin, A., Allen, K., & Jolly, C. (2016). Engaging parents in early childhood education: Perspectives of childcare providers. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 44(4), 360–374.
- Bellibaş, M., & Gümüş, S. (2013). The impact of socio-economic status on parental involvement in Turkish primary schools: Perspective of teachers. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 9, 178–193.

- Bowen, Glenn. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 9. 27-40. 10.3316/QRJ0902027.
- Bower, H. & Griffin, D. (2011). Can the Epstein Model of Parental Involvement Work in a High-Minority, High-Poverty Elementary School? A Case Study. *Professional School Counseling*. 15. 77-87. 10.5330/PSC.n.2011-15.77.
- Bukaliya, R., & Mapuranga, B. (2015). Assessing the Effects of Child Rearing Practices on the Academic Performance of Primary School Learners : A Perspective from the Teachers , Parents and Learners.
- Black, M. M., Walker, S. P., Fernald, C. H., & Anderson, C. T. (2016). Early childhood development coming of age: Science through the life course. *GHPC Articles*, 1–15.
- Blackmore, J., & Hutchison, K. (2010). Ambivalent relations: The ‘tricky footwork’ of parental involvement in school communities. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(5), 499–515.
- Blair, S. L. (2014). Parental involvement and children's educational performance: A comparison of Filipino and U.S. parents. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 45(3), 351-36. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24339542>
- Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C., & Kagee, A. (2009). *Social research methods*. Juta and Company.
- Blicht, K. A. (2017). *Parent-teacher relationships and communication in early childhood: A comparative, mixed methods study of white and ethnic-racial minority parents* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2009). *Thematic analysis: Providing accessible guidance on doing and understanding*. University of England.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2019). *The bioecological model of human development: Application for health professions education*. SAGE. London.
- Brooks, J. (2011). *The process of parenting* (8th ed.). McGraw.

- Bryan, Julia & Henry, Lynette. (2012). A Model for Building School–Family–Community Partnerships: Principles and Process. *Journal of counseling and development: JCD*. 90. 10.1002/j.1556-6676.2012.00052.x.
- Brynard, P. A., & Hanekom, S. X. (1997). *Introduction to research in public administration and related academic disciplines*. Van Schaik.
- Chang, H. (2013). *Partnership as a product of trust: Parent-teacher relational trust in a low-income urban school* [Doctoral dissertation]. Temple University.
- Chindanya, A. (2011) Parental involvement in primary schools: a case study of the Zaka district of Zimbabwe. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.uir.unisa.ac.za/bistream/handle/10500/5798/dissertation-chindayaa.pdf?sequence=4>.
- Chowa, G., Ansong, D., & Osei-Akoto, I. (2012). *Parental involvement and academic performance in Ghana*. (YouthSave Research Brief No. 12-42). Washington University, Center for Social Development. <http://preview.newamerica.org/downloads/RB12-42.pdf>
- Clarke, B. S. (2009). Elements of healthy family-school relationships. In S. L. Christenson & A. L. Reschly (Ed.), *Handbook of school-family partnerships* (pp. 61–79). Routledge.
- Coetzee, M. (2014). School quality and the performance of disadvantaged learners in South Africa. Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers: 22/14.
- Cohen, L. A. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2002). *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). Routledge.
- Coleman, N. (2012). *Empowering family-teacher partnerships: Building connections within diverse communities*. SAGE publications.
- Council of Australian Government. (2013)

- Cheung, Cecilia & Pomerantz, Eva. (2012). Why Does Parents' Involvement Enhance Children's Achievement? The Role of Parent-Oriented Motivation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 104. 820-832. 10.1037/a0027183.
- Creswell, John. (2011). *Educational Research Planning: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design international student edition: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design. Choosing among five approaches*. 3rd Ed. London: SAGE
- Cresswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed method research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Darling, K. & Lippman, L. (2016). Early childhood social and emotional development: Advancing the field of measurement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*. 45. 10.1016/j.appdev.2016.02.002.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Department of Education. (1999). Government printers. Pretoria.
- De Vos, A. S. (2002). *Research at grassroots for the social sciences and human service professions*. Delpport.
- Donoghue, K.L. (2014) Barriers to parental involvement in schools: developing diverse programs to include unique demographics. Available from World Wide Web: http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1419&context=ehtd_theses. (Accessed 05/01/2022).
- Dozza, L., & Cavrini, G. (2012). Perceptions of competence: How parents view teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 4050–4055.

- Drajea, A., Dublin, T., & O'Sullivan, C. (2020). Influence of parental education and family income on children's education in rural Uganda. *Global Education Review*, 1(3), 149–166.
- Dudovskiy, J. (2018). Research methodology. Retrieved from <https://researchmethodology.net/research-methodology/research-types/>
- Durand, T. M., & Perez, M. (2013). Continuity and variability in the parental involvement and advocacy beliefs of Latino families of young children: finding the potential for a collective voice. *School Community Journal*, 23(1), 49–79.
- Đurišić, M., & Bunijevac, M. (2017). Parental involvement as an important factor for successful education. *CEPS Journal*, 7(3), 137–153.
- Dusi, P. (2012). The family-school relationships in Europe: A research review. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 2(1), 13–33. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.393>
- Ecahune, M., Ndiku, J. & Sang A. (2015) Parental Involved in Homework and Primary School Academic Performance in Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*. .6.9 pp 46-53.
- Eco, U. (2015). *How to write a thesis* (C. M. Farina, & G. Farina, Trans.) MIT Press.
- Ellis, M., Lock, G., & Lummis, G. (2015). Parent-teacher interactions: Engaging with parents and carers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2015v40n5.9>
- El Nokali, N. E., Bachman, H. J., Votruba-Drzai, E. (2010). Parent involvement and children's academic and social development in elementary school. *Child Development*, 81(3), 988–1005.
- Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 701–712. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171009200326>
- Epstein, J. L. (2001) *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships*. Westview Press.

- Epstein, J. L. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429494673>
- Epstein, J. L., & Sanders, M. G. (2009). Prospects for change: Preparing educators for school, family and community partnerships. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 81(2), 81–120.
- Enhance. 2021. In *Cambridge English Dictionary.com*.
Retrieved May 8, 2021, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/enhance>
- Enhance. 2021. In *Merriam-Webster.com*.
Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/enhance>
- Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1).
<https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Eyisi, D. (2016). The usefulness of qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in researching problem-solving ability in science education curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(15), 91–100.
- Felix, N., Dornbrack, J., & Scheckle, E. (2008). Parents, homework and socio-economic class: Discourses of deficit and disadvantage in the “new” South Africa. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 7(2), 99–112.
- Ferlazzo, L. (2011). Involvement or engagement? *Educational Leadership*, 68(8), 10–14.
- Flick, U. (2018). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*.
10.4135/9781526416070.
- Flick, E., Van Kardorff, E., & Steinke, I. (2004). *Companion to qualitative research*. SAGE.
- Fremstad, E., Bergh, A., Solbrekke, T. D. & Fosslund, T. (2020) Deliberative academic development: the potential and challenge of agency, *International Journal for Academic Development*, 25:2, 107-120, DOI: [10.1080/1360144X.2019.1631169](https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2019.1631169)

- Garcia, L. E. & Thornton, O. (2014). The enduring Importance of parental involvement. <http://Neatoday.org/2014/11/18/the-enduring-importance-of-parental-involvement>
- Gardiner, M. (2017). Education in rural areas. *Issues in Education Policy 4*. Centre for Education Policy and Development.
- Gatilogo, L., & Tan, D. (2019). Teachers' motivation, home visitation and performance of academically at-risk students. *International Journal of English and Education*, 8(2).
- Gestwicki, C. (2015). *Home, school, and community relations*. Cengage Learning.
- Guy-Evans, O. (2020). Social and cultural capital and learners' cognitive ability: issues and prospects for educational relevance, access and equity towards digital communication in China - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Five-Ecological-Systems-Source-Guy-Evans-2020_fig1_358728791 [accessed 2 Jul, 2022]
- Ghanney, R. (2018). How parental education and literacy skill levels affect the education of their wards: The case of two schools in the Effutu Municipality of Ghana. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 6, 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.61.20>
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2010.). *50 strategies for communicating and working with diverse families* (2nd ed.). Columbus.
- Graham-Clay, S. (2005). Communicating with parents: Strategies for teachers. *The School Community Journal*. 15.
- Griffin, G. (2013). *Research methods for English studies* (2nd ed.). Rawat Publications.
- Grover, V. (2015). Research approach: An overview. *Golden Research Thoughts*, 4, 1–8.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging influences*. SAGE.

- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483384436>.
- Haddock, P. (2010, March 21). *Importance of morale*. <http://www.ehow.com>
- Harris, A., & Robinson, K. (2016). A new framework for understanding parental involvement: Setting the stage for academic success. *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2(5), 186–201. <https://doi/full/10.7758/RSF.2016.2.5.09>
- Harvey, L. 2012–2022, *Researching the Real World*, available at qualityresearchinternational.com/methodology
- Herrell, P. O. (2011). Parental Involvement: Parent Perceptions and Teacher Perceptions. Doctoral Dissertation, UMI No. 3462048.
- Higgins, S., & Katsipataki, M. (2015). Evidence from meta-analysis about parental involvement in education which supports their children's learning. *Journal of Children's Services*, 10(3), 280–290.
- Hornby, G. (2011). *Parental involvement in childhood education: Building effective school-family partnerships*. Springer.
- Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: An explanatory model. *Educational Review*, 63(1), 37–52.
- Humphrey-Taylor, H. (2015). Barriers to parental involvement in their children's education. *Journal of Initial Teacher Inquiry*, 1, 68–70.
- Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development (1999). Department Of Education
- Invankova, N. V., Cresswell, J. W., & Clark V. L. P. (2012). Appendix A, in K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (revised ed.). Van Schaik.
- Jæger, M. M. (2012). The extended family and children's educational success. *American Sociological Review*, 77(6), 903–922. <http://doi/pdf/10.1177/0003122412464040>
- Jafarov, J. (2015). Factors affecting parental involvement in education: The analysis of literature. *Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 18(4), 35–44.
- Jeynes, W. (2010). *Parental involvement and academic achievement*. Routledge.

- Jeynes, W. H. (2010). The salience of the subtle aspects of parental involvement and encouraging that involvement: Implications for school-based programs. *Teachers College Record*, 112(3), 747–774.
- Jeynes, W. H. (2011). Parental involvement research: Moving to the next level [Editorial]. *The School Community Journal*, 21(1), 9–18.
- Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational research: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2010). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Johnson, R., & Christensen, L. (2014). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Kai A. Schafft (2016) Rural Education as Rural Development: Understanding the Rural School–Community Well-Being Linkage in a 21st-Century Policy Context, *Peabody Journal of Education*, 91:2, 137-154, DOI: [10.1080/0161956X.2016.1151734](https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2016.1151734)
- Karee, M. (2012). *First steps in research*. Van Schaik.
- Kayombo, C. (2017). *The role of parents' involvement towards students' academic performance among public primary schools in Tanzania: A case of selected primary schools In Ilala Municipality* [Master's degree]. The Open University of Tanzania.
- Kivunja, C. Distinguishing between Theory, Theoretical Framework, and Conceptual Framework: A Systematic Review of Lessons from the Field. University of New England, Armidale NSW 2351, Australia
- Khajepour, M., & Ghazvini, S. D. (2011). The role of parental involvement affect in children's academic performance. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 15(2011), 1204–1208.
- Knopf, H. & Swick, K. (2008). Using Our Understanding of Families to Strengthen Family Involvement. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. 35. 419-427. 10.1007/s10643-007-0198-z.

- Kurtulmus, Z. (2016). Analysing parental involvement dimensions in early childhood education. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 11(12), 1149-1153.
- Landeros, M. (2011). Defining the 'good mother' and the 'professional teacher': Parent-teacher relationships in an affluent school district. *Gender and Education*, 20(1), 247–262.
- LaRocque, M., Kleiman, I., & Darling, S. (2011). Parental involvement: The missing link in school achievement preventing school failure. *Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 55, 115–122. <http://doi/pdf/10.1080/10459880903472876>
- Lau, E., Li, H., & Rao, N. (2012). Exploring parental involvement in early years education in China: Development and validation of the Chinese Early Parental Involvement Scale (CEPIS). *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 20. <http://doi/pdf/10.1080/09669760.2012.743099>
- Lee, A. N. (2012). Development of a parent's guide for the Singapore Primary Science curriculum: Empowering parents as facilitators of their children's science learning outside the formal classroom. *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching*, 13(2), 1–27.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2014). *Practical research: Planning and design* (10th ed.). Pearson.
- Leenders, H., Haelermans, C., De Jong, J., & Monfrance, M. (2018). Parents' perceptions of parent-teacher relationship practices in Dutch primary schools—an exploratory pilot study. *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(6), 719–743. <http://doi/pdf/10.1080/13540602.20>
- Leibowitz, B. & Francis, T. (2014). International Journal for Academic Development Reflections on academic development: what is in a name? *International Journal for Academic Development*. 10.1080/1360144X.2014.969978.
- Lekli, L. & Kaloti, E. (2015). Building Parent-Teacher Partnerships as an Effective Means of Fostering Pupils' Success. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. 10.5901/mjss.2015.v4n1s1p101.
- Leithwood, K., & Patrician, P. (2015). Changing the educational culture of the home to increase student success at school. *Societies*, 5(3), 664-685.

- Lelissa, B. T. (2018). *Research methodology* [PhD thesis]. University of South Africa.
- Lemmer, E. (2011). Who's doing the talking? Teacher and parent experiences of parent-teacher conferences. *South African Journal of Education*. 32. 83-96. 10.15700/sage.v32n1a460.
- Lemmer, E. M., Meier, C., & Van Wyk, J. N. (2012). *Multicultural education: A manual for the South African teacher*. Van Schaik Publishers.
- Li, Z. & Qiu, Z. (2018). How does family background affect children's educational achievement? Evidence from Contemporary China. *The Journal of Chinese Sociology*. 5. 10.1186/s40711-018-0083-8.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lincoln, Y.S., Lynham, S.A. & Guba, E.G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4th ed; pp. 97–128). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Magoro, A. M. (2010). The impact of parental involvement in the learning of their children: a study in Limpopo province. University of Limpopo. South Africa.
- Majerus, T. C. (2011). Development of parent-teacher relationship survey. University of Missouri. Columbia.
- Makgopa, M., & Mokhele, M. (2013). Teachers' perceptions on parental involvement: A case study of two South African schools. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2013.v3n3p219>
- Maluleke, S. G. (2014). *Parental involvement in their children's education in the Vhembe District, Limpopo* [Dissertation]. University of South Africa. <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/18814>
- Mandarakas, M. (2014). Teachers and parents-school engagement: International perspectives on teachers' preparation for and views about working with parents. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 4(1), 21–27. <https://doi.org/10.2304/gsch.2014.4.1.21>

- Manilal, R. (2014). *Parental involvement in education: A comparison between a privileged and an underprivileged school* [MEd dissertation]. University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, J. P. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships*. SEDL & US Department of Education.
- Maree, K. 2016. *First steps in research*. 2nd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers
- Martinez, A. (2015). *Parent involvement and its effects on student academic achievement* [Master's thesis]. California state University. <http://hdl.handle.net/10211.3/143159>.
- Mashburn A. J., & Serpell Z. N. (2011). Family-school connectedness and children's early social development. *Social Development*, 21(1), 21–46.
- Mattick, K., Johnston, J., & De la Croix, A. (2018). How to ... write a good research question. *The Clinical Teacher*, 15. 104–108. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tct.12776>.
- Meshram, R. (2013). Parent's perception about their involvement in children's academic achievement. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing*, 4(9), 1692.
- Mbokodi, S. M. (2011). Parental partnerships in the governance of schools in the Black townships of Port Elizabeth. *Perspectives in Education*, 29(4), 38–48.
- Mncube, V. (2010). The perceptions of parents of their role in the democratic governance of schools in South Africa: Are they on board? *South African Journal of Education*, 29, 83–103.
- Morrison, J. W., Storey, P., & Zhang, C. (2011). Dimensions of early childhood. *Early Childhood Education*, 39(3), 21–26.
- Morse, J. M. (2015). *Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry*. SAGE publications. London.
- Motala, S., & Lexumo, V. (2014). Parental involvement and access to learning: A perspective from Gauteng and the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Southern African Review of Education*, 20(2).

- Msila, V. (2012). Black parental involvement in South African schools: Will parents ever help in enhancing effective school management? *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2(2), 303.
- Munje, P., & Mncube, V. (2018). The lack of parent involvement as hindrance in selected public primary schools in South Africa: The voices of educators. *Perspectives in Education*, 36, 80–93.
- Mwapwele, S., Marais, M. A., Dlamini, S. B., & Van Biljon, J. (2019). Teachers' ICT adoption in South African rural schools: A study of technology readiness and implications for the South Africa connect broadband policy. University of the Witwatersrand. <http://hdl.handle.net/10204/11373>
- Mwonga, S. C. J., & Wanyama M. N. (2012). An assessment of the availability of resources to facilitate early childhood music and movement curriculum implementation in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy studies*, 3(5), 624–630.
- National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy. (2015). Department of Social Development. Republic of South Africa.
- Ngwaru, J. M. (2012). Parental involvement in early childhood care and education: Promoting children's sustainable access to early schooling through social-emotional and literacy development. *Southern African Review of Education*, 18(2), 25–40.
- Ntekane, A. (2018). Parental involvement in education. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Abie-Ntekane/publication/324497851_PARENTAL_INVOLVEMENT_IN_EDUCATION/links/5ad09062aca2723a33472c9f/PARENTAL-INVOLVEMENT-IN-EDUCATION.pdf
- Nyarko, K. (2011). Parental school involvement: A case of Ghana. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 2(5), 378-381.
- Ochoa, D., & Torre, B. (n.d.). Parenting in the Philippines: A Review of the Research Literature from 2004 to 2014. PETA Arts Zone Project Terre de Hommes Germany.

- Öğdül, H. G. (2010) Urban and Rural Definitions in Regional Context: A Case Study on Turkey, *European Planning Studies*, 18:9, 1519-1541, DOI: [10.1080/09654313.2010.492589](https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2010.492589)
- Okeke, C. I. (2014). Effective home-school partnership: Some strategies to help strengthen parental involvement. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(3), 1–7.
- Olcer, N., & Kocer, S. (2015). Organizational communication: A survey on the academic staff at Kocaeli University. *Global Media Journal TR Edition*, 6(11), 339-383.
- Ozmen, F. & Aküzüm, C. & ZINCIRLI, M. & Selçuk, G. (2016). The Communication Barriers between Teachers and Parents in Primary Schools. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*. 2016. 27-46. 10.14689/ejer.2016.66.2.
- Onwuegbuzie, A., Collins, K. M. T. & Frels, R. (2013). Foreword: Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to frame quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*. 7. 2-8. 10.5172/mra.2013.7.1.2.
- Onwuegbuezie, J. & Frels, R. (2016). Seven Steps to a Comprehensive Literature Review: A Multimodal and Cultural Approach.
- Ozmen, F., Akuzum, C., Zincirli, M., & Selcuk, G. (2016). The communication barriers between teachers and parents in primary schools. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 66, 26–46.
- Page, R. D. (2016). *The role that parents play in their children's academic progress at a previously disadvantaged primary school in Cape Town* [MEd thesis]. University of the Western Cape.
- Pandey, P., & Pandey, M. M. (2015). *Research methodology: Tools and techniques*. Bridge Center.
- Perera, S. (2018). *Research paradigms*. University of Colombo.
- Peters, M. (2012). Parental Involvement: How Much is Enough and What Can Schools Do to Encourage It? William Paterson University of New Jersey (Master Thesis). Parental Involvement in The Philippines: A Review Of Literatures.

- Pietersen, J., & Maree, K. (2012). Standardisation of a questionnaire. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (revised edition). Van Schaik.
- Pillai, A., & Kaushal, U. (2020). *Research methodology—An introduction to literary studies*. SAGE.
- Porumbu, D., & Necsoi, D. V. (2013). Relationship between parental involvement/attitude and children's social achievements. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 76(2013), 706–710.
- Powell, D. R. (2010). Parent-school relationships and children's academic and social outcomes in public school prekindergarten. *Journal of School Psychology*, 48(4), 269–292.
- Powell, D. R., San Juan, R. R., Son, S., & File, N. (2010). Parent-school relationships and children's academic and social outcomes in public school pre-kindergarten. *Journal of School Psychology*, 48, 269–292.
- Powell, T., & Sánchez, B. (2013). Identifying and decreasing barriers to parent involvement for inner-city parents. *Youth & Society*, 45, 54–74.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X11409066>
- Pholotho, T. & Mtsweni, J. (2016). Barriers to electronic access and delivery of educational information in resource constrained public schools: A case of Greater Tubatse Municipality. 1-9. 10.1109/ISTAFRICA.2016.7530626.
- Preston, J., & Barnes, K. (2018). Successful leadership in rural schools: Cultivating collaboration. *The Rural Educator*, 38.
<https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v38i1.231>
- Republic of South Africa. (2001). Education White Paper 5 of 2001. Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). National Archives and Record Services of South Africa Act (Act 43 of 1996).
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996. Government Printers.

Republic of South Africa. (2000). Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act 2 of 2000).

Republic of South Africa. (1996). South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Government Printers.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Lewis, P. S. P. J., Nicholls, C. M. N., & Ormston, R. (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. SAGE Publications.

Robbins, C., & Searby, L. (2013). Exploring parental involvement strategies utilized by middle school interdisciplinary teams. *School Community Journal*, 23(2)113-136.

Rouse, E. (2012). Family-Centred Practice: Empowerment, Self-Efficacy, and Challenges for Practitioners in Early Childhood Education and Care. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*. 13. 17. 10.2304/ciec.2012.13.1.17.

Rubie-Davies, C., Peterson, E., Irving, S., Widdowson, D., & Dixon, R. (2010). Expectations of achievement: Student teacher and parent perceptions. *Research in Education*, 83, 36–53.

Rule, P., & John, V. M. (2011). *Your guide to case study research*. Van Scaik Publishers.

Rural context. 2021. In *Collins dictionary.com*.

Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ruralcontext>

Rural context. 2021. In *Merriam-Webster.com*.

Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ruralcontext>

Saltmarsh, S., Barr, J., & Chapman, A. (2014). Preparing for parents: How Australian teacher education is addressing the question of parent-school engagement. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 35, 69–84.

Sanwani, A., Engelbrecht, J. C., Harding, A., & Maree, J. G. (2013). Factors that facilitate learners' performance in Maths in disadvantaged communities. *Journal for Educational Studies*, 12(2).

- Sapungan, G., & Sapungan, R. (2014). Parental involvement in child's education: importance, barriers and benefits. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences & Education*, 3(2).
- Sathiapama, M., Charl, C., Wolhuter, C. C., & Van Wyk, N. (2012). The management of parental involvement in multicultural schools in South Africa: A case study. *CEPS Journal*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.395>
- Satu, E., Maria, K., & Out, K. (2014). *Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness*. Sage.
- Savacool, J. L. (2011). *Barriers to parental involvement in the pre-kindergarten classroom*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED519173>
- Scotland, J. (2012). Exploring the philosophical underpinnings of research: Relating ontology and epistemology to the methodology and methods of the scientific, interpretive, and critical research paradigms. *English Language Teaching*, 5(9), 9–1.
- Selangan. (2015). The Reading Profile of Children in the Philippines. Literacy and World Languages Article. Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/discussion/reading-profile-children-philippines>
- Selolo, R. E. (2018). *Factors influencing parent involvement in the education of their children at primary school level in Bahananwa Circuit in Blouberg Municipality, Limpopo Province* [Master's dissertation]. University of Limpopo. <http://hdl.handle.net/10386/2287>
- Semke, C. A., & Sheridan, S. M. (2012). Family-school connections in rural educational settings: A systematic review of the empirical literature. *The School Community Journal*, 22(1), 21–48.
- Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting Qualitative Data. Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Shaheen, M., Prahad, S., & Ranajee, R. (2019). Sampling in qualitative research. 25–51.

- Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J. L. (2005). Involvement counts: Family and community partnerships and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 98, 196–206.
- Shenton, Andrew. (2004). Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Projects. *Education for Information*. 22. 63-75. 10.3233/EFI-2004-22201.
- Sheridan, S., & Moorman Kim, E. (2015). Foundational aspects of family-school connections: Definitions, conceptual frameworks, and research needs. In S. M. Sheridan & E. M. Kim (Eds.), *Foundational aspects of family-school partnership research* (pp. 1–14). Springer International Publishing.
- Sheridan, S. M., Moorman Kim, E., Coutts, M. J., Sjuts, T. M., Holmes, S. R., Ransom, K. A., & Garbacz, S. A. (2012). *Clarifying parent involvement and family-school partnership intervention research: A preliminary synthesis*. CYFS Working Paper No. 2012–4.
- Sibanda, B. (2015). The relationship between literacy level and parental involvement in secondary schools in Lebonde district, Eastern Cape. University of South Africa.
- Sibanda, L., Iwu, C., & Benedict, O. H. (2015). Factors influencing academic performance of university students. *Demography and Social Economy*, 2(24), 103–115. <https://doi.org/10.15407/dse2015.02.103>
- Sileyew, J. K. (2019). *Research design and methodology*. <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/68505>
- Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice*. SAGE.
- Simweleba, N., & Serpell, R. (2020). Parental involvement and learners' performance in rural basic schools of Zambia. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 10.
- Sigh, P., Mbokodi, S. M., Msila, V. T. (2004). Black parental involvement in education: *South African Journal of Education*, 24(4):301-307
- South African Schools Act. (1996). Department of Education. Government Printers. Pretoria.

- Stahl, N., & King, J. (2020). Expanding approaches for research: Understanding trustworthiness in Qualitative research. 44. 26-28
- Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation. (2020). Department of Education. England.
- Stelmach, B. (2009). Parent-teacher interactions with schools and schooling: Legal and cultural contexts. *International Journal about Parents in Education*.
- Strydom, H. (2013). An evaluation of the purposes of research in social work. *Journal of Social Work*, 49(2), 149–164. <https://doi.org/10.15270/49-2-58>
- Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful sampling in qualitative research synthesis. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 11(2), 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJI102063>
- Taber, K. (2013). Classroom-Based Research and Evidence-based practice. An Introduction (2nd Ed). University of Cambridge. UK
- Thanh, N. C., & Thành, T. T. M. (2015). The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. *American Journal of Educational Science*, 1(2), 24–27.
- Thomson, S. (2018) Achievement at school and socioeconomic background—an educational perspective. *Science Learn* 3. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41539-018-0022-0>
- Topor, D. R., Keane, S. P., Shelton, T. L., & Calkins, S. D. (2011). Parent involvement and student academic performance: A multiple mediational analysis. *J Prev Interv Community*, 38(3), 183–197.
- Tsolou, O., & Babalis, T. (2020). The contribution of family factors to dropping out of school in Greece. *Creative Education*, 11, 1375-1401.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2014), UNESCO roadmap for implementing the Global Action Program on Education for sustainable Development, UNESCO, Paris.
- Uyangoda, J. (2015). *Social research: Philosophical and methodological foundations*. Social Scientists' Association.

- Van Wyk, N. (2010). The South African education system. In E. Lemmer, & N. van Wyk (Eds.), *Themes in South African education: For the comparative educationist*. Pearson Education.
- Van Wyk J., Lemmer, E. M., & Meier, C. (2012). *Multicultural education: A manual for the South African teachers*. Van Schaik Publishers.
- Vellymalay, S. K. N. (2012). Bridging school and parents: Parental involvement in their child's education. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 2(1).
- Walker, J. M. T., Ice, C. L., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2011). Latino parents' motivations for involvement in their children's schooling: An exploratory study. *Elementary School Journal*, 111(3), 409–429.
- Yi Hung Lau, E., Li, H., & Rau, N. (2012). Exploring parental involvement in China: Development and validation of the Chinese Early Parental Involvement Scale (CEPIS). *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 20(4), 405–421.
- Yunus, K., & Dahlan, A. N. (2013). Child-rearing practices and socio-economic status: Possible implications for children's educational outcomes. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 90, 251–259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.07.089>
- Zeynep, K. (2016). Analyzing parental involvement dimensions in early childhood education. *Educational Research and Reviews*. 11. 1149-1153. 10.5897/ERR2016.2757.

ANNEXURE A: STUDENT REQUESTING RESEARCH APPROVAL



13 JANUARY 2019

THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

113 BICCARD STREET

POLOKWANE

0700

My name is Maisela Mologadi Lucia. I am a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation with the title: **A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile one and quantile five schools** involves investigating whether teachers and parents of children in the foundation phase have a relationship and how it enhances social and academic development of the foundation phase learners.

The study will focus on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase and how they enhance social and academic development of learners. Six teachers and four parents will be expected to participate in focus group interviews. During focus group interviews the researcher will ask participants open ended questions with the aim of gathering rich data from participants. The focus group interviews will be conducted at a school between 15h00 and 16h00. To generate potential participants, I will ask the principals of the schools to help me identify participants.

I will conduct document analysis as data collection instrument to explore the school policy on parent' meetings. The purpose of document analysis is to identify the frequency at which the meeting are held, parents' attendance and the school's expectation from parents of children at the school

I hereby request for permission to conduct research in primary schools that are under your jurisdiction to collect data for my research. All information will be kept confidential. The University of Pretoria will remain being the custodian of all research findings. The University also needs to keep on record that all protocols in attaining this permission were followed.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Susan Thuketana and Dr J West, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria.

To this end, please sign the attached form that you give permission, are aware and support that the selected teachers and parents are interviewed to collect data for the research project.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Maisela M L

Email: mlqd8613@gmail.com

ANNEXURE B: PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH



PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH

I,, hereby give permission to

Maisela Mologadi Lucia to include teachers and parents of the foundation phase learners at my district to participate in her research study on **A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile one and quantile five schools**

Signature:

(HOD)

Date:

ANNEXTURE C: CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPALS



13 JANUARY 2019

Dear School Principal

My name is Maisela Mologadi Lucia. I am a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation with the title: **A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile one and quantile five schools** involves investigating if teachers and parents of children in the foundation phase have a relationship and how it enhances the social and academic development of the foundation phase learners.

The study will focus on teacher-parent relationships in the foundation phase and how they enhance social and academic development of learners. Six teachers are expected to participate in a focus group interview. Teachers' responses will be recorded and a research journal will be used as data collection instrument.

I will conduct document analysis as data collection instrument to explore the school policy on parent' meetings. The purpose of document analysis is to identify the frequency at which the meeting are held, parents' attendance and the school's expectation from parents of children at the school

Four parents will be expected to participate in focus group interviews. During focus groups interviews the researcher will ask participants open ended questions with the

aim of gathering rich data from participants. The focus group interviews will be conducted at a school between 15h00 and 16h00.

You are kindly requested to allow me to use selected foundation phase teachers and parents collect data for my research. All information will be kept confidential. The University of Pretoria will remain being the custodian of all research findings. The University also needs to keep on record that all protocols in attaining this permission were followed.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Susan Thuketana and Dr J West in the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria.

To this end, please sign the attached form that you give permission, are aware and support that the selected teachers and parents are used to collect data for the research project.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Maisela M L

Email: mlgd8613@gmail.com

PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH

I,, hereby give permission to

Maisela Mologadi Lucia to include teachers and parents of learners in the foundation phase at the schools under my jurisdiction to participate in her research study titled **A**

**comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile
one and quantile five schools**

Signature:

(School Principal)

Date:

ANNEXURE D: CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS



13 JANUARY 2019

Dear teacher

My name is Maisela Mologadi Lucia. I am a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation with the title: **A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile one and quantile five schools** involves investigating if teachers and parents of children in the foundation phase have a relationship and how it enhances social and academic development of the foundation phase learners.

You are kindly requested to participate in my study in order to collect data for my research. All information will be kept confidential. You are also free to withdraw from this study without any penalty. The University of Pretoria will remain being in charge of all research findings. The University also needs to keep on record that all protocols in attaining this permission were followed.

You will be expected to answer a questionnaire at your own place. The researcher will distribute the questionnaire and collect it after three weeks. Data collected will be handled with strict confidentiality and anonymity. No data shall be linked to the actual names of teachers.

We would also like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis using data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Susan Thuketana and Dr J West, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria.

To this end, please sign the attached form that you give consent, are aware and support that you will participate in the study.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Maisela M L

Email : mlqd8613@gmail.com

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

Dr. S N Thuketana

.....

Dr. J West

.....

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

I,, hereby declare that I have been informed about the nature of the research and the role that I will play in the research. I understand that the information supplied will be kept strictly confidential. I further understand that I will not receive any remuneration for partaking in the research. I hereby consent to participate in the study as outlined and understand that I may withdraw if I choose to do so.

Signature:

(TEACHER)

Date:

ANNEXTURE E: CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

13 JANUARY 2020

Dear parent

My name is Maisela Mologadi Lucia. I am a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation with the title: **A comparative study of teacher-parent relationships in foundation phase quantile one and quantile five schools** involves investigating whether teachers and parents of children in the foundation phase have a relationship and how it enhances or impacts the social and academic development of the foundation phase learners.

You are kindly requested to participate in my study in order to collect data for my research. All information will be kept confidential. You are free to withdraw from this study without any penalty. The University of Pretoria will remain being in charge of all research findings. The University also needs to keep on record that all protocols in attaining this permission were followed.

You will be expected to participate in a focus groups interview where the researcher will ask questions and answer. The focus group interviews will be conducted at a primary school from 15h00 to 16h00 in the afternoon. Be informed that during the interview you will be audio recorded; therefore, your explicit permission for the recording is requested.

We would also like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis using data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Susan Thuketana on 083 675 7899 and Dr. J West on 076 556 7604, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria.

To this end, please sign the attached form to give consent, are aware and support that you will participate in the study.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Maisela M L

Email : mlgd8613@gmail.com

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

Dr NS Thuketana

.....

Dr. J West

.....



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS

I,, hereby declare that I have been informed about the nature of the research and the role that I will play in the research. I understand that the information supplied will be kept strictly confidential. I further understand that I will not receive any remuneration for partaking in the research. I hereby consent to participate in the study as outlined and understand that I may withdraw if I choose to do so.

Signature:

(PARENT)

Date:

ANNEXURE F: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. HOW THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WILL WORK

- The focus groups interviews will take place at the school in the afternoon.
- The principal will be asked to help identify parents with a medium level of English competency to participate in the study.
- Participants will be expected to report at the school 10 minutes earlier to prepare for the discussion.
- Parents will be met before the date to discuss the purpose, date and time for the interviews.
- The focus group interview will last for an hour.
- A written informed consent form that explains what participants are expected to do will be given to participants. The form will include among others what the participants are being asked, what their rights are, and how privacy and confidentiality will be secured.
- The researcher and supervisor's contact details will be provided to participants so that they are able to ask for any clarity seeking questions.

2. GROUND RULES FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

- Participation in the focus group interview is voluntary.
- You can decide not to answer a question or specific topic if not comfortable.
- There is no right or wrong answer, please respond to the questions as truthfully as possible.
- Try respect other participant's opinions.

- Do not deviate from the topic, if clarity is needed, there might be an interruption so that we cover all the necessary material.
- Try not to reveal any personal information.
- Protect other participants by not discussing details outside the questions asked.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH PARENTS

1. What kind of a relationship do you have with the teachers at the school of your child? Please elaborate
2. Do you think it is important to have a good relationship with the teachers at the school? Why do you say so?
3. How often do you attend meetings when invited?
4. How are parents' meetings communicated with you?
5. Do you think the meetings encourage teacher-parent relationships? Please explain.
6. Are you given a chance to air your views at these meeting? Please explain.
7. Do you think teachers are making efforts to form teacher-parent relationships?

Please elaborate.

8. What challenges do you experience in having a positive relationship with the teachers?
9. As a parent of a child at school, how do you communicate with teachers?
10. What do you think can be done to ensure that teacher-parent relationships are functional at schools?

ANNEXURE G: FOCUS GROUP GUIDES WITH TEACHERS

1. HOW THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WILL WORK

- Participants will be expected to report at the venue 10 minutes early to prepare for the discussion.
- The discussion will last for 45 minutes.
- Date and time will be provided to participants in due course.
- A written informed consent form that explains what participants are expected to do will be given to participants, the form will include among others what the participants are being asked, what their rights are, and how privacy and confidentiality will be secured.
- Researcher and supervisor's contact details will be provided to participants so that they are able to ask for any clarity.
- **2. GROUND RULES FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS**
 - Participation in the focus group interview is voluntary.
 - You can decide not to answer a question or specific topic if not comfortable.
 - All responses are correct; no right or wrong answer.
 - Try to respect others' opinions.
 - Do not deviate from the topic.
 - If clarity is needed, there might be an interruption so that we cover all the necessary material.
 - All should be open during the discussions.
 - Try not to reveal any personal information.

- Protect other participants by not discussing details outside the group.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH TEACHERS

1. What do you understand by the concept teacher-parent relationship?
2. Do you have a relationship with the parents of learners in your classroom?
3. Do you think teacher-parent relationship is beneficial to learners in the foundation phase? Please elaborate.
4. How do teacher-parent relationships benefit the learners in the foundation phase? Please elaborate.
5. Who do you think is responsible to initiate teacher-parent relationships? Why do you say so?
6. Do you have challenges with the parents of learners in your classroom not attending meetings at the school?
7. What strategies do you use to invite the parents to the meetings at the school?
8. What contributions do parents that attend meetings make?
9. What strategies do you think can initiate a positive teacher-parent relationship?