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Parental involvement in childrens' learning activities at Early Childhood Centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis

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(202121344)

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **Nancy Abedu-Kennedy,** declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:…….

Date:……

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Salome Praise Otami

Signature: ……

Date: ……...……..…

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DEDICATION

To my children, Oann, Obed and Obert Abedu-Kennedy, my Anokye-Yeboah family and friends.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess parental engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The research employed an interpretative perspective and a qualitative methodology, utilising a case study design. The study was conducted in the Cape Coast Metropolis,

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concentrating on parents of children enrolled in five selected early childhood centres: Ayifua St. Mary's Anglican Basic School, St. Lawrence Basic School "A" and "B", University of Cape Coast KG, and Pere Planque Preparatory School. The convenient sampling strategy was employed to pick participants for the interview. The material obtained from the interview was transcribed verbatim and evaluated by theme analysis. The major findings indicated that parents participated in activities such as preparing children for school, reviewing homework, and attending parent meetings, but were less commonly active in other school-related activities. Communication with the school predominantly occurred via telephone calls and WhatsApp messaging, with minimal utilisation of alternative methods. Although the majority of parents engaged in their children's education, obstacles such as illiteracy and inadequate school policies affected their participation. The study concluded that early childhood educational institutions should offer training to parents on engagement activities, aiding them in comprehending the several methods of engaging in their children's education. Schools must to delineate explicit objectives and goals pertaining to parental involvement to direct parents and enhance their engagement in school-related activities.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is a vital foundation for the advancement of society, as higher levels of education are strongly linked to greater discipline and civility within communities (Rafiq et al., 2013). Parents play a central role in the socialization of children, nurturing them into responsible and productive citizens. Evidence suggests that the more parents engage in their children's education, the better the academic outcomes for preschoolers, ultimately shaping them into constructive members of society (Berkeley, 2009). Consistent parental involvement during the early years has long-term benefits, enhancing children's performance across primary, secondary, and even higher levels of education (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009).

Sanders and Sheldon (2009) also highlight that the benefits of parental involvement extend beyond academics. Active engagement from parents in the early stages of a child's life can positively influence non-academic outcomes such as school attendance, behavior, attitude towards learning, and commitment to homework (Fan & Chen et al., 2020). Furthermore, parental engagement contributes to children's social and emotional development, fostering good conduct and adaptability in school. In essence, parental support shapes not only academic achievement but also holistic growth.

Copple and Bredekamp (2009) argue that family partnerships are fundamental to best practices in early childhood education. Approaches that center families such as involving them in assessments—create a sense of empowerment (Hanft & Pikington, 2000) while also improving parental well-being. Similarly, Dunst et al. (2006) emphasize that parental engagement is not just a right but a cornerstone of effective early childhood education, even though the level of

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participation may vary depending on family circumstances. Schools must therefore embrace parental contributions at all levels. Epstein (2000) further notes that such engagement fosters positive attitudes towards education among both children and parents.

Parental involvement also enhances collaboration between schools and families. It improves children's attitudes towards learning, boosts attendance, and contributes to academic progress. Parents who are supported to participate in their children's education are more likely to sustain that involvement through subsequent schooling years. This is particularly important as not all parents had positive educational experiences themselves. Meaningful engagement during their children's preschool years allows parents to reframe their perspectives on education, which may influence their continued involvement. Recognizing this importance, the United States government reinforced parental involvement in the 1994 federal legislation.

In Ghana, early childhood education refers to the provision of learning opportunities for children aged 0–6 years (Ghana Education Service [GES], 2012). Such education occurs in diverse settings, including homes, community centers, and organized Early Childhood Centres (ECCs). The Ghanaian government has taken significant steps to strengthen early childhood education, notably through the GES curriculum, which provides guidelines for quality instruction nationwide. As part of this effort, ECCs were established to serve children aged 3–5 years (GES, 2012).

These centers are run by government agencies, religious organizations, and private individuals. In the Cape Coast Metropolis, several ECCs have been set up to improve access to early childhood education. Parents remain critical partners in this process. Studies show that children whose parents actively engage in their education perform better academically (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). By creating supportive home environments reading with children, helping with assignments, attending school meetings, or volunteering in classrooms parents strengthen both

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academic achievement and overall development (Barnard & Kelly, 2007). Such involvement has also been linked to higher self-esteem, improved social skills, and stronger peer relationships (Domina, 2005).

Despite the benefits, however, parental involvement in Ghana remains limited. Research indicates that many parents do not fully participate in their children's learning activities (Biritwum & Gyamfi, 2013). Akyeampong and Stephens (2002) found that some parents in Ghana undervalue the importance of early childhood education and see themselves more as passive observers than active contributors. The lack of access to information and resources further hinders their ability to support their children's learning.

Biritwum and Gyamfi (2013) further reveal that although many Ghanaian parents hold positive attitudes toward early childhood education, practical barriers such as financial constraints, time limitations, and insufficient awareness reduce their level of engagement. This makes it necessary to develop strategies that address these challenges while promoting family involvement. Since parental engagement is indispensable for the holistic development of children, understanding its current state is vital. Within the Cape Coast Metropolis, the establishment of ECCs provides an opportunity to deliver quality education; however, the extent of parental participation remains uncertain. This study therefore seeks to explore the degree of parental involvement in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Early childhood education plays a vital role in fostering both the intellectual and social growth of children. Parental involvement has long been recognized as a key factor influencing academic achievement (Barnard & Kelly, 2007). In the Cape Coast Metropolis, however, limited parental participation in early learning may result in negative educational outcomes and hinder children's

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future performance. Despite the increasing recognition of its importance, research on the extent of parental engagement in early childhood education in Cape Coast remains limited. The Ghana Education Service (GES) acknowledges the critical role of parents in children's early education and has introduced policies and guidelines to encourage such involvement (GES, 2012). Yet, the extent to which these policies are implemented and their actual impact on parental engagement remain unclear.

Biritwum and Gyamfi (2013) found that while many Ghanaian parents, especially mothers, value early childhood education, they often lack the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively support their children's development. Parental involvement is further shaped by factors such as educational background, socio-economic status, and cultural norms (Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002; Domina, 2005). Given the diverse socio-economic and cultural context of families in Cape Coast, it is important to understand how these variables influence parental engagement in early childhood education within the metropolis.

Parents also face multiple barriers to involvement in their children's education. Henderson and Mapp (2002) highlight challenges such as competing work and family responsibilities, limited access to information, and language difficulties. Similarly, Akyeampong and Stephens (2002) note that many parents lack awareness of their roles in supporting learning, often leaving them unmotivated or unsure of how to help. In addition, inadequate resources and facilities within early childhood centers further discourage parental participation. Biritwum and Gyamfi (2013) identified these constraints as major contributors to low parental engagement in Ghanaian early education settings.

It is therefore essential to explore the specific challenges parents encounter in Cape Coast and to examine their perspectives on their roles in early education, as well as the obstacles limiting their

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involvement. Understanding these dynamics can inform strategies to enhance parental participation. The absence of consistent parental support not only undermines children's learning but also affects their overall development. Research consistently demonstrates that parental engagement is strongly associated with children's academic success and positive school outcomes (Barnard & Kelly, 2007; Domina, 2005).

Although Cape Coast, located in Ghana's Central Region, hosts several early childhood institutions that serve children aged 3 to 6 years, little is known about the actual level of parental involvement in these settings. Existing studies suggest that parental participation in Ghana remains generally low, largely due to limited education, poverty, lack of time, and inadequate awareness of the importance of early learning (Biritwum & Gyamfi, 2013). This gap is concerning, as effective collaboration between parents and schools is critical for achieving favorable educational outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Therefore, examining the degree of parental engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis and the factors influencing such involvement is necessary for developing appropriate interventions to strengthen family-school partnerships.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to investigate parental engagement in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. The study specifically aims to identify the domains of parental involvement in children's learning at selected early childhood centres in the metropolis, explore parental perceptions of their roles in their children's education, examine the obstacles to parental engagement, and identify strategies for enhancing parental involvement in early childhood education.

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1.4 Research Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Find out the state of parental involvement in the learning activities of their children in early childhood centres in the Cape Coast metropolis.
2. Explore parents' views on their roles in learning activities of their children in the early childhood centres within the Cape Coast metropolis.
3. Identify the challenges of parental involvement in children's learning in early childhood centres in the Cape Coast metropolis.
4. Examine strategies that can be explored to improve parental involvement in the learning activities of their children in early childhood centres in the Cape Coast metropolis.

1.5 Research Question

The study sought to answer the following questions

1. What is the state of parental involvement in the learning activities of their children in early childhood centers in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
2. What are the views of parents' on their roles in their children's learning at the early childhood centers within the Cape Coast Metropolis?
3. What are the challenges of parental involvement in children's learning at the early childhood centers in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
4. What strategies can be explored to improve parental involvement in the learning activities of their children in early childhood centers in the Cape Coast Metropolis?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the existing literature on parental involvement in early childhood education in Ghana and to provide insights into promoting parental

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involvement in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Specifically, this study is significant in the following ways:

1. The findings of this study would inform policy makers and education practitioners in developing policies and programs that promote parental involvement in early childhood education in Ghana. This would have significant implications for improving the quality of early childhood education in the country.
2. The study's findings would increase parental awareness of the importance of their involvement in their children's learning and the benefits of early childhood education. This awareness can lead to increased parental involvement in their children's learning, resulting in improved educational outcomes.
3. By identifying the factors that hinder or promote parental involvement in early childhood education, this study would provide insights into developing strategies that can promote parental involvement in children's learning, leading to improved educational outcomes.
4. This study would contribute to the existing literature on parental involvement in early childhood education in Ghana and provide a basis for future research on the topic.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study was delimited to the parental involvement in early childhood education. In terms of geographical delimitations, only parents who have their children enrolled in the selected early childhood centers in the Cape Coast Metropolis were considered. A case study design was adopted for the study. Convenient sampling was subsequently used to select 11 parents who had their children enrolled in four selected schools.

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1.8 Limitations to the Study

Some parents declined in participation due to time constraints; they were not interested in such activities. Sample Selection. The researcher might be influenced by their own personal experiences and perspectives. The study is limited in terms of resources available, which might affect the scope of the study and the data collection methods used.

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Learning activities- Are activities designed or deployed by the teacher to bring about, or create the conditions of learning.

Parental involvement -Any parental attitudes, behaviours, styles or activities that occur within or outside the school setting to support children's academic and /or behavioural success in the school in which they are currently enrolled (Abdul-Adil &Farmer, 2006).

Early childhood education- Also known as nursery education is a branch of education theory that relates to the teaching of children from birth up to the age of eight. Traditionally, this is up to the equivalent of third grade. It is described as an important period in child development.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The research was segmented into five chapters. Chapter One, the introduction, encompasses the study's history, problem statement, goal, research questions, importance, and delimitations. It further addressed the organisation of the study. Chapter Two addressed the literature review pertinent to the study. Chapter Three delineated the research technique employed in the study, encompassing the research design, population, setting, sample size, sampling procedure, research instrument, data collecting processes, and data processing and analysis. Chapter Four comprised a presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data obtained from the field. The fifth chapter

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summarised the findings, drew conclusions, provided suggestions, and proposed topics for additional research.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This section focused on the examination of pertinent literature. To enhance clarity and simplicity, the relevant literature was categorised under the subsequent subheadings: Theoretical foundation (Epstein's model of parental engagement, 2010); Conceptual Framework; the notion of parental involvement; categories of parental involvement; the role of parents in early childhood education and obstacles to parental involvement.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement

Epstein's model (2010) was adopted to better understand parental involvement in children's education, and it has proven effective in explaining the scope of engagement. The framework identifies six domains of parental participation: parenting, communication, volunteering, home learning, decision-making, and collaboration with the community. These areas collectively reflect the extent to which parents contribute to their children's educational experiences. Active participation across these domains is believed to increase children's interest in school and significantly improve their academic outcomes. Similarly, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) developed a Code of Ethical Conduct that highlights the importance of parental engagement for children from birth to age eight (Snow, 2012). This code emphasizes educators' responsibility to involve parents in the learning process and to communicate effectively with families. Research from the NAEYC Center for Applied Research (2012) has shown that when educators share assessment data, progress reports, and learning goals with families, they create partnerships that reinforce learning both at school and at home.

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Parenting, in this model, includes the practices and responsibilities of families that promote children's growth and academic readiness, such as proper nutrition, health care, and positive parenting skills. Families play a critical role in ensuring the well-being, safety, and holistic development of children throughout their education. Despite increasing recognition of the value of parental engagement, several challenges persist. Many parents face time limitations, while others remain disengaged due to negative past school experiences that make them uncomfortable in educational settings (Brown, 2012). Educators and school leaders, therefore, must create opportunities that encourage and support parental involvement through multiple avenues. Early childhood institutions serve as important hubs for family engagement, offering platforms such as volunteer programs, parent-teacher meetings, school committees, and regular communication channels. Communication, as defined by Epstein (2010), includes the exchange of relevant information about a child's academic progress through memos, phone calls, report cards, and conferences. Such two-way communication strengthens the home–school connection, enabling schools to better engage families as partners.

Volunteering is another significant component, involving parents in school activities that support teachers, administrators, and learners. This can range from classroom assistance to participation in school events and extracurricular programs. Home-based learning includes direct support for academic tasks, such as helping with homework, setting goals, and providing encouragement during challenges. However, this form of involvement has been found to be particularly limited within the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Decision-making reflects the active role of parents in influencing school policies and governance, often through participation in Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), advisory boards, or committees (Okantey, 2010). When parents contribute to decisions that affect school operations, they not only

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advocate for their children's interests but also strengthen the relationship between families and educational institutions. Community collaboration extends parental involvement beyond the school by connecting families with external resources such as businesses, service agencies, cultural organizations, and higher education institutions. These partnerships provide schools and families with additional support systems that enrich children's educational experiences (Epstein, 2010).

Epstein's model demonstrates that the degree of overlap between the three spheres of influence—family, school, and community—varies depending on the actions of parents, teachers, and learners. According to Van Wyk (2008), these overlaps can either expand or diminish, depending on the level of collaboration among the parties involved. Epstein (2010) further argues that because schools, families, and communities are constantly evolving, their interactions are dynamic and subject to change. This perspective highlights the importance of fostering flexible and responsive partnerships to support children's learning.

This study, therefore, adopts Epstein's model as a framework for examining parental involvement in preschool education. It focuses on the extent to which parents engage with their children's learning at home, within the school, and in the wider community, recognizing that collaboration across these overlapping spheres of influence is essential for improving educational outcomes.

2.3 The Concept of Parental Involvement

The diverse viewpoints of teachers, administrators, parents, and children complicate the definition of Parental Involvement (PI). Nonetheless, the definitions provided in the subsequent paragraphs encapsulate the core of PI. Myeko (2000) saw parental involvement (PI) as a process by which parents actively engage in their children's educational activities. The activities encompass sporadic participation in school events to rigorous initiatives designed to assist parents in enhancing their roles as educators for their children. Eccles and Harold (1996) emphasised the multidimensional

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nature of parental involvement, outlining five dimensions: monitoring, volunteering at school, engaging in homework-related activities, communicating with the school regarding their children's progress, and enquiring about ways to provide additional support.

Nye et al. (2006) defined parental involvement (PI) as the successful engagement of a parent with their kid outside of school hours in activities aimed at increasing academic achievement. The focus is on extracurricular activities, such as educational trips to the zoo or engaging in games at home that enhance the child's reading or mathematical skills. Holloway et al. (2008) defined parental involvement (PI) as the commencement of home-based behaviours, such as supervising homework, and school-based activities, including attending school events and engaging with instructors. The same authors also emphasised the overall level of cognitive stimulation, among other factors, available in the family environment. Pate and Andrews (2006) expanded upon the aforementioned definitions by defining parental involvement (PI) as an awareness of and engagement in schoolwork, comprehension of the relationship between parenting skills and student success, and a dedication to ongoing communication with educators regarding students' progress.

Kohl et al. (2000) suggest that the dimensions of monitoring and engagement are behaviours directly associated with assisting the kid with homework and may be more effectively conceptualised as a single construct; the last two dimensions pertain to communication with the school. Moreover, each was assessed using a single item, therefore precluding the determination of the dependability of these dimensions. Cho and Han (2004) delineate parental monitoring activities as encompassing the regulation of a child's media exposure, particularly to television and computer games; the establishment of study schedules and homework completion post-school hours; the oversight of recreational time following school; the facilitation of academic progress

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through subject selection assistance; and the monitoring of children's return from school. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) assert that parental participation is a significant source of ongoing parental impact in children's life throughout their elementary, middle, and high school years.

Researchers have identified that strategising for and emphasising parental involvement is a crucial method to enhance parents' engagement in their children's education (Black et al., 2003; Epstein, 1995; Farkas et al., 2001). Pryor and Ampiah (2003a, 2003b) asserted that the majority of parents shown indifference towards their children's education. Parents exhibited a disinterest in education and thus refrained from participating in their children's learning activities. This argument corroborates the phenomena identified by Baker and Stevenson (1986) and Lareau (1987) that less educated parents are either unwilling or unable to engage in their children's education.

Parental participation in a kid's schooling significantly contributes to several favourable outcomes for the youngster. Such results encompass elevated expectations for youngsters. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) simply characterise parental involvement (PI) as an encompassing phrase for several actions, including effective parenting at home, aiding with schoolwork, communicating with teachers, attending school events, and participating in school governance. This is corroborated by Zoppi (2006), who referenced Cotton and Wikelund in formulating a definition that posits parental involvement (PI) as a comprehensive term encompassing participation in school events, fulfilling school responsibilities, assisting children with their academic tasks, offering encouragement, organising suitable study environments and schedules, exemplifying desired behaviours, supervising homework, and actively tutoring children at home. These definitions clearly indicate that various authors emphasise distinct parts of PI. Their viewpoints are shaped by the surroundings in which they reside. The characteristics and obstacles to PI are context-dependent.

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2.4 Types of Parental Involvement

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) and Hoell (2006) delineated two categories of school-based involvement: school communication, which encompasses interactions between parents and school staff to exchange information regarding the child's progress, foster positive relationships between educators and parents, and address emerging issues; and school participation, which entails volunteering for school activities, attending school events, and engaging in school governance (Vogels, 2002). Vogels further included social activities like parties, excursions, and school trips, classroom instruction, supervision of children during lunchtime, as well as practical tasks such as cleaning and other housework. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) affirmed that parental involvement "exhibited within the school provides minimal or no advantage to the individual child" (p. 30). This discovery is extensively reproduced throughout the research.

Nevertheless, this warrants careful interpretation. In-school expressions of parental involvement are intrinsically linked to student progress. There are ancillary advantages, including the opportunity for schools to enhance their connections with the community, so fostering transparency and accountability, while parents derive satisfaction and self-fulfilment from their engagement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) contended that these benefits have not been demonstrated to significantly enhance children's academic performance. Parental engagement in classroom activities, school functions, governance, and advisory roles may benefit all students. They further asserted that the impact of each parent's engagement mostly benefits their own offspring. Individual advantages for some youngsters may be detrimental to others.

A parent can apply pressure on a teacher, resulting in the instructor providing that parent's child with more attention, therefore neglecting other children in the classroom. This highlights the

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necessity of exercising caution while promoting certain types of parental involvement, such as permitting parents to visit the school and engage with teachers at their convenience. Singh and Mbokodi (2004) suggested that parental involvement in schools has minimal, if any, impact on students' outcomes, however it is not wholly insignificant. The extent of school-based parental involvement and engagement serves as a channel for information, enabling teachers and parents to collaborate effectively in supporting children's education. The impact of this type of preschool engagement can serve as an essential facilitator for parental participation at home (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

2.4.1 Home-based Involvement

According to the referenced literature, home-based participation has a more significant beneficial influence than school-based involvement. Hoell (2006) and Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) delineated two categories of home-based involvement: home discussion, which pertains to conversations on school-related activities, and home supervision, which encompasses the oversight of the child's extracurricular activities, including homework.

2.4.2 Home Discussion

Houtenville and Conway (2008) said that parental involvement, encompassing the frequency with which parents engage in discussions on activities or events of particular interest to the kid or subjects studied in class, is positively correlated with children's accomplishment. This perspective receives substantial support from several sources, both historical and contemporary. Jeyne (2005) demonstrated that substantial investment in activities like reading and engaging with one’s child, along with nuanced elements of parental involvement, such as parenting style and expectations, significantly influences student educational outcomes more than overt aspects of parental involvement, such as establishing household rules.

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Senechal (2006) and Catsambis (2001) corroborated Jeynes' assertions by confirming that home-based participation positively influences academic success, both directly and indirectly. Such participation include parents actively motivating children to participate in learning within the home environment and offering educational chances for them. Evaluating children's homework, dedicating time to assist a child with reading and writing skills, providing educational materials such as books, and discussing a parent's passion for learning (while exemplifying that enthusiasm) are instances of facilitating learning opportunities for children at home.

Parental interaction, including home discussions, is a more significant predictor of children's academic performance than their level of involvement in school activities. The overall level of cognitive stimulation offered in the home is crucial for student development. Home discussions influence children' self-perception as learners, as well as their motivation, self-esteem, and educational goals. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) assert that home discussions influence students' perceptions of education and academic tasks, hence enhancing their drive to achieve. For younger children, these motivational and values mechanisms are augmented by parental encouragement of skill development, such as early reading.

McNeal (2001) noted that, in addition to enhancing accomplishment, parent-child discussions typically diminish undesirable behaviours, including lethargy and inadequate application of information. It is important to acknowledge that certain families have difficulties, including lack of power, insufficient room for peaceful study, parental illiteracy, and time constraints affecting both parents and students. Such realities serve as reminders that the concerns of PI are contingent upon context. Despite these constraints, it is unequivocal that the greater the communication between parents and children at home, the higher the students' academic achievement, irrespective of socioeconomic status.

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2.4.3 Home Supervision

Home supervision, encompassing the oversight of a child's extracurricular activities, significantly influences academic performance (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) characterised home structure as pertaining to the extent of parental discipline in enforcing homework completion and restricting potentially distracting activities, such as television viewing. This might be regarded as contributing to a favourable Home Learning Environment (HLE). Engaging in activities such as reading to and with the child, visiting libraries, manipulating letters and numbers, painting and drawing, teaching the alphabet through play, exploring shapes, and reciting nursery rhymes and singing constitutes the establishment of an effective home learning environment (Armbruster, 2003).

Melhuish et al. (2001) shown that the influence of the Home Learning Environment on cognitive development surpasses that of both socio-economic status (SES) and maternal qualifications. It is noteworthy that some parents with high socioeconomic status (SES) and credentials exhibit a low Home setting Learning (HEL) index, whilst others with low SES and qualifications create a home setting characterised by a high Home Learning Environment index. Some parents with high socio-economic position and advanced education fail to create a conducive home learning environment for their children, whilst certain parents with low socio-economic status and few credentials successfully foster a positive home learning atmosphere.

Certain educational institutions employ the expert model, wherein professionals assume the superior role as experts or disseminators of specialised knowledge and services, while parents occupy a subservient position as recipients of such information and services. Within this approach, recommendations for parental involvement in education have been restricted to overseeing the completion of teacher-assigned homework or offering extracurricular enrichment activities outside

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of school hours (Radaszewski-Byrne 2001). This is evidently restricted and seemingly predicated on an often-unwarranted distrust from schools (teachers) over parents' capacity to provide beneficial activities.

In summary, it can be asserted that home-based engagement "clearly and consistently has significant effects on student achievement and adjustment, which far surpass other forms of involvement" (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 31). This is primarily because supportive parenting furnishes the kid with an environment conducive to acquiring academic skills and fostering psychological attributes such as drive and self-esteem.

2.5 Role of Parents in the Education of their Children in Early Childhood Education

Houtenville and Conway (2008) posited that parental tactics may exemplify favourable attitudes and behaviours towards education, and research in industrialised nations like the United States has demonstrated that family participation enhances children academic achievement. Children are more inclined to engage and excel academically when their parents demonstrate interest in their education, offer assistance with homework, and hold them accountable for completing tasks.

A study by Kraft et al. (2011) in the USA aimed to assess the effectiveness of teacher contact with parents and preschools in enhancing preschool participation. The causal effect of teacher communication is calculated by a randomised field experiment in which students were assigned to receive a daily phone call and a written message during an obligatory summer school program. Frequent contact between teachers and parents significantly enhanced preschool engagement, as seen by higher assignment completion rates, on-task conduct, and class involvement. On average, teacher-parent contact enhanced the chances ratio of preschoolers completing their schoolwork by 42% and reduced instances requiring instructors to refocus preschoolers' attention to the activity by 25%.

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Hountenvill and Conway (2008) further affirmed that increased parental involvement in education, through advocacy, decision-making, oversight, fundraising, volunteering, and home teaching, positively correlates with enhanced student achievement. Research indicates that families with academically successful children maintain a daily routine, oversee extracurricular activities, exemplify the importance of learning, self-discipline, and diligence, articulate high yet attainable achievement expectations, engage with their children's academic progress through assistance or review of homework, discuss the significance of quality education and potential career paths, and maintain communication with their children, educators, and school personnel. Furthermore, a research conducted by Chowa et al. (2013) in Ghana using structural equation modelling and determined that parental participation techniques (such as, home involvement, school involvement, parent–teacher communication) predicted children's and youth's school engagement and socio-emotional adjustment. If parental participation mitigates the impact of students' mathematics anxiety on their mathematical ability, the significance of promoting parental involvement programs becomes increasingly apparent.

Parental engagement and parental participation are utilised interchangeably in research to denote the assistance provided by parents in school-related activities, both within and outside the educational environment, for the benefit of students (Kgaffe, 2007). The phrase "parental participation" encompasses a diverse range of parental activities, occurring both at home and in the school environment. These responsibilities encompass working in the children's canteen, addressing children's fundamental needs, offering secretarial assistance to instructors, participating in school social events, watching children during school trips, and aiding with homework, among others. Despite much contention on the extent of parental authority in school involvement, few proponents of parental engagement genuinely regard parents as equal collaborators with educators

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in their children's education (Monadjem, 2007). Parents, educators, and educational institutions must establish a robust strategic alliance to enhance academic programs, foster a positive school environment, deliver services and support, elevate parental competencies and leadership, integrate parents within the school community, and assist teachers in their responsibilities. The primary objective is to assist all students in achieving success academically and subsequently in life. When students, parents, and educators perceive one another as collaborators in education, the kid reaps the benefits (Epstein, 2010).

Innes (2006) discovered a favourable correlation between parents supplying school-based learning materials and books for their young children at home and student progress. He further noted that enhancing the home environment elevated students' academic performance, bolstered parents' confidence in consulting instructors, improved their comprehension of their children, and fostered tighter interactions between parents and educators. Enhancements in the domestic environment provide enduring impacts. Naidoo (2005) proposed that parents ought to assume a more active role in their children's education, as enhanced parental involvement strategies benefit teachers, students, and parents alike, potentially mitigating challenges encountered by communities in addressing children's material, emotional, and educational needs.

Furthermore, Greer (2008) posited that parental participation might enhance educational results through improved attendance rates, literacy, numeracy, self-esteem, social conduct, and completion rates in children's schooling or transition from school to employment. Monadjem (2007) and Lemmer and Van Wyk (2005) similarly asserted that both school-to-home communication, wherein teachers inform parents about school programs and students' progress, and home-to-school communication, wherein parents contact teachers regarding their children's educational experiences, are correlated with favourable child outcomes.

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Skaalvik (2006) posits that motivation initiates action, sustains effort, and dictates direction. Motivation is a significant aspect that contributes to academic performance. It is essential for both parents and educators to comprehend the significance of fostering and stimulating educational motivation from an early age. Motivation is essential for a student's academic achievement at any level. The formation of self-concepts, values, and beliefs regarding skills in children at a young age renders the development of early educational motivation crucial for subsequent academic trajectories. Extensive research indicates that individuals with strong educational motivation are more likely to achieve greater scholastic success and exhibit lower dropout rates. A favourable correlation exists between motivation and academic achievement.

Olaniyi and Mageshni (2008) contended that parental participation is favourably connected with students' academic performance. Children whose parents engage in home-based learning support activities and maintain direct communication with them get higher academic performance than those with less active parents. Nyarko (2011) conducted a study in Ghana to examine the relationship between parental school involvement and the academic achievement of young students aged 15 to 20 from various socio-economic backgrounds. The findings revealed a positive and significant correlation between mothers' school involvement and the students' academic performance. Active parental engagement in educational activities positively impacts children's learning and cognitive development.

Nyarko's (2011) research delineated parental involvement contextually, categorising it into school-based involvement, which encompasses communication with teachers regarding academic progress and school visits, and home-based involvement, which includes encouraging children's success, supervising homework, and participating in field trips. Gesare (2012) asserts that communication manifests through telephone conversations, brief visits to the school, or written

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correspondence between the instructor and others. It is essential for parents to maintain communication with the school to monitor their children's growth. This also facilitates the teacher's work, since they can consistently rely on parental support. There is a significant association between parental homework supervision and the schooling of preschoolers.

2.6 Challenges to Parental Involvement

Considering the importance of PI substantiated by global research, Lemmer and VanWyk (2004) questioned the scarcity of PI in educational institutions. Challenges to PI predominantly arise from the beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of instructors, administrators, parents, and even students, which are often context-specific and significant. Within the scope of this research, hurdles to PI will be categorised into four primary domains: attitudinal, resource-based/logistical, institutional, and expectations. The categories are not entirely discrete, as they are prone to overlap.

2.6.1 Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers may be influenced by several causes. Adequate parental educational experience is essential; its absence creates a significant obstacle due to the lack of appropriate skills for engagement. According to Siririka (2007), parents with restricted educational backgrounds lack understanding of the reasons and methods for participating in school activities. They are uncertain about their parental obligations. They seldom recognise that home education is the foundation for academic instruction in schools. In many instances, they lack awareness of procedures crucial for fostering their children's academic talents. Consequently, they are unclear about how to assist their children. Singh and Mbokodi (2004) verified that poor black parents appeared to lack comprehension of their duties in their children's schooling.

Kaperu's (2004) research in Namibia indicated that parents were uncertain about their roles, while Zoppi (2006) noted that some parents believe their own educational deficiencies inhibit their

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involvement in their children's education. Zoppi (2006) contended that language serves as a barrier, with parents believing that they would not be heard if they are unable to communicate in English. Their self-worth is eroded due to their inability to comprehend documents brought home and assist their children with schoolwork. Experiencing inadequate preparation, discomfort, or diminished confidence in their capacity to assist their children with academic tasks, parents feel frightened and perceive themselves as having little authority to intervene in a school's procedures. Consequently, they eschew interaction with the school and its educators. This is similarly evidenced in Parhar's (2006) study, which demonstrated that parents' personal discomfort and worry estrange them from the school. Such parents have an apathetic or fatalistic, if not aggressive, attitude towards parental involvement. They differ from parents who possess a "cando" mentality and perceive themselves as having an active involvement in their children's education.

Some parents think that the duty for education lies solely with the school (Siririka, 2007). Delgado-Gaitan (2004, as quoted in Zoppi, 2006) corroborated this conclusion, demonstrating that Latino parents exhibit a profound respect for teachers, regarding them as professionals deserving autonomy in their roles. Such parents typically perceive intervention with school activities as counterproductive. Perceiving instructors as authorities, many parents experience discomfort in challenging educators. In his 2004 work on experiences in South Africa, Phendla affirmed that certain parents believe instructors possess comprehensive knowledge. They fail to recognise that education requires collaborative effort. Parental participation is influenced not just by parental opinions. The attitudes of children are significantly important. Children significantly impact the extent of their parents' involvement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). They possess the capacity to nourish or suppress PI. They can facilitate or sever ties between educators and parents.

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Deslandes and Cloutier (2002) asserted that certain children exhibit a lack of enthusiasm for parental engagement in their education. They would prefer not to have parents present in their classroom or on a class excursion. Edwards and Alldred, as referenced in Deslandes and Cloutier (2002), affirmed that children are equally proactive in dissuading, circumventing, and hindering their parents' engagement as they are in encouraging it. Some students feel themselves as autonomous and entitled to a degree of privacy. They may thus regard PIas as an encroachment over their matters. Occasionally, such students deliberately obstruct home-school links by discarding notes or newsletters or suppressing comments of unfavourable days at school (Deslandes & Cloutier). The same authors disclosed that girls are more inclined to begin engagement, whilst boys are more prone to obstruct it. The mediating responsibilities of the kid are frequently disregarded, despite their significance.

Teachers' opinions significantly influence parental involvement both positively and adversely. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) asserted that schools' attitudes towards active parental involvement are often confusing. Although official discourse asserts that the home-school connection ought to be collaborative, equitable, and demonstrate a balanced allocation of authority, such conditions are frequently lacking in educational institutions. Parhar (2006) asserts that teacher ideology is pivotal in the exclusion of PI in educational institutions. Parhar (2006) contended that prevailing deficit ideas among contemporary educators adversely impact teacher-parent connections. The deficit hypothesis posits that a minority of parents are unable to engage with schools due to their lack of essential cultural and social advantages (de Marrais & LeCompte, 1995).

In other words, they are not integrated into the system to adequately engage in their children's education. Educators may perpetuate exclusionary behaviours concerning uneducated and socio-economically poor parents. Perceiving parents as lacking in educational experience leads

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instructors to establish inequitable relationships in which they exert authority over parents. Parhar (2006) contended that instructors' unfavourable attitudes and actions towards disadvantaged parents adversely affect efforts to engage these parents, hence exacerbating their marginalisation. Zoppi (2006) criticised the hostile or condescending attitudes of school officials towards parents. Such views hinder initiatives designed to enhance parental participation. Desforges et al. (2003) established that several parents feel deterred from engagement due to the manner in which certain teachers interact with them.

The instructors' views may stem from insufficient instruction regarding PI. Some educators really fear that parents within the school or classroom may compromise their professionalism. These educators are concerned that parents' perspectives may conflict with their own (Parhar, 2006). The validity of these anxieties is irrelevant. What is crucial is that they be authentic and that they significantly jeopardise PI. Educators with a "protective perspective" neglect to promote the involvement of impoverished parents, since they perceive themselves and educational institutions as primarily accountable for children's education.

2.6.2 Barriers of Expectations

The expectations of educators, parents, and children regarding parental involvement may be misaligned. Consequently, the three parties may operate at cross purposes. Siririka (2007) asserts that some teachers had expectations that exceed the capacities of parents. To exacerbate the problem, such educators may fail to empower the relevant parents to engage. The aforementioned teachers may require parents to assist their children with homework without providing guidance on how to do so. This inevitably exasperates the parents, the educators, and finally the students. Due to inadequate communication between educators and parents, both sides ultimately assign

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blame to one another for the insufficient assistance parents require from instructors to engage meaningfully in their children's education (Siririka, 2007).

Certain educators firmly assert that some parents abandon their responsibilities while seldom articulating their expectations for parental involvement. It is not surprising that some parents only visit the school when summoned or when issues arise concerning their children. Parents who attend school just to admonish instructors typically do so out of frustration with their involvement in their children's education. According to Zoppi (2006), parents must understand the school's definition of PI and the expectations the school has for them.

Parhar (2006) asserts that negative teacher expectations also affect instructors' efforts to engage disadvantaged parents. Such parents are regarded as illiterate and impoverished, leading to the assumption that they would not engage in their children's education. This denies parents the opportunity to acquire knowledge or get assistance in effectively supporting their children's education. The diverse viewpoints of teachers, administrators, and parents generate a variety of expectations, some of which may contradict. Vogels (2002) discussed that every school must address many sorts of parents, each with distinct needs and interests, and not all are equally adept at articulating them. The expectations of each partner must be well communicated to enable successful performance improvement.

2.6.3 Institutional Barriers

The frequently referenced communication gap between the school and parents is the primary factor contributing to parental involvement hurdles related to the school as an institution. Schools and their educators has the capacity to foster or impede productive relationships between parents and instructors. Certain parents are apprehensive about exceeding implicit boundaries in their interactions with educators (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). This engenders irritation and

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uncertainty among parents. Certain parents are disparaged by educational institutions and educators. Some educators believe their profession should be safeguarded against unjustified interference by parents. Such educators engage parents solely in the event of an issue.

Zoppi (2006) observed that parents are excluded from participation if their sole communication from the school pertains to negative matters or if they are uninformed of their rights to enquire about their children's education. It is not surprising that several low socioeconomic status parents perceive home-school interactions as superficial, artificial, insubstantial, and uncomfortable (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). The extent to which parents see a role in their children's education and their confidence in participating may be a hurdle. As parents require clarity on the school's interpretation of parental involvement (PI) and its expectations of them (Zoppi, 2006), schools that fail to convey their understanding of PI and the anticipated role of parents are responsible for fostering obstacles to PI.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) described schools that welcome parental involvement solely on their own non-negotiable conditions. Parents who do not adhere to these ideals are swiftly reprimanded. This does not incentivise parents to engage proactively in cooperation. Instead, it fosters parental fatalism towards their children's education. Such colleges evidently possess viewpoints that are detrimental to PI. Schools must embrace viewpoints that foster parental involvement, since the willingness to engage is contingent upon the invitations, demands, and possibilities created by the institution (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Institutionalised activities that engage parents in a restricted capacity significantly diminish parental involvement (PI) by concentrating authority within the institution and disregarding the demands and interests of parents (Parhar, 2006). The aforementioned examples indicate that schools that impose limits on parental involvement significantly disadvantage students.

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2.6.4 Resource-based/Logistical Barriers

The deficiency of certain resources significantly adversely affects PI. Intellectual resources significantly influence parental participation. Siririka (2007) said that parents with higher educational attainment create a home environment that is more favourable to learning compared to those with lower educational levels. They are likely to assist their children in various aspects of their education. Kohl & al. (2000) verify that inadequate personal education may result in parents lacking vision, confidence, or competence in helping their children. They also asserted that parental education is favourably correlated with parent-school interaction. Higher parental education correlates with increased engagement in children's schooling. Kohl and McMahon (2000) assert that a deficiency of prolonged personal educational experience has resulted in certain parents being devoid of pertinent skills or a suitable understanding of their role as co-educators.

Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) agreed with this perspective, stating that several working-class and rural black parents in South Africa encounter limitations in school attendance due to inadequate abilities. The shortage of material resources adversely affected PI. Siririka (2007) remarked on the Ugandan context, indicating that certain parents are so impoverished that they are unable to furnish critical resources for their children. Such parents are linked to inadequate supply of educational resources, which undermines their involvement in their children's education. Magara, as referenced in Siririka (2007), similarly noted the absence of reading resources. Materially impoverished families lack both access to and the means to purchase such items. This undermines parental engagement.

Siririka (2007) additionally noted that some Namibian parents possessed just hymn books and Bibles in their residences. In regard to the Ugandan context, Magara (2005) lamented the absence of home libraries. The absence of libraries has led to a deficiency in the cultivation of a passion

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for reading among parents and children. Without access to books at home and at libraries, children struggle to cultivate reading abilities. Krolak (2005) criticised the scarcity of reading resources in underdeveloped nations, which leads to an absence of a reading culture. In this context, parental involvement over a child's reading is significantly restricted.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004), Magara (2005), and Parhar (2006) all identified parents' time constraints as a barrier to parental involvement. Zoppi (2006) further asserted that economic issues negatively impact parents' capacity to engage effectively in their children's education, as they may need to maintain several jobs. It is evident that resource-based or logistical obstacles significantly hinder parental engagement in their children's education at the elementary school level.

2.7 Strategies to Improve Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

Considering the aforementioned hurdles, it is essential to implement intervention strategies to alleviate their effects. Such interventions must be context-specific to be successful. Liontos (1992, as cited in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003) asserted that all families possess strengths, parents can acquire new skills, parents hold significant insights regarding their children, the majority of parents genuinely care for their offspring, cultural differences are both legitimate and valuable, and numerous family structures are valid and noteworthy. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) substantiated these claims by asserting that various parents demonstrate differing levels of engagement in their children's schooling. Capacity denotes a synthesis of talents, values, motivations, and opportunities. Certain dimensions of ability are influenced by individual characteristics, while others are determined by societal frameworks.

Most elements associated with PI are amenable to modification through the educational process, namely through teaching and learning. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) contended that the

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fundamental processes of positive and respectful parenting may, in theory, be acquired. Nye et al. (2006) argued for educational and training programs that provide parents with the skills, talents, and resources necessary to assist their children in developing academic capabilities outside of school. Nye et al. (2006) and Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) proposed instructing parents to engage in mathematics and reading games with their children, offer rewards or incentives for academic performance, read collaboratively with their children, and involve them in mathematics or science-related activities beyond the classroom. Parhar (2006) identified four intervention strategies: the empowerment approach, the deficit approach, the political action approach, and the conceptualisation of parental involvement to encompass intangible forms of parental engagement.

Gyamfi et al. (2016) listed some factors that parents may explore to enhance their engagement in their children's schooling. The following are:

1. Parents must comprehend the significance of their oversight in their child's growth and exert additional effort to engage in their children's academic pursuits.
2. Parents must also establish regulations aimed at ensuring their children optimise their time after school.
3. Parents should establish a timetable for the kid to govern activities such as studying, playing, and sleeping.
4. The Ghanaian government should implement policies that promote parental engagement in children's education to achieve quality basic education for all.
5. Schools should engage with parents to include topics related to parental involvement in PTA meetings to enhance parents' understanding of the significance of monitoring their children's academic development. They might also organise workshops to aid parents in understanding how to effectively supervise their children's activities at home.

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6. Parents must make sacrifices and closely manage their children's activities, such as regulating television time, selecting appropriate programs, limiting playtime, overseeing homework, establishing study schedules, and, most importantly, providing assistance and encouragement throughout their studies.

Hamunyela (2008) also outlined several measures that the school may do to enhance parental participation. The following are:

1. Schools should include and engage parents and diverse community members (such as, healthcare experts, spiritual leaders, traditional and community-based authorities) in different school-related activities. Nonetheless, while schools endeavour to engage parents, some parents lack motivation and exhibit disinterest in fostering genuine and productive environments inside schools. Professional educators should thus maintain a favourable disposition towards parental engagement in their children's education.
2. Schools should organise meetings, include parents in genuine discussions, provide opportunity for parents to express their concerns, and consider their recommendations. Schools must to aggressively address parents' suggestions and feedback, while promoting their engagement in discussions that enhance students' academic success.
3. Schools ought to promote parental involvement by encouraging them to volunteer in classrooms and offer technical assistance for educational and extracurricular activities.
4. Schools have to connect their initiatives with community resources and provide parents opportunities to cultivate their skills as organisers and leaders by engaging them in diverse committees.
5. Schools should cultivate trust, respect, and robust connections with parents, guiding them in collaborating with their children at home and offering help in parenting.

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6. Teachers must to furnish parents with subject-specific knowledge to mobilise the requisite resources and enable them to cultivate understanding and acquire skills to support learning at home.
7. Moreover, educational institutions must to employ straightforward and cost-effective communication methods for parents, and they should provide translation services for those who do not speak or comprehend the official language (English).
8. Schools ought to familiarise parents and families with the substance of the early childhood education curriculum.

Hornby (2000) stated that several components exist at various levels within the school system, each contributing to the extent of parental involvement in their children's education. He proposed that all elements in the process of enhancing parental participation should be considered. These components function at four tiers of the educational system: government, local authority, school, and educators.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter presents an outline of the research technique utilised in this study on parental participation in children's learning at early development facilities in the Cape Coast metropolis. The chapter examined the research paradigm, methodology, design, study area, population, sampling technique, data collecting instrument, process, analysis, and ethical issues employed in the study. This chapter offers a thorough overview of the research methodology employed and the processes of data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study adopted an interpretative paradigm. The interpretive paradigm was used for this research to comprehend the lived experiences of parents and their perceptions of engagement in their children's learning activities. The study sought to comprehend the subjectivity of parents' experiences and interpretations regarding parental involvement; therefore, the interpretive paradigm is the most suitable choice as it prioritises qualitative research methods, including interviews, observations, and ethnography, to examine social phenomena.

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Furthermore, the interpretive paradigm enables the researcher to attain a profound comprehension of the social and cultural context in which early childhood centres in the Cape Coast metropolis function, which is crucial for elucidating the intricate dynamics of parental involvement in this particular environment. By collecting comprehensive and detailed data through qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and interviews, the researcher acquired a nuanced understanding of the experiences and perspectives of parents and teachers, which will be crucial for formulating strategies to enhance parental involvement.

3.2 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is a methodology that seeks to investigate and comprehend social phenomena by gathering and analysing non-numerical data, including textual or visual information, via techniques such as observations, interviews, and document analysis. Qualitative research is especially beneficial when the research enquiries seek to comprehend the experiences, viewpoints, and significances of persons within their natural situation, as exemplified by this study.

Qualitative research is suitable for investigating intricate and evolving phenomena, such as parental engagement in early childhood education, and enables a thorough examination of the subjective experiences and viewpoints of the participants. This study included several qualitative research approaches, including as observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, to gather comprehensive and extensive data on parental engagement in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The qualitative research design facilitated a fluid and adaptive approach to data gathering, enabling researchers to modify their procedures in response to emerging data and insights. The qualitative data analysis entailed a systematic and iterative approach to coding and categorising the data, allowing researchers to discern patterns, themes, and

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relationships, thereby fostering a comprehensive understanding of parental involvement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis.

The justification for employing a qualitative approach in this research is based on the nature of the research questions and the necessity for comprehensive insights into the phenomena (Allan, 2020; Liamputtong, 2020). Parental involvement in early childhood education is a comprehensive term encompassing communication, support, participation in activities, and collaboration with educators (Miller, 2020). Qualitative research enables researchers to explore the intricacies of parental participation, which may not be well represented by quantitative methodologies (Pathak et al., 2013). Furthermore, qualitative research is particularly effective in elucidating the context-specific elements that affect parental engagement. By conducting in-depth interviews or observations, researchers can investigate the distinct cultural, social, and economic aspects influencing parental engagement in particular early childhood centres within the Cape Coast Metropolis (Brown & Jones, 2021).

Moreover, utilising qualitative approaches like as interviews and focus groups, the research may collect rich and thorough data that offer extensive insights into parents' viewpoints, experiences, and perceptions. This data can elucidate the precise manner in which parental participation influences early childhood learning outcomes (Miller, 2020). Furthermore, qualitative research facilitates adaptability in data acquisition. The researcher can modify their enquiries and methodologies according to the replies and developing themes, facilitating a more organic and dynamic investigation of the study issue. Furthermore, early childhood education encompasses the relationships among parents, children, and educators. Qualitative research prioritises the lived experiences and viewpoints of participants, amplifying their narratives and comprehending the human dimension of parental participation (Allan, 2020). This study seeks to investigate both the

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domains of parental involvement in educational activities and the problems they encounter, as well as the measures that might augment their engagement.

Qualitative research enables an in-depth analysis of these elements, offering significant insights into the variables that obstruct or promote parental participation (Allan, 2020). Consequently, the qualitative findings can inform educational policies and practices concerning family engagement in early childhood education. Qualitative research, although beneficial for comprehensive knowledge, encounters drawbacks such as subjectivity, protracted data collecting and processing, challenges in generalising findings, and the possibility of researcher bias. Qualitative research predominantly depends on researcher interpretation, which may result in subjective conclusions and potential bias, since the researcher's perspective might affect data collection and analysis. Qualitative research often involves lower sample numbers, complicating the generalisation of findings to a broader population. The data mostly consists of text and graphics, rendering it difficult to quantify and statistically compare the findings. Ultimately, it is devoid of standardised methodologies and standards, resulting in discrepancies in data gathering and analysis.

3.3 Research Design

This research utilised a case study methodology. A case study is a research technique that thoroughly examines a specific phenomena or situation inside its real-life setting. Case study research is frequently employed to investigate intricate and dynamic phenomena, characterised by various influencing elements, necessitating a comprehensive and nuanced grasp of the subject. This research examines parental engagement in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. The case study design was chosen for this research as it facilitated the examination of the phenomenon within its natural context, enabling a comprehensive and

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contextual understanding of the experiences and viewpoints of parents engaged in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

The case study technique allowed the researcher to gather data via interviews, so fostering a thorough and nuanced knowledge of the issue. The case study technique is especially beneficial when research issues need a comprehensive knowledge of a specific occurrence, rather than generalisations about a broader population. This study sought to investigate certain facets of parental engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis, encompassing the domains of involvement, obstacles to participation, and solutions for enhancement. A case study methodology enabled the researcher to thoroughly explore these enquiries and get comprehensive and nuanced data about particular facets of parental engagement.

3.4 Study Area

The research was carried out in the Cape Coast Metropolis, situated in the Central Region of Ghana, located in the southern section of the country. The city has a total population of around 143,015 (Ghana Statistical Services, 2014). The population of Cape Coast predominantly consists of Fantes. As a seaside community, its inhabitants mostly engage in fishing, fish sales, and trade. Cape Coast is recognised for its historical importance as a principal hub for the transatlantic slave trade in the 18th and 19th centuries. The city hosts several historical buildings, notably the Cape Coast Castle, constructed by the Swedes in the 17th century and subsequently utilised by the British as a holding facility for enslaved Africans prior to their transatlantic transportation. Moreover, Cape Coast is renowned for its picturesque beaches, dynamic culture, and kind inhabitants. Individuals frequently remain in the city for many reasons, including administrative and business purposes, among others.

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Cape Coast is home to the premier secondary schools in the nation, along with Ghana's foremost institution for teaching and research, the University of Cape Coast, as well as Cape Coast Technical University, Mfantsipim School, Wesley Girls' High School, St. Augustine's College, Adisadel College, and Aggrey Memorial A.M.E. Zion Senior High School (Boakye, 2012; Ghana Tourist Board, 2013; Badu-Baiden, Boakye, et al. 2016). As noted by Akyeampong (1996), Cape Coast, like several other towns in Ghana, features various tourist attractions and hosts multiple Basic and Kindergarten schools that offer instruction to young children. Prominent basic and kindergarten schools in the area comprise: St. John's Anglican Primary School, Cape Coast Anglican Primary School, Cape Coast Seventh-Day Adventist Primary School, Ayifua St. Mary's Anglican Basic School, St. Lawrence Basic School "A" and "B", University of Cape Coast Kindergarten, and Pere Planque Preparatory School. These institutions offer fundamental education for children aged 4 to 12 years. These institutions are recognised for their dedication to delivering high-quality education, with qualified educators and adequate infrastructure. Several of these schools provide Kindergarten programs for children aged 3 to 4 years (Badu-Baiden et al., 2016).

3.5 Population

The research population comprised parents with children enrolled in early childhood educational facilities in the Cape Coast Metropolis. According to the Ghana Education Service Statistics (2020), the Cape Coast Metropolis has 176 early childhood centres with an enrolment of 5,388 kids. The targeted audience comprised parents of children enrolled at Ayifua St. Mary's Anglican Basic School, St. Lawrence Basic School "A" and "B", University of Cape Coast KG, and Pere Planque Preparatory School. From the aforementioned schools, 425 parents were chosen as the population for this study.

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3.6 Sample and Sampling Technique

The study employed a convenience sample strategy to choose parents with children enrolled in early childhood facilities within the Cape Coast Metropolis. Convenient sampling is a non-probability sampling method that entails selecting individuals who are readily accessible and amenable to participating in the study. This research involved parents who were dropping off and collecting up their children at four distinct early development facilities within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The sample was chosen based on the accessibility and willingness of parents to engage in the study. The sample size for this investigation was established based on data saturation.

Although there is no definitive guideline for establishing sample size in qualitative research, the sample size for this study was deemed sufficient since it achieved data saturation. Data saturation transpires when further data collecting yields no novel insights or themes, signifying that the sample size is adequate to sufficiently address the study issues. This study achieved data saturation after the 11th participant, signifying that more data collecting was unwarranted. The sample size of 11 was deemed adequate for this study, given the objective of the research was not to generalise the findings to a broader population, but to investigate the experiences and viewpoints of parents in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The chosen participants exhibited diversity in socio-economic status, age, and educational attainment, therefore offering a broad spectrum of viewpoints on parental engagement in early childhood education.

3.7 Data Collection Instrument

The data gathering tool employed in this study was an interview guide. The interview guide was created in accordance with the research questions and objectives of the study, and it was employed to conduct semi-structured interviews with the chosen parents. Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research approach that provides flexibility and depth in examining participants'

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experiences and viewpoints. The interview guide included open-ended questions that enabled participants to furnish extensive and personal comments on their experiences with parental engagement in early childhood education.

The interview guide was pilot tested with many participants during a visit to the school for Open Day and Parent Association Meetings to verify that the questions were clear and pertinent to the research questions and objectives of the study. The input acquired from the pilot testing was utilised to enhance the interview guide, rendering it more complete and useful for data collecting. The use of an interview guide as a data collecting instrument in this study is warranted by its efficacy in examining the experiences and views of participants in qualitative research. The interview guide offered a versatile and thorough methodology for data collection, allowing researchers to gather extensive and detailed information on parental engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The use of open-ended questions in the interview guide enabled participants to offer comprehensive and personal comments that would not have been achievable with closed-ended questions or survey tools.

The interview guide offered a framework for the interviews, guaranteeing that the research questions and study objectives were thoroughly addressed. The semi-structured format of the interviews allowed for flexibility and depth in examining the experiences and viewpoints of the participants. The participants were had the chance to articulate their perspectives and experiences, enabling the researchers to get a more thorough comprehension of the challenges pertaining to parental engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis.

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3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Study

Validity and reliability are crucial components of research, since they reflect the degree to which the study design, data collecting, and analytic procedures effectively assess what they are meant to measure and yield consistent results.

Validity: This denotes the degree to which a research accurately assesses its target construct. In other words, it assesses the degree to which the study findings truly reflect the real character of the topic under investigation. This study can employ numerous ways to enhance the validity of the findings.

3.9 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using theme analysis. Thematic analysis is a prevalent technique in qualitative research that entails recognising patterns and themes within the data. The analytical procedure encompassed many stages:

- **Familiarisation with the data**: The researcher engaged in thorough examination of the audio recordings and meticulously reviewed the transcripts many times to comprehend the facts.
- **Generating initial codes**: The researcher discerned significant chunks of the text and allocated codes to them. The codes were developed in accordance with the study questions and objectives.
- **Searching for themes**: The researcher consolidated analogous codes to establish preliminary themes. They further sought patterns and correlations among the topics using Thematic Analysis. Inductive coding involves the researcher identifying codes based on observations from the obtained data.

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- **Reviewing themes**: The researcher examined the themes to confirm their appropriate representation of the data. They also verified that the themes aligned with the study questions and objectives.
- **Defining and designating themes**: The researcher elucidated the themes and assigned them precise and succinct names. They also furnished a comprehensive delineation of each subject.
- **Producing the report**: The researcher compiled a report that used participant quotations to exemplify each subject.

The data was categorised into four topics as follows:

1. Domains of parental engagement in educational activities.
2. Parental perspectives on their responsibilities in educational activities.
3. Obstacles to parental engagement in children's education.
4. Strategies to enhance parental engagement in educational activities.

3.10 Trustworthiness of the Instrument

Trustworthiness denotes the level of trust in the data, interpretations, and methodologies employed to guarantee the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). The study's credibility, or the faith in its veracity and therefore its conclusions, is the paramount requirement (Polit & Beck, 2014). Shenton (2004) asserts that trustworthiness in a qualitative study seeks to substantiate the claim that the study's findings merit consideration.

In this study, the researcher delineated the protocols and processes requisite for a study to merit attention by readers (Amankwaa, 2016). While the majority of professionals concur that trustworthiness is essential, scholarly arguments persist about its definition (Leung, 2015). The criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985) are widely endorsed by qualitative researchers

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and will be the emphasis of this column. The requirements are credibility, reliability, confirmability, and transferability.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility denotes the degree to which a study narrative is plausible and suitable, particularly about the alignment between participants and the researcher (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000). Credibility is the primary element or criterion that must be established. It is regarded as the primary factor in creating credibility. Credibility requires the researcher to connect the findings of the study with reality to validate the veracity of those findings. Credibility possesses the greatest array of ways for its establishment, in contrast to the other three dimensions of trustworthiness (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002).

This research centres on the two predominant techniques—triangulation and member checking—commonly seen in qualitative research. Credibility emphasises aligning the created realities of participants with those depicted by the researcher (Patton, 2002). To assure the study's authenticity, the conducted interviews were audio-taped, allowing the researcher to revisit them easily and verify that the recorded reality was not a fake. The researcher verified the accuracy of the material by cross-referencing the transcriptions with the participants concerning their experiences during the interview.

3.10.2 Dependability

Dependability deals with the consistency of research results obtained over time. Dependability, according to Shenton (2004) can be established by using different methods of data collection and different times of collecting the data on the same research problem. In this study, dependability was established by having prolonged and concentrated engagement with the participants about the study, three to four weeks in this case.

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3.10.3 Confirmability

Confirmability denotes the extent to which the results may be validated or substantiated by others. Maxwell (2012) asserts that the researcher can proactively identify and articulate any unfavourable occurrences that challenge previous observations. Patton (2002) asserts that confirmability may be proven when the results are directly associated with the data itself. It pertains to data administration and the analysis of the data. This study verified confirmability by replaying the audio recording to respondents to check that the data accurately reflected their statements.

3.10.4 Transferability

Transferability emphasises the relevance of the findings to an alternative context (Shenton, 2004). Given that this is a qualitative study and no significant generalisations could be drawn, the researcher provided a comprehensive summary of the findings, allowing readers to determine the potential transferability of the data to their own research situations.

3.11 Ensuring the consistency and accuracy of the research tool

To guarantee the consistency and precision of the research instrument, the interview guide, numerous measures were implemented.

1. Initially, the interview guide was prepared in accordance with the study objectives and enquiries, using insights from specialists in early childhood education. The guide was evaluated and enhanced to guarantee clarity, conciseness, and relevance to the study.
2. Secondly, the interview guide underwent pre-testing with a limited sample of parents to detect any concerns regarding the phrasing or organisation of the questions. The comments from the pre-test was utilised to enhance the interview guide and to confirm its suitability for the research population.

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3. Thirdly, the interviewer who administered the interviews was instructed in the use of the interview guide to guarantee that she posed the questions uniformly and consistently to all participants. She was also instructed on how to elicit further information as required and to maintain neutrality and impartiality during the interviews.
4. Fourthly, the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to guarantee the accuracy of the obtained data and to verify that no material was overlooked. The transcripts were subsequently verified for correctness by comparing them to the audio recordings.
5. Ultimately, to guarantee the precision and uniformity of the data analysis, two research professionals separately assist in coding the transcripts and the study findings. All disputes were deliberated and settled by consensus.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Multiple ethical concerns were addressed during the research process to ensure the study was done ethically and with respect for the participants.

Initially, informed permission was secured from all participants prior to the commencement of the interviews. The study's goal and nature were elucidated to the participants, who were had the option to enquire and determine their willingness to join. The participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they might quit from the research at any moment without repercussions. Secondly, the confidentiality and identity of the subjects were maintained throughout the study. The participants were assured that their comments would remain anonymous and that their names would not be disclosed in any publications arising from the study. Pseudonyms were employed to safeguard the participants' identity. Thirdly, the research team guaranteed that the subjects had no injury or pain throughout the trial. The questions were crafted to be non-threatening, and participants were not required to provide any sensitive or personal information

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that may be detrimental or disturbing. Fourthly, the research team guaranteed that the acquired data was utilised just for the study's objectives and would not be disclosed to any unauthorised individuals or entities. The project received approval from the relevant institutional review board to confirm compliance with ethical guidelines for research involving human beings.

3.13 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, the research methodology chapter delineated the research design, sampling strategy, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures to be employed in this study. This study employs a qualitative case study methodology to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of parental engagement in learning activities in early childhood facilities in the Cape Coast metropolitan. A purposive selection technique was employed to choose a sample of early childhood facilities within the Cape Coast city. The chapter also addressed the research paradigm, research method, research design, study area, study population, sampling technique, data collecting instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis, and ethical issues employed in the study. 13925

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Overview

The chapter presents the results of the data collected from the field through unstructured interview guide to evaluate the extent to which parents are involved in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The data was recorded and transcribed thematically from the local languages. The study was aimed at to evaluate the extent to which parents are involved in early childhood education within the Cape Coast metropolis. The data obtained were to aid in achieving the question stated in the introductory chapter of this study. The research objectives were to: find out the areas of Parental involvement in learning activities in the early childhood centres; ascertain

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the parental views on their roles in learning activities in early childhood centres; explore the challenges of Parental involvement in child learning in early childhood centres, and examine the strategies for improving Parental involvement in learning activities in early childhood centres in the Cape Coast metropolis.

4.1 Background and Identification of the participants

The qualitative data for this study was obtained from interviews granted by 25 parents whose wards were enrolled at the Ayifua St. Mary's Anglican basic school, St. Lawrence Basic School "A" and "B", University of Cape Coast KG, and Pere Planque Preparatory School. To maintain confidentiality, the respondents were identified using codes instead of their names. The study reached a point called saturation at the 11th respondent, which means that no new significant information was being gained from the remaining respondents. Therefore, the study was based on the data collected from the first 15 respondent. The table present the background of 11 the respondents who participated in this study.

Table 1: Background and Identification of the Respondents

ID	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education
Parent A	Male	32	Cab Driver	Junior High School
Parent B	Male	40	Pharmacist	Tertiary Education
Parent C	Female	27	Trader	Junior High School
Parent D	Female	43	Teacher	Tertiary Education
Parent E	Female	24	Teacher	Tertiary Education
Parent F	Female	30	Teacher	Tertiary Education

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Parent G	Male	28	Teacher	Tertiary Education
Parent H	Female	45	Lecturer	Tertiary Education
Parent I	Male	40	Trader	Tertiary Education
Parent J	Female	26	Market Woman	Illiterate
Parent K	Female	29	Unemployed	Junior High School

(Source: Fieldwork, 2022)

The data in Table 1 above present the identification and background information of the respondents that participated in this study. From the data, majority (8 out of 11) of the respondents were females. The ages of the respondents range from 24 to 45, with the average age being 34. The majority of the respondents (7 out of 11) have a tertiary education, while 3 have a junior high school education and 1 is illiterate. The occupations of the respondents are diverse, with the majority being teachers (4 out of 11) and others being a cab driver, pharmacist, trader, lecturer, market woman, and unemployed. This data suggests that the respondents come from a variety of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, with a mix of both highly educated and less educated individuals.

Theme and Sub-Themes

More so, the interview data were using coding as a process to identify the main themes and sub-themes. The steps for classifying the data were reading the answers to the research questions, labelling them and grouping similar labels together. The goal here was to find the patterns that were repeated from the participants' answers. The identified pattern was put together to develop the themes and sub-theme.

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The theme that emerged from the data collected through an interview of parents on the topic of Parental involvement in learning activities at early childhood centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis included five major themes and twenty-six (26) sub-themes. The table below present the outlook of the main themes and sub-themes that characterized this study

Table 2: Theme and sub-themes

Theme	Sub-themes
Areas of parental involvement in learning activities	Preparing the child for school and providing necessary materials
	Checking on the child's performance and progress in school
	Helping with homework and additional studies
	Participating in school events and activities
	Teaching at Home
	Limited involvement due to work or other commitments
Parents methods for checking on the progress of their children at school	Preparation at home before enrolling the child in school
	Phone calls to the school
	Use of technology for communication between school and parents
Parental views on their roles in learning activities.	Importance of parental involvement in the beginning of a child's educational journey
	Helping with developing resources and learning materials
	Involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers
	Reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance
	Encouraging and guiding children academically
	Monitoring progress and ensuring the transfer of correct information
	Rewarding good performance and ensuring homework is completed
	Involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers
Challenges of parental involvement in child learning	Positive experiences with teachers and school communication:

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	Lack of issues or challenges with teachers and school
	Socioeconomic barriers to involvement in the school
	Limited involvement or trust in teachers to handle child's needs
Strategies for improving parental involvement in learning activities	Building Trust and Interaction with Facilitators
	Monitoring Child's Behaviour and Media Consumption
	School Involvement Initiatives and Support
	Providing for Basic Needs and Learning Materials
	Encouraging Active Participation and Assisting with Homework

Research Question one: What is the state of parental involvement in the learning activities of their children in early childhood centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis?

The first research objective sought to explore the involvement and engagement of parents in the education of their children in the early child hood centres. The responses from the participant suggest that the levels of parental involvement in their child's education varies greatly among the parents. The findings in relations to this objective were presented under the following sub-themes as deduced form the responses of the study participants; preparing the child for school and providing necessary materials, checking on the child's performance and progress in school, helping with homework and additional studies, participating in school events and activities, teaching at home, and limited involvement due to work or other commitments. An abstract overview of the responses suggest that some parents are very hands-on and actively involved in their child's education, while others are more passive and only provide the necessary materials and support for their child's education.

Theme 1: Preparing the child for school and providing necessary materials

One of the main forms of parental participation that emerged from the interview was some of the respondents mentioned that they actively involved their children education by getting them ready

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for school each morning, paying school fees, and purchasing books and other materials needed for school. During the interview, some of respondents (parents) indicated that they actively in involve themselves in preparing the child for school (getting them ready, ensuring they have necessary materials). A respondent remarked that:

> *""As a Cab Driver, my schedule can be unpredictable, but I make sure to always set aside time in the morning to get my child ready for school. This includes making sure she is dressed appropriately, has had breakfast, and is on time for her classes. I also take on the financial responsibility of paying her fees and purchasing any books or other materials she may need for her classes. I believe it's important for me to be involved in my child's education and make sure she has everything she needs to succeed."* ***(Parent A)***

Another respondent remarked that:

> *"I am a teacher, so I understand the importance of education and I strive to instil that value in my child. So, I try as much to take charge of everything of my child that has to do with academics. See, every morning, I make sure to get her ready for school by helping her pick out her outfit, making sure she has eaten breakfast, and ensuring her bag is well packed and organized. I like to check that she has all the necessary materials like her reading books, pencils and even homework intact for her classes. I also make sure that her bag is not too heavy for her to carry around all day. I want to make sure that my child is set up for success and is prepared for her day ahead."* ***"(Parent D)***

The assertions suggest that some parents mentioned that they actively get involve in preparing their children for school each morning, which includes ensuring they have everything they need for the day such as packed bags, appropriate clothing, and lunch. They also mention paying school fees and purchasing books and other materials needed for school. This shows that parents are making sure that their children have everything they need to succeed in school.

Additionally, some parents also mentioned looking through their children's books at home, which shows that they are actively involved in their child's education and want to ensure they are on track with their studies.

Theme 2: Checking on the child's performance and progress in school

Another form of involvements that emerged from the interview session was monitoring the child's progress and performance and progress in school. This includes visiting the school, asking questions after school, and paying for extra classes. Some of the parents remarked during the interview that:

> *" I value education and understand the importance of staying informed about my child's academic progress. I make it a priority to go to the school to check on her performance and ask questions about her progress. I also like to speak*

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> *with her teachers to understand any challenges she may be facing and discuss ways to improve. I am invested in my child's education and want to ensure she is reaching her full potential.* ***(Parent D)***

A female parent indicated that:

> *" Well. I sometimes stop by the school to check on her studies and speak with her teachers to understand how she is doing in class. I want to make sure she is staying focused and motivated in her studies"* ***(Parent D)***

> *" As a Lecturer, I always want to be informed about my child's performance and attitude in class. I visit the school frequently to check on his progress, and whether he is actively participating in class or not. I also like to speak with his teachers to understand any challenges he may be facing and discuss ways to improve. I believe that regular check-ins and communication with the school is key to my child's success."* ***(Parent H)***

> *" My sister that is the very reason why we are hustling in life. Is it for the future of our children. So, no matter how busy I am, I always make sure to set aside time to be involved in my child's education. Some of us didn't the opportunity to attend school. So, I try my possible best to get every he needs for school. Aside the school fees and books, I so pay for extra classes to give him an opportunity to excel. I talk to him after school and try to discuss with him about he learned at school."****(Parent I)***

Another respondent remarked that;

> *" I try to visit the school occasionally, to check on her performance. I like to speak with her teachers to understand any challenges she may be facing and discuss ways to improve. I know that staying involved in her education is important for her success"* ***(Parent K)***

In the responses, the parents mentioned going to the school to check on their child's performance and progress. This shows that they are actively involved in their child's education and want to stay informed about how their child is doing in school. They also mention asking questions after school to check on their child's progress. This shows that they are actively engaged with their child's education and want to ensure that their child is on track with their studies. The importance of parent involvement in their child's education is that it allows them to have a good understanding of the

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child's academic performance, and identify any areas where they may need extra support. By regularly visiting the school, the parents are able to stay informed about the child's progress and communicate with the teacher as needed.

Additionally, some parents also mentioned paying for extra classes for their child. This shows that they are willing to invest in their child's education and want to ensure that their child has the resources they need to succeed in school. The implication of checking on the child's performance and progress in school is that parents are taking steps to ensure that their child is performing well in school. Thus, by visiting the school, asking questions after school, and paying for extra classes, parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This can have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have the resources they need to succeed in school, and parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. Also, by going through homework with the child, they are also able to provide additional support and reinforcement of the material being taught in school.

Theme 3: Helping with Homework and Additional Studies

It was also evident from the interview that many of the parents involve in their children education by helping with homework and additional studies. This form of parental involve includes reviewing homework, teaching at home, and hiring extra classes tutors. The following are excerpts of the remarks made by some session of the parents during the interview:

> *"I take an active role in my child's education by regularly reviewing her schoolwork with her. I start by asking her to read passages from her books, and then I ask her to explain the meaning of certain words or phrases. This helps me understand her level of comprehension and identify any areas where she may be struggling. I also give her vocabulary quizzes and other exercises to reinforce what she's learned" [Parent B, Male, 40 years, Pharmacist, Tertiary Education]*

Another parent remarked that;

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> *"I am a hands-on parent when it comes to my child's education. I believe that helping with homework is an essential part of their learning process. I am always available to assist them with their homework and make sure they understand the material" [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

Another female respondent remarked that;

> *"Well, I help with my child homework. I also provide kids tablet for educational videos and online learning. I also got her a teacher at home who provides extra support and guidance, to ensure she is getting the most out of her education [Parent K, Female, 29 years, Unemployed, Junior High School]*

From the responses, many of the parents mentioned to involve in reviewing homework with their children, which is one of the most important forms of parent involvement in their child's education, and wanting to ensure that their child is on track with their studies. They also mention teaching at home and hiring a tutor for their child, which shows that they are willing to invest their time and energy in their child's education and want to provide additional support to their child.

This finding suggest that the parents are actively are taking steps to ensure that their child is performing well in school. Hence, by reviewing homework, teaching at home, and hiring a tutor, parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This can have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have the resources they need to succeed in school, and parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This finding also shows the importance of parents in providing additional support for their children in their education, not only by providing the necessary materials but also by ensuring that their children have the extra support they need to excel in their studies.

Theme 4: Participating in school events and activities

Furthermore, during the interview, many of that parents mentioned that they involve in their ward education by participating in school events and activities. Such events as mentioned by some of

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the parents includes fundraising, volunteering, and donating resources to the school. The following remarks were made by some of the parents:

> *"I have participated in a speech and prize giving day in the school where funds were raised to support the activities of the school"[Parent B, Male, 40 years, Pharmacist, Tertiary Education]*
>
> *" Just last year, I donated books to the school library. I have always felt it is important to be involved in my child's education, which is why I have taken an active role in providing supports to the school. My wife has also been involved in volunteering at the school; she provided cultural training to the children, teaching them about our customs and tradition"[Parent I, Male, 40 years, Trader, Tertiary Education]*

This assertion suggests that some of the parents participate in school events such as speech and prize-giving days, where funds were raised to support the activities of their child's school. This suggest that some of the parents support the school's efforts to provide a good education for their child. Also, some of the parents mentioned that they donate resources to the school, such as books, which shows that they are willing to invest in the school and its programs to benefit all students. The implication of such gesture is that the parents are able to support the school's efforts to provide a good education for their child. Also, the parents who involve in the school events and activities are more likely to be aware of the school's programs and resources, and be able to provide additional support if needed. This can have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have access to the resources they need to succeed in school and the school's programs and activities that can enhance their learning experience.

Moreover, by participating in school events and activities, parents are also able to connect with other parents and the school community, which can provide a sense of support and belonging for both the parents and the children. This can lead to a stronger sense of Parent-Teacher-School Association, and a more positive school experience for everyone involved – the child, teachers, and parents. Nevertheless, through the participation of the school events and activities, parents

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may also be abreast with the factors that influence decision-making of the school, and be more influential in influencing the policies and programs of the school.

Theme 5: Teaching at Home

Moreover, another form of parental involvements that emerged during the interview was teaching child while at home. This form of involvements or participated, as mentioned by some of the respondents included reading storybooks, doing colouring, and going through the child's books to see what they were taught that day.

In the responses, the parents mentioned to participate in their children education by teaching them at home. Some of them also mentioned reading storybooks and doing colouring. These show that some of the parents invest their time and energy in their child's education and want to provide additional support to their children. Additionally, some parents also mention going through their child's books to see their academic lesson- depicting that some of them actively engaged in their child's education and want to ensure that their child is on track with their studies. The consequence of this form participation is that the parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress in school, and be able to provide additional support if needed.

Additionally, the parents are able to provide a more personalized approach to their child's education, and have first-hand knowledge about individual strengths and weaknesses of their child, and help tailor the teaching methods to best suit their child's needs. This can lead to a more effective and efficient learning experience for the child. Besides, teaching at home can also provide a more comfortable and relaxed environment for the child, which can help to reduce stress and anxiety associated with school.

Theme 6: Limited involvement due to work or other commitments

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However, only few of the respondents to have limited involvement in their child education due to work or other commitments. Some of them also indicated not having time to visit the school, not being able to help with homework, or not participating in school events and activities. The remarks made some of the respondents were as follow:

> *"I have a very demanding job that takes up a lot of my time, so I am only able to attend Parents Association meetings when they are scheduled. However, I make sure to always attend these meetings as they are important for staying informed about my child's education."[Parent C, Female, 27 years, Trader, Junior High School]*

From the responses, some parents mention that they do not have time to visit the school due to work, and only come to the school for Parent Association meetings. Other parents mention that they are not able to help with homework due to their other commitments and responsibilities. The implication of this result is that some parents may have limited involvement in their child's education due to work or other commitments. This can have a negative impact on the child's education, as they may not have the resources they need to succeed in school and may not have the support they need to succeed. It also highlights the challenges that some parents may face in balancing their work and other commitments with their involvement in their child's education.

However, it is also important to note that even with limited involvement, parents are still providing resources and materials for their child's education, such as paying school fees, providing learning materials, and organizing extra classes, which shows that they still want to ensure that their child gets the best education possible and they are still making an effort to be involved.

That notwithstanding, it is important to consider that limited involvement can also have a positive impact on the child's education. It may lead the child to become more independent and self-motivated in their studies, as they must take on more responsibility for their own learning.

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On the whole, the responses from parents, as clustered under various sub-themes, show that many parents actively involved in their child's education, and actively take steps to ensure that their children have the resources they need to succeed in school. This includes preparing their child for school each morning, paying school fees, purchasing books and other materials needed for school, reviewing homework, teaching at home, and communicating with the child's teacher to stay informed about their progress. It was also found that many of parents participate in school events and activities, such as fundraising, volunteering, and donating resources to the school, which shows that they want to support the school's efforts to provide a good education for their child.

However, some parents have limited involvement in their child's education due to work or other commitments. This highlights the challenges that some parents may face in balancing their work and other commitments with their involvement in their child's education.

Overall, the various responses from parents sync with other research findings that show the importance of parental involvement in their child's education. For example, a study by Epstein, et al. (2002) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement. The study found that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers was associated with higher academic achievement.

Additionally, a study by Fan and Chen (2001) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement, and that parental involvement in homework is the most consistent predictor of academic achievement. This corroborates with the findings that parents review the homework with their children and helping with homework.

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Also, recent research studies also support the importance of parental involvement in their child's education. A study by Jeynes (2015) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement. This is consistent with the responses where many parents mentioned reviewing homework, teaching at home, participating in school events and activities, and communicating with the child's teacher to stay informed about their progress.

Another study by Desjardins and Markow (2016) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement.

In conclusion, the responses from parents align with the recent studies by Epstein, et al. (2002); Fan and Chen (2001); Jeynes (2015); Desjardins and Markow (2016); Votruba-Drzal, et al. (2019); Chen and Li (2018) that indicate that form of parental involvement in their child's education include paying school fees, buying books, participate in school events and activities, such as fundraising, volunteering, and donating resources to the school, and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement.

4.2 Parents Methods for Checking on the Progress of Their Children at School

The second research objective sought to find the various ways in which parents check on the progress of their children in early childhood centres within the Cape Coast Metropolis. the responses suggest that some parents are using technology to communicate with their child's school,

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but not all schools are utilizing technology for communication with parents. This highlights the importance of technology in education and the need for schools to invest in and implement technology to facilitate communication with parents and improve the overall educational experience for children. Additionally, remote communication through technology can be beneficial during disruptions and allows for more flexibility and convenience. However, some parents reported not receiving any communication from the schools, which highlights the need for schools to use multiple mediums of communication to involve parents in their child's education.

The findings in relations to this objective were presented under the following sub-themes as deduced form the responses of the study participants; preparation at home before enrolling the child in school; phone calls to the school, and use of technology for communication between school and parents

Preparation at home before enrolling the child in school

During the interview session, some of the respondent (parents) indicated that they prepare their children for school before they are enrolled. One of the parents mentioned that:

> *I start from home and prepare my child by introducing her to scribbling, colouring and alphabet reading and ensure they are physically and mentally ready before I enrol them in school. I am their first facilitator before they even step into the school.*

Parents who fall under this category view themselves as the first facilitators of their child's education and believe in starting the educational process at home. They introduce their children to basic skills such as scribbling, colouring, and alphabet reading, and ensure that their children are physically and mentally ready for school. This helps to ensure that their children are well-prepared for their educational journey and that they will be able to thrive in the school environment. This result implies that some of the parents are proactive and highly invested in their child's education, and they want to provide the best opportunities for their children to succeed. They believe that the

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early years are crucial for children's development, and they want to ensure that their children have a solid foundation before they start school.

Phone calls to the school

Also, some of the respondent (parents) indicated that the use phone calls as a means of checking on the progress of their children at school. A respondents noted that:

> *I normally place a phone call to the school to check on the progress my child is making. I'm a busy person. I cannot visit the school on regular basis.*

Parents who fall under this category often find it difficult to visit the school on a regular basis due to their busy schedule, so they rely on phone calls as the primary means of communication with the school. This allows them to stay informed about their child's progress, ask any questions they may have, and address any concerns they may have. Some parents may also use phone calls as a way to schedule visits or meetings with teachers and staff at the school.

Generally, phone calls serve as a convenient and efficient way for parents to stay connected with their child's school and ensure that their child is on track for success. However, it also implies that some of the parents get busy and do not have the time to visit the school on regular basis, which means that the school staff and teachers might not see the parents as much as they would like, which could potentially limit the opportunities for building a relationship with parents and for them to be more involved in their child's education. Also, relying on phone calls as the primary means of communication could lead to a lack of face-to-face interaction between parents and teachers, which could make it more difficult to fully understand and address any concerns or issues that arise.

Use of technology for communication between school and parents

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It was also evident from the responses that some of the parents use technology as a means of communication between parents and early childhood centres within the Cape Coast Metropolis. A parent remarked that:

> *The medium of communication between the child's school and myself is through telephone calls, WhatsApp chats and visits. I think the schools are a bit behind when it comes to leveraging these technologies for school Parent communication.*

Deductions from this remark suggest that some of the parents view technology as an important tool for staying connected with their child's school and staying informed about their child's progress. They may use mediums such as telephone calls, WhatsApp chats, and emails to communicate with the school. Additionally, they believe that technology can be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication between parents and schools.

These responses imply that some parents are aware of the potential of technology to facilitate communication and are utilizing it, but it also suggests that some schools might not be leveraging technology for communication with parents.

This result highlights the importance of technology in education and how it can be used to improve communication between parents and schools. It also implies that there is a need for schools to invest in and implement technology to facilitate communication with parents and improve the overall educational experience for children. Moreover, the use of technology also allows for remote communication, which could be particularly important during times of school closures or other disruptions (like outbreaks of diseases, and it accompanying lockdowns). It also allows for more flexibility and convenience for both parents and schools. In addition, it can help to keep parents more informed and involved in their child's education.

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Overall, these responses, as imminent from the various sub-themes, indicate that parents in the Cape Coast Metropolis are somewhat invested in their child's education and want to ensure that their children are well-prepared for school and have the best chances of success. They also want to stay informed and involved in their child's education and find ways to communicate effectively with schools.

The findings of this study corroborate that of Kraft, Mathew and Shaun (2011) that telephone calls with teachers remained the dominant mode of communication between teachers and students and this immediately increased preschool engagement as measured by homework completion rates, on-task behaviour and class participation. It is also in line with other research findings that shown that phone calls are a common means of communication between parents and schools (Dearing, McCartney, Taylor, & Weiss, 2007). Similarly, studies have shown that parents play an active role in their child's education and that they view the early years as crucial for children's development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002). Many other research has also shown that technology can be used as a tool for communication between parents and schools (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Shumow, Lee, & Lomax, 2007). It has been found that technology can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication and also provides opportunities for remote communication (Liu, Chen, & Liang, 2010).

Research question 2: What are the views of parents on their roles in their children's learning at the early childhood centers within the Cape Coast Metropolis?

The second research question the study sough to inquire about the views of parents with regards to their roles and what parents think of the essence of getting involved and engaged in their children's education. The responses from parents suggest that they believe in the importance of

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positive reinforcement and motivation in promoting good academic performance in their child and are willing to take active steps to support their child's education. It was also evident that most parents recognize the importance of their involvement in the beginning of a child's educational journey and are willing to be involved in school decisions, provide assistance to teachers, and monitor their child's progress. Additionally, some of the parent try to reinforce teachers' efforts to improve academic performance, actively encourage and guide their children academically, and ensure that homework is completed, and their child has enough rest for overall development. The findings also indicate that parents respond to information from schools regularly, participate in school fundraising and perform other tasks as expected by the schools.

Accordingly, the findings in relations to this objective were presented under the following sub-themes as deduced form the responses of the study participants, includes; the importance of parental involvement in the beginning of a child's educational journey; helping with developing resources and learning materials; involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers; reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance; encouraging and guiding children academically; monitoring progress and ensuring the transfer of correct information; rewarding good performance and ensuring homework is completed; and involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers

Theme 1: Importance of parental involvement in the beginning of a child's educational journey

During the interviews many of the parents asserted that their involvement in their child's education is crucial from the very beginning. They stress that it is necessary for parents to be actively involved in their child's education in order to ensure that they are receiving the support and

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guidance they need to thrive. They also believe that the early years are the foundation of the child's educational journey, and that parents play a critical role in setting their child up for success. Some of the specific remarks by some of the were as follows;

> *"As a parent, it is very necessary for parents to get involved because that's the beginning of the child's educational ladder. This involvement is crucial for laying the foundation for their future academic success."* ***(Parent D)***
>
> *"In my view, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child receives a proper education. So, you must take active interests in their studies and providing the necessary support and resources" [Parent E, Female, 24 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

Another female parent remarked that;

> *"Well, I can't say for many parents, but for me, I think as a parent, it is important to prioritize your child's education in order to secure their future" [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

These responses suggest that some parents recognize the vital role that they play in their child's education, and that they view their involvement in the early years as essential for their child's overall success. They also acknowledge that the early years are a foundation for the child's educational journey and they play a critical role in setting their child up for success. They also believe that it is their duty as a parent to be actively involved in their child's education from the beginning, to ensure that their child has the best chance of success.

This implies that many of the parents understand the importance of their role in their child's education and how they can best support their child's learning. As such may be willing to provide the necessary needed to support the education of the children. Secondly, it highlights the need for communication and collaboration between parents and educators. Lastly, it also highlights the

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importance of creating and providing an appropriate and suitable learning environment for children in their early years, to ensure that they have the best chance of success in the future.

Overall, the responses from the respondents suggest that parents view their involvement in their child's education as crucial, and that they believe that the early years are a foundation for their child's educational journey and success. This highlights the importance of encouraging and fostering parental involvement in early childhood education, as well as the importance of effective communication and collaboration between parents and educators.

Theme 2: Helping with developing resources and learning materials

I was eminent from the responses that many of the parents to assist in developing resources and learning materials for their children education. Many of the respondents argued that providing their children with additional resources and learning materials, they are able to support their child's education and improve their chances of success.

Some of the parent recounted that:

> *" I also take an active role in development of resources and learning materials for my child. I also research and find additional resources like the reading books and videos, that can supplement her education and provide a more well-rounded learning experience. I don't want to leave everything in the hands of her teachers, I always understand my child's needs and support her learning in a more meaningful way." [Parent B, Male, 40 years, Pharmacist, Tertiary Education]*

Another respondent remarked that;

> *While at home, I try to download educative cartoon videos or kids of his age reading or reciting poems and other engaging Videos. I trust that providing him with relevant and engaging materials is essential for his growth and development. I am always looking for ways to make learning fun and effective for my child [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

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This response suggests that parents recognize the importance of providing their children with additional resources and learning materials in order to support their education and enhance their chances of success. The implication of this findings is that parents are willing to assist in developing resources and learning materials for their children. This can have a positive impact on the child's education as having additional resources and materials can enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and interactive. Furthermore, it highlights that parents are willing to play an active role in their child's education and are interested in providing their child with the best possible learning opportunities.

This also implies that the parents who are actively involved in developing resources and learning materials for their children are more likely to be engaged in their child's education and more invested in their child's academic success. This can lead to greater communication and collaboration between parents and educators, which can ultimately lead to better academic outcomes for the child.

Furthermore, parental involvement in the development of resources and learning materials can also provide valuable insights and perspectives on how to best support the child's learning. Parents who are closely involved in their child's education are likely to have a good understanding of the child's learning style, strengths, and weaknesses, and can provide feedback and suggestions on how to best support the child's learning.

Theme 3: Involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers

In addition, the responses gathered from the interview suggest that some of the parents believe that by being involved in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers, they can support their child's education and improve their chances of success. Some remarks by the parents included;

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"I often participate in meetings and events organized by the school to stay informed about the decisions being made and provide input where necessary. This helps me better understand the needs of my child and the school, and allows me to support them in achieving their goals" [Parent E, Female, 24 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]

" I am a strong advocate for my child's education, and I believe that being involved in the school community is key to their success. Like I said, I am a teacher myself, so the chance to provide voluntary assistance to the teachers and staff, whether it be through tutoring, mentoring, or helping with classroom activities. I am always willing to lend my support and I work closely with the school administration to ensure that the needs of my child and other pupil are being met. I believe that by working together, we can create a positive and nurturing learning environment for all students, and I am dedicated to doing my part to make this happen." [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]

These responses suggest that parents recognize the importance of being involved in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers in order to support their child's education and enhance their chances of success.

Parental involvement in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers can have a positive impact on the child's education as it can lead to better decision making and a better understanding of the child's needs and how to best support their learning. This implies that involving in the school decisions and providing assistance to teachers, and that they could also consider the provision of sufficient resources and materials to support the child's education. Additionally, involving parents in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers can also provide valuable insights and perspectives on how to best support the child's learning.

Theme 4: Reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance

Additionally, from the interview responses, some parents were of their opine that their involvement in their child education reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance. A respondent, during the interviews, remarked that:

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> *"I guess my involvement in my child education reinforces teachers' efforts to improve my child's academic performance. By working together, we can achieve better academic outcomes for my child" [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

This response suggests that parents recognize the important role that teachers play in their child's education, and that they are willing to support and work in collaboration with teachers to help their child achieve academic success. It also indicates that the parents are actively involved in their child's education and wants to contribute to their child's academic performance.

This also implies that providing training and support to parents to help them understand how they can best support their child's learning and work with teachers to improve their child's academic performance. Additionally, parental involvement in supporting teachers' efforts to improve academic performance can also provide valuable insights and perspectives on how to best support the child's learning.

Theme 5: Encouraging and guiding children academically

Again, many of parents express the belief that their involvement in their children education provides guidance and support to their child to help them succeed academically. Some of the verbatim expressions from the respondents include:

> *"I believe that as parents, we play a vital role in our children's education. By being involved in their academic lives, we are able to provide guidance and support that helps them succeed. Whether it's helping with homework, attending parent-teacher meeting, or volunteering at the school, our involvement is crucial to ensuring that our children have all they need to succeed" [Parent F, Female, 30years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

Another respondent said that;

> *"I truly believe, my involvement in my child's education is crucial for her success in life. I see myself as a partner in their learning journey, so I work together with the teachers to provide the best support for*

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> *them. I make sure to stay informed on their progress and communicate regularly with their teachers to ensure they are receiving the appropriate instruction."*
>
> *I have seen how my involvement in my child's education has helped him to bloom. I believe my involvement gives him the confidence he needs to succeed in school and achieve his dreams*

Another parent affirmed that;

> *"Well, I am firmly convinced that being active in my child's education is one of the most important things in life, and the best way to helping her develop her growth, skills and knowledge she needed in life… I believe that my involvement is essential to their success".*

From statements like these, it is apparent that the involvement of parents guiding and supporting their child academically through activities such as visiting the school, checking on their child's progress, and playing educational games encourages and guiding children academically. They also mention the importance of being present in the child's school life, thus attending school meetings and controlling the child's daily activities to promote their education.

The responses in the study suggest that parents see their involvement in their child's education as important for their child's development and success. They express the belief that they should be involved in their child's education from the beginning and that their involvement is necessary for the child's educational ladder. They also emphasize the importance of being involved in the child's education from the early stages, as that is when the child is starting to learn and pick up new skills.

The responses also suggest that parents see themselves as partners in their child's education, helping to develop resources and learning materials, providing assistance to teachers, and reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance. Additionally, parents express the belief that they should be involved in the decision-making process at the school level, and that they

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should provide voluntary assistance to teachers and other parents in matters related to the school. The responses also indicate that parents see their role as encouraging and guiding children academically, by checking on their child's progress and making sure that the right information is being taught. They also see the importance of being present in the child's school life, attending school meetings and controlling the child's daily activities to promote their education.

Theme 6: Monitoring progress and ensuring the transfer of correct information

Moreover, some of the respondents during the interview indicated that the involvement in their children education have paved way for them monitor their academic progress and ensuring the right form of education or transfer of correct information. Some of the respondents note that:

> *" ... My involvement in my child's education has been crucial in ensuring that she receive the best possible education..., I am able to monitor her progress and identify the areas where she may be struggling. This allows me to work closely with her teachers to provide additional supports. I also believe that my involvements have helped to ensure that my child is receiving accurate information." [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

This other male parent affirmed that;

> *"I have found that this involvement has been invaluable in helping me to monitor his development and ensure that he is receiving the right form of education." [Parent I, Male, 40 years, Trader, Tertiary Education]*

These statements indicate that parental involvement in their children education, helps parents to actively monitor the academic progress of their children and ensure that the correct information is being taught. By involving in their child education, parents can get a sense of how their child is progressing and how they are interacting with their classmates and teachers. They can also get a sense of what their child is learning and if the child is keeping up with the class and school.

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Attending school meetings gives parents an opportunity to stay informed about their child's education and the activities of the school.

Theme 7: Rewarding good performance and ensuring homework is completed

Finally, a number of the parents also intimated that the involvement in their children education provides them the opportunity to reward their child's good performance. the Parents express the belief that they should reward their child for good performance and provide encouragement to complete their homework as a way of promoting good academic performance. Some of the verbatim expressions from the respondents include:

> *I am of the conviction that being an active and supportive parent in my child's education is crucial. One of the ways I do this is by rewarding her good performance, through a small token of appreciation like toffees, biscuit or a special outing to the children play parks. I think that this not only helps to recognize my child's efforts, but also encourages her to continue to endeavour for good behaviour [Parent F, Female, 30years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

Another respondent remarked that;

> *As a parent, I resolutely believe in the importance of being involved in my child's education. Not only does it give me the opportunity to stay informed about their progress and address any issues that may arise, but it also allows me to appreciate her personal growth and development. It is satisfying see your child learns to recite the alphabets and do some counting… Seeing the tangible improvement in their academic is a great motivator for me to continue putting in effort.*

The implication of these responses is that parents see the importance of rewarding their child for good performance, as it can serve as a motivation for the child to continue to do well in their academics.

On the whole, from the responses as out outlined under the various sub-themes, it is clear that parental involvement contributes immensely to the beginning of a child's educational journey. Thus, it is necessary for parents to get involved in their child's education in order to provide the

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foundation for the child's future academic success. Parents also recognize the importance of developing resources and learning materials, as well as being involved in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers in order to support their child's education.

Additionally, parents acknowledge the importance of reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance, and many of them actively encourage and guide their children academically, both at home and at school. Parents also express their willingness to monitor their child's progress, ensure the transfer of correct information, and reward good performance. They also ensure that homework is completed and that their child has enough rest for overall development.

The findings indicate that parents respond to information from schools regularly, they participate in school fundraising and support the school when requested. It is clear that the parents are willing to perform task that are expected of them from the schools. Apart from their roles performed at school, there are other roles they perform at home to ensure that the child becomes intelligent. Most of the parents agreed that they give rewards to their children for good performance, guide and support their children academically, participate in their children's learning activities, punish their child for bad behaviours that may interfere with proper learning, read to their children to promote their language development, play games with their children at home and ensue that they have enough rest needed for their overall development. Evidently, various roles are being played by the parents to ensure the teaching and learning of their wards. The views of the parents seem to show that a lot of resources in terms of money and time are spent on their children. Children at the early years of their educational life, needs the attention of the Parent as well as the facilitator. (Sirirka,2007). Wyk (2010) agrees with the view of Henderson and Berla (1994) who assert that when schools work with parents to support learning, learners tend to succeed not only in school,

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but through-out life. Research on effective schools, those where students are learning and achieving, has consistently shown that these schools despite often working in low social and economic neighbourhoods have strong and positive school-home relationship. (Sanders &Sheldon,2009) more importantly, these effective schools with positive school climate, have made a real effort in reaching out to their students families in in order to bring about good cooperation. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) maintain that schools become successful when a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community has been established

Research question 3: What are the challenges of parental involvement in children's learning at the early childhood centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis?

The research question of this study sought to inquire about the various problems parents face with the centre, facilitator, administrators and heads of their children. The data as gathered from the respondents suggests many some parents rather had positive experiences with the teachers and school communication, and reported satisfaction with the level of involvement and communication they had with teachers and the school administration. Also, many of the parents indicated not to face any challenges involving in their child education, others indicated to encounter socioeconomic barriers, and significant few of them mentioned have limited time for involvement and trust in teachers to handle child's needs. The Reponses from the parent were analysed and present in the sub-themes below.

Theme 1: Positive experiences with teachers and school communication

This sub-theme includes responses from parents who reported positive experiences with teachers and school communication. These parents expressed satisfaction with the level of involvement and

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communication they have with teachers and the school administration. Some of the verbatim expressions from these parents include:

> *"I have had nothing but positive experiences with the school my child attends. The staff is always friendly and willing to help with any concerns or questions I may have. My child is thriving academically and socially, and I credit that to the strong support system in place at the school [Parent A, Male, 32 years, Cab Driver, Junior High School]*

This is what another parent affirmed;

> *"I haven't any major problem yet... if for nothing at all, I have been extremely impressed with the dedication and commitment of her teachers. They go above and beyond to ensure that my child is engaged in their learning and that they are understanding the material. I like the attention and care given to my child and other children in the school... I have the teacher's phone number so I call her often to enquire about my child. I also sometimes walk in unannounced to see what goes on in class [Parent B, Male, 40 years, Pharmacist, Tertiary Education]*

Another female respondent said that;

> *Well… I have not experienced any challenge that much. I know every school has its problems, but I have been very pleased with the level of communication and collaboration between myself and the school so far. They make sure to keep me informed of my child's progress and involve me in the decision-making process [Parent C, Female, 27 years, Trader, Junior High School]*

> *My experience with the teachers and school has been nothing but positive. They are always available to communicate with me and make sure my child is getting the support they need*

From these responses, we can deduce that some parents have positive experiences with the teachers and school. Some of the parents expressed that the staff of the various schools are friendly and helpful, and that their children are thriving academically and socially due to the strong support systems of the schools. Some of the parents were also impressed with the dedication and commitment of the teachers, who go above and beyond to ensure that their child is engaged in their learning and understanding the material. They also appreciate the attention and care given to their

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children and other children in the school. Overall, the implication of these responses is that the schools have positive reputation among parents and are providing supportive and engaging learning environment for their children. It also indicates a high level of teacher-parent relationship and open communication which is important for the child's academic and social growth.

Theme 2: Have no issues or challenges with teachers and school

Some of the parents indicated that they do not face any issues or challenges with the teachers and school in terms of communication and involvement in their child's education. These parents, similarly, expressed the sense of trust and satisfaction with the teachers and the school's ability to handle their child's needs and communicate with them effectively. They also express their willingness to actively monitor their child's progress and ensure the transfer of correct information from the teachers to the child. Some specific verbatim expressions from the respondents that exemplify these inferences include:

> *" haven't had any problems with the teachers or school, the teachers always call me if there is any problem or need me" [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

> *I haven't had any major issues or challenges with the school. The teachers have been very professional in keeping us informed about our child's progress and addressing any concerns we have. I mean that's they are being paid for. It their job [Parent I, Male, 40 years, Trader, Tertiary Education]*

Another parent remarked that;

> *"I don't have any issues with the teacher and the school, they handle everything well" [Parent J, Female, 26years, Market Woman, Illiterate]*

> *"I am satisfied with the way the teacher communicates with me and handles my child's needs" [Parent K, Female, 29 years, Unemployed, Junior High School]*

These statements indicate that some of the parents have a high level of trust and satisfaction with the teachers and school's ability to handle their child's needs and communicate with them

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effectively, as such do not have any issues or challenges with the teachers or school. They feel satisfied with the way the teacher communicates with them and handle their child's needs.

Theme 3: Socioeconomic barriers to involvement in the school

Nevertheless, some of the parents mentioned to encounter some socio-economic barriers while trying to in terms of involvement in their child's education. Some of these socioeconomic barriers as mentioned by the parents included lack of transportation, financial constraints, exclusion and discrimination, limited English proficiency, long working hours, lack of trust in the school system, limited education level, single parent or families with multiple children, and family instability or crisis. Other parents expressed the feelings of inadequacy, as they believe that their socio-economic status limits their ability to be involved in their child's education. Some specific verbatim expressions from the respondents that exemplify this include:

> *"For me, the issues of transportation have been a major barrier for us. We live miles away, and as you can see, we don't have a car and the public transportation to the school is not reliable, so it's sometimes difficult for me to attend meetings or events at the school." [Parent E, Female, 24 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

This other respondent affirmed that;

> *"My sister it's all about the money. Everything is money these days. We're a low-income family and finances are always tight. It's hard for me to afford to participate in school activities or buy materials for my girl's education, but I try as to get her some stuff. We are still trying." [Parent G, Male, 28years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

Another respondent remarked that;

> *"I won't lie you; language is a big barrier for me. I'm not fluent in English and it can be hard for me to understand communication from the school or participate in school activities." [Parent J, Female, 26years, Market Woman, Illiterate]*

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> *"I work long hours and multiple jobs, so it's hard for me to find the time to attend school events or meetings." [Parent C, Female, 27 years, Trader, Junior High School]*

Another female respondent affirmed that;

> *"I'm a single parent with multiple children, so it's hard for me to devote the time and energy to my child's education that I would like to." [Parent H, Female, 45 years, Lecturer, Tertiary Education]*

Another respondent remarked that;

> *"We've been dealing with a lot of family instability and crisis, and it's been hard to focus on our child's education. It's been difficult for us to be involved." [Parent E, Female,24 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

These responses suggest that parents face a range of socio-cultural challenges in their effort to be involved in their child's education. These challenges can make it difficult for parents to attend school meetings or events, understand school communication, participate in school activities, or provide support for their child's education at home. The implications of these barriers to parental involvement in their children education are that it can result in a lack of support for the child's education and limit the child's potential for academic success.

Theme 4: Limited involvement or trust in teachers to handle child's needs

Finally, a good number of the parents also submitted to have limited involvement of parents in their child's education, and a lack of trust in teachers to handle the child's needs. Also, some of the parents express a lack of understanding or knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities. Some specific verbatim expressions from the respondents that exemplify include:

> *"I don't have time for such things. once I drop her, I expect the teacher to take care of her and when it's closing I come to pick him and send him to his mother." [Parent F, Female, 30years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

> *"I don't understand what my child is learning in school, so I leave it to the teacher to handle"* [*Parent L]*

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"I don't have the time to be involved in my child's education, so I trust the teacher to handle it" [*Parent M]*

These statements indicate that some of parents have a limited involvement in their child's education, and a lack of trust in teachers to handle the child's needs. Some of them also express a lack of interest, time, understanding and, knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities. Whiles other expressed the lack of understanding or knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities.

The study shows that some of the parents lack adequate knowledge on how they can effectively contribute towards the growth and development of the schools where their children are enrolled. As Siririka (2007) reveals, parents with limited educational experience do not know why and how they can be involved in school activities. They are unsure of their responsibilities as parents. They also hardly appreciate how education at home serves as the basis for education at school. In most cases they are unaware of practices essential to helping their children develop academic skills.

In other cases, they are uncertain about how to help their children. This is corroborated by Singh and Mbokodi (2004) who found that disadvantaged black parents did not seem to understand their roles as parents in the education of children. Kaperu's (2004) Namibia-based research also confirms that parents were not quite sure of their role while Zoppi (2006) states that some parents think their own lack of education precludes them from participating in their children's education.

Research question 4: What strategies can be implemented to improve parental involvement in children's learning at the early childhood centers in the Cape Coast Metropolis?

The fourth and final research question of the study was to find out the strategies adopted by parent to improve their involvement in school and learning activities of the children at the early childhood

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centres. The analysis of the data collected from the respondent outlined the follow; building trust and interaction with the teachers, monitoring child's behaviour and media consumption, school involvement initiatives and support, providing for basic needs and learning materials, and encouraging active participation and assisting with homework, as some of the strategies employed by the parents for improving parental involvement in learning activities of their children. The responses from the respondents are further discussed below.

Theme 1: Building Trust and Interaction with Facilitators

This sub-theme highlights the importance of building trust and interaction between parents, facilitators, and the school as a means of promoting Parental involvement in the education of their children. Parents in this sub-theme express the belief that trust and interaction are key factors in allowing parents to actively participate in their child's education. Some of the verbatim expressions from the respondents in this sub-theme include:

> *" I think that there's the need for trust to be built amongst the parents, facilitators and school to make room for parents to interact with the facilitator to help in educating the child." [Parent D, Female, 43 years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]*

These statements indicate that some of the parents believe that building trust and interaction is crucial in order for parents to be able to actively participate in their child's education. Accordingly, some of them viewed the need for mutual trust as necessary tool for parents to be able to communicate and interact with facilitators, and that these interactions can help in the education of their child.

The implication of these responses is that some of the parents see the importance of trust and interaction in allowing them to be more involved in their child's education. They recognize that

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trust is necessary for effective communication and interaction between parents, facilitators and the school. They also understand that interaction with facilitators can help in educating their child.

On the whole, the findings indicate that parents are willing to build trust and interact with teachers and the school to support their child's education. This can be a valuable insight for educators and school administrators to consider when developing programs and policies to support Parental involvement in the education of their children.

Theme 2: Monitoring Child's Behaviour and Media Consumption

Another strategy that emerged from the interview is the monitoring of the child's behaviours and media consumption in order to promote good academic performance. Some expressions from the parent include:

> *"Parents should monitor their child's behaviour before and after school. Monitor the games and kind of cartoon they watch on television." [Parent C, Female, 27 years, Trader, Junior High School]*

These statements indicate that the parents believe that monitoring their child's behaviour and media consumption is crucial in order to ensure their child's academic success. This suggests that the parents see the importance of monitoring their child's behaviours and media consumption in order to ensure good academic performance. They recognize that certain behaviours and media consumption can have a negative impact on their child's education and they are willing to take steps to ensure that this does not happen. This can be an important information for educators and school administrators to consider when developing programs and policies to support student success.

Theme 3: School Involvement Initiatives and Support

Some of the respondent similarly highlights the importance of school involvement initiatives and support in promoting Parental involvement in the education of their children. The parents posits that the initiatives and support from the school can play a role in encouraging parents to be more

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actively involved in their child's education. Some of the verbatim expressions from the respondents in this sub-theme include:

Another parent suggested the schools should invite motivational speakers to enlighten parents on school involvement. Head teachers to organise meetings to educate parents on their involvement, volunteer in class activities, participate in field trips with their children.

These statements indicate that the parents believe that initiatives and support from the school can play a role in encouraging parents to be more actively involved in their child's education. The implication of these responses is that parents see the importance of initiatives and support from the school in promoting Parental involvement in their child's education. They recognize that initiatives such as motivational speakers, meetings, and opportunities for volunteerism and participation in class activities and field trips can help to educate and engage parents and make them more actively involved in their child's education. The views of the parents seem to show that they are willing to participate in school involvement initiatives and support to support their child's education and that it's a vital aspect of parental involvement in the child's education.

Theme 4: Providing for Basic Needs and Learning Materials

Additionally, some of the parents underscored the importance of providing for basic needs and learning materials in promoting good academic performance. These parents in their submissions expressed the need for providing basic needs and learning materials in ensuring the academic success of their children. A parent had this to say during the interview:

> *parents should limit watching of television of their children and read stories to their children and help with homework. They should also provide good*

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food and clothing for their children and also provide learning materials for the children. Encourage parents to attend meetings regularly.

These statements shows that most of the parents are in view of the fact that providing for basic needs and learning materials is essential in shaping the academic success of their children.

The implication of these responses is that parents recognize that certain basic needs such as good food, clothing, and appropriate learning materials are essential for a child's development and academic success. They also understand that by limiting their child's television watching and encouraging reading, it can improve their child's language development and focus. They also understand that by providing support and assistance with homework, it can help their child retain information and improve their understanding of the material.

Additionally, the parents recognize the importance of attending PTA meetings regularly. They understand that attending meetings can provide them with important information about their child's education and progress and provide opportunities for them to communicate with teachers and school administrators. Overall, the views of the parents seem to show that providing for basic needs and learning materials can help to create a conducive learning environment for the child, giving the child the opportunity to succeed academically and socially.

Theme 5: Encouraging Active Participation and Assisting with Homework

Finally, the response from the parents highlights the importance of encouraging active participation and assisting with homework in promoting good academic performance. the parents suggested that encouraging active participation and assisting with homework can play a role in ensuring their child's academic success. Some of the verbatim expressions from the respondents in include:

"Parents should do their part by helping with homework but should not do it for the child." [Parent F, Female, 30years, Teacher, Tertiary Education]

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These statements indicate that parents in this sub-theme believe that encouraging active participation and assisting with homework is crucial in order to ensure their child's academic success. This, similarly, depicts that parents recognize that homework is an important tool for reinforcing and consolidating the material learned in class and that by assisting with homework, it can help to improve the understanding and retention of the material of the child. Some of the parents also understand that encouraging active participation can help their child to develop good learning habits and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Overall, the responses suggest that parents are willing to take an active role in encouraging active participation and assisting with homework to support their child's education and that it's a vital aspect of parental involvement in the child's education. It can be a valuable insight for educators and school administrators to consider when developing programs and policies to support student success.

The findings indicate that parents have specific roles expected of them to play in the education of their children. All participants agreed that parents should provide learning materials to children, help with homework at home, provides good food for children to grow healthy and volunteer in classroom activities. Children are more likely to apply themselves and perform better in school when their parents show interest in their school work, are willing to assist them with homework and are willing to hold their children accountable for completion of school assignment (Houtenville & Conway, 2008).

Parental involvement in the education of children begins at home with the parent providing a safe and healthy environment, appropriate learning experiences, support and a positive attitude about school. Epstien (2009). Several studies indicate increased academic achievement with students

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that have involved parents. (Epstien 2009; Greenwood and Hickman, 1991; Henderson and Bella 1994; Rumberger Et Al,1990; Swap,1993; Whitacker and Fior,2001). Studies also indicate that parental involvement is most effective when viewed as a partnership between educators and parents (Davies, 1996; Emeagwaly,2009; Epstien, 2009). By examining parents' and teachers' perceptions educators and parents should have a better understanding of effective parental involvement practice in promoting students achievement.

Epstien (2009) alleged that there are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership in school, family and community. The main reason for such a partnership is to aid in succeeding at school. Other reasons include improving school climate and school programs, developing parental skills and leadership, assisting families in connecting with others in the school and the community, and assisting teachers with their work. All these reasons emphasize the importance of parents playing an active role in their children's education and keeping a strong and positive relationship with schools. The study results suggest that some parents are very hands-on and actively involved in their child's education, while others are more passive and only provide the necessary materials and support for their child's education. One of the main forms of parental participation that emerged from the interview was some of the respondents mentioned that they actively involved their children education by getting them ready for school each morning, paying school fees, and purchasing books and other materials needed for school. Additionally, some parents also mentioned looking through their children's books at home, which shows that they are actively involved in their child's education and want to ensure they are on track with their studies.

Another form of involvements that emerged from the interview session was monitoring the child's progress and performance and progress in school. This includes visiting the school, asking

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questions after school, and paying for extra classes. This shows that they are actively involved in their child's education and want to stay informed about how their child is doing in school.

Some parents also mentioned paying for extra classes for their child. This shows that they are willing to invest in their child's education and want to ensure that their child has the resources they need to succeed in school. The implication of checking on the child's performance and progress in school is that parents are taking steps to ensure that their child is performing well in school. Thus, by visiting the school, asking questions after school, and paying for extra classes, parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This can have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have the resources they need to succeed in school, and parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. Also, by going through homework with the child, they are also able to provide additional support and reinforcement of the material being taught in school.

Parents indicated that they were involved in reviewing homework, teaching at home, and hiring extra classes tutors. These are among the most important forms of parent involvement in their child's education, and wanting to ensure that their child is on track with their studies. This finding suggest that the parents are actively are taking steps to ensure that their child is performing well in school. Hence, by reviewing homework, teaching at home, and hiring a tutor, parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This could have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have the resources they need to succeed in school, and parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress and be able to provide additional support if needed. This finding also shows the importance of parents in providing additional support for their children in their education, not only by providing

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the necessary materials but also by ensuring that their children have the extra support they need to excel in their studies.

Many of that parents mentioned that they involve in their wards education by participating in school events and activities. Such events as mentioned by some of the parents includes fundraising, volunteering, and donating resources to the school. This assertion suggests that some of the parents participate in school events such as speech and prize-giving days, where funds were raised to support the activities of their child's school. This suggest that some of the parents support the school's efforts to provide a good education for their child. Also, some of the parents mentioned that they donate resources to the school, such as books, which shows that they are willing to invest in the school and its programs to benefit all students. The implication of such gesture is that the parents can support the school's efforts to provide a good education for their child. Also, the parents who involve in the school events and activities are more likely to be aware of the school's programs and resources and be able to provide additional support if needed. This could have a positive impact on the child's education, as they are more likely to have access to the resources they need to succeed in school and the school's programs and activities that can enhance their learning experience. Moreover, by participating in school events and activities, parents are also able to connect with other parents and the school community, which can provide a sense of support and belonging for both the parents and the children. This could lead to a stronger sense of Parent-Teacher-School Association, and a more positive school experience for everyone involved – the child, teachers, and parents. Nevertheless, through the participation of the school events and activities, parents may also be abreast with the factors that influence decision-making of the school and be more influential in influencing the policies and programs of the school.

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Another form of parental involvements that emerged during the interview was teaching child while at home. These show that some of the parents invest their time and energy in their child's education and want to provide additional support to their children. The consequence of this form participation is that the parents are more likely to be aware of their child's progress in school and be able to provide additional support if needed.

Additionally, the parents are able to provide a more personalized approach to their child's education and have first-hand knowledge about individual strengths and weaknesses of their child and help tailor the teaching methods to best suit their child's needs. This can lead to a more effective and efficient learning experience for the child. Besides, teaching at home can also provide a more comfortable and relaxed environment for the child, which can help to reduce stress and anxiety associated with school.

Overall, the various responses from parents sync with other research findings that show the importance of parental involvement in their child's education. For example, a study by Epstein, et al. (2002) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement. The study found that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers was associated with higher academic achievement.

Additionally, a study by Fan and Chen (2001) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement, and that parental involvement in homework is the most consistent predictor of academic achievement. This corroborates with the findings that parents review the homework with their children and helping with homework.

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Also, recent research studies also support the importance of parental involvement in their child's education. A study by Jeynes (2015) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement. This is consistent with the responses where many parents mentioned reviewing homework, teaching at home, participating in school events and activities, and communicating with the child's teacher to stay informed about their progress.

Another study by Desjardins and Markow (2016) found that parental involvement in their child's education is positively associated with academic achievement and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement.

In conclusion, the responses from parents align with the recent studies by Epstein, et al. (2002); Fan and Chen (2001); Jeynes (2015); Desjardins and Markow (2016); Votruba-Drzal, et al. (2019); Chen and Li (2018) that indicate that form of parental involvement in their child's education include paying school fees, buying books, participate in school events and activities, such as fundraising, volunteering, and donating resources to the school, and that parental involvement in activities such as homework, school events, and communication with teachers is associated with higher academic achievement.

When asked about the various ways in which parents check on the progress of their children in early childhood centres within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The responses suggest that some parents are using technology to communicate with their child's school, but not all schools are utilizing technology for communication with parents. This highlights the importance of technology in education and the need for schools to invest in and implement technology to facilitate

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communication with parents and improve the overall educational experience for children. Additionally, remote communication through technology could be beneficial during disruptions and allows for more flexibility and convenience.

Some parents viewed themselves as the first facilitators of their child's education and believe in starting the educational process at home. They introduce their children to basic skills such as scribbling, colouring, and alphabet reading, and ensure that their children are physically and mentally ready for school. This helps to ensure that their children are well-prepared for their educational journey and that they will be able to thrive in the school environment. This result implies that some of the parents are proactive and highly invested in their child's education, and they want to provide the best opportunities for their children to succeed. They believe that the early years are crucial for children's development, and they want to ensure that their children have a solid foundation before they start school.

Also, some of the respondent (parents) indicated that the use phone calls as a means of checking on the progress of their children at school. Parents who fall under this category often find it difficult to visit the school on a regular basis due to their busy schedule, so they rely on phone calls as the primary means of communication with the school. This allows them to stay informed about their child's progress, ask any questions they may have, and address any concerns they may have. Some parents may also use phone calls to schedule visits or meetings with teachers and staff at the school.

Generally, phone calls serve as a convenient and efficient way for parents to stay connected with their child's school and ensure that their child is on track for success. However, it also implies that some of the parents get busy and do not have the time to visit the school on regular basis, which means that the school staff and teachers might not see the parents as much as they would like,

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which could potentially limit the opportunities for building a relationship with parents and for them to be more involved in their child's education. Also, relying on phone calls as the primary means of communication could lead to a lack of face-to-face interaction between parents and teachers, which could make it more difficult to fully understand and address any concerns or issues that arise.

Deductions from this remark suggest that some of the parents view technology as an important tool for staying connected with their child's school and staying informed about their child's progress. They may use mediums such as telephone calls, WhatsApp chats, and emails to communicate with the school. Additionally, they believe that technology can be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication between parents and schools. These responses imply that some parents are aware of the potential of technology to facilitate communication and are utilizing it, but it also suggests that some schools might not be leveraging technology for communication with parents.

This result highlights the importance of technology in education and how it can be used to improve communication between parents and schools. It also implies that there is a need for schools to invest in and implement technology to facilitate communication with parents and improve the overall educational experience for children. Moreover, the use of technology also allows for remote communication, which could be particularly important during times of school closures or other disruptions (like outbreaks of diseases, and it is accompanying lockdowns). It also allows for more flexibility and convenience for both parents and schools. In addition, it can help to keep parents more informed and involved in their child's education.

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The findings of this study corroborate that of Kraft, Mathew and Shaun (2011) that telephone calls with teachers remained the dominant mode of communication between teachers and students and this immediately increased preschool engagement as measured by homework completion rates, on-task behaviour and class participation. It is also in line with other research findings that shown that phone calls are a common means of communication between parents and schools (Dearing, McCartney, Taylor, & Weiss, 2007). Similarly, studies have shown that parents play an active role in their child's education and that they view the early years as crucial for children's development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002). Many other research has also shown that technology can be used as a tool for communication between parents and schools (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Shumow, Lee, & Lomax, 2007). It has been found that technology can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication and provides opportunities for remote communication (Liu, Chen, & Liang, 2010).

This study sough to inquire about the views of parents with regards to their roles and what parents think of the essence of getting involved and engaged in their children's education. The responses from parents suggest that they believe in the importance of positive reinforcement and motivation in promoting good academic performance in their child and are willing to take active steps to support their child's education. It was also evident that most parents recognize the importance of their involvement in the beginning of a child's educational journey and are willing to be involved in school decisions, aid teachers, and monitor their child's progress. Additionally, some of the parent try to reinforce teachers' efforts to improve academic performance, actively encourage and guide their children academically, and ensure that homework is completed, and their child has enough rest for overall development. The findings also indicate that parents respond to information

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from schools regularly, participate in school fundraising and perform other tasks as expected by the schools.

These responses suggest that some parents recognize the vital role that they play in their child's education, and that they view their involvement in the early years as essential for their child's overall success. They also acknowledge that the early years are a foundation for the child's educational journey, and they play a critical role in setting their child up for success. They also believe that it is their duty as a parent to be actively involved in their child's education from the beginning, to ensure that their child has the best chance of success.

This implies that many of the parents understand the importance of their role in their child's education and how they can best support their child's learning. As such may be willing to provide the necessary needed to support the education of the children. Secondly, it highlights the need for communication and collaboration between parents and educators. Lastly, it also highlights the importance of creating and providing an appropriate and suitable learning environment for children in their early years, to ensure that they have the best chance of success in the future.

Overall, the responses from the respondents suggest that parents view their involvement in their child's education as crucial, and that they believe that the early years are a foundation for their child's educational journey and success. This highlights the importance of encouraging and fostering parental involvement in early childhood education, as well as the importance of effective communication and collaboration between parents and educators.

It was eminent from the responses that many of the parents to assist in developing resources and learning materials for their children education. Many of the respondents argued that providing their children with additional resources and learning materials, they can support their child's education

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and improve their chances of success. This response suggests that parents recognize the importance of providing their children with additional resources and learning materials in order to support their education and enhance their chances of success. The implication of this findings is that parents are willing to assist in developing resources and learning materials for their children. This could have a positive impact on the child's education as having additional resources and materials can enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and interactive. Furthermore, it highlights that parents are willing to play an active role in their child's education and are interested in providing their child with the best possible learning opportunities. This also implies that the parents who are actively involved in developing resources and learning materials for their children are more likely to be engaged in their child's education and more invested in their child's academic success. This can lead to greater communication and collaboration between parents and educators, which can ultimately lead to better academic outcomes for the child.

The responses gathered from the interview suggest that some of the parents believe that by being involved in school decisions and helping teachers, they could support their child's education and improve their chances of success. These responses suggest that parents recognize the importance of being involved in school decisions and aiding teachers to support their child's education and enhance their chances of success.

Parental involvement in school decisions and helping teachers could have a positive impact on the child's education as it can lead to better decision making and a better understanding of the child's needs and how to best support their learning. This implies that involving in the school decisions and aiding with teachers, and that they could also consider the provision of sufficient resources and materials to support the child's education. Additionally, involving parents in school decisions

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and helping teachers can also provide valuable insights and perspectives on how to best support the child's learning.

Some parents were of their opine that their involvement in their child education reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance. This response suggests that parents recognize the important role that teachers play in their child's education, and that they are willing to support and work in collaboration with teachers to help their child achieve academic success. It also indicates that the parents are actively involved in their child's education and wants to contribute to their child's academic performance.

This also implies that providing training and support to parents to help them understand how they can best support their child's learning and work with teachers to improve their child's academic performance. Additionally, parental involvement in supporting teachers' efforts to improve academic performance can also provide valuable insights and perspectives on how to best support the child's learning.

Many of parents expressed the belief that their involvement in their children education provides guidance and support to their child to help them succeed academically. It is apparent that the involvement of parents guiding and supporting their child academically through activities such as visiting the school, checking on their child's progress, and playing educational games encourages and guiding children academically. The responses in the study suggest that parents see their involvement in their child's education as important for their child's development and success. They expressed the belief that they should be involved in their child's education from the beginning and that their involvement is necessary for the child's educational ladder. They also emphasize the

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importance of being involved in the child's education from the early stages, as that is when the child is starting to learn and pick up new skills.

The responses also suggest that parents see themselves as partners in their child's education, helping to develop resources and learning materials, helping teachers, and reinforcing teachers' efforts to improve academic performance. Additionally, parents express the belief that they should be involved in the decision-making process at the school level, and that they should provide voluntary assistance to teachers and other parents in matters related to the school. The responses also indicate that parents see their role as encouraging and guiding children academically, by checking on their child's progress and making sure that the right information is being taught. They also see the importance of being present in the child's school life, attending school meetings and controlling the child's daily activities to promote their education.

Some of the parents indicated that their involvement in their children education have paved way for them monitor their academic progress and ensuring the right form of education or transfer of correct information. These statements indicate that parental involvement in their children education, helps parents to actively monitor the academic progress of their children and ensure that the correct information is being taught. By involving in their child education, parents can get a sense of how their child is progressing and how they are interacting with their classmates and teachers. They can also get a sense of what their child is learning and if the child is keeping up with the class and school. Attending school meetings gives parents an opportunity to stay informed about their child's education and the activities of the school.

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Rewarding good performance and ensuring homework is completed.

Several of the parents also intimated that the involvement in their children education provides them the opportunity to reward their child's good performance. The implication of these responses is that parents see the importance of rewarding their child for good performance, as it can serve as a motivation for the child to continue to do well in their academics.

Children at the early years of their educational life, needs the attention of the Parent as well as the facilitator. (Sirirka,2007). Wyk (2010) agrees with the view of Henderson and Berla (1994) who assert that when schools work with parents to support learning, learners tend to succeed not only in school, but through-out life. Research on effective schools, those where students are learning and achieving, has consistently shown that these schools despite often working in low social and economic neighbourhoods have strong and positive school-home relationship. (Sanders &Sheldon,2009) more importantly, these effective schools with positive school climate, have made a real effort in reaching out to their students families in in order to bring about good cooperation. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) maintain that schools become successful when a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community has been established.

Challenges of parental involvement in child learning

The fourth objective of this study sought to inquire about the various problems parents face with the centre, facilitator, administrators, and heads of their children. The data as gathered from the respondents suggests many some parents rather had positive experiences with the teachers and school communication and reported satisfaction with the level of involvement and communication they had with teachers and the school administration. Also, many of the parents indicated not to

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face any challenges involving in their child education, others indicated to encounter socioeconomic barriers, and significant few of them mentioned have limited time for involvement and trust in teachers to handle child's needs. The Reponses from the parent were analysed and present in the sub-themes below.

Positive experiences with teachers and school communication

This sub-theme includes responses from parents who reported positive experiences with teachers and school communication. These parents expressed satisfaction with the level of involvement and communication they have with teachers and the school administration.

From these responses, we can deduce that some parents have positive experiences with the teachers and school. Some of the parents expressed that the staff of the various schools are friendly and helpful, and that their children are thriving academically and socially due to the strong support systems of the schools. Some of the parents were also impressed with the dedication and commitment of the teachers, who go above and beyond to ensure that their child is engaged in their learning and understanding the material. They also appreciate the attention and care given to their children and other children in the school. Overall, the implication of these responses is that the schools have positive reputation among parents and are providing supportive and engaging learning environment for their children. It also indicates a high level of teacher-parent relationship and open communication which is important for the child's academic and social growth.

Have no issues or challenges with teachers and school

Some of the parents indicated that they do not face any issues or challenges with the teachers and school in terms of communication and involvement in their child's education. These parents, similarly, expressed the sense of trust and satisfaction with the teachers and the school's ability to

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handle their child's needs and communicate with them effectively. They also express their willingness to actively monitor their child's progress and ensure the transfer of correct information from the teachers to the child.

These statements indicate that some of the parents have a high level of trust and satisfaction with the teachers and school's ability to handle their child's needs and communicate with them effectively, as such do not have any issues or challenges with the teachers or school. They feel satisfied with the way the teacher communicates with them and handle their child's needs.

Socioeconomic barriers to involvement in the school

Nevertheless, some of the parents mentioned to encounter some socio-economic barriers while trying to in terms of involvement in their child's education. Some of these socioeconomic barriers as mentioned by the parents included lack of transportation, financial constraints, exclusion, and discrimination, limited English proficiency, long working hours, lack of trust in the school system, limited education level, single parent or families with multiple children, and family instability or crisis. Other parents expressed the feelings of inadequacy, as they believe that their socio-economic status limits their ability to be involved in their child's education.

These responses suggest that parents face a range of socio-cultural challenges in their effort to be involved in their child's education. These challenges can make it difficult for parents to attend school meetings or events, understand school communication, participate in school activities, or provide support for their child's education at home. The implications of these barriers to parental involvement in their children education are that it can result in a lack of support for the child's education and limit the child's potential for academic success.

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Finally, a good number of the parents also submitted to have limited involvement of parents in their child's education, and a lack of trust in teachers to handle the child's needs. Also, some of the parents express a lack of understanding or knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities.

These statements indicate that some of parents have a limited involvement in their child's education, and a lack of trust in teachers to handle the child's needs. Some of them also express a lack of interest, time, understanding and, knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities. Whiles other expressed the lack of understanding or knowledge about the child's education and the school's activities.

The study shows that some of the parents lack adequate knowledge on how they can effectively contribute towards the growth and development of the schools where their children are enrolled. As Siririka (2007) reveals, parents with limited educational experience do not know why and how they can be involved in school activities. They are unsure of their responsibilities as parents. They also hardly appreciate how education at home serves as the basis for education at school. In most cases they are unaware of practices essential to helping their children develop academic skills.

In other cases, they are uncertain about how to help their children. This is corroborated by Singh and Mbokodi (2004) who found that disadvantaged black parents did not seem to understand their roles as parents in the education of children. Kaperu's (2004) Namibia-based research also confirms that parents were not quite sure of their role while Zoppi (2006) states that some parents think their own lack of education precludes them from participating in their children's education.

This study was to find out the strategies adopted by parent to improve their involvement in school and learning activities of the children at the early childhood centres. The believed that building

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trust and interaction were crucial for parents to be able to actively participate in their child's education. Accordingly, some of them viewed the need for mutual trust as necessary tool for parents to be able to communicate and interact with facilitators, and that these interactions can help in the education of their child.

The implication of these responses is that some of the parents see the importance of trust and interaction in allowing them to be more involved in their child's education. They recognize that trust is necessary for effective communication and interaction between parents, facilitators, and the school. They also understand that interaction with facilitators can help in educating their child.

Another strategy that emerged from the interview was the monitoring of the child's behaviours and media consumption to promote good academic performance. The parents believe that monitoring their child's behaviour and media consumption is crucial in order to ensure their child's academic success. This suggests that the parents see the importance of monitoring their child's behaviours and media consumption to ensure good academic performance. They recognize that certain behaviours and media consumption can have a negative impact on their child's education, and they are willing to take steps to ensure that this does not happen. This can be an important information for educators and school administrators to consider when developing programs and policies to support student success.

Some of the respondent similarly highlights the importance of school involvement initiatives and support in promoting parental involvement in the education of their children. The parents posits that the initiatives and support from the school can play a role in encouraging parents to be more actively involved in their child's education. The implication of these responses is that parents see the importance of initiatives and support from the school in promoting parental involvement in

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their child's education. They recognize that initiatives such as motivational speakers, meetings, and opportunities for volunteerism and participation in class activities and field trips can help to educate and engage parents and make them more actively involved in their child's education. The views of the parents seem to show that they are willing to participate in school involvement initiatives and support to support their child's education and that it's a vital aspect of parental involvement in the child's education.

Additionally, some of the parents underscored the importance of providing for basic needs and learning materials in promoting good academic performance. These parents in their submissions expressed the need for providing basic needs and learning materials in ensuring the academic success of their children. These statements shows that most of the parents in view that providing for basic needs and learning materials is essential in shaping the academic success of their children. The implication of these responses is that parents recognize that certain basic needs such as good food, clothing, and appropriate learning materials are essential for a child's development and academic success. They also understand that by limiting their child's television watching and encouraging reading, it can improve their child's language development and focus. They also understand that by providing support and assistance with homework, it can help their child retain information and improve their understanding of the material.

The parents recognize the importance of attending PTA meetings regularly. They understand that attending meetings can provide them with important information about their child's education and progress and provide opportunities for them to communicate with teachers and school administrators. Overall, the views of the parents seem to show that providing for basic needs and learning materials can help to create a conducive learning environment for the child, giving the child the opportunity to succeed academically and socially.

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The parents also highlighted the importance of encouraging active participation and assisting with homework in promoting good academic performance. the parents suggested that encouraging active participation and assisting with homework can play a role in ensuring their child's academic success. These statements indicate that parents in this sub-theme believe that encouraging active participation and assisting with homework is crucial in order to ensure their child's academic success. This, similarly, depicts that parents recognize that homework is an important tool for reinforcing and consolidating the material learned in class and that by assisting with homework, it can help to improve the understanding and retention of the material of the child. Some of the parents also understands that encouraging active participation, can help their child to develop good learning habits and to take responsibility for their own learning.

The responses suggest that parents are willing to take an active role in encouraging active participation and assisting with homework to support their child's education and that it's a vital aspect of parental involvement in the child's education. It can be a valuable insight for educators and school administrators to consider when developing programs and policies to support student success.

The findings are consistent with those of Houtenville & Conway, 2008 who observed that children are more likely to apply themselves and perform better in school when their parents show interest in their schoolwork, are willing to assist them with homework and are willing to hold their children accountable for completion of school assignment.

Parental involvement in the education of children begins at home with the parent providing a safe and healthy environment, appropriate learning experiences, support and a positive attitude about school. Epstien (2009). Several studies indicate increased academic achievement with students

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that have involved parents. (Epstien 2009; Greenwood and Hickman, 1991; Henderson and Bella 1994; Rumberger Et Al, 1990; Swap, 1993; Whitacker and Fior, 2001). Studies also indicate that parental involvement is most effective when viewed as a partnership between educators and parents (Davies, 1996; Emeagwaly, 2009; Epstien, 2009). By examining parents' and teachers' perceptions educators and parents should have a better understanding of effective parental involvement practice in promoting students' achievement.

Epstien (2009) opines that there are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership school, family and community. The main reason for such a partnership is to aid in succeeding at school. Other reasons include improving school climate and school programs, developing parental skills and leadership, assisting families in connecting with others in the school and the community, and assisting teachers with their work. All these reasons emphasize the importance of parents playing an active role in their children's education and keeping a strong and positive relationship with schools.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This is the final chapter of the study report. The summary of the research report is first presented. From the key findings that emerged from the study, conclusions are reached to aid the generation of appropriate recommendations for policy formulation.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The primary focus of this study was to assess the degree of parental involvement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis. To meet the particular aims of the study, the following research questions were developed:

1. What are the domains of parental participation in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis?
2. What are parents' perspectives on their involvement in the education of their children in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
3. What are the obstacles to parental engagement in children's education at early childhood centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
4. What measures might enhance parental participation in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis?

The study employed a case study design. The purposive and convenience sample strategy was employed to engage 20 parents whose children are enrolled in these four schools during the child pick-up period.

5.2 Key Findings

The following are the key findings that emerged from the study:

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1. The primary finding indicates that parents are dedicated to facilitating their children's education by readying them for the school day and supplying essential materials and financial resources.
2. The data demonstrate that parents consistently respond to information from schools, engage in fundraising activities, and provide help when solicited. The parents are evidently prepared to undertake the responsibilities demanded of them by the schools.
3. The study indicates that certain parents possess insufficient understanding regarding their beneficial contributions to the growth and development of the schools their children attend.
4. The data suggest that parents are expected to fulfil particular tasks in their children's education.

5.3 Conclusions

1. It was concluded that parents exhibit a high level of dedication to their children's education by ensuring they are prepared for school and providing necessary materials and financial resources. This demonstrates a strong foundational support system for students' academic success.
2. The study concluded that parents consistently engage with schools by responding to communications, participating in fundraising activities, and offering support when requested. This shows a willingness to fulfill their expected roles and contribute to the school's operational needs.
3. It was concluded parents lack adequate knowledge on how to effectively contribute to the school's growth and development. This indicates a gap in understanding that could be addressed through targeted educational programmes for parents.

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4. It was concluded parents have specific roles to play in their children's education. Recognizing and defining these roles can help in structuring better support systems and expectations, leading to more effective collaboration between parents and schools.

5.4 Recommendations

1. It is recommended that there should be workshops and informational sessions to educate parents on how they can effectively contribute to the growth and development of the schools. These sessions should provide practical strategies and guidance on supporting school initiatives and understanding their specific roles.
2. The researcher recommended that schools should create more structured and regular opportunities for parents to engage with teachers and administrators. This could include regular meetings, feedback sessions, and involvement indecision-making processes to ensure parents feel more connected and informed about school activities and needs.
3. Parents should come out with the best child rearing strategies that enhances Parents involvements in the education of preschool learners' performance
4. It is recommended that schools should also make sure that any communication is translated for parents who do not speak and understand the official language (English).

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study assessed the degree of parental involvement and engagement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast metropolitan. The research was exclusively qualitative. To enhance the literature in this domain, the following areas are proposed for more research.

1. A comprehensive study should be conducted on the same topic on a larger sample size across other regions so that the findings can be generalized. Teachers could also be included in such a study to compare their responses to that of the parents.

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2. Other research approaches should be used to replicate the study to see if the findings will be the same. The quantitative method would add complementarity to the instrument used in the current study.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Good [morning/afternoon/evening],

My name is Nancy Abedu-Kennedy, and I am a student of the University of Education, Winneba, conducting a study on parental involvement in early childhood education within the Cape Coast Metropolis in Ghana. I am grateful to have the opportunity to speak with you today about your experiences and perspectives on this important topic.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the extent of parental involvement in early childhood education and its impact on children's learning within the Cape Coast Metropolis. Specifically, this study aims to identify the various areas in which parents are actively engaged in their children's learning at selected early childhood centres, explore parental views on their roles in their children's educational journey, examine the challenges that may hinder parental involvement, and ultimately identify strategies to improve parental engagement in early childhood education.

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary, and your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The information you provide will be used solely for research purposes, and all data will be anonymous to ensure your privacy.

Before we proceed, I kindly request your informed consent to participate in this interview. This means that you understand the purpose of the study, how the information will be used, and that you have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequences.

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Please feel free to ask any questions or seek clarification about the study before we begin. Your input is vital to our research, and your valuable insights will contribute to enhancing parental involvement in early childhood education in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Thank you for your willingness to participate, and let us begin the interview.

Section 1: Background Information:

1. Gender:
2. Age:
3. Education:
4. Occupation:

Section 2: Areas of Parental Involvement in Learning Activities

1. Can you tell me about the ways you prepare your child for school and provide necessary materials to support their learning?
2. How do you usually check on your child's performance and progress in school?
3. Do you help your child with homework and additional studies? If so, how do you approach this?
4. Are you actively involved in participating in school events and activities? If yes, could you share some examples?
5. Have you ever engaged in teaching activities at home to support your child's learning? If yes, what kind of activities do you do?
6. Do you face any challenges in being involved in your child's learning due to work or other commitments? If yes, how do you manage to balance these responsibilities?

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Section 3: Parent's Methods for Checking on the Progress of Their Children at School

1. Could you share the steps you take at home before enrolling your child in school to ensure they are ready for their educational journey?
2. Do you use any communication methods, such as phone calls or technology, to stay connected with your child's teachers and school?

Section 4: Parental Views on Their Roles in Learning Activities

1. Do you believe that parental involvement is essential at the beginning of a child's educational journey?
2. In what ways do you assist in developing resources and learning materials for your child?
3. How do you feel about being involved in school decisions and providing assistance to teachers?
4. How do you support and reinforce teachers' efforts to improve your child's academic performance?
5. Can you share some ways in which you encourage and guide your child academically?
6. How do you ensure accurate information transfer between you and your child's teachers?

Section 5: Challenges of Parental Involvement in Child Learning

1. Have you experienced any positive interactions with teachers and school communication?

2. Are there any issues or challenges you have encountered regarding teachers and the school? If yes, please elaborate.
3. Do socioeconomic barriers impact your involvement in your child's education?

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4. Are there any reasons why you might have limited involvement or difficulty trusting teachers to handle your child's needs?

Section 6: Strategies for Improving Parental Involvement in Learning Activities

1. In your opinion, how can trust and interaction with facilitators be built to improve parental involvement?
2. What methods do you use to monitor your child's behaviour and media consumption to ensure a conducive learning environment?
3. Have you come across any school involvement initiatives or support systems that have positively impacted parental involvement?
4. What steps do you think can be taken to ensure that basic needs and learning materials are provided for children to enhance their learning experience?
5. How can parents be encouraged to actively participate in their child's education and how can they be assisted with homework effectively?

Vote of thanks

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each participant for taking the time to share your valuable insights and experiences with us today. Your willingness to contribute to this study on parental involvement in early childhood education is greatly appreciated, and your input is essential to understanding and improving the educational landscape within the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Your responses have provided valuable perspectives on the various aspects of parental involvement, including the areas where parents are actively engaged in their children's learning,

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the challenges they face, and the strategies that can be implemented to enhance parental engagement.

Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for research purposes. Your input will remain anonymous, and the information you have provided will be critical in informing policies and practices aimed at strengthening parental involvement in early childhood education.

Thank you and have a wonderful day.

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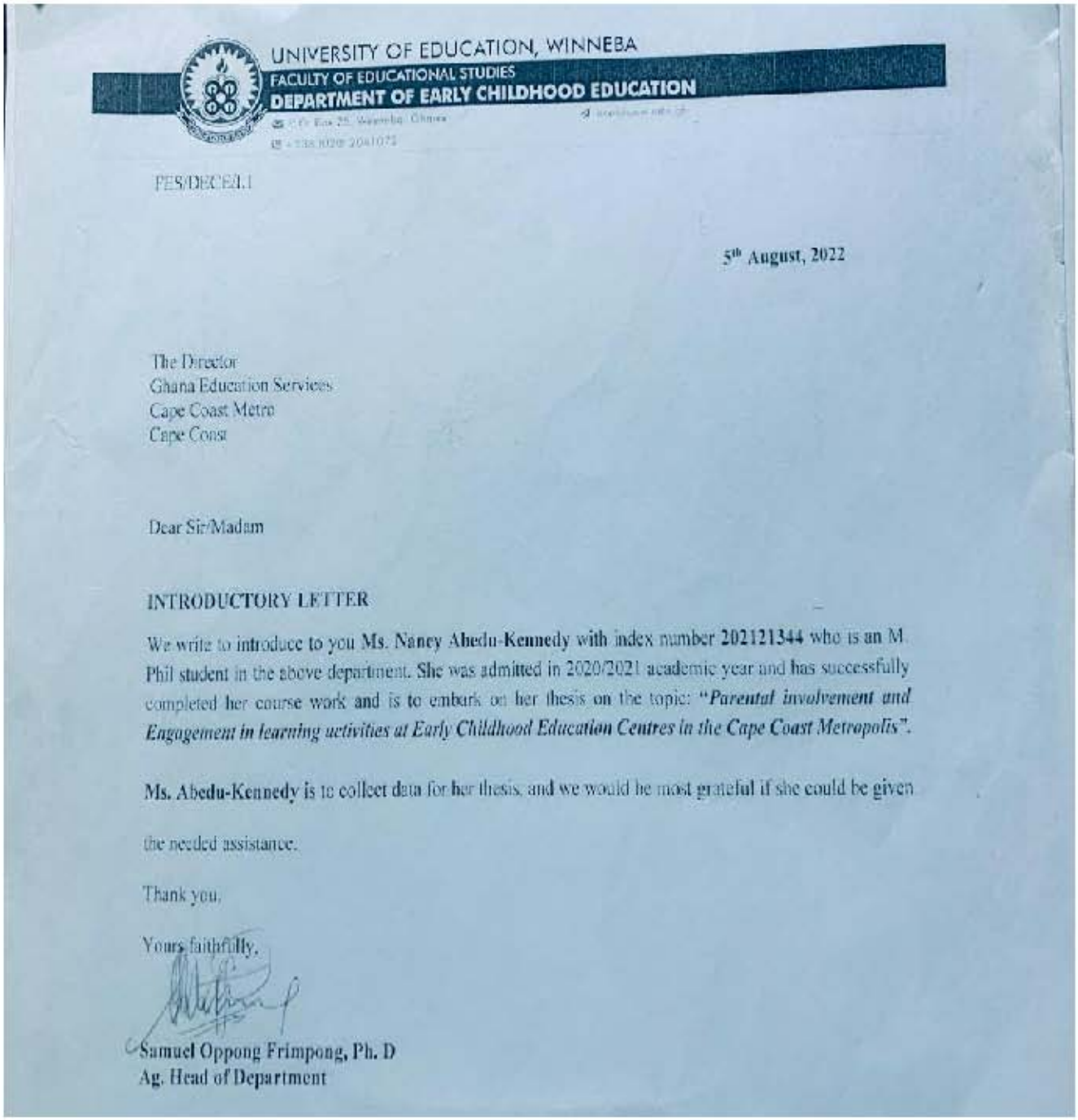
APPENDIX B
INTRODUCTORY LETTER



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FES/DECED.1

5th August, 2022

The Director
Ghana Education Services
Cape Coast Metro
Cape Coast

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

We write to introduce to you **Ms. Nancy Abedu-Kennedy** with index number **202121344** who is an M. Phil student in the above department. She was admitted in 2020/2021 academic year and has successfully completed her course work and is to embark on her thesis on the topic: ***"Parental involvement and Engagement in learning activities at Early Childhood Education Centres in the Cape Coast Metropolis"***.

Ms. Abedu-Kennedy is to collect data for her thesis, and we would be most grateful if she could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Samuel Oppong Frimpong, Ph. D
Ag. Head of Department

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CAPE COAST METRO DATA ON KINDERGARTIN (KG)

Number of Kinergartin(KG) in public Schools	65
Number of Kinergartin(KG) in Private Schools	111
Total KG enrolment for Public school	3719
total KG enrolment for private school	5388

S/No.	NAME OF SCHOOL	ENROLMENT FOR KG
1	Ayifua St. Mary's Anglican Basic School	58
2	St. Lawrence Basic School ' A'	47
3	St. Lawrence Basic School ' B'	52
4	UCC KG	349
5	Pere Planque Preparatory School	58

METRO. EDUCATION OFFICE
DESPATCHED
01 SEP 2020
CAPE COAST