

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**SCHOOL-PARENT PARTNERSHIPS IN FOR STUDENT LEARNING IN
SELECTED PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOLS IN GREATER ACCRA, GHANA**



MATILDA QUIST

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**SCHOOL-PARENT PARTNERSHIPS IN FOR STUDENT LEARNING IN
SELECTED PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOLS IN GREATER ACCRA, GHANA**



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**A thesis in the Department of Educational Administration and Management,
School of Education and Life-Long Learning, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Educational Administration and Management)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

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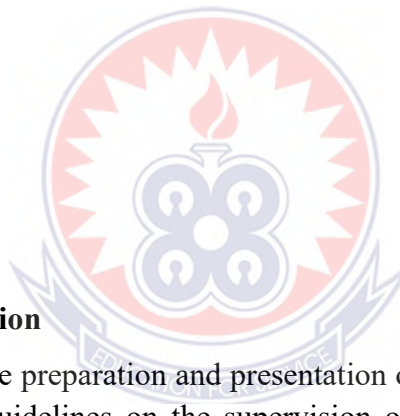
DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Matilda Quist (Rev. Sister), declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works that have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is my original work and 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 thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of a thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Professor Kwame Odei-Tettey

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my Biological and Religious Families, benefactors and benefactresses.



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I am really fortunate to have received an immense amount of help and support throughout this process. My deepest thanks go out to everyone who has contributed to making this challenge possible. I want to express a special appreciation to those who guide and comfort me, especially my father, Mr. Cosmos Quist, Joycelyn, William, Hilda, Clement, and my sisters in St. Mary's community.

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GLOSSARY

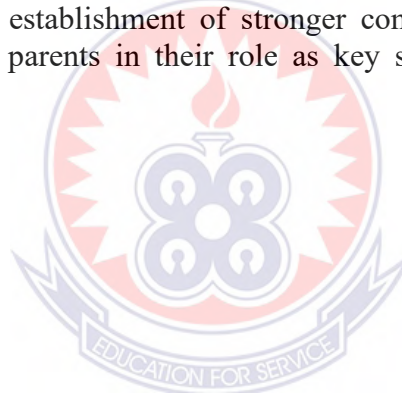
AMA:	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GES:	--* School
PTA:	Parent-Teacher Association
SPSS:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



ABSTRACT

The study explores the dynamics of school-parent partnerships in selected private basic schools within the Greater Accra, Ghana. Parental involvement is widely recognized as critical to enhancing students' academic performance and holistic development. However, in many private schools in urban areas, parental disengagement remains a significant challenge. The study aims to investigate the underlying causes of this disengagement and to identify effective strategies to foster active parental involvement

in the educational process. A qualitative research design was adopted, utilizing Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as the guiding framework. Data were collected from two private basic schools in Accra through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires involving parents, teachers, and school administrators. The study employed purposive sampling to select participants who could provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon of parental disengagement. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify and interpret patterns and themes emerging from the data. The results indicate that several interrelated factors, including socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs, demanding work schedules, and insufficient communication between schools and families influence parental disengagement. Many parents feel disconnected from the school environment due to these challenges, leading to reduced participation in school activities and limited support for their children's learning at home. Existing strategies, such as Parent-Teacher Associations and school newsletters, have had limited success in overcoming these barriers. The discussion highlights the need for schools to adopt more inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches to engage parents. It suggests that existing strategies must be re-evaluated and tailored to address better the specific needs and circumstances of families in these urban private schools. The study concludes that strengthening school-parent partnerships is essential for improving student outcomes. It recommends the development of comprehensive engagement policies that include the integration of technology for communication, the creation of flexible participation opportunities, and the establishment of stronger community-school partnerships to support and empower parents in their role as key stakeholders in their children's education.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter introduces the study by examining the importance of parental involvement and engagement in children's academic and holistic development, with a particular focus on private basic schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. It presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research purpose, objectives, and questions, as well as the delimitations and significance of the study. The chapter also highlights the contextual challenges of parental disengagement in selected private schools and justifies the need for systematic inquiry into strategies that strengthen school-parent partnerships. Finally, it outlines the organization of the thesis into five chapters, thereby setting the framework for the subsequent review of related literature.

1.1 Background to the Study

According to Myende and Nhlumayo (2022), children's education begins from birth, with parents as their first teachers and role models. Parents play a critical role in providing a learning bridge between school and the home while instilling positive attitudes and values toward learning and life in their children. Parent engagement in their children's upbringing and education is thus crucial for a child's holistic development. This way, schools and families have the traditionally accepted role as the institutions with fundamental effects on children's development. As a result, the two institutions are interested in children's successful socialization and education. This fusion of their interests suggests their common goal of achieving students' successful learning through mutual effort, cooperation and support, termed partnerships. A home-school partnership generally describes a collaborative relationship between parents and

educators where the underlying goal is to maximize students' full potential in schools (Bates et al., 2021a).

According to (Hannon and O'Donnell, 2022), partnerships between parents and teachers are founded on the principle that parents are viewed as experts on their children, while teachers are seen as experts on education. Many believe parents and teachers should be allies and partners because both aim to raise, guide, and teach children. However, participants in such partnerships are often estranged, causing suspicion of one other. This way, such partnerships can become defensive and adversarial rather than collaborative and productive. Some sociologists believe this tension between parents and teachers is inevitable because of the different roles each plays in children's lives. Parents' concerns are individualistic because of their deep, passionate bond with their children (Cudillo et al., 2022). Teachers' concerns are more broadly focused because they have to meet the needs of many as they lead children in developing a classroom community in which children learn to be responsible and accountable to the group (Bahdanovich, Hanssen & Erina, 2022). Thus, the role of partnership is to connect the focus on the involvements of the two parties.

Parental involvement is an important aspect of children's and youth's education. It is "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities" (Gerdes et al., 2022). Parental involvement with the school is linked to positive student outcomes, including academic and social development (Bates et al., 2021a). For instance, research has identified positive relationships between parental involvement and grade point average, lower dropout rates, and school engagement (Bates et al., 2021b).

Although the home's support and influence on academic learning are significant, the quality and quantity of classroom instruction and the child's characteristics are also important. So, school-family partnerships are integral to academic, social, behavioural, and emotional domains. For the home-school partnership to endure, there must be consistency between home and school. Continuity across home and school about children's learning is an important protective factor. Consensus and consistency in the partnership between home and school strengthen a positive, pro-education message (Paredes Ruvalcaba et al., 2023a). As a protective factor, families are active, supportive, and involved partners. At the same time, educators invite and inform families, including families in decisions, and support families when they need information about how schools function and their children's progress (Bates et al., 2021b).

For many students, however, the discontinuity between home and school is a risk factor, particularly concerning expectations, the value placed on learning, and communication patterns (Murphy & Risser, 2022; Paredes Ruvalcaba et al., 2023a). Therefore, a focus on creating consistent messages and conditions that promote student learning outcomes includes enhancing communication and coordination between parents and educators, continuity in programmes and approaches across family and school contexts, shared ownership and commitment to educational goals, increased understanding of the complexities of the child and his/her situation; pooling of resources to increase the range and quality of solutions, diversity in expertise, and integrity of educational programmes. The benefits of the home-school partnership to children include improved academic performance, being more likely to complete their homework, exhibiting better behaviour generally and reduced classroom misbehaviour, more positive attitudes toward learning, better school attendance and graduating. Reading acquisition and development are also more susceptible to family influence (Bates et al., 2021b).

School-family collaboration comes in various forms. The common school-parent partnership activities, as in Epstein's (2014) classic six-type model, covers parameters of parent involvement that encourage and strengthen home-school partnership: (a) basic obligations of parents as care providers, (b) schools communicating with parents about school programmes, (c) parent volunteering at school, (d) parent involvement in home learning, (e) parent as a decision maker, such as the inclusion of parental voices in the development of mission statements, and (f) collaborating with the community, such as support networks for parents and after-school recreation for students. Research suggests that the activities can lead to children's improved learning outcomes. For years, researchers have used the terms involvement and engagement interchangeably. However, these terms have different meanings (Skaraki & Kolokotronis, 2022).

Current researchers consider the term engagement to mean when parents take an active role in the instructional practice of their child's education so they can become better equipped to have meaningful dialogue with the children and the school to decrease the disconnect between the home-school relationships (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2022). When parents become engaged in their children's education, they support the school's work by developing a caring and trusting relationship among school staff (Bates et al., 2021b). Creating this positive school climate promotes children's high academic, social, and emotional development, which requires significant parental engagement in the schools (Rochmawati & Anggraini, 2022a). The level of engagement by parents is often a direct correlation to the school's effort to secure and build a trusting relationship (Oteng et al., 2023; Papadima, 2021).

The primary influences on parental involvement and engagement are specific school programmes, staff practices, and attitudes toward parents (Rochmawati & Anggraini, 2022b). "Cultivating a welcoming atmosphere for parents, just as we create a

welcoming atmosphere for our students, means giving parents comfortable and significant ways to participate in the schooling process in the same way we give our students meaningful and appropriate work to help them master academic goals and classroom challenges” (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2022). Parental involvement significantly impacts students and reduces negative behaviours (Gerdes et al., 2022). However, Ghana’s parent-teacher relationship is often marked with distrust and disillusionment. Parents and educators may view each other as hostile, indifferent, and unable to help the child (Pardo-Garcia & Barac, 2020). However, parents influence all three domains of a child’s academic, language, and social-emotional development; each domain affects the others (Rochmawati & Anggraini, 2022a). Parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, and attending parent-teacher meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Rochmawati & Anggraini, 2022a).

In contrast, parental disengagement can have a negative impact on the child’s integral development. The phenomenon of parental disengagement refers to the lack of active involvement and participation of parents in their children’s education and school-related activities. Parental disengagement is a concerning issue that affects educational institutions worldwide, including private basic schools such as St. Theresa School at Kaneshie and Bishop Bowers School at Lartebiokorshie in Accra. In the case of St. Theresa School at Kaneshie, parental disengagement can be attributed to various factors. Firstly, the school is located in an urban area where many parents are occupied with demanding work schedules and other responsibilities. This factor may leave them with limited time and energy to actively engage in their children’s education.

Additionally, socioeconomic factors such as low income and financial constraints can further hinder parents' ability to participate in school activities and maintain regular communication with teachers. Furthermore, cultural factors may also contribute to parental disengagement in St. Theresa School. In some cases, parents may lack the necessary educational background themselves, which can affect their confidence in engaging with academic matters. Moreover, cultural beliefs and practices may prioritize other aspects of child-nurture over active involvement in education, leading to a lack of emphasis on school-related engagement.

Similarly, Bishop Bowers School at Lartebiokorshie also faces challenges related to parental disengagement. The school's location in a bustling urban area may result in parents being preoccupied with work, transportation, and other daily responsibilities. The fast-paced nature of city life can make it difficult for parents to find the time and energy to participate in their children's education actively. Furthermore, socioeconomic factors play a significant role in parental disengagement at Bishop Bowers School. Many parents in the area may face financial constraints, which can limit their ability to support their children's education financially and be physically present at school events. In some cases, parents may have to work multiple jobs to make ends meet, leaving little time for involvement in their children's school life. Additionally, cultural factors can also contribute to parental disengagement at Bishop Bowers School. Cultural beliefs and practices may prioritize obedience to authority figures, including teachers, which can create a sense of distance between parents and the school community. This cultural dynamic may discourage parents from actively engaging with the school and taking on a more participatory role in their children's education.

In conclusion, both St. Theresa School at Kaneshie and Bishop Bowers School at Lartebiokorshie in Accra face challenges related to parental disengagement. Factors such as demanding work schedules, socioeconomic constraints, limited educational background, and cultural beliefs all contribute to this issue. These schools need to address these challenges and implement strategies to encourage parental involvement, as active parental engagement has been shown to impact students' academic success and overall well-being positively.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement in education has long been recognized as a cornerstone for improving student achievement and holistic development across global contexts. Internationally, educational research underscores the strong correlation between family engagement and children's academic, social, and emotional outcomes. For example, evidence from large-scale studies in the United States, the United Kingdom, and East Asia demonstrates that students whose parents actively participate in school-related activities and maintain strong communication with teachers tend to perform better academically, display higher levels of motivation, and develop stronger social competencies (Fan & Chen, 2020; Harris & Goodall, 2018; Tan & Goldberg, 2019). Similarly, systematic reviews highlight that parental involvement contributes not only to improved academic performance but also to greater school attendance, reduced behavioral problems, and enhanced well-being (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Wilder, 2014). These global findings provide compelling justification for positioning parental engagement as a critical determinant of student learning.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, where educational systems continue to face structural and resource challenges, the role of parents in supporting student learning is particularly

vital. Regional studies confirm that the presence of committed parental engagement can mitigate some of the systemic deficiencies in infrastructure, instructional quality, and resource provision in basic schools (Oketch & Rolleston, 2018; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). Evidence from East and Southern Africa suggests that family-school partnerships create opportunities for collaborative problem-solving, improved attendance, and targeted support for children struggling academically (Jeynes, 2012; Kimani, 2017). Yet, despite the acknowledged importance of parental involvement, evidence also points to widespread inconsistencies and inequities in levels of engagement across urban and rural settings, government and private institutions, and among different socioeconomic groups (Bunyi & Wangia, 2020). These variations underscore the need to contextualize research on parental engagement within specific educational and cultural environments rather than adopting a universal approach.

In Ghana, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service have historically emphasized the significance of family involvement in education through structures such as the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), which was formalized in the 1990s (MoE, 1994; GES, 1997). Policy frameworks such as the Education Strategic Plan (2018–2030) reiterate the need to foster school-community linkages to strengthen learning outcomes at the basic level. Empirical evidence in Ghana has consistently demonstrated that schools where parents and teachers collaborate experience higher academic success, better discipline, and stronger student motivation (Nyarko, 2011; Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). However, despite these policy commitments and empirical confirmations, research shows that parental engagement remains uneven, fragmented, and often dependent on parental initiative rather than systematic institutional strategies (Bartoli et al., 2022; Darko-Asumadu & Sika-Bright, 2012). Furthermore, while much research has focused on public schools, there is relatively less exploration of how

parental engagement unfolds in private basic schools, particularly in urban contexts such as Accra, where private institutions serve a significant proportion of school-aged children.

The Greater Accra provides a particularly important context for such an investigation. As Ghana's most urbanized and economically dynamic region, it is home to a proliferation of private basic schools that cater to diverse populations ranging from affluent households to lower-income families seeking alternatives to public schooling. Within this context, parental disengagement has become a growing concern. Teachers and administrators in private schools frequently report limited parental responsiveness to communication, low attendance at PTA meetings, and minimal participation in school-organized activities (Nkansah et al., 2024; Amponsah & Okyere, 2023). This disengagement undermines the potential for collaborative school-parent partnerships and raises concerns about the long-term implications for student learning outcomes. Unlike public schools, where state-driven policies provide some level of institutional pressure for parental involvement, private schools often depend on voluntary engagement from parents, making disengagement more disruptive to learning processes. The situation in Greater Accra therefore illustrates a gap between policy aspirations and practical realities, and addressing this gap requires systematic inquiry.

Several factors may account for this disengagement. Socioeconomic constraints, such as demanding work schedules and financial pressures, can limit parents' ability to participate in school activities (Chowa, Masa, & Tucker, 2013). Cultural perceptions regarding the division of roles between schools and families may also discourage parents from assuming active roles in education (Esia-Donkoh, 2014). Furthermore, logistical barriers, such as commuting distances in congested urban settings, and the

absence of structured policies within private schools to encourage participation, exacerbate the challenge. Teachers in Greater Accra have voiced frustration at what they perceive to be indifference on the part of parents, citing instances of poor communication, neglect of homework supervision, and lack of follow-through on agreed-upon school strategies (Deng, 2021; Iqbal et al., 2022). These issues are compounded by the fact that while parents express aspirations for high academic achievement for their children, their practical involvement often falls short of expectations, creating a dissonance between intent and action.

The gap in knowledge and practice that this study seeks to address lies precisely in this tension. Although parental involvement has been widely studied in public schools in Ghana and elsewhere, the distinctive dynamics within private basic schools in urban Accra remain underexplored. Private schools operate under different management structures, funding models, and parental expectations compared to public schools, making findings from the latter insufficient for guiding practice in the former. There is limited empirical evidence documenting the barriers to parental engagement in these contexts, and even less scholarship that proposes strategies tailored to private schools. By failing to adequately examine these dynamics, the educational research community leaves unaddressed a critical dimension of Ghana's education system, especially given the growing reliance on private schools to absorb increasing enrollments in urban areas.

It is against this backdrop that the present study is justified. The investigation contributes to the literature by systematically identifying and analyzing the root causes of parental disengagement in private basic schools in the Greater Accra, while simultaneously proposing strategies to enhance school-parent partnerships. In doing so, the study not only fills a conceptual and empirical gap but also aligns with national

educational priorities that emphasize the importance of inclusive and collaborative approaches to student learning. Operationally, key terms such as school-parent partnership are defined as structured, collaborative efforts between families and schools aimed at supporting student learning through communication, participation, and joint decision-making. Parental engagement refers to the active, consistent, and meaningful participation of parents in educational processes both at home and in school environments. Student learning encompasses not only academic achievement but also broader developmental outcomes including motivation, behavior, and social integration. These operational definitions provide clarity and consistency throughout the study.

The significance of this research can be articulated across three dimensions. At the policy level, findings can inform education policymakers and regulators about the unique challenges facing private schools in fostering parental involvement, thereby guiding targeted interventions and policies that extend beyond the public sector. At the theoretical level, the study contributes to the application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Epstein's model of parental involvement to the Ghanaian private school context, testing their explanatory power and relevance in a rapidly urbanizing African environment. At the practical level, the research provides actionable strategies for school administrators, teachers, and parents to strengthen collaborative partnerships that directly improve student learning outcomes.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the reasons for parental disengagement from their children's schooling and to explore strategies for actively engaging parents

to enhance the educational outcomes of students in two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate the reasons for parental disengagement in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana.
2. Find out the effects of parental disengagement from children's schooling on students' academic performance and holistic development in the two private basic schools in Accra.
3. Explore existing strategies used in the two private basic schools in Accra to enhance parental engagement.
4. To find out effective, innovative strategies that can be used to increase parental engagement in the two private basic schools in Accra.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the study objectives, this study is guided by the following research questions on school-parent partnerships for student learning in two basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana:

1. What are the reasons for parental disengagement in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana?
2. How does parental disengagement affect students' academic performance and holistic development of students in the two private basic schools in Accra?
3. What are the existing strategies used in the two private basic schools in Accra to enhance parental engagement?

4. What effective innovative strategies can be used to increase parental engagement in the two private basic schools in Accra?

1.6 Delimitation

This study is delimited to private basic schools located specifically in the urban area of Accra, Ghana. It does not encompass public schools, other regions of Ghana, or private schools outside of Accra. School selection: The research focuses on two private basic schools, namely Bishop Bowers and St. Theresa's, in Accra. The findings may not be directly transferable to other schools or regions with different characteristics.

The study primarily targets basic education levels, including primary and junior high school levels. It does not extend to higher education institutions or other educational levels.

In addition, the research employs a qualitative research approach, limiting the scope to subjective perspectives and experiences of parents, administrators and teachers. It does not include quantitative data or statistical analysis. Moreover, the study's timeframe is limited to the period during which data were collected. Long-term trends and changes in school-parent partnerships may not be fully captured.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant potential for various aspects of the educational landscape in Accra, Ghana, and beyond. Firstly, it can foster stronger school-parent partnerships within private basic schools in Accra, thus promising improved educational outcomes for students. Additionally, the insights gleaned from this research can serve as a valuable resource for educational policymakers, aiding them in crafting more effective policies and practices that bolster these partnerships, ultimately benefitting students. Moreover, the study can help sensitize both parents and educators about their respective

roles in fostering student success, facilitating greater parental engagement, and preventing potential conflicts between families and schools.

Furthermore, by emphasizing holistic student development beyond just academic achievement, this research aligns with contemporary educational ideals. It also makes a noteworthy contribution to the existing literature on parent-teacher partnerships, potentially inspiring further research and advancing the field of educational psychology and effective teaching practices. Ultimately, by enhancing school-parent partnerships and, consequently, the overall quality of education in private basic schools in Accra, this study can have far-reaching positive impacts on the broader educational system, not only in Ghana but also beyond its borders.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One deals with the study's preliminary matters involving the study's background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance, delimitations and organization of the study. Chapter Two consists of a review of related literature covering the conceptual framework and theoretical framework underpinning the study and empirical studies on the topic. Chapter Three dwells on the methodology comprising the research paradigm, approach, and research design, the study setting, population, sample and sampling technique, data collection method, validation of the instrument data collection procedure, data analysis, trustworthiness criteria, and ethical considerations of the study. Chapter Four involves data presentation and analysis regarding the study objectives and a discussion of the study's major findings. Chapter Five summarises the study's findings and provides conclusions and recommendations drawn from the results.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The literature review serves as the intellectual foundation for this study by situating school-parent partnerships within established conceptual, theoretical, and empirical traditions. A robust review requires not only the identification of relevant studies but also a critical examination of how these studies illuminate or obscure the problem under investigation. Globally, research has consistently highlighted that parental engagement is a decisive factor in student learning outcomes, contributing to improved academic performance, behavioral development, and overall well-being (Fan & Chen, 2020; Wilder, 2014). Yet the depth and nature of such engagement differ across sociocultural and educational contexts, thereby necessitating a closer examination of the interplay between context-specific factors and parental participation.

Within this framework, the review first introduces the conceptual foundations of school-parent partnerships by clarifying how key constructs such as parental engagement, partnership, and student learning are defined and applied in scholarship. This conceptual clarity provides a basis for understanding the diverse interpretations of partnerships across different educational systems. The review then considers the theoretical underpinnings most relevant to this study particularly Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Epstein's model of overlapping spheres of influence which together explain how family, school, and community environments interact to shape children's learning experiences. These theoretical perspectives not only anchor the current study but also enable a comparative lens through which Ghanaian experiences can be examined alongside global trends.

Building on these foundations, the review turns to empirical studies, critically analyzing evidence from international, African, and Ghanaian contexts. While numerous studies confirm that effective partnerships foster positive learning outcomes (Houtenville & Conway, 2008; Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018), significant variations remain in the extent, form, and impact of parental involvement. Importantly, evidence from Ghana indicates that parental participation is often inconsistent, fragmented, or largely dependent on parental initiative rather than institutional structures (Darko-Asumadu & Sika-Bright, 2012; Bartoli et al., 2022). The scarcity of well-documented studies on private basic schools in urban Accra highlights a clear research gap, making it imperative to contextualize this study within both national priorities and international scholarship.

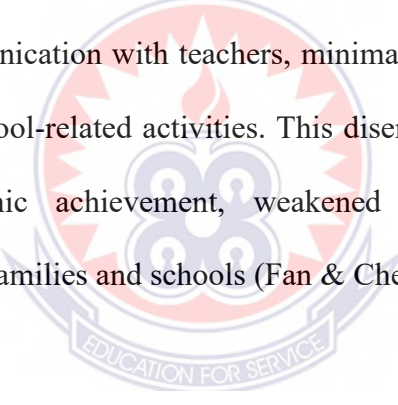
In summary, the literature demonstrates that parental engagement significantly enhances student outcomes, including academic performance, behavioral development, and overall well-being. Theories such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Epstein's model provide useful frameworks for understanding how family, school, and community contexts interact to influence children's learning. Empirical studies across global and African contexts consistently affirm the value of strong school-parent partnerships, while Ghanaian evidence highlights that such engagement often remains fragmented, inconsistent, and heavily reliant on individual parental initiative.

Despite this growing body of work, a critical gap persists in the literature: limited research has been conducted on parental involvement within private basic schools in urban Ghana, particularly in Greater Accra. Most existing studies focus on public schools or broader national trends, leaving the unique dynamics of private institutions underexplored. This omission is significant because private schools account for a

substantial proportion of basic education in urban Ghana and often operate under different cultural, economic, and structural conditions than public schools.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the recognition that parental involvement is a multidimensional construct that significantly influences children's academic and socio-emotional development. Scholars such as Epstein (2011) and Hornby and Lafaele (2011) define parental involvement as the active and meaningful participation of parents in both home-based and school-based activities that support student learning. Within this study, parental disengagement is conceptualized as the absence, inconsistency, or withdrawal of such participation, which may manifest through limited communication with teachers, minimal support for home learning, or lack of presence in school-related activities. This disengagement has been associated with reduced academic achievement, weakened motivation, and diminished collaboration between families and schools (Fan & Chen, 2020; Wilder, 2014).

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sun-like symbol with rays, surrounded by a wreath. Below the wreath, the text "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE" is inscribed on a banner. The entire emblem is set against a light blue background.

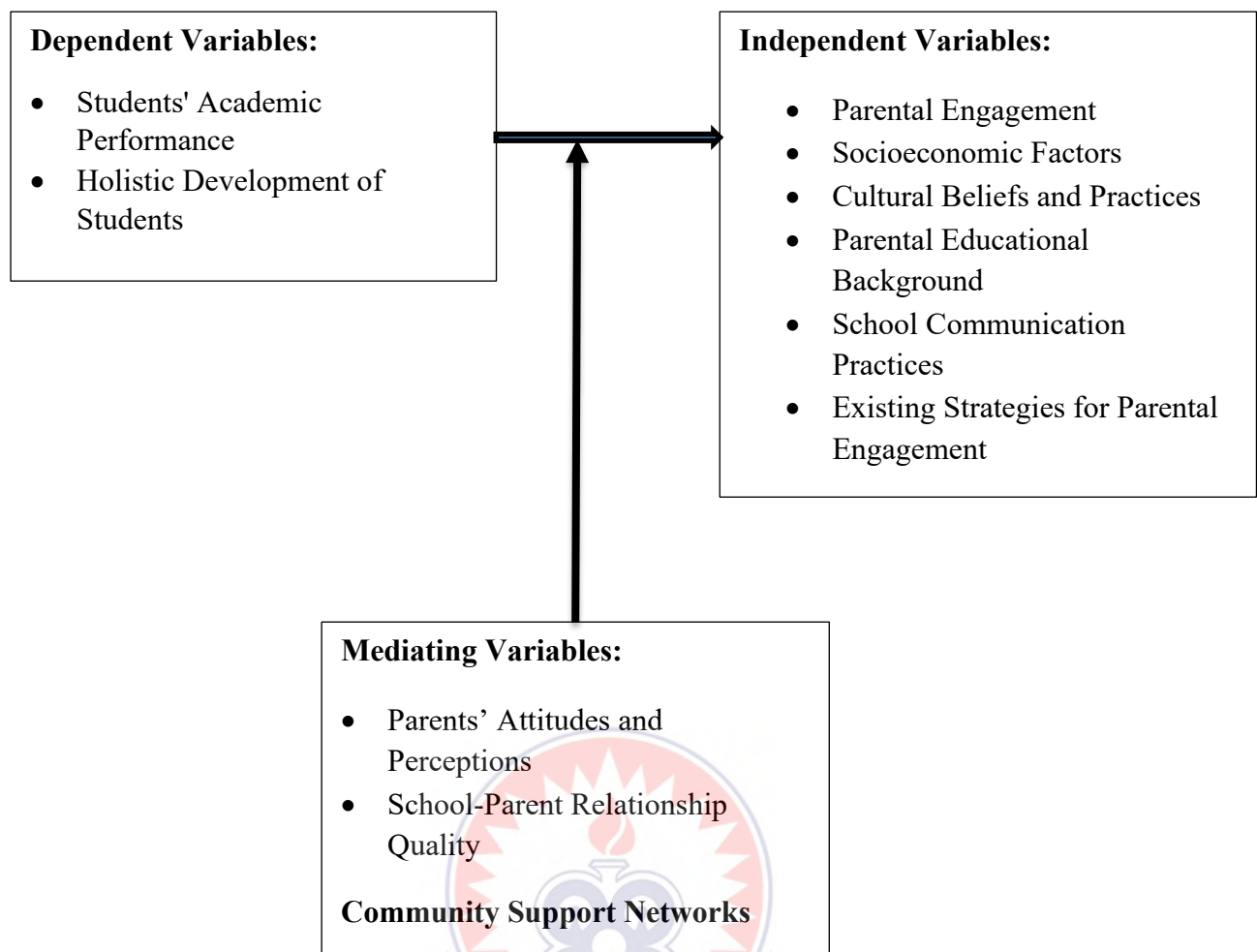


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The framework also highlights that parental engagement is not uniform but shaped by a constellation of socioeconomic, cultural, and institutional factors. For example, Hornby and Lafaele (2011) identify four key barriers to parental involvement: individual parent and family factors, child-related factors, parent–teacher factors, and societal factors. Applying these insights to the Accra private school context, parental disengagement may arise from demanding work schedules, financial pressures, or perceptions that schools alone bear responsibility for student outcomes (Chowa, Masa, & Tucker, 2013; Esia-Donkoh, 2014). Understanding these factors conceptually provides the foundation for analyzing why disengagement persists despite the recognized benefits of active school-parent collaboration.

In addition, the conceptual framework directs attention to strategies for reversing disengagement and enhancing parental participation. International evidence suggests that effective strategies include establishing two-way communication between schools and families, creating inclusive school policies, and involving parents in decision-making processes (Harris & Goodall, 2018; Bartoli et al., 2022). Within Ghana, studies such as Nyarko (2011) and Owusu-Amponsah et al. (2018) confirm that when schools intentionally create platforms for parental participation, students benefit from improved academic performance and greater motivation. This conceptual positioning therefore emphasizes that strengthening partnerships requires deliberate efforts to build trust, remove structural barriers, and institutionalize collaborative practices.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of a study provides the interpretive lens through which concepts are understood, variables are situated, and relationships are examined. In the context of parental involvement in education, theoretical perspectives are essential because they help clarify how and why parents engage with their children's schooling, the barriers that limit their engagement, and the broader ecological and institutional factors that influence these dynamics. For the present study, which seeks to investigate parental disengagement and identify strategies for enhancing parental involvement in private basic schools in Accra, Ghana, two theoretical models are particularly relevant: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement. These frameworks are not only appropriate but complementary, providing both a broad ecological lens and a practical typology of involvement.

Bronfenbrenner's theory situates the child within multiple nested environmental systems that interact over time, emphasizing the interconnectedness of family, school,

community, and broader cultural and policy contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Gallo et al., 2022). It provides a macro-level perspective on the diverse influences shaping children's development and educational outcomes. Epstein's model, on the other hand, operationalizes parental involvement into six concrete forms parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community thereby offering a practical guide for understanding how parental engagement unfolds within educational contexts (Epstein, 2011).

2.2.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner developed the Ecological Systems Theory in the late 1970s to explain how children's development is influenced by a series of nested environmental systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). He argued that earlier research on child development was overly focused on isolated variables such as intelligence or parenting style, without considering the broader ecological contexts in which children live. His model, therefore, provided a holistic framework that captured the multiple layers of influence shaping development, ranging from the most immediate settings (such as family and school) to broader societal structures (such as culture, policy, and historical change).

The theory identifies five interrelated systems: Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem, and Chronosystem. Each system plays a unique role in shaping children's development, and their interactions create dynamic processes that influence outcomes over time. A central concept in Bronfenbrenner's theory is that of proximal processes, which refer to the enduring forms of interaction between a child and the people, objects, and symbols in their immediate environment. These processes are the primary engines of development, but their effectiveness depends on the interaction of the various ecological systems (Tudge et al., 2009).

In the Ghanaian educational context, particularly within private basic schools in Accra, this theory is useful for examining how parental disengagement is not merely the result of individual choice but is shaped by factors operating at multiple levels. For example, parents' busy work schedules (Exosystem) may reduce their availability to attend PTA meetings (Microsystem), while cultural norms that position teachers as the primary authority figures in education (Macrosystem) may discourage parents from active involvement. By applying the ecological model, this study acknowledges the complexity of parental engagement and situates it within a broader socio-ecological framework.

2.2.1.1 Microsystem

The Microsystem represents the child's immediate environment and includes settings such as the family, school, peer group, and neighborhood. It is within this system that children have direct, face-to-face interactions that significantly shape their development (Boonphadung & Seubsang, 2021). For example, the relationship between parents and teachers, the support parents provide for homework, and the encouragement children receive from caregivers are all part of the Microsystem.

Research has shown that strong parental involvement within the Microsystem contributes to improved academic achievement, greater motivation, and enhanced socio-emotional development (Fan & Chen, 2020; Hill & Tyson, 2009). Conversely, disengagement at this level manifested through limited communication with teachers, lack of participation in school events, or absence of support for learning at home has been linked to lower academic performance and weaker student engagement (Esia-Donkoh, 2014).

In private basic schools in Accra, the Microsystem is particularly significant because these schools rely heavily on tuition fees and parent participation for their functioning. When parents disengage, the lack of collaboration with teachers can undermine students' learning outcomes and limit schools' ability to implement holistic educational strategies. For instance, a child whose parents consistently attend school meetings and maintain regular communication with teachers may experience greater academic success than one whose parents rarely interact with the school. The Microsystem therefore highlights the importance of strengthening family–school relationships as a means of addressing parental disengagement.

2.2.1.2 Mesosystem

The Mesosystem encompasses the interconnections between different Microsystems, such as the relationships between home and school, family and peer networks, or family and religious institutions. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized that development is not shaped solely by individual Microsystems in isolation but by the quality of linkages and interactions between them. The Mesosystem therefore represents the *web of connections* that integrates a child's various life contexts, ensuring that experiences across different settings are consistent, reinforcing, and mutually supportive. When these interconnections are harmonious, children benefit from a coherent developmental environment; when they are disjointed or conflictual, children are often caught in contradictions that undermine growth (Gheyssens et al., 2020).

Empirical research has demonstrated that the Mesosystem is pivotal in promoting positive academic and social outcomes. When parents and teachers collaborate effectively—sharing information, aligning expectations, and reinforcing each other's efforts—children are more likely to experience academic success, emotional stability,

and stronger self-concept (Boonphadung & Seubsang, 2021). Such collaboration can take the form of parent–teacher conferences, joint problem-solving, and shared responsibility for supporting homework. Conversely, when parents are disengaged, the links between Microsystems weaken, leading to miscommunication, conflicting messages, and diminished support. For instance, children may receive encouragement to study at school but lack reinforcement at home, creating gaps that lower motivation and achievement.

In many global contexts, strong home–school partnerships within the Mesosystem have been linked to long-term benefits such as reduced dropout rates, better transitions between educational levels, and more effective behavioral management (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2012). African studies also highlight that when families and schools build reciprocal relationships, students show increased attendance, improved literacy outcomes, and reduced absenteeism (Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). These findings reinforce the idea that the Mesosystem acts as a bridge, allowing support and expectations to flow seamlessly between key environments in a child’s life.

In the Ghanaian context, however, the Mesosystem is often characterized by misalignments between parental expectations and school practices. Some parents perceive education as the sole responsibility of teachers and believe that their role is limited to providing financial support for fees and materials (Nyarko, 2011). Schools, on the other hand, frequently expect parents to be more actively engaged in their children’s learning, from attending PTA meetings to supervising homework and participating in extracurricular activities (Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). This misalignment creates tensions within the Mesosystem, as the two most significant Microsystems home and school operate with differing assumptions. The result is a gap

in support that negatively affects students, who are left navigating inconsistent messages and limited reinforcement.

In private basic schools in Accra, these challenges are further compounded by socioeconomic pressures and cultural dynamics. Many parents in urban settings work long hours in the formal and informal sectors, limiting their ability to maintain regular contact with schools. Others may not fully understand contemporary pedagogical practices, making it difficult for them to align home support with school expectations (Esia-Donkoh, 2014). These factors weaken the Mesosystem, as the bridges between home and school become fragile or non-existent. Teachers in these schools often express frustration at the lack of parental responsiveness, noting that students who receive little reinforcement at home struggle more in the classroom.

Strengthening the Mesosystem in private schools requires deliberate and sustained efforts to align parental expectations with school goals and to foster open communication channels. This may include the use of structured parent–teacher communication systems, orientation sessions to help parents understand curriculum expectations, and flexible platforms such as digital messaging tools to accommodate busy parents. Schools may also need to build trust by demonstrating the value of parental contributions, thereby shifting cultural perceptions that minimize the parental role in education.

2.2.1.3 Exosystem

The Exosystem refers to the broader social settings that indirectly influence the child's development, even though the child is not an active participant in these environments. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), these are contexts in which the child does not directly interact but which nonetheless shape the conditions of their everyday life.

Examples of such settings include parents' workplaces, community organizations, religious institutions, local governance structures, and mass media (Hagenauer et al., 2022). The Exosystem influences children by shaping the resources, time, and emotional energy that parents and caregivers can devote to child-rearing and educational involvement.

The impact of the Exosystem on child development is well-documented in international research. For instance, studies in the United States and Europe have shown that parents' working conditions, access to social services, and neighborhood safety significantly affect the extent of parental involvement in schools (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Fan & Chen, 2020). Parents employed in supportive work environments with flexible schedules are more likely to attend school meetings, volunteer, and monitor homework than those working in demanding or unstable jobs. Conversely, parents in precarious employment often face fatigue, stress, and time scarcity, which can undermine their ability to participate in their children's education.

African evidence reinforces these findings, showing that parents' socio-economic circumstances and community structures exert strong indirect influences on students' educational outcomes. Chowa, Masa, and Tucker (2013) found that in Tanzania, parents with secure livelihoods and supportive community networks engaged more effectively in school activities compared to those facing chronic financial instability. Similarly, in Ghana, parents in low-resource urban communities reported that economic pressures and long working hours limited their participation in school activities, despite their recognition of its importance (Esia-Donkoh, 2014).

In the context of private basic schools in Accra, the Exosystem is particularly salient. Many parents in these schools work in formal sectors such as banking, education, or

civil service, as well as in informal sectors including trading and self-employment. The demanding nature of urban work schedules often prevents parents from attending PTA meetings, parent–teacher conferences, or school events. For example, a parent employed in a private firm with inflexible working hours may miss important school engagements, while another involved in daily market trading may lack the time or energy to supervise homework consistently. These structural constraints create a pattern of parental disengagement that cannot be attributed to disinterest but to systemic barriers inherent in the Exosystem.

Beyond workplaces, local government policies and community-level resources also influence the Exosystem. For instance, school zoning regulations, availability of affordable transportation, and provision of after-school programs all shape the extent to which parents can engage with schools. In Accra, inadequate public transportation and heavy traffic congestion create additional logistical barriers, discouraging parents from visiting schools regularly. Likewise, limited community-level educational support services reduce opportunities for collaborative engagement between families and schools. This study underscores that parental disengagement is often rooted in systemic constraints rather than individual neglect. Addressing these challenges requires structural interventions that go beyond urging parents to be more active. For example, policies that encourage flexible workplace arrangements, employer-sponsored family support programs, or local government initiatives to improve community–school linkages can create enabling conditions for parental involvement. Schools themselves can adapt by offering flexible meeting times, using digital platforms for communication, and designing engagement strategies that account for the time limitations imposed by parents’ work environments.

2.2.1.4 Macrosystem

The Macrosystem encompasses the overarching cultural, societal, economic, and policy frameworks that shape the conditions of child development and indirectly influence family–school interactions. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the Macrosystem represents the broad ideological and structural environment in which Microsystems, Mesosystems, and Exosystems are embedded. It is composed of cultural values, societal norms, national laws, and institutional policies that define what is considered acceptable or expected behavior for parents, teachers, and children (Schmid & Petko, 2019). In essence, the Macrosystem provides the worldview or overarching cultural script that guides interactions in the smaller ecological systems.

At a global level, research demonstrates that cultural and policy contexts significantly affect patterns of parental involvement. In Western societies such as the United States and the United Kingdom, educational systems actively promote parental participation as part of school governance and decision-making (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Harris & Goodall, 2018). National policies, such as the Every Student Succeeds Act in the U.S., explicitly mandate parent–school collaboration, reflecting a cultural emphasis on shared responsibility for children’s education. In contrast, studies in parts of Asia show that parental involvement is often shaped by Confucian traditions, where teachers are highly respected authority figures and parental roles in education are limited to providing home support (Tan & Goldberg, 2019). These variations highlight how the Macrosystem influences whether parental engagement is institutionalized or culturally discouraged.

African contexts also reveal the influence of Macrosystemic factors on parental involvement. In many sub-Saharan countries, structural inequalities, poverty, and

limited educational resources shape the extent to which parents can support their children's education (Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). For instance, parents in low-income households may prioritize immediate economic survival over school engagement, while cultural norms may assign educational responsibility almost exclusively to teachers. Additionally, in contexts where governments underfund education, the burden shifts to families and communities, further complicating patterns of parental involvement (Oketch & Rolleston, 2018).

In Ghana, the Macrosystem is particularly relevant to understanding parental disengagement in private basic schools. Culturally, teachers are often positioned as the custodians of knowledge, while parents are expected to fulfill a primarily financial role (Nyarko, 2011). This cultural norm reduces the perceived legitimacy of parents participating in academic discussions or school decision-making processes. As a result, even parents who are financially committed to their children's schooling may disengage from active collaboration with teachers, believing that academic matters fall outside their role. This dynamic reflects a broader societal belief system that inadvertently discourages shared responsibility in education.

Socioeconomic structures within the Ghanaian Macrosystem also shape parental involvement. Widespread income inequality, unemployment, and financial pressures limit the resources parents can dedicate to education (Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). Parents in urban Accra may enroll their children in private basic schools with the expectation of higher academic standards, yet economic strain often reduces their ability to provide consistent non-financial support such as supervision of homework, attendance at meetings, or engagement in extracurricular activities. Thus,

socioeconomic pressures embedded within the Macrosystem create conditions that undermine effective school–parent partnerships.

Educational policies further contribute to shaping parental involvement in Ghana. Although the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service have promoted structures such as Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs), implementation is uneven, particularly in private schools, where PTAs may lack formalized mandates or operate with limited influence (Amponsah & Okyere, 2023). Moreover, national policies have tended to emphasize access to education rather than sustained parent–school collaboration, leaving gaps in systemic support for parental engagement. This policy orientation influences how private schools design their parental involvement strategies and, in many cases, leaves them without clear guidelines for fostering meaningful partnerships.

In Accra’s private schools, these cultural, economic, and policy dynamics converge to shape patterns of parental disengagement. On the one hand, parents invest financially in their children’s education, reflecting a commitment consistent with societal expectations. On the other hand, broader Macrosystemic influences cultural norms that minimize parental roles, socioeconomic inequalities that restrict parental capacity, and policies that inadequately support parent–school collaboration constrain the forms of engagement parents are able or willing to pursue. These systemic influences demonstrate that disengagement cannot be fully understood as an individual failure but must be contextualized within the cultural and structural frameworks of the Macrosystem.

2.2.1.5 Chronosystem

The Chronosystem refers to the dimension of time in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, encompassing both individual life transitions and broader socio-historical changes that influence development. Unlike the other systems, which describe spatial or contextual environments, the Chronosystem emphasizes the temporal context of human development, recognizing that children's lives are shaped not only by their current environments but also by the timing and sequencing of events across their lifespan (Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Tafahomi, 2021). Examples of Chronosystem influences include parental divorce, migration, changes in family economic status, political transitions, natural disasters, and technological revolutions. These events and transitions may alter the structure and function of other systems Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, and Macrosystem thereby influencing the trajectory of child development.

At a global level, research has demonstrated the impact of historical shifts and technological change on parental involvement in education. For instance, the rapid rise of digital technologies has transformed how parents communicate with schools, enabling online platforms for monitoring grades, attending virtual meetings, and accessing school information (Harris & Goodall, 2018). Similarly, global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped parental roles in education, as parents were required to provide direct instructional support during home-based learning (Garcia & Weiss, 2020). Such events illustrate how the Chronosystem redefines expectations of parental engagement, demanding adaptation to new forms of interaction with schools and learning processes.

In African contexts, historical and economic changes have also influenced parental involvement. For example, rural-to-urban migration has altered family structures, weakening extended kinship networks that traditionally supported child-rearing and school engagement (Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). Additionally, structural adjustment policies in the 1980s and 1990s reshaped educational financing in many sub-Saharan countries, shifting greater responsibility onto families and thereby altering the expectations placed on parents (Oketch & Rolleston, 2018).

In the Ghanaian context, the Chronosystem has had profound implications for parental involvement, particularly in private basic schools in urban areas such as Accra. Rapid urbanization has created new educational demands, as many families migrate from rural areas seeking quality education in cities. This shift has increased reliance on private schools, which in turn places new responsibilities on parents to support not only tuition but also governance and school-community initiatives (Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). At the same time, socio-economic changes such as rising cost of living and employment instability have affected parents' capacity to engage consistently in school activities. Families that experience transitions such as job loss, relocation, or household restructuring often struggle to maintain the same level of involvement in their children's schooling.

The COVID-19 pandemic serves as a recent example of the Chronosystem's influence on parental engagement in Ghana. When schools were closed, parents became primary facilitators of learning at home, often without adequate preparation or resources (Amponsah & Okyere, 2023). Schools adopted digital platforms for instruction and communication, requiring parents to adapt to new technologies and invest additional time and resources. For some parents, this transition fostered stronger involvement, as

they became more aware of their children's academic needs. For others, however, the additional burden created disengagement, particularly among families with limited digital literacy or financial means to access online learning tools.

Beyond crises, the Chronosystem also highlights gradual historical changes that reshape parental roles. Over the past two decades, Ghana's increasing reliance on private education reflects a socio-historical trend that has shifted expectations for parents. Unlike in public schools, where government policies often dictate structures for parental involvement through PTAs, private schools vary widely in how they engage families. This variability means that parents must continually adjust their expectations and roles depending on the policies of individual schools, creating both opportunities and challenges for sustained engagement.

Understanding these temporal dimensions is crucial for developing strategies that are both effective and sustainable. Interventions must account for the fact that parents' capacity to engage may fluctuate over time and that schools must remain flexible in creating opportunities for involvement. For instance, recognizing that parents may disengage during periods of economic hardship suggests the need for alternative forms of engagement that are less resource-intensive. Similarly, acknowledging the long-term impact of historical shifts such as urbanization and privatization underscores the importance of systemic reforms that support parental participation across changing social contexts.

2.2.1.6 Applications and implications

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory offers valuable applications and implications for understanding, researching, and addressing parental involvement in education. Its central premise that child development is influenced by multiple, interconnected systems operating simultaneously makes it a powerful tool for analyzing the complex and multi-layered problem of parental disengagement. Rather than attributing children's educational outcomes solely to individual characteristics or isolated family behaviors, the theory emphasizes the interaction between immediate relationships and broader social, cultural, and historical forces (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Radwan et al., 2021). This ecological orientation compels educators, policymakers, and researchers to adopt multifaceted approaches that address barriers to engagement at every level of the child's environment.

At the Microsystem level, the theory underscores the importance of strengthening direct interactions between children, parents, and teachers. Practical applications include creating structured communication channels such as parent-teacher conferences, home visits, or digital messaging platforms that facilitate regular dialogue. Teachers can also provide parents with strategies for supporting learning at home, thereby reinforcing classroom instruction. For research, the Microsystem highlights the need to investigate the quality of parent-child and parent-teacher relationships, examining how they contribute to students' academic motivation and emotional well-being (Hill & Tyson, 2009). In the context of Accra's private schools, interventions at this level might involve equipping teachers with training in family engagement strategies and ensuring that parents understand the value of their active participation in daily learning processes.

At the Mesosystem level, Bronfenbrenner's framework calls attention to the connections between different Microsystems, particularly the relationship between home and school. Schools can apply this insight by fostering collaborative partnerships with parents, aligning expectations, and encouraging joint problem-solving. For example, schools might organize workshops where teachers and parents co-develop strategies for supporting children's literacy and numeracy. Research in this area can focus on the extent and quality of home-school collaboration, exploring how alignment (or misalignment) between parental expectations and school practices affects student outcomes (Boonphadung & Seubsang, 2021). In Accra's private schools, where some parents view education as solely the responsibility of teachers, deliberate efforts to strengthen the Mesosystem could help bridge the gap and promote consistency across children's learning environments.

The Exosystem level draws attention to the indirect but significant impact of parents' workplaces, community organizations, and local governance structures on their capacity to engage with schools. Practical applications include advocating for family-friendly workplace policies, such as flexible schedules or parental leave provisions that enable parents to attend school events. Schools can also collaborate with community organizations to provide after-school programs and support services that alleviate some of the demands on working parents (Hagenauer et al., 2022). For researchers, the Exosystem highlights the importance of examining how structural and institutional factors shape parental engagement patterns. In Accra, where many parents in private schools juggle long working hours and demanding urban conditions, addressing Exosystem barriers requires systemic interventions that go beyond urging individual parents to "do more."

At the Macrosystem level, the theory emphasizes the influence of cultural norms, societal expectations, and policy frameworks on parental involvement. Applications here include designing education policies that explicitly mandate and support parental engagement, ensuring that PTAs or similar structures are inclusive and effective, and fostering cultural shifts that recognize parents as active partners in education (Schmid & Petko, 2019). For research, the Macrosystem encourages critical analysis of how cultural values such as the belief in Ghana that teachers are the sole custodians of academic knowledge (Nyarko, 2011) affect parental attitudes and behaviors. In Accra's private schools, addressing Macrosystem factors may involve targeted sensitization programs that reframe parental roles, national campaigns promoting family-school collaboration, and policy reforms that create supportive environments for engagement.

The Chronosystem level highlights the importance of considering time and historical change in shaping parental involvement. Applications include monitoring how life transitions (e.g., relocation, economic shocks, family restructuring) affect parental engagement and designing flexible school strategies that accommodate such changes. On a larger scale, schools and policymakers must adapt to socio-historical shifts such as digitalization, urbanization, and the growing reliance on private education (Tafahomi, 2021). For research, this means exploring how parental involvement evolves across generations, examining the long-term effects of historical events such as the COVID-19 pandemic on family-school interactions. In Accra's private schools, the Chronosystem perspective underscores the need for strategies that are not static but responsive to the changing realities of families over time.

2.2.2 Connectedness of Epstein's Model and Bronfenbrenner's Theory

While Bronfenbrenner's ecological model provides a broad framework for understanding the multiple systems influencing child development, Epstein's model offers a more specific typology of parental involvement within educational contexts. Epstein (2011) identifies six types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. These categories provide a practical framework for schools to design and implement strategies that foster parental engagement.

The connection between the two theories lies in their complementary perspectives. Epstein's model operates primarily within the Microsystem and Mesosystem by focusing on direct parent-child and parent-school interactions. Bronfenbrenner's theory, in contrast, extends to the Exosystem, Macrosystem, and Chronosystem, capturing the broader social and cultural influences that shape parental involvement (Gallo et al., 2022). Together, the two models provide a comprehensive understanding of parental engagement that spans from immediate relational contexts to systemic structures.

For this study, integrating the two frameworks is particularly valuable. Bronfenbrenner's theory explains why parents may disengage due to structural or cultural barriers, while Epstein's model specifies the forms of engagement most affected, such as attendance at PTA meetings or support for home learning. By combining the two, the study can not only identify the root causes of disengagement but also propose targeted strategies for enhancing involvement in ways that are contextually relevant to private schools in Accra.

For instance, if parents' work schedules (Exosystem) limit their ability to volunteer at school, schools can design alternative forms of engagement, such as digital communication platforms or flexible meeting times. Similarly, if cultural norms (Macrosystem) discourage parents from participating in decision-making, schools can implement policies that actively invite and legitimize parental input. This integration ensures that strategies are both practical and sensitive to the broader ecological environment.

2.3. Reason for Parental Disengagement

Parental disengagement in education can be conceptualized as a multidimensional phenomenon characterized by limited participation in school activities, minimal communication with teachers, and insufficient involvement in at-home learning support (van Rooij et al., 2021). Understanding the root causes of disengagement is essential for designing effective interventions. A review of the literature suggests that reasons for disengagement can be grouped into three broad categories: socioeconomic constraints, cultural and perceptual influences, and institutional or structural barriers.

2.3.1 Socioeconomic constraints

Socioeconomic factors are consistently cited in the literature as some of the strongest determinants of parental disengagement. Parents who face financial hardship, unemployment, or unstable income often find themselves unable to commit sufficient time or resources to their children's education. Research conducted in sub-Saharan Africa demonstrates that parents from low-income households prioritize meeting immediate survival needs over educational engagement, resulting in reduced attendance at parent-teacher meetings and little involvement in extracurricular activities (Chowa, Masa, & Tucker, 2013). Similarly, Esia-Donkoh (2014) found that financial challenges

directly affected parents' ability to contribute to school development activities, which in turn weakened their relationship with school authorities.

In Ghana, studies highlight that urban parents, particularly in cities like Accra, face a dual burden: high living costs and long working hours. These conditions create a scarcity of both financial and emotional resources, leaving little time for meaningful participation in children's education (Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). The evidence suggests that disengagement here is not necessarily a matter of indifference but often the result of economic necessity. While parents may recognize the importance of engagement, the daily struggle to provide food, shelter, and healthcare overshadows their ability to attend meetings, supervise homework, or volunteer in school activities. However, the literature also suggests that socioeconomic challenges are not insurmountable. Razali et al. (2018) argue that supportive workplace policies, such as flexible working hours or family leave, can moderate the negative effects of economic pressure by creating opportunities for parents to participate in school-related activities.

2.3.2 Cultural and perceptual influences

Cultural norms and parental perceptions strongly shape attitudes toward engagement. In many Ghanaian contexts, cultural expectations position teachers as the custodians of academic knowledge, while parents are expected to fulfill a primarily financial role (Nyarko, 2011). This division of responsibilities reflects long-standing traditions in which parents view themselves as providers rather than educational partners. Consequently, even parents who are financially committed to their children's education may disengage from direct academic involvement, considering it outside their mandate.

This cultural orientation is not unique to Ghana. In Asia, respect for teachers' authority similarly limits parental participation to financial or supportive roles, with parents often

deferring entirely to schools on academic matters (Tan & Goldberg, 2019). However, contrasting findings from Western contexts demonstrate how cultural scripts can encourage engagement. In the United States and United Kingdom, for instance, policies such as the Every Student Succeeds Act institutionalize parental involvement, framing it as a shared responsibility between schools and families (Harris & Goodall, 2018).

What emerges from this comparison is that cultural beliefs do not only determine the extent of involvement but also shape the types of engagement parents consider appropriate. In Ghana, the perception that parents should remain at the margins of educational decision-making reinforces disengagement. Over time, this creates a cycle in which schools expect little from parents, and parents reciprocally perceive themselves as peripheral. Breaking this cycle requires shifting cultural perceptions so that parents recognize themselves not just as financiers of education but also as co-partners in their children's learning.

2.3.3 Institutional and structural barriers

Institutional and structural barriers further exacerbate parental disengagement. Research indicates that parents with lower educational attainment often feel unprepared to support their children academically, particularly in subjects where they lack knowledge or confidence (van Rooij et al., 2021). Mo et al. (2024) add that insufficient parenting knowledge and lack of access to training or resources leave many parents ill-equipped to engage effectively with schools. Yisihak Ukumo and Damtew Berlie (2024) found that parents who undervalue their own contributions tend to disengage, assuming that their involvement makes little difference to learning outcomes.

Schools themselves may inadvertently reinforce disengagement. Weak communication strategies, limited transparency, and failure to create inclusive spaces for parents to

participate discourage engagement (Amponsah & Okyere, 2023). In Ghanaian private basic schools, Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs) often exist in name only, with irregular meetings or limited authority, leaving parents feeling excluded from meaningful decision-making. The absence of strong institutional frameworks undermines parents’ confidence and perpetuates cycles of disengagement, as parents who feel their input is not valued are less likely to continue participating.

2.3.4 Cross-context similarities and differences

When comparing findings across different contexts, both similarities and differences emerge in the factors leading to disengagement. Socioeconomic constraints are nearly universal. Whether in Ghana, Tanzania, or developed nations, financial hardship and long working hours consistently limit parental involvement (Chowa et al., 2013; Esia-Donkoh, 2014). However, the degree of their impact varies depending on whether institutional supports such as family-friendly workplace policies or school-based assistance exist to mitigate these challenges (Razali et al., 2018).

Cultural and perceptual influences, by contrast, show significant regional variation. Ghana and other African contexts align more closely with Asian models, where teachers are viewed as primary authorities. In Western contexts, however, parental involvement is encouraged and institutionalized, resulting in more active partnerships (Harris & Goodall, 2018). This variation underscores the importance of tailoring engagement strategies to local cultural frameworks rather than assuming universal applicability. Institutional barriers cut across all regions, but their form and intensity differ. In Ghana, weak PTA structures and poor communication strategies limit involvement, while in Western countries, bureaucratic processes or overreliance on digital systems may create obstacles (van Rooij et al., 2021).

2.3.5 Strategies for mitigating disengagement

The literature also identifies strategies for addressing disengagement, many of which emphasize multi-level and contextually grounded approaches. Community-based programmes, such as after-school clubs and family counselling, can strengthen parents' capacity to engage by providing knowledge, skills, and supportive networks (Mo et al., 2024). Similarly, community centres offering joint parent–child activities create spaces where families can build stronger relationships and develop a culture of engagement.

Employers also play an important role. Razali et al. (2018) highlight that family-friendly policies, including flexible schedules and leave allowances, enable parents to balance work and school commitments more effectively. In Ghana's urban context, where long work hours are common, such interventions could significantly enhance parental participation in private schools. Schools themselves can adopt strategies such as digital platforms for communication, flexible meeting times, and parent training programmes to overcome barriers related to time, knowledge, and confidence. These interventions must, however, be sensitive to local realities, recognizing that strategies effective in one cultural or socioeconomic setting may not automatically translate into others.

2.4 Effects of Parental Involvement

The results of many hundreds of studies have shown that a stronger parental involvement in their children's schooling is positively related to their cognitive and social functioning (Koomson & Afoakwah, 2023; Wolf et al., 2019). However, numerous studies show null effects or even negative effects. Regarding the latter, several researchers warn against a one-sided, too optimistic picture because, according to them, studies with null or no effects often are not submitted to scientific journals or

have a lesser chance of being accepted, the so-called file-drawer effect (Paredes Ruvalcaba et al., 2023b). Furthermore, most of the studies on parental involvement in education are based on cross-sectional and correlational designs, which – strictly speaking – do not permit causal inferences as to what affects what (Supplemental Material for Year 3 Follow-Up of the “Quality Preschool for Ghana” Interventions on Child Development, 2019). This section will not focus on individual studies but on review studies and (statistical) meta-analyses. An advantage of the latter is that effects are expressed in some form of quantitative effect size, a compact coefficient that gives an idea of the strength of a relation or effect.

A larger meta-analytic databases provide a greater opportunity to analyse a wider range of moderator effects with more precision. This finding does not mean, however, that meta-analysis is a methodology without any problems. One very practical one is that most meta-analyses build on overlapping individual studies; that is, the results, to a more or lesser degree, are based on the same studies. In a synthesis of nine meta-analyses, i.e., a meta-analysis of meta-analyses, carried out between 1984 and 2007, Hattie (2009) found an effect size (Cohen’s d) of 0.51 for the average effect of parental involvement on achievement, which is regarded as a medium effect. Hattie established that there is much variance in the influence of parental involvement. When it involves a surveillance approach, the effects are negative; there are weaker effects in case the involvement relates to early interventions and much stronger effects when it comprises parental aspirations and expectations and when parents are more actively involved. More precisely, parental aspirations and expectations are strongest correlated with achievement (0.80), while modes of communication (such as interest in homework and schoolwork, assistance with homework, and discussing school progress) have a moderate.

Effect sizes play a crucial role in quantifying the practical significance of research findings. Cohen's rule of thumb, which categorizes effect sizes as small, medium, or large based on values of 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80, respectively, provides a standardized framework for interpretation. For instance, you mentioned an effect size of 0.38, although the specific variable it relates to is not clear. However, this number provides a valuable point of reference for assessing the magnitude of an observed effect. Furthermore, your mention of an effect size of 0.18 for parental home supervision underscores the relatively modest impact of this particular factor on academic achievement.

Parental involvement in a child's education is a topic of considerable importance, and it is crucial to understand its effects on academic achievement. Hattie's emphasis on the need for schools to collaborate with parents highlights the recognition of parental involvement as a potential catalyst for positive educational outcomes. However, as indicated by the research conducted by Patra and Sethi (2023), disentangling the precise impact of parental involvement is far from straightforward. Factors such as varied definitions of involvement, the scarcity of experimental studies, and the omission of mediating and interacting variables add complexity to the analysis.

The strongest associations appear to be discussions about school activities between parent and child (positive), parents' aspirations and expectations for their children (positive), and parental styles, in particular, an authoritative style (positive) and authoritarian and permissive styles (both negative). In addition to small positive associations, the researchers also reported several negative associations. They stress the need to be cautious about interpreting correlational data. An illustrative example is the following. The variable "parents checking homework" is often negatively associated

with achievement. The reason for this is that parents tend to check homework more vigilantly in case their child has learning or behavioural problems, making checking homework an effect rather than a cause of poor academic achievement (Castro et al., 2015).

Jeynes (2012) performed a meta-analysis specifically focusing on urban areas. According to him, this is necessary because the context and circumstances there differ greatly from other areas. He synthesized 51 studies analysing the relationship between parental participation programmes and the academic achievement of students from pre-kindergarten to 12th-grade secondary school. The studies were published between 1964 and 2006. Unlike earlier studies, he concentrated on involvement programmes, distinguishing between a general involvement programme and a range of specific types of involvement programmes. He did not differentiate between different types of achievement measures, however. The effect sizes he computed ranged from $d = 1.91$ to -0.21 ; all but two effects were positive. The overall involvement programme produced an effect size of 0.30. He found a somewhat smaller effect size in 4. They presented no date range.

Regarding the estimates for specific types of involvement, the effect size estimates were: shared reading 0.51; partnership/collaboration teachers-parents 0.35; checking homework 0.27; communication parents-teachers 0.28; Head Start 0.22 (n.s.); English as a Second Language 0.22 (n.s.). The results of these studies, which were published between 2003 and 2013, showed that for students of all ages, the involvement of parents at home is the most effective strategy. Significantly less important is the involvement in school and the contact between parents and teachers.

The researchers do not report exact effect size coefficients; they conclude, nevertheless, that effects in general are small or even very small. On a total of 135 effects, 78 percent was positive, 19 percent was negative, and 4 percent was a null effect. Bakker et al. concluded that regarding the effectiveness of parental involvement, the socioeconomic and cultural background of families play a role, but it is difficult to establish this association unambiguously. In some studies, parental involvement is a mediating variable, while in other studies, interaction effects point to differential effects for different categories. In case interaction effects have been reported, they mostly point to more favourable effects for lower than for higher socioeconomic milieus. Wilder (2014) synthesized the results of nine meta-analyses published between 2001 and 2012 that examined the impact of various types of parental involvement on academic achievement. These types were parental involvement – academic achievement, home supervision, parental participation, parental expectations, and homework assistance.

The results showed that the relationship was positive, regardless of the type of parental involvement or the measure of achievement. This association was strongest if involvement was defined as parental expectations for the academic achievement of their children; the influence was weakest if involvement was operationalized as homework assistance. The relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement was consistent across different grade levels and ethnic groups. Still, the strength of that relationship varied according to the way student achievement was measured. Regarding the latter, the impact may be significantly stronger if there is a more global measure of achievement rather than a specific measure. Castro et al. (2015) performed a quantitative synthesis of research into parental involvement and academic achievement through a meta-analysis of 37 studies in kindergarten, primary and secondary schools carried out between 2000 and 2013.

They differentiated between seven modes of involvement: general involvement, communication with children, homework, parental expectations, reading with children, parental attendance and participation, and parental style. In addition, they discerned seven measures of academic achievement: general achievement, mathematics, reading, sciences, social studies, foreign language, and others. Because of small numbers, they did not distinguish between ethnic or immigrant groups. Effect size estimations for the various types of involvement varied from 0.01 to 0.22, that is, non-existent to small. The average effect size of 0.12 can be interpreted as less than small. The analyses revealed that the parental activities most linked to high achievement are those focusing on general supervision of the children's learning activities. The strongest (but small) associations were found when families have high academic expectations for their children (0.22), develop and maintain communication with them about school matters (0.20), and help them to develop adequate reading habits (0.17). The effects, according to the outcome measure, varied from -0.01 (science; n.s.) to 0.39 (other curricular subjects). With regard to educational level, the largest effect was for secondary education (0.14), followed by primary education (0.13) and kindergarten (0.05).

In a meta-analysis of 28 studies published between 1990 and 2012, Jeynes (2017) analysed the relationship between parental involvement and the academic achievement and school behaviour of pre-kindergarten to college-age children of one specific ethnic group, namely the Latinos. Effect sizes were computed for parental involvement overall and for specific categories of involvement (Jeynes, 2012). Results indicated a significant relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement and overall outcomes, but not for school behaviour. For parental involvement as a whole, the effects on achievement ranged from 1.90 to -0.12, with all but one effect being positive; the average effect was 0.52. This relationship existed both for younger (grades

K-5) and older (secondary school and college freshman) students. Jeynes (2012) also computed effect sizes for different outcome measures, namely reading, math, science, and social studies. The effect sizes appeared to be identical (all were 0.47). The analyses also indicated that among the specific types of parental involvement, parental style and strong parent-child communication were associated with higher levels of academic achievement (0.31 and 0.34, respectively).

Boonk et al. (2018) analysed the results of 75 studies performed between 2003 and 2017, examining the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. They made a distinction between the phases of early childhood education, elementary school, and middle school and beyond. Though they concluded that according to those studies parental involvement indeed is related to children's academic achievement, they also relativized this finding by remarking that this association is not as strong as traditionally believed. In the studies analysed, the researchers found small to medium associations between various parental involvement variables and academic achievement. The most consistent and positive relations were found for reading at home, parents holding high expectations for their children's academic achievement and schooling, communication between parents and children regarding school, and parental encouragement and support for learning. Boonk et al (2018). cautioned, however, that while there clearly are forms of parental involvement that are positively related to achievement, several studies consistently suggest the opposite. Their overviews show that only 61 percent of the effects are positive, while 15 percent are negative, and in 24 percent of the cases, there is no effect. Rather than assuming that any form of involvement is a good thing, educators, parents, and researchers should, therefore, be aware that some forms of involvement do not work or might actually lead to declines

in achievement. To make matters even more complicated, Boonk et al (2018). remarked that not all forms of parental involvement are the same for all ethnic/racial groups.

In another study, Barger et al. (2019) performed a statistical meta-analysis of 448 studies published between 1964 and 2016. They described their results in terms of correlation coefficients (r). Barger et al. reported small positive associations (0.13 to 0.23) between parental involvement in their children's schooling and the children's academic outcome measures of achievement, engagement, and motivation. Parental involvement was also positively associated with social and emotional adjustment (0.12 and 0.17, respectively), but it was negatively related to the children's delinquency (-0.15). Different types of involvement, such as parents' participation in school events and discussion of school with children, were likewise positively related to the academic adjustment measures. Parental homework assistance, though, was negatively associated with their children's achievement (-0.15) but not with their engagement and motivation (0.07 and 0.05, respectively). According to Barger et al., there is a reason to believe that multiple dimensions of children's outcomes reinforce one another over time. The analyses also revealed that little variation existed due to the moderating variables age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in the association between different types of involvement and the children's academic outcome measures. Reasons for this disappointing finding may be that the classifications of socioeconomic status used in the analyses were not fine-grained enough and that the number of studies specifically focusing on ethnic minorities was relatively small.

Erdem and Kaya (2020) also examined the effects of parental involvement on students' academic achievement at the levels of preschool, elementary school and secondary school. In their meta-analysis, they distinguished between home-based and school-

based parental involvement strategies, including control, learning assistance, communication, support, activity, academic socialization and expectation. For their analyses, they selected 55 research studies published between 2010 and 2019. Their analyses revealed that the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement (expressed as the correlation coefficient r) was positive but (very) small, ranging from -0.10 to 0.29; the mean effect was 0.09. Parental expectations had the biggest effect (0.29) on academic achievement, and parental control produced a negative and small effect (-0.10). School-based involvement had a (slightly) stronger effect on academic achievement than home-based involvement.

The effects did not differ significantly according to the moderator variables of the academic area and education level. Kim (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of the relationship between parental involvement and school-age student achievement, specifically focusing on East Asian countries. These countries are characterized by high achievement levels, a relatively standardized education system, and no policies encouraging family-school relations. Instead, parents in these countries are more likely to be heavily involved in the home situation. His main research question was whether the relationship between involvement and achievement is positive overall in East Asian countries and whether the strength of the association across different types of involvement is similar compared with that found for (mostly) U.S. samples. Kim located 15 studies published between 1990 and 2017 and conducted moderator analyses across various types of involvement. He discerned the following three categories of involvement: school involvement (attendance and participation in school activities, communication with school); home involvement and parent-child communication about the school, home supervision, checking homework, homework assistance,

reading with children); and academic socialization (education expectations and aspirations, parental attitudes toward education).

The analyses showed an average significant positive relation of $r = 0.12$ (range -0.01 – 0.35), which can be interpreted as weak. The relation for each of the categories of involvement was also significant and positive. The association was strongest for academic socialization (0.31), followed by home involvement (0.08) and school involvement (0.05). Kim also found that the relation between parental involvement and achievement was stronger in the higher grades of secondary school (0.17) than in elementary school (0.05). He concluded that the effects of parental involvement in East Asian countries are very similar (though weaker) to those in other countries. Worthy of note is the finding that, just like in, for instance, the U.S., academic socialization (i.e., expectations and aspirations) of parents toward education is the most important mode of involvement for student achievement. This finding is remarkable because, in East Asia, aspirations are uniformly high, which might preclude many variations and, thus, any strong association between academic socialization and achievement.

To summarize the results of the twelve meta-analyses reported here, it can be concluded that there are many similarities but also some differences. First of all, for the studies that reported effect size coefficients, the average effect (in terms of d ; r s were converted here into d s; Lenhard & Lenhard, 2016) ranged from 0.12 to 0.52 , that is, from no/neglectable effect to small/moderate effect. For the studies that reported their findings in qualitative terms, the effects ranged – in similar wordings – from less than small/very small to medium/moderate. Extreme effect sizes for individual effects were reported by Jeynes (2017), which ranged from -0.21 to 1.91 . An explanation for such “outliers” may be that his data included many small samples (Cheung & Slavin, 2016).

Another reason could be that in both studies, Jeynes (2012) focused on specific samples, namely, in the first study on students living in urban areas and the second study on Latinos.

In addition to positive effects, many negative and null effects were reported. In two studies, the percentage of positive effects was 61 and 78, the percentage of negative effects was 15 and 19, and the percentage of null effects was 4 and 24. In most studies, in addition to the overall effect of parental involvement, effects for specific types of involvement were also computed. The type with the strongest effect in several studies is parents having high aspirations and expectations for the child; d s were up to 0.88, which is considered as a large effect. In some studies, analyses focused on possible effect differences according to age or educational level.

The findings are inconclusive: in some studies, no differences were found; in other studies, the effects were stronger for secondary education than for primary education and kindergarten. A few studies performed specific analyses looking for differences according to ethnicity and social background. These studies could not establish differences, but one study warns that because of mediating variables and interaction effects, it is difficult to establish this association unambiguously. Studies focusing on differences according to outcome measure reported no differences, while analyses focusing on differences according to subject did find differences (Retnawati et al., 2016).

2.5 Existing Strategies Used to Enhance Parental Engagement

To foster an environment where parental engagement is prioritized and nurtured, a holistic strategy that encompasses a variety of approaches is essential. This strategy involves improving communication channels between schools and families, ensuring

that information is regular, positive, and accessible in multiple formats to cater to the diverse needs of the parent body. By offering parenting workshops and classes, schools and community organizations can equip parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to support their children's learning and development effectively. Furthermore, acknowledging the busy schedules of modern families is crucial; hence, providing flexible participation opportunities, including virtual engagement options and scheduling events outside of traditional working hours, can significantly increase parental involvement.

Creating an inclusive atmosphere that respects and integrates the cultural diversity of families through culturally responsive practices and policies is another vital component. This inclusiveness, coupled with policy support for working parents, such as advocating for flexible working arrangements, can make it easier for parents to balance their work and family commitments. The role of community and school partnerships cannot be overstated; by collaborating with local organizations, schools can offer a more comprehensive support network to families, encompassing not just educational needs but also health, emotional, and social support.

Leveraging technology through educational platforms, apps, and social media can also play a pivotal role in enhancing parental engagement. These tools can provide parents with real-time updates on their child's academic progress, facilitate easier communication with educators, and offer a platform for schools to share achievements and news. Personalizing engagement strategies to cater to the individual needs and preferences of families can further improve the effectiveness of these efforts. By implementing such a multifaceted approach, schools, communities, and policymakers can work together to create an environment that not only encourages but also supports

parents in playing an active and informed role in their children's education and overall development. This comprehensive engagement can lead to stronger family-school connections, better educational outcomes for students, and a more supportive and engaged community overall.

2.6 Most Effective Innovative Strategies Used to Increase Parental Engagement

Among the innovative strategies that have shown promise in increasing parental engagement, the integration of technology stands out as particularly effective. This strategy includes the use of educational apps and online platforms that enable parents to monitor their child's academic progress, access homework and curriculum resources, and communicate more efficiently with teachers and school administrators. These tools not only bridge the communication gap between schools and families but also provide a convenient and accessible way for parents to become actively involved in their children's education from any location. Additionally, leveraging social media and other digital communication channels can significantly enhance parental engagement by offering a platform for schools to share updates, celebrate student achievements, and create a community spirit among parents.

Virtual meetings and webinars have also proven to be effective, especially for parents who may have scheduling conflicts or transportation issues that prevent them from attending in-person meetings. These virtual platforms can host workshops, parent-teacher conferences, and informational sessions, making it easier for parents to participate in their children's educational journey without the constraints of physical attendance.

Gamification is another innovative strategy where educational goals are aligned with game-design elements to make learning and parental involvement more engaging and

fun. Schools can create challenges and rewards for parental participation, such as attending events, volunteering, or supporting learning at home, thereby motivating parents through a sense of achievement and recognition.

Furthermore, personalized communication strategies that take into account the unique preferences, needs, and cultural backgrounds of each family can greatly improve engagement. This strategy can be achieved through targeted messages, providing materials in multiple languages, and creating family engagement plans that cater to the specific circumstances of each household.

Finally, fostering strong community-school partnerships can amplify the effects of these innovative strategies. By collaborating with local businesses, community organizations, and social services, schools can offer a broader range of support and resources to families, thereby enhancing parental engagement not just in education but in a holistic sense that encompasses the overall well-being of children and their families.

Incorporating these innovative strategies requires a commitment from educational institutions to invest in technology, training, and the development of inclusive practices that respect and respond to the diversity of the student and parent population. By doing so, schools can create a more engaging, supportive, and collaborative educational environment that encourages parental involvement at every level.

2.6.1 Impact on student outcomes

The third aspect of the framework assesses the impact of parental disengagement on student outcomes. This aspect includes examining how such disengagement affects academic performance, manifested through metrics like grades, test scores, and

classroom participation. Beyond academics, the framework also considers the broader implications of holistic development, such as the impact on students' social skills, emotional well-being, motivation, and long-term aspirations. This comprehensive approach acknowledges that parental involvement influences various facets of a child's educational journey.

2.6.2 Current strategies for parental engagement

This part of the framework involves analysing the current strategies and programmes implemented in schools to enhance parental involvement. It looks at what has been done, what is working, and where gaps exist. This part includes a critical assessment of the effectiveness of these strategies, considering the unique context of private basic schools in the Greater Accra. Understanding the successes and limitations of existing approaches is crucial for developing more effective strategies.

2.6.2.1 Development of new engagement strategies

This section focuses on building on the insights gained from the previous components and proposing new and innovative strategies that are tailored to the specific needs and barriers identified in the Greater Accra context. It involves not just the creation of these strategies but also detailing an implementation framework. This framework will consider necessary resources, delineate stakeholder roles, and anticipate potential challenges to ensure effective execution and sustainability.

2.6.2.2 Feedback loop and continuous improvement

A critical element of the framework is establishing a system for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. This process ensures that the effectiveness of new engagement strategies is assessed and feedback is used for continuous improvement. It allows for

the strategies to be adaptive and responsive to the changing needs and contexts of the school communities.

2.6.2.3 Stakeholder involvement

The final component of the framework emphasizes the importance of stakeholder involvement in enhancing parental engagement. It delineates the roles and responsibilities of teachers, parents, school administrators, and the broader community. By defining these roles clearly and exploring the potential for community support, the framework aims to foster a collaborative environment conducive to successful school-parent partnerships.

In conclusion, this conceptual framework provides a structured approach to understanding and addressing parental disengagement in private basic schools in Accra, Ghana. It integrates various dimensions, from identifying underlying causes to implementing and refining engagement strategies, ensuring a comprehensive and effective approach to enhancing parental involvement in children's education.

2.6.3 Types of involvement

For several years, promoting parental engagement and involvement in their children's education has been widely recognized as a crucial strategy to enhance their academic progress and long-term prospects in the job market, particularly for youngsters from underprivileged backgrounds characterized by low socioeconomic status or belonging to ethnic minority or immigrant communities (Obichukwu et al., 2021). Bridging the existing gap between schools and homes by actively involving parents in both settings is seen as an essential tool to improve educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their family backgrounds (Obichukwu et al., 2021). Moreover, it is imperative not only to emphasize the connection between home and school but also to

engage and incorporate the local community in collective efforts to address educational disadvantages (Nushi et al., 2022).

In academic literature, various terms and definitions are used when discussing collaborations and partnerships involving parents, teachers, schools, and the local community (Moore & Swan, 2008; Owusu et al., 2010). Some of these terms include parental involvement, parental participation, parental engagement, school-family relationships, school-family-community partnerships, and educational partnerships. For clarity, we will primarily use the term “parental involvement” as we advance. Research on parental involvement has revealed significant disparities in the level of engagement, largely influenced by the socioeconomic status and ethnic or immigrant backgrounds of parents (Bäckström, 2021; Moore & Swan, 2008). Increasingly, the term “partnership” is employed in reference to meaningful collaborative relationships among schools, parents, and the local community (Desforges, 2003). (Hailikari et al., 2022). In such partnerships, all participants work toward mutually supporting one another and aligning their efforts to enhance the motivation, learning, and development of children, especially those facing disadvantages. In the following section, we will present a literature review and provide examples of typologies and classifications related to these partnerships. Parental involvement in a child’s education can take various forms and can have a significant impact on a child’s academic success and overall development. Here are some types or levels of parental involvement:

Basic Parenting: Basic parenting serves as the cornerstone of a child’s development, laying the essential groundwork for their overall well-being and success in life. At its core, it involves meeting the child’s most fundamental needs, starting with the provision of nourishing and wholesome meals that support their physical growth and cognitive

development (Aitokhuehi & Ojogho, 2014). Additionally, it encompasses the assurance of a safe and stable shelter where the child can feel protected and secure, fostering a sense of belonging and trust in the world. Safety, both physical and emotional, is paramount, with parents taking measures to childproof the environment and cultivate a nurturing atmosphere filled with love, affection, and emotional support. Stability in daily routines, such as consistent bedtimes and meal times, further reinforces a child's sense of predictability and comfort. Establishing boundaries and employing effective discipline strategies are essential for teaching responsibility and respect while simultaneously providing children with the guidance they need to navigate the complexities of life. Finally, basic parenting involves tending to a child's physical health through regular medical check-ups and addressing any health concerns promptly, ensuring they are in the best possible condition to embark on their educational journey. In sum, basic parenting is the foundational building block upon which all other forms of parental involvement, including educational support, can thrive, creating a nurturing environment where children can flourish and reach their fullest potential (Alharbi et al., 2021).

Communication: Effective communication between parents and teachers is an indispensable pillar of a child's educational journey. Parent-teacher conferences, often held at regular intervals during the school year, provide a valuable platform for parents and teachers to engage in meaningful dialogues about a child's progress and development. These conferences offer parents insights into their child's academic strengths, areas for improvement, and any concerns that may arise. Furthermore, staying responsive to teacher notes and emails, which serve as vital channels for conveying updates, assignments, and classroom happenings, ensures that parents remain well-informed and can actively support their child's educational needs. Beyond

formal meetings, parents' participation in school events like open houses and curriculum nights allows them to familiarize themselves with the school's teaching methods, policies, and extracurricular activities.

Additionally, in today's digital age, many schools utilize communication apps and portals to share academic information, grades, and important announcements. Parents are encouraged to embrace these tools as they provide convenient ways to stay in the loop. Moreover, fostering a culture of regular check-ins, either in person or virtually, further solidifies the partnership between parents and teachers (Gilakjani, 2012).

These proactive discussions facilitate a holistic understanding of a child's progress and enable swift intervention in case any concerns arise. Furthermore, parents should feel empowered to provide feedback and suggestions to teachers and school administrators, as their input can help enhance the overall educational experience. If a child requires additional support with homework or specific subjects, clear communication with teachers ensures that instructional needs are met both in the classroom and at home. Additionally, in culturally diverse settings, schools should prioritize language accessibility, ensuring that all parents, regardless of their language background, have the means to participate in their child's education actively (Samuel et al., 2019).

For children with special needs, maintaining open lines of communication with special education teachers and support staff is critical to addressing individualized education plans (IEPs) and other necessary accommodations. When behavioural issues arise, collaborative communication between parents and teachers enables the development of effective strategies to support the child's growth and well-being. In essence, effective communication not only strengthens the partnership between parents and teachers but also nurtures an environment where every child can thrive academically and personally.

Volunteering: Volunteering in schools is a vital and multifaceted form of parental involvement that plays a crucial role in enriching the educational experience for students. When parents volunteer their time and skills, they contribute directly to the well-being of the school community. Whether it's accompanying students on field trips to museums, historical sites, or nature reserves, offering classroom assistance to teachers, or helping to organize and execute school events and fundraisers, their involvement is felt throughout the academic year. These contributions not only lighten the workload for educators but also provide students with valuable opportunities for enhanced learning and personal growth. In the classroom, parental volunteers can provide additional one-on-one support to students who may need extra attention or help facilitate hands-on activities that reinforce classroom lessons. They can share their expertise in various subjects, fostering a deeper understanding of the material. Moreover, by assisting in the library or helping organize book fairs, parents promote literacy and a love of reading among students (Samuel et al., 2019).

Participation in parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and similar groups enables parents to engage in meaningful discussions about school policies and initiatives, advocate for improved resources, and contribute to fundraising efforts that benefit the entire school community. Beyond academics, parents often lend their talents to extracurricular activities, such as leading after-school programmes, coaching sports teams, or advising clubs, which expand students' horizons and provide opportunities for pursuing their passions (Alharbi et al., 2021).

Volunteering also builds a sense of community within the school. Parents who volunteer frequently form bonds with teachers, administrators, and fellow parents, creating a supportive network that fosters open communication and collaboration. This

sense of belonging can have a positive impact on the overall school climate and the well-being of students. Ultimately, parental volunteering goes beyond lending a helping hand; it showcases a shared commitment to providing the best possible education for children. By actively participating in their child's school life, parents demonstrate the value of education and civic engagement, setting a powerful example for the next generation. Encouraging parental volunteering and creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all parents to participate is essential for nurturing a thriving and interconnected school community.

Homework support from parents plays a vital role in nurturing a child's educational journey and fostering their overall development. Establishing a consistent routine is the cornerstone of effective support. By creating a designated time and quiet, organized workspace for homework, parents help their children develop essential study habits. This routine also sends a clear message about the importance of education. While it's important to be available for questions and guidance, parents should encourage their children to tackle assignments independently. Teaching problem-solving skills and time management is a valuable part of this process, allowing children to become more self-reliant learners. Setting realistic expectations is crucial to avoid undue pressure, ensuring that children are motivated rather than overwhelmed. Additionally, parents should take the time to stay informed about their child's curriculum, enabling them to offer more targeted support and engage in meaningful conversations about their academic progress. Ultimately, homework support is not just about completing assignments; it's about instilling a lifelong love for learning and equipping children with the skills they need to thrive academically and beyond (Alharbi et al., 2021).

Ensuring that children attend school regularly and on time is undeniably a cornerstone of effective parental involvement in their education. This commitment to consistent attendance holds multifaceted benefits that extend far beyond the confines of the classroom (Julie et al., 2020). First and foremost, regular school attendance is a linchpin for academic success. When children attend school consistently, they have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the curriculum, engage in dynamic classroom discussions, and complete assignments in a timely manner. Each day missed in school could result in missed lessons and knowledge gaps that may be challenging to bridge later on, potentially hindering the child's educational progress.

Moreover, school is not solely about academic achievements; it serves as a crucible for social development. By attending school regularly, children foster vital social skills and build relationships with their peers. Interacting with classmates allows them to learn how to cooperate, communicate effectively, and navigate the complexities of interpersonal relationships, all of which are essential life skills (Ashtari & Bellamy, 2021). Parents who prioritize punctual and consistent school attendance instil a sense of responsibility in their children. This lesson goes beyond the classroom, teaching children that commitments and obligations are integral aspects of life. This early exposure to responsibility helps them develop a strong work ethic and discipline, qualities that are invaluable in adulthood.

In addition to personal growth, there are legal implications associated with school attendance. Many countries have strict laws and regulations governing compulsory education, mandating that children attend school for a certain number of days each year. Parents who ensure their children meet these legal obligations demonstrate their commitment to complying with societal norms and setting a responsible example.

Furthermore, regular school attendance opens doors to a world of future opportunities. It directly impacts a child's ability to graduate from high school, pursue higher education, and eventually secure meaningful employment. Parents who prioritize attendance are actively shaping their children's prospects, paving the way for a brighter and more promising future. Regular school attendance also provides parents with a means of monitoring their children's health. Consistently missed days can signal underlying health issues that require attention and intervention. By staying attuned to their child's attendance patterns, parents can address potential health concerns proactively, ensuring their child's well-being (Samuel et al., 2019).

Lastly, the commitment to regular school attendance fosters stronger parent-teacher communication. Parents who prioritize attendance are often more engaged with their child's school and educators. This increased involvement leads to more open and collaborative relationships, ultimately benefiting the child's overall educational experience. Parental involvement in guaranteeing regular and punctual school attendance encompasses a broad spectrum of advantages. It lays the groundwork for academic achievement, nurtures critical life skills, and imparts a sense of responsibility. Moreover, it ensures legal compliance, opens doors to future opportunities, monitors health, and cultivates positive relationships between parents, teachers, and the school community. In essence, ensuring consistent school attendance is an integral aspect of parental engagement that shapes a child's path to success and personal development (Adegbola & Adeleke, 2023; Alharbi et al., 2021).

Advocacy: Advocating for your child's educational needs is a multifaceted and ongoing process that plays a pivotal role in their academic journey. Communication lies at the heart of this endeavour; establishing and nurturing open channels of dialogue with your

child's teachers and school administrators is paramount. By building positive relationships with these key stakeholders, you create an environment where concerns can be addressed effectively and collaboratively (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2022). For the stakeholders to be effective advocates, they must have an intimate understanding of the children's educational needs, encompassing both their academic strengths and areas that may require additional support. Regularly attending parent-teacher conferences is an essential step in this process. These meetings provide an opportunity to not only monitor your child's progress but also to share insights about their learning style, personality, and unique needs while gaining valuable perspectives from educators. Collaboration is the cornerstone of successful advocacy. Working hand in hand with your child's teachers allows for the development of tailored strategies to optimize their educational experience. This partnership may lead to the implementation of accommodations or modifications in the classroom, catering to your child's specific requirements.

For children with special needs, such as learning disabilities, ADHD, or physical challenges, advocating may involve requesting an Individualized Education Programme (IEP) or a 504 Plan. These legal documents outline precise accommodations, services, and support your child should receive, ensuring their educational needs are met effectively. Moreover, parents should familiarize themselves with relevant federal and state laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. This knowledge empowers parents to assert their child's rights and secure the necessary resources. Maintaining meticulous records, such as teacher communications, assessment results, and medical reports, is a practical approach to substantiate your advocacy efforts. These documents can serve as a compelling foundation for your case when requesting

accommodations or demonstrating your child's progress. Remaining informed about curriculum changes, school policies, and educational developments is also vital. Attending school board meetings, if possible, grants insight into the broader educational context, facilitating more informed advocacy (Drossel et al., 2020).

When navigating this journey, parents can seek support from specialized organizations and advocacy groups that offer guidance, resources, and connections to experts. Connecting with other parents facing similar challenges can be profoundly empowering, enabling the exchange of experiences and strategies and fostering a collective effort to advocate for improvements within the educational system. Advocating for your child's educational needs is a dynamic, ongoing process that requires dedication, patience, and persistence. By actively engaging with educational professionals, staying informed, and leveraging resources, parents can help create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where their child can thrive academically and personally. Ultimately, effective advocacy is a powerful tool to ensure that every child receives the education they need and deserve (Alhamad, 2018).

School Decision-Making: Active parental involvement in school decision-making, through avenues such as parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and school boards, serves as a linchpin in the foundation of a thriving education system. At its core, this involvement fuels better communication and understanding among parents, educators, and school administrators. It facilitates a robust exchange of ideas, fostering an environment where concerns can be voiced and solutions explored. Consequently, the decision-making process becomes more informed, holistic, and responsive to the evolving needs of students. One of the paramount benefits of active parental involvement is the establishment of accountability within the educational ecosystem.

When parents take an active role, they act as a check and balance mechanism, ensuring that schools and educators are held responsible for their actions and policies. This accountability is vital in maintaining the quality of education and ensuring that the school environment remains safe, inclusive, and conducive to learning (Samuel et al., 2019).

Moreover, parental participation in PTAs and school boards contributes significantly to community building. These organizations often become a hub for like-minded parents who share a common goal — the betterment of their children’s education. The sense of camaraderie that develops within these groups extends to the wider school community, fostering a deeper sense of belonging. Students benefit from this atmosphere of support and inclusivity, while parents find themselves more deeply connected to the school’s mission and their children’s educational journey.

Furthermore, active parental involvement enables parents to advocate more effectively for their children’s needs and well-being. Whether it’s voicing concerns about individual student experiences or participating in discussions about curriculum and policies, engaged parents play an essential role in shaping the school’s direction. Their advocacy ensures that the school remains responsive to the diverse needs of its student body, resulting in a more inclusive and equitable education system. Resource allocation within schools is another area significantly influenced by parental involvement. PTAs, for instance, often spearhead fundraising initiatives that contribute to critical resources, ranging from educational materials to extracurricular programmes. This financial support can bridge gaps in funding and enrich the overall educational experience, providing students with opportunities they might not otherwise have (Ashtari & Bellamy, 2021).

Parental voices in decision-making bodies like school boards directly influence policy development and implementation. By participating in these forums, parents ensure that policies align with the values and priorities of the school community. This collaborative approach leads to policies that better serve the interests of all stakeholders, contributing to a more harmonious and effective learning environment. In addition to these systemic benefits, active parental involvement cultivates a diverse array of perspectives. The varying experiences and viewpoints that parents bring to the table enrich discussions and decision-making processes. This diversity ensures that decisions are well-rounded, considering the unique needs and backgrounds of all students and families. Ultimately, parental involvement in school decision-making is a multi-faceted endeavour that yields numerous advantages. It enhances communication, fosters accountability, strengthens community bonds, enables effective advocacy, influences resource allocation, shapes policy, and promotes diverse perspectives. Moreover, it equips parents with valuable skills and offers them opportunities for personal growth. In essence, active parental involvement is an indispensable component of a robust and inclusive education system where the voices of all stakeholders are heard and respected (Aitokhuehi & Ojogho, 2014).

Also, providing emotional support and cultivating a nurturing environment for children is akin to tending to the roots of a sturdy and flourishing tree. Just as a well-nurtured tree can withstand storms and grow tall, so too can a child with a solid emotional foundation face life's challenges and reach their full potential. Emotional security is the fertile soil in which a child's sense of self takes root and flourishes. It instils in them a profound sense of safety, assuring them that they can explore the world and learn without fear. This security forms the bedrock of their confidence, empowering them to

stretch their intellectual boundaries, take risks, and embrace new learning experiences with enthusiasm.

Confidence is the sunlight that nourishes this growing tree of a child's self-esteem. When they know they are cherished, respected, and celebrated for their uniqueness, they absorb these affirmations and translate them into a belief in their abilities. With this newfound confidence, children approach educational challenges with a "can-do" attitude, unafraid to venture into the unknown and tackle complex subjects. They understand that mistakes are part of the learning process and that they are valued regardless of their achievements, fostering a resilience that helps them rebound from setbacks. This emotional support also acts as a sturdy trunk against which the winds of adversity may blow. Children learn to lean on their caregivers and support network during tough times, gaining resilience to weather storms and growing stronger from experience. This resilience becomes an essential tool in their educational journey, allowing them to bounce back from failures and keep forging ahead.

As the child continues to grow, they develop branches of social and emotional skills, which are nourished by the deep roots of emotional support. These skills enable them to interact harmoniously with others, manage conflicts, and navigate the complexities of relationships. In the classroom, these abilities are invaluable, fostering a positive learning environment where collaboration and empathy thrive. Furthermore, this emotional support enhances the child's readiness for learning. They enter educational settings with minds unburdened by fear or insecurity, allowing them to focus on tasks, concentrate for longer periods, and actively engage in the learning process. Their emotional well-being is the fertile ground upon which the seeds of knowledge take root and flourish (Hailikari et al., 2022).

Positive behaviour is another branch of growth stemming from this emotional nurturing. Children who feel secure and cherished are more likely to exhibit cooperative and prosocial behaviour, making them eager participants in group activities and discussions, both crucial elements of the educational experience (Yuan et al., 2021). Effective communication, cultivated through emotional support, becomes a bridge between caregivers, educators, and the child. This open channel of dialogue ensures that children can freely express their thoughts, concerns, and questions. It enables them to seek help when needed, fostering a sense of trust and collaboration that is invaluable in educational contexts.

Ultimately, this nurturing environment serves as a wellspring of motivation. Children who are emotionally supported understand the intrinsic value of education and believe in their ability to learn and grow. With their self-esteem nurtured and their emotional needs met, they are driven to set and pursue academic and personal goals, their aspirations reaching toward the sky like the branches of a sturdy tree (Dori et al., 2023). Providing emotional support and creating a nurturing environment for children is a multifaceted process that nurtures their emotional roots, branches into confidence and resilience, and bears the fruits of positive behaviour, effective communication, readiness for learning, and unshakable motivation. Parents, caregivers, teachers, and communities all contribute to this vital process, ensuring that every child can grow strong and flourish in both their emotional well-being and educational pursuits (Yuan et al., 2021).

Financial Support: Financial support from parents for their children's education is a multifaceted and vital aspect of nurturing a child's academic growth and development. It encompasses a range of provisions, starting with the fundamental purchase of school

supplies, including textbooks, notebooks, and stationery, which are essential tools for learning. Additionally, parents may invest in tutoring services or enrol their children in tutoring programmes to offer tailored academic assistance. With the advent of the digital age, educational technology has become increasingly significant, and parents often provide resources such as computers, tablets, software, and online learning platforms to enrich their child's educational experience (Bäckström, 2021).

Furthermore, parents recognize the importance of extracurricular activities in shaping a well-rounded individual, and they often extend their financial support to cover the costs of activities like sports, music lessons, art classes, or other enrichment programmes. As children advance in their education, parents commonly save for their higher education expenses, setting up college savings accounts like 529 plans to ensure financial readiness. This financial commitment may extend to field trips and educational outings that provide valuable real-world learning experiences. When it comes time for college applications, parents may assist with application fees and support their child in seeking scholarships and financial aid to alleviate the costs associated with higher education (Hailikari et al., 2022). This steadfast financial support often continues into graduate or professional education if their child chooses to pursue further studies. In essence, parents' financial investment in their children's education reflects a commitment to providing them with the best possible opportunities for future success, both academically and professionally (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2022).

Parent education plays a pivotal role in nurturing healthy family dynamics and promoting the well-being of children. It recognizes that parenting is a complex journey that benefits from ongoing learning and adaptation. By actively seeking out educational resources and participating in workshops, parents can equip themselves with a diverse

set of tools and strategies to navigate the challenges of raising children effectively. The significance of parent education lies in its potential to enhance parent-child relationships. Through programmes that delve into child development, effective communication, and discipline strategies, parents gain a deeper understanding of their children's needs, behaviours, and emotions. Armed with this knowledge, they can build stronger connections with their children, fostering an environment of trust and open communication (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012).

Furthermore, parent education can alleviate parenting stress and boost parental confidence. It offers parents evidence-based approaches to address common parenting challenges, such as managing behaviour issues or supporting their child's educational journey. By learning how to implement positive discipline techniques and set appropriate boundaries, parents can cultivate their children's self-esteem while maintaining a loving and nurturing home. Continuous learning is a hallmark of effective parenting as children evolve. Parent education is not a one-time endeavour but a lifelong commitment to staying informed about the latest research and best practices in child-rearing. This adaptability allows parents to meet the unique needs of each developmental stage and adapt their parenting strategies accordingly. In addition to formal programmes, parent support groups play a crucial role in parent education (Nygren & Guath, 2021). These groups provide a sense of community, enabling parents to share their experiences, seek advice, and offer support to one another. The camaraderie built within these groups can be invaluable in navigating the challenges and joys of parenthood (Gonzalez et al., 2022).

Moreover, parent education programmes need to be culturally sensitive and inclusive, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and needs of families. By tailoring resources to

different communities, parent education becomes more accessible and relevant, ensuring that every family can benefit from these valuable insights. Ultimately, parent education not only benefits children but also promotes personal growth and self-awareness in parents. It empowers them to become more reflective and intentional in their parenting journey. In this way, parent education is a transformative process that empowers parents to create a nurturing, supportive, and loving environment where their children can thrive and reach their full potential (Obichukwu et al., 2021).

Technology and Internet Safety: In today's digital age, parents play an indispensable role in guiding their children's safe and responsible use of technology and the internet, particularly when it comes to educational purposes. This responsibility begins with open and honest communication. Establishing a strong and trusting line of dialogue with your children encourages them to share their online experiences, be they positive or negative, and ensures they feel comfortable discussing any concerns that may arise. Moreover, it's crucial to educate children about the potential risks associated with the online world, from cyberbullying and exposure to inappropriate content to online predators and scams. Parents should impart the importance of safeguarding personal information and maintaining digital privacy. Setting age-appropriate boundaries is equally vital, tailoring screen time limits and access to specific websites or apps according to a child's age and maturity level. Parental control software can be a valuable tool for enforcing these limits (Yuan et al., 2021).

Parents should lead by example and model responsible tech use. This modelling means putting away personal devices during family time and adhering to the rules and guidelines set for their children. Additionally, teaching critical thinking skills is essential, enabling children to discern reliable and credible information from

misinformation or biased content and encouraging them to question what they encounter online (Nsiah Asante & Mereku, 2012; Thornberg et al., 2022; Yuan et al., 2021). To bolster online safety, consider using parental control software or device settings to filter and monitor your child's online activity, offering an additional layer of protection. Teach your children about online etiquette, emphasizing respect, empathy, and kindness in their digital interactions. Privacy and security awareness should also be a priority, instilling the importance of strong passwords, not sharing them with others, and recognizing potential phishing attempts.

For younger children, close supervision of online activities is paramount. Co-viewing and co-playing on educational websites and apps not only ensure their safety but also foster a sense of shared exploration. As your child grows, gradually grant them more independence online while continuing to monitor and guide them toward making responsible choices.

Balancing screen time with offline activities is key to a well-rounded development. Parents can encourage their children to engage in hobbies, sports, and reading, providing a counterbalance to their digital experiences and staying informed about the latest digital trends, apps, and websites relevant to their children's interests empowers the children to make informed decisions about their online exposure (Hannon & O'Donnell, 2022).

Ultimately, the objective is not to limit your child's access to technology but to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the digital landscape safely and responsibly. By actively participating in your child's online life and providing guidance, you empower them to harness the educational benefits of technology while mitigating potential risks Kidslox. (2023).

Cultural and Diversity Awareness: Promoting cultural and diversity awareness among children is an essential aspect of their holistic development, fostering a broader perspective and a profound understanding of the world they inhabit. One of the key outcomes of this educational approach is the cultivation of empathy. As children learn about different cultures, traditions, and backgrounds, they begin to appreciate the unique experiences and challenges faced by individuals from various walks of life. This newfound awareness diminishes prejudice and stereotypes, replacing them with compassion and understanding. It instils in children the ability to put themselves in others' shoes, thereby paving the way for more harmonious relationships and a society that values and respects differences.

Furthermore, cultural and diversity awareness nurtures respect. Children are taught that the beliefs, customs, and values of diverse groups are not only valid but also deserving of acknowledgment and respect. This recognition of diversity as a source of strength rather than division encourages children to embrace the richness of human experiences, fostering a sense of unity amidst differences. It promotes the idea that our collective tapestry is woven from a multitude of unique threads, each contributing to the vibrant mosaic of humanity (Retnawati et al., 2016).

In an increasingly interconnected world, cultivating cultural and diversity awareness equips children with a global perspective. They gain insights into the myriad ways people live, think, and express themselves around the world. This global awareness is indispensable for raising informed and open-minded global citizens who can navigate the complexities of our globalized society. It empowers them to engage with international issues, consider diverse perspectives, and work toward solutions that transcend borders.

Another crucial skill that emerges from cultural and diversity awareness is conflict resolution. As children become more attuned to different viewpoints and cultural norms, they develop the ability to mediate conflicts with sensitivity and diplomacy. They are less likely to resort to stereotyping or discrimination when disagreements arise, instead opting for dialogue and understanding as tools for resolution (Alhamad, 2018; Nsiah Asante & Mereku, 2012).

Communication skills are also honed through exposure to diversity. Children learn how to communicate effectively with people from various backgrounds, enhancing their ability to engage in meaningful conversations, cooperate, and collaborate. They discover the beauty of language as a bridge between cultures and recognize that effective communication extends beyond words, encompassing body language, gestures, and cultural nuances. Moreover, cultural and diversity awareness promotes inclusion. It encourages children to welcome and embrace those who may be different from them, fostering a sense of belonging and community (Hagenauer et al., 2022; Hansen et al., 2020). By appreciating diversity, they actively contribute to the creation of inclusive environments at school and in their communities, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued.

Fostering cultural and diversity awareness among children is not merely an educational endeavour but a cornerstone of building a more inclusive, tolerant, and harmonious society. It empowers children with empathy, respect, a global perspective, conflict resolution skills, enhanced communication abilities, and a commitment to inclusion. These qualities collectively nurture individuals who are better prepared to navigate our diverse and interconnected world with compassion and wisdom, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and harmonious global community (Wolf et al., 2019).

The well-being of children, encompassing both their physical and mental health, serves as an indispensable foundation for their educational achievements and overall quality of life. Nutrition, as a cornerstone of health, plays a pivotal role in this equation. It entails not just providing sustenance but nourishing their growing bodies and minds with a rich tapestry of nutrients from fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and dairy products. By offering a balanced diet and instilling healthy eating habits, parents not only bolster their children's physical health but also enhance their cognitive abilities, enabling them to focus and learn effectively. Physical activity complements this effort, not only by ensuring physical fitness but by fostering mental resilience and well-being. Encouraging children to engage in active play, sports, or other physical pursuits cultivates habits that will serve them well throughout their lives (Boonphadung & Seubsang, 2021).

Moreover, adequate sleep, often overlooked, is a linchpin for optimal learning and emotional balance. Establishing consistent bedtime routines and ensuring children receive the recommended amount of sleep for their age is crucial. Emotionally, creating a nurturing environment where children feel safe discussing their feelings and concerns is vital. This environment allows parents to address emotional issues, such as anxiety or stress, proactively, preventing them from becoming roadblocks to academic success. Regular healthcare check-ups, up-to-date vaccinations, and proactive management of mental health issues further fortify this holistic approach to well-being. When parents address these multifaceted aspects of health and wellness, they provide their children with a strong foundation for not only academic success but also a happy, fulfilling life (Attoe, 2023).

Assisting children with college and career planning is a crucial aspect of parental involvement in their education, particularly as they approach the high school years and start thinking about their future. It's important to start these conversations early, even during middle school, to help them explore their interests and strengths. Parents can play a pivotal role in this process by helping their children assess their interests, skills, and talents. Engaging in open and supportive discussions about their hobbies, favourite subjects in school, and activities in which they excel can shed light on potential career paths. Moreover, parents can aid their children in exploring a wide range of career options, conducting research on different professions, and discussing the educational requirements, potential earnings, and job outlook associated with each. Encouraging their children to reflect on how these careers align with their interests and values can provide valuable insights.

Internships and job shadowing experiences can offer valuable real-world insights into potential careers. Parents can help their children find opportunities in fields of interest, allowing them to gain hands-on experience and make more informed decisions about their future. Teaching financial literacy skills, offering emotional support, and encouraging independence as their children mature are all vital components of effective parental involvement in college and career planning. Ultimately, this collaborative effort between parents and children empowers young individuals to make well-informed decisions that align with their passions, interests, and aspirations as they embark on the exciting journey of shaping their future (Wolf et al., 2019). The extent and type of parental involvement can vary based on the child's age, needs, and the family's circumstances. The most effective parental involvement strategies often involve a combination of these different types of involvement, tailored to the child's individual needs and the school's resources and opportunities.

2.7 Summary of Literature

This chapter considered studies on the topic of school-parent partnerships, which started with providing the conceptual framework for the study. It also examined various factors that can influence school-parent partnerships. The conceptual review led to an analysis of empirical studies on school-parent partnerships and gaps in the research. It

showed various studies that illustrate the application of the Ecological Systems Theory to examine school-parent partnerships across various contexts and dimensions. The studies also emphasized the importance of considering multiple levels of influence, including individual, family, school, and community factors, in understanding the dynamics of these partnerships and their impact on students' educational experiences and outcomes. The studies underscored the role of parents in education. They highlighted the various dimensions of school-parent partnerships and the positive impact of parental involvement on students' academic achievement, motivation, and overall school experiences. Moreover, the literature indicated the importance of policies and practices. Yet, there remains a gap in the understanding of how parents and educators perceive their roles and responsibilities within school-parent partnerships and the need to find strategies to promote school-parent partnerships and children's holistic development.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Research methodology serves as the structural backbone of any scholarly investigation, outlining the philosophical foundations, paradigmatic orientations, methodological choices, and procedural steps that guide the study. A well-articulated methodology is essential to ensure coherence between the research problem, objectives, and the processes employed in data collection and analysis. For the present study, which investigates school–parent partnerships and the reasons for parental disengagement in selected private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana, the methodological framework has been carefully crafted to align with both the philosophical underpinnings of social science inquiry and the contextual realities of the study setting.

The methodology of this study rests on the premise that parental involvement and disengagement in education are complex social phenomena, shaped by diverse ontological, epistemological, and cultural assumptions. It therefore requires a methodological approach that is capable of capturing multiple perspectives, contextual nuances, and socially constructed meanings. This chapter explicates the ontological and epistemological stance adopted, provides justification for the chosen research paradigm, outlines the approach and design employed, and sets the foundation for the subsequent description of instruments, sampling, and data collection procedures.

3.1 Research Philosophy

3.1.1 Ontological position

Ontology refers to the researcher's assumptions about the nature of reality and what constitutes existence (Scotland, 2012). In social science research, ontology provides a foundation for determining whether reality is objective and singular, or subjective and

multiple. The present study adopts a relativist ontological stance, which posits that reality is socially constructed and context-dependent rather than existing as one fixed, universal truth. This position is particularly important for research into parental engagement and disengagement, which are phenomena deeply embedded in cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional contexts.

A relativist ontology suggests that realities vary across different stakeholders. For example, parents, teachers, and school administrators may hold divergent yet equally valid interpretations of what constitutes “involvement” in children’s education. A school administrator may define parental involvement in terms of formal governance structures such as Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs) or financial contributions to school development projects. Parents, on the other hand, may view their role primarily as providers of resources such as tuition fees, school supplies, or daily welfare support. Teachers, meanwhile, may expect parents to play a more interactive role, assisting children with homework, reinforcing classroom learning at home, and maintaining close communication with educators.

These multiple interpretations highlight that parental involvement is not a fixed or universally agreed-upon concept. Rather, it is constructed differently depending on the positionality and lived experiences of stakeholders. For instance, a parent from a low-income background may define “involvement” in terms of simply ensuring school attendance, while a middle-class parent may define it in terms of participating in decision-making or extracurricular support. None of these definitions can be considered more “real” than the others; instead, they represent co-existing realities shaped by context.

3.1.2 Epistemological position

Epistemology concerns the nature and scope of knowledge how it is generated, validated, and communicated (Crotty, 1998). In research, epistemological assumptions determine the criteria by which findings are judged credible and meaningful. This study adopts an interpretivist epistemology, which assumes that knowledge is socially constructed, situated, and inseparable from the context in which it is produced. Interpretivism challenges the positivist paradigm of detached, value-free observation, instead emphasizing the co-construction of meaning between researcher and participants.

This epistemological position is highly appropriate for a study of school–parent partnerships. Parental engagement is not a phenomenon that can be measured solely through objective indicators such as attendance records or financial contributions. Rather, it must be understood by exploring how stakeholders parents, teachers, and administrators perceive, interpret, and respond to expectations of involvement. For example, two parents may attend the same PTA meeting but attach different meanings to their participation: one may see it as a civic responsibility, while another may view it as a burdensome requirement. These interpretations are shaped by personal, cultural, and institutional contexts, and an interpretivist stance is needed to uncover such depth.

Furthermore, interpretivism emphasizes dialogue, reflexivity, and understanding rather than prediction. In this study, interviews and focus group discussions provide opportunities for participants to share their experiences in their own words. The researcher, in turn, engages in reflexive interpretation, recognizing that knowledge emerges from the interaction between participant and investigator rather than existing

independently of them. This is particularly critical in Ghana's educational landscape, where cultural scripts about parental roles influence how engagement is framed.

3.1.3 Axiological assumptions

Axiology, though often less emphasized than ontology and epistemology, plays a crucial role in shaping research. It refers to the role of values and ethics in the research process and acknowledges that all research is value-laden (Heron, 1996). No researcher enters the field as a completely neutral observer; personal beliefs, cultural background, and professional commitments inevitably influence the framing of the study, the interactions with participants, and the interpretation of findings.

In this study, axiological considerations are particularly important because parental engagement is a socially sensitive issue with significant implications for policy, practice, and community trust. The researcher acknowledges that her own values such as the belief in the importance of inclusive education and equitable parental involvement shape the research questions and interpretation of data. However, reflexivity is maintained to ensure that participants' perspectives are not overshadowed by the researcher's preconceptions.

The study is guided by principles of respect, empathy, and inclusivity. Respect entails recognizing participants as experts of their own experiences, whose voices deserve to be heard without judgment. Empathy involves seeking to understand participants' perspectives within the realities of their socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Inclusivity ensures that diverse voices including those of parents who may traditionally be marginalized due to income, educational background, or gender are represented in the research. Ethically, the axiological stance also influences how issues of confidentiality, consent, and trust are handled. Given the sensitive nature of parental

disengagement, participants may fear being judged or blamed for their lack of involvement.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm provides a philosophical and conceptual framework that guides methodological choices, integrating ontology, epistemology, and methodology into a coherent whole (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Paradigms are essential because they reflect the assumptions researchers make about reality, knowledge, and values, and these assumptions directly influence the research design, data collection methods, and interpretation of findings. Broadly, research in social sciences is often aligned with paradigms such as positivism, interpretivism/constructivism, or critical theory (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

For this study, the constructivist paradigm has been adopted. Constructivism is grounded in the belief that reality is constructed through human experiences and social interactions rather than existing as an objective truth independent of human perception. It emphasizes that meaning is created in specific cultural and social contexts and is therefore inherently multiple and subjective. This makes constructivism particularly suitable for educational research that seeks to explore how individuals and groups make sense of their roles, responsibilities, and relationships within school systems.

The constructivist paradigm emphasizes qualitative approaches that privilege participants' voices and contextual understanding over generalization and prediction. By allowing participants to narrate their experiences in their own terms, constructivism foregrounds the importance of subjective interpretation. In investigating parental disengagement in Accra's private schools, this paradigm makes it possible to examine how disengagement is shaped by diverse interpretations of parents, teachers, and

administrators, rather than treating it as a fixed, measurable variable. For example, one parent may disengage due to long work hours, while another may interpret disengagement as the culturally appropriate role of “leaving education to teachers.” Constructivism validates both perspectives as meaningful in their own right.

Moreover, constructivism aligns with the chosen theoretical frameworks underpinning this study Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein’s Model of Overlapping Spheres of Influence. Both theories emphasize interaction, context, and multiple layers of influence on children’s development, which are central to the constructivist orientation. Bronfenbrenner underscores how various systems shape experiences, while Epstein highlights the overlapping roles of families, schools, and communities. Together, they reinforce the constructivist idea that realities are co-constructed through relationships and contexts.

3.3 Research Approach and Design

3.3.1 Research approach

The study employs a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is appropriate for exploring complex social issues where depth of understanding is prioritized over breadth of coverage (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It allows the researcher to capture the richness of participants’ experiences, perspectives, and emotions, which are crucial for understanding parental disengagement.

This choice is particularly justified given that disengagement is not simply a quantifiable absence of parental involvement but is embedded in cultural norms, socioeconomic conditions, and institutional dynamics. Quantitative surveys alone would be insufficient to uncover the nuanced reasons behind disengagement. Instead, qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups enable the researcher to

generate detailed narratives that reveal both explicit and implicit factors influencing parents' behaviors and attitudes.

The qualitative approach also provides flexibility, allowing the researcher to adapt questions and probes in response to participants' insights. This adaptability is essential in Ghana's urban context, where parents and teachers may articulate their experiences in culturally specific ways that do not neatly align with pre-defined categories.

3.3.2 Research Design

Within the qualitative approach, this study employs a case study design. A case study is particularly useful for in-depth exploration of a bounded system such as a specific group, institution, or community within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). For the current study, the bounded system consists of selected private basic schools in the Greater Accra.

The choice of a case study design is justified on several grounds:

- 1. Contextual relevance:** Parental disengagement cannot be understood in isolation from the school environment, cultural norms, and socioeconomic context. The case study design allows for a holistic examination of these factors as they operate within private schools in Accra.
- 2. Depth of inquiry:** By focusing on a defined set of schools, the case study design provides the opportunity to collect rich, detailed data from multiple stakeholders parents, teachers, and administrators. This depth of inquiry ensures that the study captures the diversity of perspectives that characterize school–parent partnerships.
- 3. Methodological triangulation:** The case study design facilitates the use of multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews and

focus group discussions. This triangulation enhances the credibility and validity of the findings by allowing cross-verification of insights across different sources.

- 4. Practical feasibility:** Given time and resource constraints, it is impractical to study all private schools in Accra. The case study design enables the researcher to concentrate on selected schools while still generating findings that can offer valuable insights for broader policy and practice.

3.3.3 Justification from literature

The choice of a qualitative case study design is well supported by existing literature. Stake (1995) emphasizes that case studies are appropriate when the researcher seeks to understand the particularity and complexity of a phenomenon within its context. Similarly, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that case studies are especially useful in education because they allow for exploration of processes, relationships, and social dynamics.

In Ghana, prior research on parental involvement has often employed case study designs to capture localized experiences (Esia-Donkoh, 2014; Owusu-Amponsah et al., 2018). These studies demonstrate the effectiveness of case studies in illuminating the nuances of school–parent interactions, which may otherwise be obscured in large-scale surveys.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The credibility and trustworthiness of any research project is closely tied to the appropriateness, relevance, and rigor of the data collection instruments employed. In qualitative inquiry, instruments must be carefully chosen to capture the depth and richness of participants' experiences while aligning with the philosophical stance and

research design. For this study, two primary instruments were employed: semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). These tools were considered most appropriate because they not only align with the qualitative case study design but also resonate with the interpretivist epistemological stance that underpins the research. Semi-structured interviews were particularly valuable as they combined structure with flexibility. The interview guide ensured that all participants responded to key thematic areas relevant to parental involvement and disengagement, such as perceptions of roles, barriers to engagement, and strategies for improving school–parent partnerships. At the same time, the open-ended format allowed participants to expand on their responses, introduce new issues, and reflect on personal experiences in their own words (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This instrument was especially suited to school administrators and teachers, whose professional positions often require a more individualized exploration of expectations and experiences.

To guide the development of the interview and focus group protocols, themes and sub-themes were identified based on the research objectives, literature review, and pilot testing results. These themes served as anchors during data collection and analysis, ensuring consistency and alignment with the study’s aims. Table 3.1 summarizes the major themes and sub-themes of parental engagement that structured the data collection instruments.

Expanded Table 3.1: Themes and Sub-themes Guiding Data Collection on Parental Engagement in Private Basic Schools, Greater Accra

	Sub-themes	Description / Focus
Themes	Socioeconomic constraints	Challenges related to poverty, unstable employment, and high cost of living that limit parents' ability to engage in school activities or provide consistent support.
	Cultural beliefs and practices	Norms that position teachers as custodians of knowledge and parents as financial supporters, reducing parental involvement in academic activities.
	Lack of awareness	Limited knowledge about the importance of parental engagement and its direct impact on children's learning outcomes.
	Communication barriers	Weak or inconsistent communication between parents and schools, including language challenges and lack of structured feedback systems.
Perceptions Impacting Engagement	Academic performance	How parents and teachers perceive the relationship between parental involvement and students' test scores, grades, and general scholastic success.
	Behavioural development	Influence of parental engagement on children's discipline, attitudes toward learning, and classroom behavior.
	Emotional and social development	The role of parental support in fostering self-esteem, resilience, and positive peer relationships among students.
Existing Strategies and Interventions	Regular parent–teacher meetings	Formal platforms for interaction between parents and teachers to discuss children's academic and behavioural progress.
	School events and activities	Sports days, cultural festivals, and other events that create informal spaces for parental participation.
	Communication tools	Use of notices, newsletters, and phone calls to share updates and expectations between schools and families.
	Parental education programmes	Training sessions or workshops designed to build parents' capacity to support learning at home.

	Feedback mechanisms	Channels through which schools gather parents' views, concerns, and suggestions to improve collaboration.
Proposed/New Strategies	Leveraging technology	Adoption of digital platforms such as WhatsApp groups, emails, and online portals for real-time school–parent communication.
	Flexible participation opportunities	Allowing parents with demanding jobs to contribute in alternative ways, such as volunteering outside school hours.
	Enhanced communication channels	Expanding the use of SMS alerts, virtual meetings, and translated materials to reach all parents effectively.
	Expanded parental education programmes	Introducing structured and continuous training sessions on literacy, parenting skills, and supporting children's learning at home.
	Community partnerships	Collaborations with local NGOs, churches, and community leaders to create supportive networks for families.
	Targeted outreach initiatives	Specific strategies to engage “hard-to-reach” parents, such as home visits and one-on-one counselling sessions.

Source: Author's fieldwork (2024)

Focus group discussions, by contrast, offered the advantage of group interaction, enabling participants to exchange perspectives and build upon one another's contributions. As Morgan (1997) argues, FGDs are effective in revealing shared cultural norms and collective meanings that may not surface in individual interviews. In this study, separate focus groups were conducted for parents and teachers to minimize power imbalances and encourage candid discussion. The group format fostered dialogue around sensitive issues, such as frustrations with disengagement, and provided insight into how social dynamics influence collective understandings of parental roles. The choice of these two instruments reflects a deliberate strategy of methodological triangulation, enhancing the credibility of findings by collecting data through multiple lenses. Semi-structured interviews captured depth and individual

variation, while FGDs revealed commonalities, divergences, and cultural scripts operating within groups.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews provide an effective balance between structure and flexibility, enabling the researcher to cover predetermined themes while allowing participants the freedom to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Unlike structured interviews, which rely heavily on fixed questions, semi-structured interviews employ guiding prompts that can be adjusted depending on the flow of the conversation. This flexibility makes them particularly appropriate for qualitative case study research, where the aim is to generate depth of understanding rather than standardized responses.

For this study, interview guides were carefully designed to elicit insights from school administrators, teachers, and parents. Questions explored participants' definitions of parental engagement, perceived barriers to involvement, cultural expectations regarding the roles of parents and teachers, and experiences with existing school–parent partnership structures. For instance, administrators were asked about institutional mechanisms to promote parental involvement, teachers were probed on how parents supported or failed to support classroom learning, and parents were asked to share their perceptions of schools' expectations.

A key strength of semi-structured interviews lies in their ability to allow for probing and clarification. This approach enabled the researcher to uncover nuanced meanings that might not have emerged in a rigid interview format. For example, when parents gave brief or ambiguous answers, the interviewer was able to follow up with additional prompts to clarify their perspectives. The interviews also respected participants' voices

by giving them space to narrate experiences in their own terms, thereby reducing researcher dominance. Overall, semi-structured interviews were particularly effective for accessing the individual perspectives and personal narratives necessary to understand the complex issue of parental disengagement in private schools in Accra.

3.4.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) complemented the interviews by generating collective insights from groups of participants. FGDs bring individuals together to share experiences and opinions in an interactive setting, where group dynamics often spark new ideas and highlight areas of consensus or disagreement (Morgan, 1997). They are particularly effective for exploring how cultural norms and social expectations influence behavior, as participants build on one another's contributions to articulate shared understandings. For this study, FGDs were conducted with parents and teachers separately to minimize power imbalances and encourage candid discussion. Grouping participants in this way ensured that parents did not feel inhibited by the presence of teachers or administrators, and that teachers could speak openly about their challenges without fear of offending parents. Each focus group was guided by a set of prompts that explored parental roles, schools' expectations of parents, challenges in sustaining engagement, and perceptions of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).

The interactive nature of FGDs made them invaluable for revealing shared cultural norms and collective barriers that might not surface in one-on-one interviews. For example, parent groups often highlighted feelings of marginalization, noting that schools sometimes treated them as financial contributors rather than partners in learning. Teacher groups, on the other hand, emphasized their frustrations with parents' limited responsiveness to communication and homework support. By capturing these

collective perspectives, FGDs provided a broader understanding of how disengagement is perceived at a community level. The data from FGDs thus complemented interview findings, creating a more holistic picture of the dynamics of school–parent partnerships in Accra’s private basic schools.

3.5 Pilot Testing of Instruments

3.5.1 Purpose of pilot testing

Pilot testing is an essential step in qualitative research because it provides an opportunity to refine instruments, ensure clarity of questions, and assess the overall feasibility of the data collection process (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). A well-designed pilot not only highlights technical or logistical challenges but also allows the researcher to observe how participants engage with the instruments in real-world conditions. For this study, pilot testing was conducted in two private basic schools located in the Greater Accra but outside the main study area. This choice ensured that the feedback would be contextually relevant while preventing the contamination of data in the schools that formed the actual study sample. The pilot stage therefore played a critical role in confirming whether the semi-structured interview and focus group discussion guides were understandable, culturally appropriate, and capable of eliciting responses aligned with the research objectives.

3.5.2 Psychometric properties

Although qualitative instruments are not usually assessed through statistical psychometric testing as in quantitative research, the pilot test still offered valuable insights into the reliability and validity of the instruments. Reliability was promoted by ensuring consistency in the way questions were asked across different participants and groups, thus reducing researcher bias. Validity was assessed by examining whether the

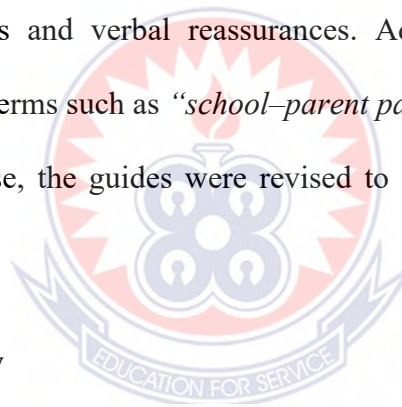
questions truly elicited responses relevant to the research problem and objectives. Feedback indicated that some participants interpreted terms like “*parental engagement*” differently, reflecting variations in cultural and experiential understanding. These ambiguities were addressed by refining the guides and including clear examples to ensure shared comprehension. Additionally, broad or complex questions were rephrased into shorter, manageable prompts, enabling participants to provide more focused yet detailed responses.

3.5.3 Results of pilot testing

The pilot confirmed the effectiveness of both semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as complementary instruments for exploring parental disengagement. One key finding was that parents demonstrated greater comfort and openness in group discussions, where shared experiences created a supportive environment for expressing concerns. By contrast, administrators and teachers were more comfortable with individual interviews, which allowed them to speak candidly about sensitive issues without fear of criticism. This insight influenced the methodological strategy for the main study by emphasizing FGDs for parents while prioritizing interviews for administrators and teachers. The pilot also revealed practical challenges such as scheduling conflicts and varying levels of willingness to participate, which informed adjustments in planning for the main fieldwork. Overall, the pilot demonstrated that the instruments were well suited to capturing the depth and diversity of perspectives needed, while highlighting important refinements to maximize their effectiveness in the study context.

3.5.4 Challenges and resolutions

Like many qualitative studies, the pilot stage encountered several challenges that needed to be addressed before the main data collection. One major issue was scheduling conflicts, particularly with parents who often had competing work and household responsibilities. This made it difficult to gather participants at a single time. To resolve this, the main study incorporated more flexible scheduling, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate parents' availability. Another challenge was participant hesitation; some parents expressed discomfort discussing disengagement due to fears of being judged or criticized by school authorities. To address this, the researcher emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and guaranteed confidentiality through consent forms and verbal reassurances. Additionally, terminology posed difficulties, as certain terms such as "*school-parent partnerships*" were not uniformly understood. In response, the guides were revised to include practical examples and simpler phrasing.



3.6 Sampling Strategy

3.6.1 Sampling technique

The study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability technique that involves selecting participants who possess specific characteristics relevant to the research (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive sampling was appropriate because the study sought in-depth insights from stakeholders directly involved in school-parent partnerships.

Criteria for selection included:

- Parents with children enrolled in selected private basic schools in Greater Accra.
- Teachers with at least two years of teaching experience in these schools.
- Administrators responsible for overseeing school-parent engagement initiatives.

Purposive sampling ensured that participants had both the knowledge and lived experience necessary to provide meaningful contributions.

3.6.2 Sample size and justification

In qualitative research, the emphasis is on depth rather than breadth of data, and sample size is determined by data saturation the point at which no new insights emerge (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). For this study, the sample included:

- **20 parents**, divided into four focus groups of five members each.
- **10 teachers**, participating in two focus groups.
- **6 school administrators**, interviewed individually.

This brought the total sample size to 36 participants.

The number of focus groups and participants was chosen to balance diversity of perspectives with feasibility. Groups of five participants were small enough to ensure everyone had the opportunity to contribute but large enough to stimulate meaningful interaction. Administrators were interviewed individually due to their unique roles and responsibilities, which required more in-depth exploration.

3.6.3 Appropriateness of sampling

The purposive sampling technique was particularly appropriate given the study's interpretivist orientation. The goal was not statistical generalization but analytical generalization, where findings contribute to theoretical insights and practical understanding (Yin, 2018).

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

3.7.1 Preparatory stage

Before the commencement of fieldwork, careful preparations were undertaken to ensure that data collection proceeded smoothly and ethically. The first step involved obtaining

an introductory letter from the researcher's university department. This letter served as formal authorization, legitimizing the study and enhancing the researcher's credibility when approaching schools. The letter was then presented to school authorities, including head teachers and administrators, to seek permission to conduct the study. This step was crucial in the Ghanaian educational context, where hierarchical approval is highly valued and helps foster trust between researchers and institutions. After receiving approval, the researcher scheduled preliminary meetings with school authorities and potential participants. During these meetings, the purpose, scope, and procedures of the study were clearly explained to all stakeholders. This helped to manage expectations and address concerns regarding confidentiality and voluntary participation. Informed consent was sought through both verbal explanations and written forms.

3.7.2 Implementation stage

The actual process of data collection was conducted over a period of three months, allowing sufficient time for interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and follow-ups. Semi-structured interviews were held with administrators and teachers in private, quiet settings within the schools. These locations were deliberately chosen to minimize distractions, ensure confidentiality, and allow participants to speak freely about sensitive topics such as parental disengagement. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, and with participants' permission was audio-recorded for accuracy.

FGDs were conducted with parents and, separately, with teachers. Holding sessions in neutral venues such as school halls and community centres ensured accessibility and comfort. Each FGD lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, which allowed adequate time for in-depth discussion while avoiding participant fatigue. Ground rules were

introduced at the start of each session, emphasizing respect, confidentiality, and equal opportunity to speak. The discussions were moderated by the researcher, with the support of a trained note-taker who captured key points and non-verbal expressions. This dual arrangement improved both the reliability of data and the overall quality of the sessions.

3.7.3 Documentation and reflexivity

To ensure data integrity, all interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim, preserving participants' words exactly as spoken. This approach reduced the risk of researcher bias and allowed for more accurate interpretation during analysis. In addition, detailed field notes were maintained to record contextual observations, such as tone of voice, body language, and group dynamics elements that often provide important insights in qualitative research.

Reflexivity was a key component of this stage. The researcher consistently reflected on how personal beliefs, professional background, and cultural position could influence both the interactions with participants and the interpretation of data. For example, as a researcher within the Ghanaian context, there was an awareness that participants might perceive the researcher as aligned with educational authorities. To minimize this effect, the researcher emphasized neutrality and reinforced the confidentiality of responses.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Before initiating data collection for the study, a crucial step was taken to secure ethical approval from the University of Education, Winneba. This approval, a testament to the study's adherence to ethical standards, involved a thorough review of the research proposal by the university's ethics committee. The proposal detailed the study's objectives, methodology, potential risks, and benefits, ensuring that all aspects of the

research were conducted with integrity and respect for the participants and the community at large.

Once ethical approval was obtained, the focus shifted to getting the informed consent of participants. Each participant was provided with comprehensive information about the study, including its aims, the nature of their participation, and the duration. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that participants understood their rights, including the voluntary nature of their participation and their freedom to withdraw at any time without consequence. This process was essential in ensuring that participants were making an informed and voluntary decision to take part in the study.

Also ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participant information, this research process implemented rigorous measures to protect participants' identity, including the use of pseudonyms in place of real names in data gathering and the research report. Personal data and sensitive information were securely stored and strictly accessed only by the research team. Additionally, sensitive information, was handled with utmost care and respect. Participants were assured that any such information would be treated confidentially and used solely for research purposes.

As a final step, plans were made to disseminate the research findings back to the participants and the broader educational community, thereby closing the loop and ensuring that the contributions of the participants were acknowledged and valued. This comprehensive approach to ethical research practice not only ensured compliance with academic standards but also underscored a deep respect for the rights and well-being of all individuals involved in the study.

3.9 Summary of Methodology

This chapter presented the methodological framework that guided the study on school–parent partnerships and the reasons for parental disengagement in private basic schools within the Greater Accra. The chapter began by outlining the philosophical stance, which was rooted in a relativist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. These foundations were situated within a constructivist paradigm, which emphasizes that reality is socially constructed and best understood through the lived experiences of participants. This philosophical orientation justified the choice of a qualitative approach and a case study design, both of which are suitable for exploring context-specific meanings and complex social phenomena.

The chapter further detailed the data collection instruments, which included semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. These tools were selected because they allow for both individual depth and collective insights, and they were piloted to test clarity, reliability, and cultural appropriateness. The sampling strategy was purposive, targeting 36 participants consisting of parents, teachers, and administrators. This composition was carefully justified to ensure diversity of perspectives while maintaining feasibility.

Additionally, the data collection procedures were systematically described, beginning with obtaining an introductory letter from the university to secure institutional access, followed by scheduling, conducting fieldwork, and documenting findings. Reflexivity was emphasized to ensure researcher positionality did not bias the process. Finally, ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were thoroughly addressed, ensuring the integrity and credibility of the study. Collectively, these methodological choices provided a rigorous and contextually

appropriate framework for examining parental disengagement and its implications for school–parent partnerships.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study, focusing on the analysis and interpretation of data collected to understand the reasons behind parental disengagement in private basic schools in Accra and the impact this has on student learning outcomes. The chapter begins by presenting the demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by an exploration of the key factors contributing to parental disengagement. The chapter also examines the existing strategies used by schools to enhance parental involvement and evaluates their effectiveness. The results are discussed in relation to the research objectives, providing insights into how parental disengagement affects students' academic performance and overall development and suggesting potential strategies for improvement.

4.1 Data Coding and Theme Development

Before presenting the results, it is important to describe how the raw data from interviews and focus group discussions were systematically transformed into codes, sub-themes, and overarching themes. The study employed an inductive–deductive coding approach, drawing both from the research objectives and from emergent patterns in participants' narratives (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019). The analytic process began with verbatim transcription of all interviews and focus groups. Each transcript was read multiple times to ensure familiarity with the content. During the open coding stage, meaningful phrases or sentences were highlighted and labeled with descriptive codes such as “*financial hardship*,” “*teacher authority*,” or “*lack of time*.” These codes represented initial insights from the data without imposing rigid categories.

In the next stage, axial coding was undertaken, where related codes were grouped into sub-themes. For example, codes like “*inability to pay fees*,” “*long working hours*,” and “*cost of living pressures*” were merged under the sub-theme socioeconomic constraints. Similarly, codes relating to “*teachers as sole knowledge providers*” and “*parents’ limited role*” were grouped under cultural beliefs and practices.

Table 4.1: Examples of Codes, Sub-themes, and Themes on Parental Engagement

Sample Codes	Sub-themes	Themes
“I work long hours, so I can’t attend meetings.” / “Fees take most of my salary.”	Socioeconomic constraints	Parental Disengagement
“Teachers know more about education; my role is to pay fees.” / “Parents shouldn’t interfere with school matters.”	Cultural beliefs and practices	Parental Disengagement
“I didn’t know the school expected me to help with homework.” / “No one told us about the PTA meeting.”	Lack of awareness	Parental Disengagement
“We send letters home, but parents rarely reply.” / “Sometimes parents change numbers without informing the school.”	Communication barriers	Parental Disengagement
“When parents check homework, children do better in class.” / “Engaged parents improve discipline.”	Academic and behavioural development	Perceptions Impacting Engagement
“We organize PTA meetings, but attendance is low.” / “Parents come for speech day but not for workshops.”	Parent–teacher meetings; School events	Existing Strategies and Interventions
“If schools used WhatsApp or emails, more parents could respond.” / “Evening meetings would help working parents.”	Leveraging technology; Flexible opportunities	Proposed/New Strategies

Source: Author’s coding framework, fieldwork (2024).

Finally, through selective coding, these sub-themes were refined into broader themes that aligned with the research objectives and theoretical frameworks. Four major themes emerged:

1. **Parental Disengagement** (with sub-themes such as socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs, lack of awareness, and communication barriers),
2. **Perceptions Impacting Engagement,**
3. **Existing Strategies and Interventions,** and
4. **Proposed/New Strategies.**

These themes formed the organizing framework for presenting and discussing the findings in the subsequent sections. A summary of the themes and sub-themes was presented earlier in Table 3.1 (Chapter Three) and is used here as the analytical lens for structuring the results.

4.2 Ensuring Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure the credibility and rigor of the findings, the study adopted Guba and Lincoln's (1984) trustworthiness criteria, which consist of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these was systematically addressed throughout the research process.

1. **Credibility:** Multiple strategies were employed to ensure the accuracy and believability of findings. First, data were triangulated by comparing insights from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions across parents, teachers, and administrators. Member checking was also conducted, where selected participants reviewed preliminary interpretations to confirm that their perspectives were accurately represented. Additionally, peer debriefing with colleagues provided external checks on the interpretation process.

2. **Transferability:** Thick, contextual descriptions of the schools, participants, and sociocultural environment were provided to enable readers to assess whether the findings may be applicable to other settings, particularly similar private schools in urban Ghana. By detailing the study context, readers can determine the extent to which conclusions resonate with their own educational environments.
3. **Dependability:** An audit trail was maintained, documenting each stage of the research process, including transcription, coding, theme development, and interpretation. This transparent record ensures that the research process could be followed and potentially replicated by other scholars.
4. **Confirmability:** Reflexivity was practiced throughout the study, with the researcher continually reflecting on personal biases, assumptions, and positionality. Field notes were used not only to capture observations but also to document reflections on how the researcher's background might influence interpretations. This practice minimized undue researcher influence and ensured that findings were grounded in participants' voices rather than the researcher's preconceptions.

4.3 Presentation of Results

In this section, the results of the study are presented based on the analysis of data collected from parents, teachers, and administrators at the two selected private basic schools in Accra. The analysis was conducted manually, following the coding framework outlined earlier. After transcription of interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher engaged in multiple readings of the texts to identify recurring ideas, phrases, and expressions. These were first highlighted as open codes, then grouped into broader sub-themes and finally synthesized into major themes aligned

with the study objectives. Manual analysis was chosen over software packages to ensure closer immersion in the data and to maintain sensitivity to contextual nuances in participants' narratives. However, an audit trail in the form of coded transcripts, tables, and matrices was maintained to ensure transparency and consistency in the analytic process.

The presentation of results is organized according to the study's objectives, beginning with the demographic characteristics of respondents. Following this, the key reasons for parental disengagement are examined, highlighting socioeconomic, cultural, and logistical factors that hinder active parental involvement in children's education. The analysis then shifts to the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the impact of parental disengagement on student academic performance and holistic development. Furthermore, the effectiveness of current strategies employed by the schools to enhance parental engagement is assessed, revealing areas where improvements are needed. The results culminate in the identification of innovative strategies that could potentially increase parental involvement, offering a pathway for schools to strengthen partnerships with parents and improve educational outcomes for students. Each section of the results is supported by direct quotes from interviews and focus groups, as well as summary tables, thereby providing a comprehensive and credible overview of the findings.

4.3.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study provide a comprehensive overview of the diverse backgrounds of parents, teachers, and administrators involved in selected private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana. The study included 6 parents, 20 teachers, and 10 administrators, selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure rich and in-depth insights into school-parent

partnerships. In terms of age, the majority of parents and administrators were between 31 and 50 years old, with a smaller proportion in the 25-30 and 51-60 age brackets. This distribution indicates that most participants were mature adults likely to have substantial life and professional experience, which can influence their perspectives on school-parent partnerships. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 45% of respondents being male and 55% female, ensuring diverse viewpoints from both genders.

Marital status data showed that most respondents were married, particularly among the teachers and administrators, suggesting potential stability and support systems that could positively affect their engagement in educational partnerships. Educational background varied, with a significant number of parents and teachers holding bachelor's degrees and many administrators possessing master's degrees. This high level of education among respondents likely contributes to a better understanding and appreciation of the importance of parental involvement in education. Occupational data revealed that all teachers and administrators were involved in education, while parents were engaged in various sectors, including healthcare, commerce, and public service. This occupational diversity among parents suggests a wide range of skills and experiences that can be leveraged to support school activities and initiatives.

The length of association with the schools varied, with many respondents having been involved for 4-6 years, indicating a reasonable period of engagement. This duration suggests that respondents have had sufficient time to form opinions and provide meaningful feedback on the effectiveness of school-parent partnerships. The demographic profile of the respondents reflects a well-rounded and experienced group of individuals. Their diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, marital status,

educational attainment, occupation, and length of association with the schools provide a robust foundation for understanding the dynamics of school-parent partnerships in the selected private basic schools in the Greater Accra. This diversity is crucial for ensuring that the study captures a wide range of perspectives and experiences, which can inform more effective strategies for enhancing parental engagement in education.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Parents (N = 6)	Teachers (N = 20)	Administrators (N = 10)	Total (N = 36)
Age	25-30	1	5	1	7
	31-40	3	8	3	14
	41-50	2	5	4	11
	51-60	0	2	2	4
Gender	Male	2	10	5	17
	Female	4	10	5	19
Marital Status	Single	1	4	1	6
	Married	4	13	8	25
	Divorced	1	2	0	3
	Widowed	0	1	1	2
Educational Background	Secondary Education	1	3	0	4
	Bachelor's Degree	3	12	5	20
	Master's Degree	2	5	5	12
Occupation	Education	1	20	10	31
	Healthcare	2	0	0	2
	Commerce	2	0	0	2
	Public Service	1	0	0	1
Length of Association with the School	1-3 years	2	5	1	8
	4-6 years	2	8	3	13
	7-10 years	1	4	4	9
	Over 10 years	1	3	2	6

Source: Fieldwork Data (2024)

Note: N represents the number of respondents in each category.

4.3.2 Reasons for parental disengagement in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana

The study identified several key reasons for parental disengagement in the two selected private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana. Socioeconomic challenges emerged as a significant factor, with many parents struggling to balance demanding work schedules with their responsibilities at home. This challenge often leaves them with little time or energy to participate actively in their children's education. Financial constraints further exacerbate this issue, as some parents prioritize work over school involvement to meet the economic needs of their families. Cultural beliefs and practices also play a crucial role in parental disengagement.

In some cases, parents may hold traditional views that place less emphasis on formal education, particularly when their own educational background is limited. This consideration can lead to a perception that their involvement in school-related activities is unnecessary or beyond their capability. Logistical challenges, such as difficulties in transportation and scheduling conflicts, further hinder parental participation in school events and meetings. These challenges are particularly pronounced in the urban setting of Accra, where the fast-paced nature of city life often clashes with the schools' schedules and expectations.

Additionally, there is a lack of effective communication between schools and parents, which contributes to disengagement. Parents may feel disconnected from the school community if they are not regularly informed about their children's progress or if communication methods are not accessible or convenient. Together, these factors create a significant barrier to parental engagement, ultimately impacting students' academic performance and overall development. Addressing these challenges requires targeted

strategies that consider the unique circumstances and needs of each family, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for parental involvement.

Socioeconomic Constraints

Socioeconomic constraints emerged as a significant factor contributing to parental disengagement. Many parents reported financial difficulties as a primary reason for their limited involvement in school activities. These financial burdens often required parents to work multiple jobs or extended hours, leaving them with little time or energy to participate in their children's education. This situation was particularly pronounced among parents in lower-income brackets who had to prioritize earning a livelihood over attending school functions.

Responses:

Parents at St. Theresa School who work two jobs to make ends meet often find it challenging to attend school meetings or events. The demands of multiple jobs leave them with little time or energy to participate in their child's school activities, despite their desire to be involved. **P-ST-048**

Some parents at Bishop Bowers School express that it's not a lack of interest in being involved, but by the time they get home from work, they are too exhausted to engage in any additional activities. This fatigue creates a barrier to their participation in school events and meetings. **P-BB-049**

At St. Theresa School, the high cost of living forces many parents to prioritize work over school events, as they must provide for their families. Often, these events clash with their work schedules, making it difficult for them to be actively involved in their child's education. **P-ST-050**

Some parents at Bishop Bowers School cannot afford to take time off work for school events without losing part of their income. This financial pressure makes it challenging for them to participate, despite understanding the importance of being involved in their child's school life. **P-BB-051**

Parents at St. Theresa School with demanding jobs find it difficult to engage with their children's school activities due to the limited time they have outside of work. This lack of availability hampers their ability to support their child's educational journey fully. **P-ST-052**

For some parents at Bishop Bowers School, the choice between attending a school event and ensuring they can put food on the table is a difficult one. While

they value their child's education, their family's immediate needs must come first, which often means missing out on school-related activities. **P-BB-053**

Cultural Beliefs and Practices

Cultural beliefs and practices also played a crucial role in parental disengagement. Some parents held the belief that the responsibility for their children's education rested solely with the school. This perspective was particularly prevalent among parents with lower educational backgrounds, who tended to see teachers as the primary figures responsible for their children's learning. This cultural norm often resulted in minimal parental involvement at home or in school activities.

Responses:

Some parents at Bishop Bowers School believe that once they pay the school fees, their job is done, and it is up to the school to handle everything else. This mindset can lead to a lack of parental involvement in their child's educational journey, as they view the teacher as solely responsible for academic matters. **P-BB-043**

In the cultural context of St. Theresa School, education is often seen as the teacher's job, not the parents'. Parents trust the teachers to fulfill their role, which can sometimes result in minimal parental participation in school activities. **P-ST-044**

Many parents at St. Theresa School believe that their involvement is unnecessary because the teachers are the experts. This belief can create a gap in collaboration between the school and home, as parents may feel that their input is not needed. **P-ST-045**

There is a general perception at Bishop Bowers School that school is a place where children go to learn, and parents have little role in that process. This perspective can limit parental engagement and reduce the potential impact of home-school collaboration on student success. **P-BB-046**

Some parents at Bishop Bowers School grew up with the idea that school matters are strictly for teachers and not something parents should interfere with. This traditional view can lead to a hands-off approach to their child's education, relying entirely on the school for academic development. **P-BB-047**

Lack of Awareness

Another contributing factor was a lack of awareness regarding the importance of parental involvement in their children's education. Some parents were not fully aware of how their engagement could positively impact their children's academic

performance and overall development. This lack of awareness was often linked to the parents' own educational experiences and background, which did not emphasize the role of parental engagement in schooling.

Responses:

At St. Theresa School, some parents did not have much schooling themselves, so they may not see the importance of being involved in school activities. This lack of personal experience with education can lead to disengagement and a lower level of participation in their child's academic life. **P-ST-037**

Some parents at Bishop Bowers School were unaware that their involvement in their child's school could make such a big difference in their performance. This realization often comes as a surprise, leading to a greater commitment to participate in school-related activities. **P-BB-038**

At St. Theresa School, some parents did not realize that their presence at school meetings and events could significantly encourage their child to perform better. Understanding this connection can motivate parents to become more active participants in their child's education. **P-ST-039**

Parents at Bishop Bowers School sometimes express that if they had known how much their involvement mattered, they would have made more effort to attend school functions. This hindsight highlights the importance of educating parents about the impact of their engagement on their child's success. **P-BB-040**

Some parents at St. Theresa School reflect on their own upbringing, where their parents were not involved in their schooling, and therefore, they did not think it was important to be involved in their child's education. This generational gap can influence current attitudes toward parental engagement. **P-ST-041**

Parents at Bishop Bowers School sometimes do not realize that simple actions, such as helping with homework or attending parent-teacher meetings, can have a significant impact on their child's academic success. This newfound understanding often leads to increased involvement. **P-BB-042**

Communication Barriers

Ineffective communication between schools and parents emerged as another barrier to parental engagement. Parents mentioned that they often did not receive timely information about school events or their children's progress. Additionally, language barriers hindered effective communication for some parents, making it difficult for them to understand and respond to school communications.

Responses:

Sometimes, parents at Bishop Bowers School do not receive newsletters or notices on time, and when they do, the information is often in English, a language some parents are not very comfortable with. This language barrier can make it difficult for parents to stay fully informed and engaged. **P-BB-031**

Some parents at St. Theresa School wish the school would send information in a language they understand better. Receiving communication in their preferred language would significantly enhance their ability to stay involved in their child's education. **(Parent, St. Theresa School) P-ST-032**

At Bishop Bowers School, emails are a common form of communication, but not all parents check their email regularly, leading to missed important updates. This gap in communication can result in parents feeling disconnected from school events and their child's progress. **P-BB-033**

Parents at St. Theresa School sometimes feel disconnected because they don't always understand the information sent home. It would be helpful if the school provided translations, ensuring that all parents can access and comprehend important updates. **P-ST-034**

Occasionally, at Bishop Bowers School, information is relayed through the child, and by the time it reaches the parents, it is too late to act on it. This delay can cause parents to miss out on critical opportunities to engage with the school. **P-BB-035**

Some parents at St. Theresa School prefer face-to-face communication, but finding the time to visit the school and speak directly with teachers can be challenging. This preference for personal interaction highlights the need for flexible communication options. **P-ST-036**

The results for Objective 1 reveal that socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs and practices, lack of awareness, and communication barriers are the primary reasons for parental disengagement in the two private basic schools studied. Addressing these issues requires targeted strategies such as financial support programmes, cultural sensitization workshops, awareness campaigns, and improved communication channels to foster greater parental involvement in school activities. These findings provide a foundation for developing interventions aimed at enhancing school-parent partnerships in the Greater Accra. By understanding and addressing these barriers, schools can create

more inclusive and supportive environments that encourage active parental engagement, ultimately benefiting students' academic and personal development.

4.3.3 Perceptions of Teachers and Administrators on the Impact of Parental Engagement on Student Learning Outcomes

Objective 2 aimed to explore the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the impact of parental engagement on student learning outcomes. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and administrators from St. Theresa School and Bishop Bowers School. The findings are categorized into perceptions of academic performance, behavioural development, and emotional and social development.

Perceptions of Academic Performance

Teachers and administrators overwhelmingly agreed that parental engagement positively influences students' academic performance. They noted that students whose parents are actively involved in their education tend to perform better academically as they receive additional support and encouragement at home. Engaged parents are more likely to monitor their children's homework, attend parent-teacher conferences, and participate in school events, which collectively contribute to improved academic outcomes.

Responses:

Students at St. Theresa School with involved parents often excel in their studies because their parents actively help them with homework and consistently monitor their progress. This hands-on approach at home directly contributes to the student's academic success. **P-ST-026**

When parents at Bishop Bowers School show interest in their child's education, it significantly boosts the child's motivation to perform well in school. This parental encouragement fosters a positive attitude toward learning and academic achievement. (Parent, Bishop Bowers School) **P-BB-027**

Parental involvement at Bishop Bowers School provides a crucial support system that reinforces what is taught in the classroom. This alignment between home and school enhances the student's learning experience and helps solidify their understanding of the subjects. **P-BB-028**

Teachers at St. Theresa School have noticed that students whose parents are engaged tend to achieve higher grades and possess a better understanding of the subjects. This active involvement from parents creates a strong foundation for academic excellence. **P-ST-029**

Parents at St. Theresa School who attend school meetings and events are better informed about their child's academic needs, enabling them to provide the necessary support. This informed involvement ensures that the child receives consistent guidance both at home and at school. **P-ST-030**

Perceptions of Behavioural Development

Both teachers and administrators observed that parental engagement has a significant impact on students' behavioural development. They reported that students with engaged parents are more likely to exhibit positive behaviours, such as discipline, respect, and responsibility. These students are also less likely to engage in disruptive behaviours, as they receive guidance and supervision from their parents.

Responses:

Engaged parents at Bishop Bowers School play a vital role in instilling discipline in their children, which is clearly reflected in their behaviour at school. This active parental involvement contributes to creating a more orderly and respectful school environment. **P-BB-021**

When parents are involved in their children's education at St. Theresa School, students are more likely to adhere to school rules and exhibit respectful behaviour. This collaboration between parents and the school reinforces positive behavioural expectations. **P-ST-022**

Parental engagement at St. Theresa School is key in shaping the character of the students, making them more responsible and well-behaved. The support from home complements the school's efforts in developing well-rounded individuals. **P-ST-023**

Students at Bishop Bowers School with supportive parents tend to have fewer behavioural issues because they understand that their parents and teachers are working together. This strong partnership provides a consistent framework for behavioural expectations both at home and in school. **P-BB-024**

Teachers at Bishop Bowers School have observed a noticeable difference in the behaviour of students whose parents actively participate in their education. These students often display better conduct and a more positive attitude toward school. **P-BB-025**

Perceptions of Emotional and Social Development

Teachers and administrators also highlighted the positive impact of parental engagement on students' emotional and social development. They noted that students with engaged parents tend to have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and stronger relationships with their peers and teachers. These students feel more secure and supported, which enhances their overall well-being and school experience.

Responses:

Students at St. Theresa School who have involved parents tend to be more confident and exhibit higher self-esteem. This strong parental presence contributes significantly to their overall sense of self-worth and encourages them to perform better academically and socially. **P-ST-016**

Parental engagement at Bishop Bowers School plays a crucial role in helping students develop better social skills and form stronger relationships with their peers. This involvement fosters a positive social environment where students can thrive and build meaningful connections. **P-BB-017**

When parents are actively involved in their children's education at Bishop Bowers School, it creates a sense of support and security for the students. This nurturing environment has a positive impact on their emotional well-being, making them more resilient to the stresses of school life. **P-BB-018**

Engaged parents at St. Theresa School provide the emotional support that is essential for students as they navigate the various challenges of school life. This support system helps students manage their emotions and enhances their ability to cope with academic and social pressures. **P-ST-019**

Teachers at St. Theresa School have observed that students with supportive parents are generally happier and more socially adept. This positive influence from parents contributes to their overall well-being and success in the school environment. **P-ST-020**

The results for Objective 2 indicate that teachers and administrators perceive parental engagement as having a profound and positive impact on student learning outcomes.

They believe that active parental involvement enhances students' academic

performance, behavioural development, and emotional and social well-being. These perceptions underscore the importance of fostering strong school-parent partnerships to support student success. By encouraging and facilitating greater parental engagement, schools can create a more supportive and enriching educational environment for students.

4.3.4 Existing strategies and interventions for involving parents in the educational process in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana

Objective 3 aimed to identify and evaluate the existing strategies and interventions employed by St. Theresa School and Bishop Bowers School to involve parents in the educational process. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and administrators. The findings are categorized into regular parent-teacher meetings, school events and activities, communication tools, parental education programmes, and feedback mechanisms.

Regular Parent-Teacher Meetings

Regular parent-teacher meetings are a cornerstone strategy for involving parents. These meetings provide a structured opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss students' academic progress, behavioural issues, and any concerns. They also serve as a platform for parents to understand the school's expectations and collaborate on strategies to support their children's learning.

Responses:

Parent-teacher meetings held every term at St. Theresa School are essential for discussing the progress of each child and addressing any emerging issues. These meetings ensure that parents are well-informed and remain actively involved in their children's education. **P-ST-011**

These meetings are vital in fostering a strong partnership between parents and teachers at Bishop Bowers School. By working together, both parties can better

support the child's academic and personal development, ensuring a holistic approach to education. **P-BB-012**

Regular interactions during parent-teacher meetings at Bishop Bowers School provide valuable insights into the parents' expectations. This alignment with the school's goals helps create a unified effort in promoting the child's success. **P-BB-013**

Face-to-face meetings at St. Theresa School offer a direct channel for addressing any concerns and finding immediate solutions. This approach helps maintain a positive and collaborative relationship between the school and parents. **P-ST-014**

Parent-teacher conferences at Bishop Bowers School are crucial for sharing detailed feedback about the child's performance. These discussions also focus on creating personalized action plans to address specific needs and enhance the child's learning experience. **P-BB-015**

School Events and Activities

Both schools organize various events and activities aimed at engaging parents and fostering a sense of community. These include open days, sports days, cultural festivals, and workshops. Such events encourage parents to participate actively in school life and provide opportunities for informal interactions with teachers and administrators.

Responses:

Events like sports days and cultural festivals organized by St. Theresa School provide an excellent opportunity for parents to engage with the school community. By inviting parents to participate, these events help foster a sense of belonging and ensure that parents feel actively involved in their child's school life. **P-ST-006**

Parents' involvement in school events at Bishop Bowers School plays a crucial role in building a stronger school community. These interactions allow parents to witness firsthand the school's dedication to their children's education and contribute to a collaborative environment. **P-BB-007**

Workshops offered by Bishop Bowers School cover various topics aimed at empowering parents to support their children's education at home. These sessions provide valuable insights and practical strategies, making it easier for parents to contribute to their child's academic success. **P-BB-008**

Family Day and Parent-Child Sports Day events at St. Theresa School have proven to be highly effective in bringing parents into the school. These gatherings help cultivate a strong sense of community and encourage parents to participate in school activities actively. **P-ST-009**

Cultural festivals at Bishop Bowers School not only highlight students' talents but also actively engage parents in the celebration of their children's achievements. These events provide a platform for parents to participate, creating a festive atmosphere that strengthens the connection between the school and its community. **P-BB-010**

Communication Tools

Effective communication between schools and parents is facilitated through various tools such as newsletters, emails, messaging apps, and school portals. These tools ensure that parents receive timely updates about school activities, events, and their children's progress.

Responses:

Parents at St. Theresa School appreciate receiving newsletters and emails, as these keep them consistently informed about various school events and important dates. This method also allows them to track their child's academic progress more effectively, fostering a stronger connection between the home and school environment. **P-ST-001**

Many parents at Bishop Bowers School find that messaging apps like WhatsApp significantly enhance their communication with the school. These apps facilitate quick updates and easy interaction, enabling parents to stay informed about their child's activities and school announcements in real-time. **P-BB-002**

Regular communication between the school and parents at Bishop Bowers School helps to maintain a close connection with the child's education. This ongoing dialogue ensures that parents are actively involved, which in turn positively influences the student's academic experience and success. **P-BB-003**

Parents highly value the use of a school portal at St. Theresa School, as it provides a centralized platform where they can easily access their child's grades, attendance records, and information on upcoming events. This engagement tool helps parents stay informed and involved in their child's education. **P-ST-004**

Text message alerts are particularly effective for parents at Bishop Bowers School, as they serve as timely reminders for important meetings and deadlines. This communication method ensures that parents are always up-to-date with crucial school information, reducing the risk of missing key events. **P-BB-005**

Parental Education Programmes

To enhance parents' ability to support their children's education, both schools have implemented parental education programmes. These programmes include workshops and seminars on various topics, such as effective parenting, understanding the curriculum, and supporting homework. These programmes aim to empower parents with the knowledge and skills necessary to be active participants in their children's education.

Responses:

We conduct workshops for parents on topics like effective parenting and helping with homework. These sessions aim to empower parents by providing them with the tools and knowledge they need to support their children's educational journey effectively. These programmes have had a significant impact, helping parents feel more equipped to engage in their children's academic lives. **(A001)**

Parental education programmes are essential as they help parents gain a deeper understanding of the school's curriculum. These initiatives also clarify the critical role parents play in reinforcing learning at home, creating a strong partnership between the school and home environments. By participating, parents are better prepared to support their children's academic progress. **(A002)**

These programmes have proven to be highly effective in boosting parental involvement, which in turn has led to noticeable improvements in students' academic performance. By encouraging parents to be more active in their children's education, the programmes foster a supportive learning environment that benefits the entire school community. **(A003)**

Workshops on relevant topics such as internet safety, adolescent development, and literacy strategies have garnered significant interest from parents. These workshops are designed to address current challenges that parents face, equipping them with practical strategies to support their children's growth and safety in a digital age. **(A004)**

Providing parents with targeted resources and strategies through these programmes has significantly boosted their confidence in assisting their children academically. This empowerment enables parents to take a more proactive role in their children's education, ultimately leading to better academic outcomes and a stronger parent-child relationship. **(A005)**

Feedback Mechanisms

Both schools have established feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement in their engagement strategies. These mechanisms include surveys, suggestion boxes, and parent advisory committees. Such feedback systems allow parents to voice their opinions, suggest improvements, and participate in decision-making processes.

Responses:

We utilize surveys as a key tool to gather detailed feedback from parents, which allows us to gain valuable insights into their experiences and areas where they feel improvements are needed. This approach not only helps us address specific concerns but also guides us in enhancing our educational strategies to serve the students and their families better. **(T-STS-001)**

A suggestion box strategically placed in the school office offers parents an anonymous and convenient way to provide feedback. This method encourages open communication, allowing parents to freely express their thoughts and concerns on various school matters without the fear of being identified. **(A-BBS-002)**

Our parent advisory committees meet on a regular basis to discuss school policies and programmes. This structure ensures that parents are actively involved in the decision-making process, giving them a platform to voice their opinions and contribute to the development of the school's initiatives. **(T-BBS-003)**

Feedback from parents has played a crucial role in refining our communication strategies and event planning. By listening to their input, we are able to tailor our approaches to better meet the needs of our school community, leading to more effective and inclusive school activities. **(A-STs-004)**

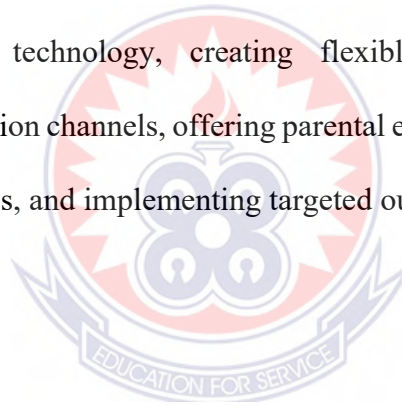
Listening to and acting on parents' concerns has been instrumental in fostering trust and strengthening the partnerships between the school and the families we serve. This ongoing dialogue not only builds confidence but also enhances the overall educational experience for students. **(T-BBS-005)**

The results for Objective 3 indicate that St. Theresa School and Bishop Bowers School employ a range of strategies and interventions to involve parents in the educational process. These include regular parent-teacher meetings, school events and activities, communication tools, parental education programmes, and feedback mechanisms. These strategies have been effective in fostering parental engagement and building strong school-parent partnerships. However, continuous evaluation and adaptation of

these strategies are necessary to address the evolving needs of parents and students. By maintaining open communication, providing support, and involving parents in various school activities, these schools can enhance the educational experience and outcomes for their students.

4.3.5 Proposing new strategies for parental engagement in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana

Objective 4 aimed to propose innovative strategies to enhance parental engagement in the educational process at St. Theresa School and Bishop Bowers School. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators. The findings highlight several potential strategies, including leveraging technology, creating flexible participation opportunities, enhancing communication channels, offering parental education programmes, fostering community partnerships, and implementing targeted outreach initiatives.



Leveraging Technology

Integrating technology was identified as a crucial strategy for enhancing parental engagement. This strategy includes using educational apps and online platforms that allow parents to monitor their children's academic progress, access homework and curriculum resources, and communicate more efficiently with teachers and school administrators. Social media and digital communication channels can also be leveraged to share updates, celebrate student achievements, and foster a sense of community among parents.

Responses:

Educational apps that allow us to track our children's progress and communicate with teachers would be very beneficial. Such tools could help us stay more involved in our children's academic journey and address any issues promptly. They would also foster better communication between parents and teachers, enhancing the overall educational experience. **(R001)**

Using social media to share school updates and achievements can significantly enhance parent engagement and keep us more informed. It provides a convenient and accessible way for us to stay connected with the school's activities and successes. This approach could also help build a stronger school community by celebrating student accomplishments together. **(R002)**

Online platforms for homework and curriculum resources can be a valuable asset for parents to support their children's learning. These tools would make it easier to access educational materials and ensure that parents are well-equipped to assist with homework. By providing these resources, schools can empower parents to take an active role in their children's education. **(R003)**

Virtual meetings and webinars offer a flexible solution for parents with busy schedules, making it easier to participate in school activities. These options remove the barriers of time and location, allowing more parents to be involved in their children's education. By providing this convenience, schools can foster greater parental engagement. **(R004)**

A dedicated school app could be a game-changer, providing real-time updates on student performance, school events, and important announcements. This app would allow parents to stay informed and engaged, even on the go. The app could also streamline communication between the school and parents, ensuring that everyone is on the same page. **(R005)**

Creating Flexible Participation Opportunities

Offering flexible participation opportunities can accommodate parents' varying schedules and increase their involvement. This opportunity includes scheduling events outside of traditional working hours and providing virtual engagement options such as online meetings and webinars. Such flexibility ensures that more parents can participate regardless of their work commitments.

Responses:

School events are an essential part of a child's education, and scheduling them in the evenings or on weekends would significantly increase accessibility for parents who work during regular hours. This change would ensure that more parents can actively participate in their children's school life, fostering a stronger connection between home and school. Such adjustments can also enhance the overall sense of community within the school. **(RSP001)**

The option to join virtual meetings from home offers immense convenience, especially for parents who work late. It eliminates the need for travel and allows parents to stay involved in their child's education despite their demanding schedules. This approach not only increases participation but also ensures that parents remain engaged and informed about school activities. **(RSP002)**

Flexibility in scheduling parent-teacher conferences is crucial for encouraging higher levels of parental involvement. When teachers and schools offer multiple time slots or alternative meeting formats, it accommodates parents' varying work schedules. This consideration can lead to better communication and collaboration between parents and teachers, ultimately benefiting the students. **(RSP003)**

Offering both in-person and virtual options for school events is an inclusive approach that caters to the diverse needs of parents. By providing these choices, schools can ensure that more parents, regardless of their circumstances, can participate in important events. This strategy not only enhances parental involvement but also builds a more connected school community. **(RSP004)**

Providing recorded sessions of school meetings and workshops would be a valuable resource for parents who cannot attend live sessions. These recordings allow parents to access crucial information at their convenience, ensuring they remain informed and involved in their child's education. This approach is especially beneficial for parents with unpredictable or busy schedules. **(RSP005)**

Enhancing Communication Channels

Improving communication between schools and parents is essential for fostering engagement. This engagement can be achieved by using multiple communication channels, such as newsletters, emails, messaging apps, and school portals, to ensure timely and effective dissemination of information. Providing materials in multiple languages and ensuring that communication is regular and positive can also help reach a broader parent audience.

Responses:

Regular newsletters and emails are essential tools that keep us up to date with all the events, activities, and important announcements happening at school. They provide a consistent stream of information, ensuring that we, as parents, are always in the loop. This helps us stay connected and engaged with our children's educational experience. **(R001)**

Messaging apps like WhatsApp have proven to be incredibly effective for communication between parents and teachers. They allow for quick updates and foster easy interaction, making it convenient to share information in real-time. This immediate access to communication helps to address concerns and queries promptly. **(R002)**

Making school information available in multiple languages would significantly benefit non-English speaking parents, allowing them to stay informed and actively participate in their children's education. This inclusion would ensure that language barriers do not hinder their ability to engage with the school community. **(R003)**

A school portal where parents can log in to monitor their child's academic progress and see upcoming events is a valuable resource. It provides a centralized platform for accessing important information, making it easier for parents to stay involved and support their child's educational journey. **(R004)**

Text message alerts are highly effective for reminding parents about important meetings, deadlines, and events. These timely reminders ensure that parents do not miss out on crucial information, allowing them to stay organized and engaged with school activities. **(R005)**

Regularly celebrating student achievements through newsletters and emails fosters a positive relationship between the school and parents. Highlighting these successes not only boosts student morale but also strengthens the connection and communication with parents, showing them that their child's efforts are recognized. **(R006)**

Offering Parental Education Programmes

Providing educational programmes for parents can empower them to support their children's education more effectively. These programmes can include workshops and seminars on topics such as effective parenting, understanding the curriculum, supporting homework, and internet safety. By equipping parents with the necessary knowledge and skills, schools can foster a more supportive home environment for students.

Responses:

Workshops on effective parenting and helping with homework are essential for enhancing parents' ability to support their children's academic journey. These sessions provide practical strategies that parents can easily implement at home. As a result, parents feel more equipped to contribute positively to their children's education. **RSP001**

Parental education programmes play a critical role in bridging the gap between home and school by offering insights into the curriculum. These programmes empower parents with the knowledge needed to assist their children effectively at home. Understanding the curriculum fosters a collaborative environment between parents and educators. **RSP002**

These programmes are instrumental in motivating parents to take a more active role in their children's educational experience. By offering them tools and knowledge, parents become more engaged in school activities. This increased involvement leads to better academic outcomes for the students. **RSP003**

Providing resources and strategies through workshops has significantly boosted parents' confidence in supporting their children's learning. With these tools, parents can more effectively assist with homework and other academic tasks. This empowerment strengthens the home-school connection. **RSP004**

Sessions on internet safety and digital literacy are increasingly important as technology becomes a central part of learning. Educating parents on these topics ensures they can guide their children in navigating the digital world safely. This proactive approach helps in mitigating potential risks associated with technology use. **RSP005**

Workshops on stress management and emotional support are vital for helping parents manage their children's challenges. These sessions equip parents with techniques to handle stress and provide emotional support at home. By addressing these aspects, parents can create a more supportive environment for their children. **RSP006**

Fostering Community Partnerships

Building strong community-school partnerships can enhance parental engagement by offering a broader range of support and resources to families. Collaborating with local businesses, community organizations, and social services can provide additional educational, health, emotional, and social support to students and their families.

Responses:

Partnerships with local businesses and organizations can offer additional resources and support to families. These partnerships provide families with access to services and programmes that might otherwise be unavailable, enhancing the overall well-being of students. By working together, schools and community partners can create a more robust support system for both students and parents. **(R001)**

Community partnerships can help address some of the challenges parents face in supporting their children's education. By engaging with community resources, schools can offer parents additional tools and guidance to navigate their children's educational journey. These collaborations can lead to a more inclusive and supportive environment for all involved. **(R002)**

Working with local organizations allows us to provide more comprehensive support to families. These collaborations enable us to address a broader range of needs, from academic assistance to health services, ensuring that students and their families receive holistic support. This approach fosters stronger connections between the school and the community. **(R003)**

Community involvement can create a more supportive environment for both students and parents. When schools actively engage with their communities, they can tap into local resources that help foster a nurturing atmosphere. This environment not only benefits the students but also empowers parents to be more involved in their children's education. **(R004)**

Engaging with local health services can help provide necessary health screenings and support for students. By collaborating with health professionals, schools can ensure that students' physical and mental health needs are met, which is essential for their academic success. These partnerships can also offer parents peace of mind, knowing that their children are receiving comprehensive care. **(R005)**

Collaborations with community centers can offer after-school programmes and tutoring services for students. These programmes provide students with additional learning opportunities and a safe place to be after school, which can significantly enhance their academic performance. Moreover, parents benefit from knowing their children are in a supportive and educational environment. **(R006)**

Implementing Targeted Outreach Initiatives

To engage parents who may be less involved due to various barriers, schools can implement targeted outreach initiatives. These initiatives can include home visits, personalized invitations to school events, and tailored support for families with specific needs. By reaching out to parents directly and addressing their unique challenges, schools can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Responses:

Home visits are essential in helping educators understand the unique challenges faced by some families. Through these visits, teachers can offer personalized support tailored to the specific needs of each household. This approach fosters a deeper connection between the school and the family, ultimately benefiting the student's academic and social development. **(R01)**

Personalized invitations to school events play a crucial role in making parents feel recognized and valued. When parents receive these tailored invitations, they are more inclined to attend and participate, as it reinforces the idea that their involvement is important to the school community. This personal touch can significantly enhance parent engagement. **(R02)**

Tailored support for families, particularly those with specific challenges like single-parent households, is vital in increasing their engagement with the school. By addressing their unique needs, the school can create a more inclusive environment where all families feel supported and involved. This approach helps in building a stronger partnership between the school and these families. **(R03)**

Outreach programmes that prioritize building trust and establishing strong relationships with parents are key to achieving sustained engagement. When parents feel that the school genuinely cares about their involvement, they are more likely to stay engaged over the long term. This trust-based approach lays the foundation for a collaborative and supportive school community. **(R04)**

Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for parents, especially those who may feel intimidated by the school setting, is crucial. Schools should strive to make all parents feel comfortable and valued, which can significantly enhance their willingness to engage with the school. This inclusive approach helps break down barriers and fosters a sense of belonging. **(R05)**

Offering transportation support for parents to attend school events is an important strategy for removing significant barriers to their participation. By addressing logistical challenges, the school ensures that all parents have the opportunity to be actively involved in their child's education. This support is

especially critical for families who might otherwise be unable to attend due to transportation issues. **(R06)**

The proposed strategies for enhancing parental engagement in St. Theresa School and Bishop Bowers School include leveraging technology, creating flexible participation opportunities, enhancing communication channels, offering parental education programmes, fostering community partnerships, and implementing targeted outreach initiatives. These strategies aim to address the barriers to parental involvement and create a more supportive and collaborative educational environment. By implementing these innovative approaches, the schools can enhance parental engagement, ultimately benefiting students' academic and personal development. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of these strategies are necessary to meet the evolving needs of parents and students, ensuring a dynamic and effective partnership between the schools and families.

4.4 Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research objectives, drawing explicitly on the qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews with administrators and teachers and focus group discussions with parents and teachers in the two selected private basic schools in Accra. The discussion is therefore firmly grounded in empirical evidence, while also situated within the broader scholarly conversation through comparison with existing literature. Each subsection engages with prior studies to highlight both convergences and divergences between the present findings and those reported in international, African, and Ghanaian contexts. Furthermore, the interpretation of results is guided by the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein's Model of Overlapping Spheres of Influence. These frameworks provide explanatory

lenses for understanding how parental disengagement is shaped by interactions between individual, institutional, and societal factors, and how these dynamics in turn influence children's academic performance and holistic development. By combining empirical data, literature, and theory, the discussion offers a nuanced account of the drivers, effects, and potential remedies of parental disengagement in private basic schools in the Greater Accra.

4.4.1 Reasons for parental disengagement in the two private basic schools in the Greater Accra of Ghana

Analytic approach and complementarity of data sources

To address Objective 1, transcripts from semi-structured interviews (administrators and teachers) and FGDs (parents and teachers, separately) were analysed thematically using an inductive–deductive procedure aligned with the coding framework established in Section 4.1. The interview corpus was particularly effective for eliciting individual role expectations, institutional constraints, and policy perspectives; the FGD corpus was leveraged to surface shared norms, test socially negotiated meanings, and capture collective barriers (e.g., “what most parents in our community tend to do”). Practically, analysis proceeded in three passes: (i) open coding in each corpus (e.g., “long working hours,” “teacher knows best,” “PTA communication gaps”); (ii) intra-source clustering into sub-themes; and (iii) cross-source integration using a triangulation matrix (rows = codes/sub-themes; columns = source: interviews vs FGDs; cells = convergent, complementary, or dissonant evidence). The complementarity points occurred when interview data explained institutional rationales (e.g., why meetings are scheduled at certain times), while FGD data explained community reception (e.g., why those times are impractical for most parents). Discrepancies (e.g., teachers reporting high message

circulation; parents reporting missed notices) were treated as analytic prompts and resolved by examining audit-trail memos and member-checking notes.

Interpretation of reasons, situated in theory and literature

The integrated analysis identified four proximate drivers of disengagement: demanding work schedules, socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs about educational authority, and limited parental educational background. Interviews with administrators clarified organisational logics (e.g., heavy reliance on printed circulars and daytime meetings), while FGDs with parents brought out the lived frictions (e.g., commuting time, shift work, single-parent households). These findings align with prior work showing that economic precarity and time poverty depress parental engagement (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2022) and that cultural scripts shape whether parents view themselves as partners or distant supporters (Hannon & O'Donnell, 2022). FGD talk also revealed meta-beliefs for instance, that “teachers are the experts” and parents should “avoid interfering” which resonated with the macrosystem layer in Bronfenbrenner’s framework and the school–family boundary in Epstein’s model.

Ecological interpretation

Viewed through Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, exosystemic pressures (parents’ workplaces, transport systems, cost of living) filtered into the microsystem (home–school interface), attenuating time/energy available for engagement. Interviews provided detail on school-level (mesosystem) routines (when and how schools expect parent presence), whereas FGDs illuminated community-level scripts (norms about “good parenting” and deference to teachers). The interview–FGD complementarity was clearest where administrators’ rationales (e.g., “daytime meetings are when staff are available”) met parents’ practicalities (e.g., “that’s when I’m at work or in traffic”),

producing the integrated sub-theme “temporal misalignment” under the broader theme Parental Disengagement.

Link to disengagement pathways

Across sources, long working hours and urban commuting repeatedly surfaced as constraints; parents in FGDs framed the trade-off as a survival calculus (overtime vs. meeting attendance), while teachers in interviews highlighted knock-on effects (missed homework support, fewer touchpoints). Socioeconomic pressures (fees, materials, transport) were consistently coded across both corpora; interviews added the dimension of school payment policies that inadvertently stigmatize or silence parents in arrears, while FGDs showed how such experiences discourage future attendance. Cultural beliefs and limited educational background emerged most strongly in FGDs (parents’ self-efficacy and comfort with academic content), while interviews clarified teachers’ expectations for home-based learning routines.

Empirical evidence from the fieldwork revealed that parents repeatedly cited long working hours, economic hardship, and cultural deference to teachers as the most salient barriers to their involvement. One mother in the parent FGD explained: “By the time I close from work, the school is already locked. I cannot always attend meetings even if I want to.” This testimony illustrates how urban employment patterns in Accra create practical obstacles to participation. These findings are consistent with Myende and Nhlumayo (2022), who noted that economic precarity and demanding work schedules limit parental involvement in South African schools. Similarly, Hannon and O’Donnell (2022) found that cultural expectations about educational authority influence whether parents perceive engagement as their responsibility. However, unlike Rochmawati and Anggraini (2022a), who reported relatively strong parental participation in contexts where schools deliberately nurture parent confidence, the

current study shows that in Accra's private schools, structural and cultural barriers often outweigh parental intent. This comparison underscores that disengagement is not simply a matter of parental indifference but a complex interplay of socioeconomic, cultural, and institutional factors.

4.4.2 Effects of parental disengagement on students' academic performance and holistic development in the two private basic schools in Accra

Analytic approach and complementarity of data sources

For Objective 2, analysis focused on co-occurrence patterns between disengagement codes (e.g., "infrequent school contact," "no homework oversight") and student-outcome codes (e.g., "missed assignments," "behavioural referrals," "low confidence"). Interviews with teachers and administrators supplied case-level evidence (attendance records, anecdotal trajectories, classroom observations), while FGDs offered home-context narratives (routines, stressors, sibling care, device access). The complementarity point lay in pairing school-side indicators (teachers' assessments of homework quality, participation, punctuality) with parent-reported barriers that explain those indicators (work shifts, limited content knowledge, overcrowded housing). Joint displays (matrix summaries) were used to align school-observed outcomes with home-reported conditions to reduce single-source bias.

Academic performance

Interviewed teachers described predictable patterns: learners with less parent contact often had irregular homework completion, limited reading practice, and weaker cumulative assessment scores. These interview-derived observations were contextualized by parents in FGDs, who reported time scarcity and discomfort with content (especially mathematics and English grammar), which constrained home scaffolding. The integration of sources thus connected mechanisms (insufficient guided

practice, lower feedback loops) to outcomes (lower grades, slower mastery). This pathway coheres with cumulative evidence that parental monitoring and instructional support correlate with achievement gains.

Behavioural development and attendance

Teachers' interview data highlighted increased behaviour referrals and attendance variability among pupils with minimal home-school contact. FGDs enriched this by describing evening work patterns, care duties, and household crowding, which reduce sleep and morning readiness. Complementarity was clearest where teacher-reported inattentiveness was explained by parent-reported late-night chores or transport challenges. In ecological terms, exosystem demands degrade microsystem readiness, which manifests at school as behavioural dysregulation or fatigue.

Social-emotional outcomes

Interviewees noted lower help-seeking, participation, and peer integration among children receiving little encouragement at home. Parents in FGDs especially those who felt alienated from school spaces reported less emotional bandwidth to reinforce perseverance and confidence. Integrating sources suggests a reinforcing loop: weak parental self-efficacy → fewer affirmations and academic check-ins → child's uncertainty in the classroom → avoidance and further withdrawal. This aligns with the mesosystem mechanism in Bronfenbrenner (home messages and school climate jointly shape socio-emotional trajectories) and with Epstein's emphasis on learning at home and two-way communication as protective factors.

Synthesis

Bringing interview evidence (school-side indicators) into dialogue with FGD evidence (home-side narratives) allowed the study to move beyond correlation to plausible

explanatory chains: constraints on parents' time, knowledge, or access → less practice/monitoring → weaker academic/behavioural outcomes. The complementary vantage points thus substantiate the conclusion that disengagement is causally proximal to diminished academic and holistic development in this context.

The fieldwork highlighted clear consequences of parental disengagement. Teachers consistently reported that children whose parents were absent from school activities often had unfinished homework, weaker literacy and numeracy skills, and more classroom disruptions. One teacher remarked: "The children whose parents don't come for meetings usually struggle with behaviour and homework completion." These local observations mirror findings from Gerdes et al. (2022), who documented that disengagement is linked to reduced motivation and attendance, and Bates et al. (2021b), who demonstrated a strong correlation between parental involvement and higher grades. Conversely, Boonk et al. (2018) emphasized that disengaged parents not only affect academic performance but also exacerbate behavioural problems a pattern also reflected in the present study. The Accra findings affirm international evidence that disengagement compromises both cognitive and socio-emotional domains, while highlighting the need for locally tailored responses that address the particular pressures of urban Ghanaian families.

4.4.3 Existing strategies used in the two private basic schools in Accra to enhance parental engagement

Analytic approach and complementarity of data sources

To address Objective 3, the analysis examined how current school strategies were described in interviews (policy, rationale, logistics) and experienced in FGDs (usability, inclusivity, perceived value). Interviews mapped the design intent of

strategies (e.g., why meetings are quarterly, why notices are paper-based; what the school expects parents to do after workshops), while FGDs assessed on-the-ground fit (can parents attend at those times? are notices reaching them? did workshops change practices at home?). The complementarity point is pragmatic: interviews yield supply-side accounts of provision, FGDs yield demand-side evaluations of uptake and barriers. Cross-tabulation of strategy types (meetings, workshops, communication tools, events) with reported accessibility and behavioural follow-through produced an evaluative picture of which strategies are impactful, under-utilized, or misaligned.

Parent–teacher meetings

Interviews: regarded as the primary engagement spine used to review progress, align expectations, and problem-solve. FGDs: valued in principle but often time-incompatible; some parents reported information asymmetry (arrive late, miss key updates), or affective barriers (fear of being judged about fees or performance). Complementarity: the meeting model works for families with flexible schedules; for shift workers, it functions as a gatekeeping device unless alternatives exist. The integrated inference is to retain meetings but add scheduling diversity and alternative channels.

Workshops and parent education

Interviews: intended to build home-support skills (reading at home, numeracy games, behaviour guidance). FGDs: parents appreciated concrete, hands-on sessions but wanted simpler language, translated summaries, and follow-up prompts (e.g., WhatsApp reminders of the same techniques). Complementarity shows content relevance is high, but instructional design and aftercare determine actual uptake.

Communication tools

Interviews: schools depend on paper circulars, class WhatsApp groups (where available), and occasional SMS. FGDs: delivery failures (lost circulars), digital gaps (number changes, data costs), and desire for two-way micro-channels (quick queries, timely reminders). Complementarity indicates that multichannel redundancy and message brevity increase reach; FGDs also suggested evening or weekend digital check-ins.

School events and community-building

Interviews: events create informal touchpoints; FGDs: events foster belonging but can feel performative if detached from learning supports. Integration suggests the most effective events include mini-workshops and classroom showcases that translate to home practices.

Summary of fit

The interview–FGD synthesis indicates existing strategies are directionally sound but require temporal flexibility, linguistic simplification, multichannel communication, and structured follow-up to convert attendance into home-based engagement behaviours. This analysis directly informed the design of new strategies in the next subsection.

Evidence from interviews and FGDs revealed mixed experiences with existing engagement strategies. While administrators highlighted parent–teacher meetings and workshops as their primary interventions, parents expressed frustration that these activities were often scheduled at inconvenient times or lacked practical follow-up. One father explained: “I want to help, but when they call meetings during working hours, I simply cannot attend.” These findings align with Epstein’s (2014) assertion that communication structures are central to effective school–parent partnerships, and with

Boonk et al. (2018), who stressed that workshops must provide practical, accessible tools for parents to be effective. At the same time, they diverge from Kim's (2020) study, which found that schools adopting flexible digital communication methods significantly increased parental participation. The contrast suggests that while private schools in Accra employ familiar strategies, their limited adaptation to parents' lived realities reduces effectiveness. This positions the current findings within the broader literature while also signaling the need for more flexible, context-sensitive approaches.

4.4.4 Recommendations for improving parental engagement in the two private basic schools in Accra

How the two data sources shaped the recommendations

Recommendations were not drafted abstractly; they were co-constructed from (a) interview insights into organisational constraints and (b) FGD reports of parental realities. At each recommendation point, we articulate which corpus led and how the other corpus qualified/refined it i.e., the complementarity juncture that makes the proposal feasible and context-sensitive.

1. Flexible scheduling and modality mixing for core activities.

- *Interviews* revealed staffing and timetable constraints; *FGDs* documented high evening/weekend feasibility and transport constraints.
- **Integration:** Offer staggered meeting times (early morning, late evening, Saturdays), hybrid options (short virtual check-ins), and micro-touchpoints (5-minute phone updates) for families that cannot attend plenaries.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Preserves the school's need for structure while meeting parents' time realities.

2. Multichannel, two-way communication with redundancy.

- *Interviews* described reliance on circulars/WhatsApp; *FGDs* flagged number churn, literacy level, and data costs.
- **Integration:** Use layered messaging (SMS + WhatsApp + hard copy), plain-language summaries, and visuals; maintain an opt-in call-back window for queries.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Aligns school broadcast with parent reception capacity, increasing reach and response.

3. Micro-curriculum for home learning (low-lift, high-yield).

- *Interviews* stressed the need for home reinforcement; *FGDs* requested bite-size guidance and repeated prompts.
- **Integration:** Issue weekly 10-minute routines (e.g., “3 questions after reading,” “number talks at dinner”), with voice notes/videos in class groups; follow with mid-week nudges.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Converts workshops into sustained habits parents can realistically adopt.

4. Culturally responsive parent education with aftercare.

- *Interviews* emphasised workshops; *FGDs* asked for simpler language, translations, and follow-ups.
- **Integration:** Co-design sessions with parent champions; provide take-home cue cards; run follow-up office hours (virtual or in-person).
- **Complementarity payoff:** Increases self-efficacy and retention of practices.

5. Community partners for barrier reduction (transport, materials, counselling).

- *Interviews* acknowledged limits of school budgets; *FGDs* named costs and stress as enduring barriers.
- **Integration:** Partner with local NGOs, churches, alumni associations to support transport stipends, learning kits, and family counselling.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Tackles exosystem barriers beyond school control, consistent with the ecological lens.

6. Parent advisory circles and feedback loops.

- *Interviews* sought constructive parent input; *FGDs* wanted non-judgmental spaces.
- **Integration:** Establish rotating parent advisory circles (5–7 parents/class) to co-review calendars and communications; collect pulse surveys after events to refine formats.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Builds shared ownership, strengthens mesosystem linkages (home–school).

7. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) using joint displays.

- *Interviews* highlighted the need for accountability; *FGDs* asked to “see that feedback matters.”
- **Integration:** Track participation, response rates, and home-practice adoption; use joint displays (simple dashboards) at PTA meetings showing what changed because of parent feedback.
- **Complementarity payoff:** Demonstrates **responsiveness**, sustains engagement.

Theoretical anchoring

These recommendations operationalise Epstein’s six types of involvement (communication, parenting, learning at home, decision-making, volunteering, collaborating with the community) and enact Bronfenbrenner’s multi-layer strategy (addressing exosystem constraints, strengthening mesosystem coordination, and improving microsystem routines). Importantly, the proposals originated where

interview-derived feasibility met FGD-derived acceptability the precise complementarity that increases the likelihood of durable implementation.

The recommendations proposed by participants centered on flexible meeting schedules, digital communication platforms, and stronger community partnerships to support families facing financial or logistical barriers. Parents in FGDs particularly emphasized the value of weekend meetings and WhatsApp-based updates as more practical engagement tools. These suggestions align with Kim (2020), who found that technology-mediated communication bridges gaps for busy or low-income parents, and with Boonk et al. (2018), who argued that targeted workshops empower parents to engage more confidently in their children's learning. They also resonate with Murphy and Risser's (2022) call for school environments that are inclusive and culturally responsive. However, unlike studies in Western contexts that emphasize volunteering and decision-making (Epstein, 2014), parents in this study prioritized flexibility and support over leadership roles, reflecting the unique socioeconomic and cultural context of Accra. Thus, while the recommendations are rooted in global best practices, they are firmly tailored to the realities of Ghanaian urban private schools.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter reported how raw qualitative data were transformed into credible findings and interpreted in light of the study's objectives and theoretical anchors. First, the analytic pathway was made explicit: verbatim transcripts from semi-structured interviews (administrators and teachers) and focus group discussions (parents and teachers) were subjected to iterative open, axial, and selective coding, yielding clearly defined codes → sub-themes → themes that aligned with the study's conceptual frame. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation of data sources and methods,

member checking, peer debriefing, a documented audit trail, and sustained reflexivity, thereby strengthening the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the results.

Substantively, the analysis identified a multidimensional set of reasons for parental disengagement notably demanding work schedules, socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs about educational authority, and limited parental educational background each operating across ecological levels and shaping the home–school interface. The chapter then demonstrated the effects of disengagement on academic and holistic outcomes (achievement, attendance, behaviour, and socio-emotional wellbeing), explaining plausible mechanisms by linking school-side indicators with home-context narratives. Existing school strategies (parent–teacher meetings, workshops, communication tools, school events) were found to be directionally appropriate but variably effective, often constrained by temporal misalignment, communication gaps, and limited after-care supports. Building on the complementary insights from interviews (institutional intent/feasibility) and FGDs (family-side acceptability), the chapter proposed context-sensitive improvements: flexible scheduling and hybrid modalities, multichannel two-way communication with redundancy, bite-size home-learning routines, culturally responsive parent education with follow-ups, community partnerships to reduce structural barriers, parent advisory circles, and simple monitoring dashboards to close feedback loops. Throughout, Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein’s Model of Overlapping Spheres provided interpretive scaffolds linking individual experiences to institutional practices and broader contextual forces.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study investigated school–parent partnerships and their impact on student learning in two private basic schools St. Theresa School at Kaneshie and Bishop Bowers School at Lartebiokorshie in the Greater Accra of Ghana. It was premised on the growing recognition that parental involvement is a crucial determinant of students’ academic success and holistic development, yet evidence suggests persistent challenges of parental disengagement in urban private schools. To frame the analysis, the study adopted Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein’s Model of Overlapping Spheres of Influence, enabling a multi-layered understanding of how contextual, cultural, and institutional factors interact to shape parental engagement.

The research was guided by four objectives:

1. To investigate the reasons for parental disengagement in two private basic schools in Accra.
2. To examine the effects of parental disengagement on students’ academic performance and holistic development.
3. To analyze existing strategies employed by schools to enhance parental engagement.
4. To propose innovative strategies for improving parental engagement in private basic schools.

A qualitative case study design was employed, drawing on semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators. Findings revealed a complex web of socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs, and structural barriers that undermine consistent parental involvement. The study also showed that

disengagement negatively influences academic performance, behaviour, and social-emotional outcomes. While existing strategies such as parent–teacher meetings and workshops exist, their effectiveness is limited. Emerging evidence suggested the potential of technology-driven, flexible, and culturally responsive strategies to foster stronger partnerships.

5.1 Key Findings of the Study

The study’s findings are summarized below and further organized into themes and sub-themes (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Themes and Sub-Themes of Findings

Themes	Sub-Themes	Findings
Reasons for Parental Disengagement	Socioeconomic constraints	Financial pressures, long work hours, and survival priorities limit parental time and energy for school involvement.
	Cultural beliefs & practices	Parents defer to teachers as sole custodians of knowledge; traditional gender roles restrict involvement.
	Lack of awareness & educational background	Parents with limited education feel inadequate to engage in school activities.
Effects of Disengagement	Communication barriers	Weak school–home communication structures discourage parents.
	Academic performance	Students of disengaged parents show lower grades, inconsistent homework, and reduced participation.

	Behavioural development	Increased truancy, disruptive behaviour, and poor discipline.
	Emotional/social development	Low self-esteem, limited resilience, and weaker peer/teacher relationships.
Existing Strategies	Parent–teacher meetings	Valuable but poorly attended due to scheduling conflicts.
	Workshops and seminars	Effective but underutilized due to lack of resources.
	Communication tools	Limited use of newsletters, WhatsApp, and calls, often one-way rather than interactive.
Innovative Strategies Proposed	Technology-based engagement	Educational apps, online platforms, and virtual meetings to bridge communication.
	Flexible participation	Weekend/after-hours meetings; voluntary activities at home.
	Culturally responsive practices	Multilingual communication, integration of cultural events, inclusivity.
	Community partnerships	Collaboration with local businesses, NGOs, and faith-based organizations.

5.2 Conclusions

The conclusions are numbered to align with the four research objectives.

5.2.1 Conclusion on reasons for parental disengagement (Objective 1)

The study concluded that parental disengagement in private basic schools in Accra is primarily driven by socioeconomic hardships, demanding work schedules, and cultural

perceptions that minimize the parental role in academic matters. Limited educational backgrounds and communication gaps further exacerbate disengagement. These findings suggest disengagement is not rooted in apathy but in systemic, contextual, and perceptual constraints.

5.2.2 Conclusion on effects of parental disengagement (Objective 2)

Disengagement has far-reaching negative implications. Students whose parents are less engaged face lower academic performance, behavioural challenges, and diminished social-emotional wellbeing. The absence of parental reinforcement at home undermines teacher efforts and deprives students of consistent support systems necessary for holistic development.

5.2.3 Conclusion on existing strategies (Objective 3)

Although schools implement traditional strategies such as parent–teacher meetings and workshops, their effectiveness is hindered by logistical barriers, poor attendance, and limited inclusivity. These findings conclude that current efforts are insufficient and inadequately tailored to the lived realities of parents in Accra’s private schools.

5.2.4 Conclusion on innovative strategies (Objective 4)

Innovative strategies such as leveraging technology, offering flexible engagement opportunities, and embedding culturally responsive practices hold significant promise for strengthening school–parent partnerships. The study concludes that future approaches must be multi-dimensional, contextually relevant, and adaptive to socioeconomic and cultural conditions.

5.3 Implications of the Study

5.3.1 Theoretical implications

The findings reinforce Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory by showing how parental disengagement is shaped not only by family-level dynamics (microsystem) but also by exosystemic factors such as workplaces and macrosystemic cultural beliefs. Similarly, the study confirms Epstein's model by demonstrating that disengagement disrupts multiple spheres of influence parenting, communication, and decision-making highlighting the importance of overlapping efforts for student success.

5.3.2 Policy implications

The study reveals an urgent need for policy frameworks that support parental involvement. Education authorities and private school owners must create policies that require structured parental engagement, support family-friendly work environments, and encourage schools to develop inclusive communication systems.

5.3.3 Practical implications

Practically, schools must prioritize building welcoming environments, adopt technological tools, and establish support programmes that empower parents. This study provides evidence that practical interventions such as flexible scheduling, multilingual communication, and parent advisory committees can significantly enhance parental participation.

5.4 Recommendations

Recommendations are numbered to reflect conclusions and linked directly to objectives.

5.4.1 Recommendations on reasons for disengagement

1. Schools should establish parent sensitization programmes to demystify cultural beliefs and emphasize the value of active parental roles.

2. Provide financial literacy and empowerment workshops in collaboration with NGOs to support low-income parents.
3. Strengthen communication structures by developing interactive two-way channels, such as school apps and WhatsApp groups.

5.4.2 Recommendations on effects of disengagement (linked to Conclusion 5.2.2)

4. Schools should implement mentorship and counselling programmes that provide additional support for students of disengaged parents.
5. Encourage regular teacher–parent feedback loops to monitor academic and behavioural progress.
6. Design school-based extracurricular activities where both parents and students participate, enhancing social-emotional development.

5.4.3 Recommendations on existing strategies (linked to Conclusion 5.2.3)

7. Reorganize parent–teacher meetings into more flexible schedules, including weekend and evening options.
8. Provide resource support (childcare, transportation) to increase workshop participation.
9. Revise communication strategies to ensure inclusivity, translating key materials into local languages.

5.4.4 Recommendations on innovative strategies (linked to Conclusion 5.2.4)

10. Adopt technology-driven systems (e.g., apps, SMS alerts, digital platforms) for academic updates
11. Implement flexible volunteering opportunities, allowing parents to support school activities remotely or at times convenient to them.

12. Strengthen community-school partnerships by collaborating with businesses and religious organizations to sustain parental engagement initiatives.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

1. Future studies should expand the sample beyond two private schools to include government schools for comparative insights.
2. Quantitative approaches could be integrated to measure the strength of relationships between parental engagement and specific academic outcomes.
3. Longitudinal research is recommended to track the impact of evolving engagement strategies over time.
4. Research could explore the role of digital technology adoption in bridging gaps in school–parent partnerships, particularly post-COVID-19.

5.6 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge in several ways:

1. It provides context-specific evidence on parental disengagement in urban Ghanaian private schools, an area underexplored in literature.
2. It applies and extends Bronfenbrenner’s theory and Epstein’s model in an African educational context, showing how global theories translate into local realities.
3. It develops a framework of barriers and strategies that can guide both policy and practice in Ghana and similar contexts.
4. It highlights the importance of culturally responsive practices and flexible approaches as central to fostering school–parent partnerships.

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive synthesis of the study's major findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations, structured in alignment with the four research objectives. It began with a summary of the entire study, which reiterated the rationale for examining school–parent partnerships in private basic schools in Accra, Ghana, highlighting the urgency of addressing parental disengagement and its implications for student learning outcomes. The summary emphasized that parental engagement is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by socioeconomic, cultural, and institutional dynamics, and that improving student outcomes requires deliberate and inclusive efforts to foster stronger school–home collaboration.

The chapter then presented the key findings in a systematic, numbered format, ensuring clarity and coherence. These findings revealed the reasons for parental disengagement, including socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs, and communication barriers; the negative effects of disengagement on students' academic, behavioural, and social-emotional outcomes; the limited effectiveness of existing strategies such as parent–teacher meetings and workshops; and the potential of innovative approaches such as technology integration, flexible participation opportunities, and culturally responsive practices. By presenting these findings clearly, the study demonstrated how its results contribute to both local understanding and the broader scholarly conversation on parental involvement. Following the findings, the conclusions were drawn in direct correspondence with each of the four objectives, avoiding ambiguity and ensuring alignment with the research design. The conclusions reinforced that disengagement is not a result of indifference but rather a consequence of systemic barriers, that its effects are multidimensional, and that sustainable solutions must be tailored to local realities.

The implications of the study were presented across three domains: theory, policy, and practice. The theoretical implications situated the findings within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement, illustrating how global frameworks can illuminate local educational challenges. The policy implications stressed the need for structured guidelines and institutional support for parental involvement, while the practical implications pointed to strategies schools can adopt, such as adopting digital tools, flexible scheduling, and inclusive communication practices.

In addition, the chapter offered recommendations that were numbered to mirror the conclusions, ensuring logical flow. These recommendations provided actionable steps for schools, policymakers, and communities, making the research both academically rigorous and practically useful. Finally, the chapter identified future research directions including comparative studies with public schools, longitudinal designs, and digital innovations and articulated the contributions to knowledge, such as context-specific insights into Ghanaian private schools and the extension of theoretical frameworks to African educational contexts.

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EACH GROUP

Parents Group

Introduction (10 minutes)

- The facilitator introduces the study, its purpose, and the significance of parents' contributions.
- Assures confidentiality and anonymity.

Setting the Tone (5 minutes)

- Warm-up question: "How long have you been associated with this school?"
- Encourages open and honest responses, highlighting the importance of every perspective

Objective 1: Factors Contributing to Parental Disengagement (15 minutes)

- "Can you share any personal or external factors that have affected your involvement in your child's education?"

Objective 2: Impact of Parental Disengagement on Students (15 minutes)

- "How do you think your level of engagement impacts your child's learning and overall development?"

Objective 4: Proposing New Strategies for Parental Engagement (20 minutes)

- "What are some innovative ways you think the school could better engage parents?"

Closing (10 minutes)

- Summarise key points, thank participants, and explain the next steps.

Teachers Group

Introduction (10 minutes)

- The facilitator introduces the study, its purpose, and the significance of parents' contributions.
- Assures confidentiality and anonymity.

Setting the Tone (5 minutes)

- A warm-up question to ease participants into the discussion.
- Stresses the importance of open dialogue

Objective 1: Factors Contributing to Parental Disengagement (15 minutes)

- “From your perspective, what are the key reasons behind parents not engaging actively in their children’s education?”

Objective 2: Impact of Parental Disengagement on Students (15 minutes)

- “Have you observed any specific effects on students when their parents are less involved in their education?”

Objective 3: Existing Strategies and Interventions (15 minutes)

- “What methods are in place at your school for involving parents in the educational process?”

Objective 4: Proposing New Strategies for Parental Engagement (20 minutes)

- “Considering your experience and the context of your school, what new strategies do you suggest to enhance parental engagement?”

Closing (10 minutes)

- Recap the discussion, express gratitude, and discuss next

School Administrators Group

Introduction (10 minutes)

- The facilitator introduces the study, its purpose, and the critical role of administrators.
- Assures confidentiality and anonymity.

Setting the Tone (5 minutes)

- An initial question to relax participants.
- Emphasises the value of diverse viewpoints.

Objective 1: Factors Contributing to Parental Disengagement (15 minutes)

Objective 2: Impact of Parental Disengagement on Students (15 minutes)

- “Have you observed any specific effects on students when their parents are less involved in their education?”

Objective 3: Existing Strategies and Interventions (15 minutes)

- “What methods are in place at your school for involving parents in the educational process?”

Objective 4: Proposing New Strategies for Parental Engagement (20 minutes)

- “What new strategies do you suggest to enhance parental engagement, based on your experience and the school’s context?”

Closing (10 minutes)

Summary of discussions, appreciation for contributions, and explanation of follow-up.

FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE: PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT STUDY

Facilitator: [Facilitator's Name]

Purpose: To explore factors affecting parental engagement in education and identify strategies for improvement.

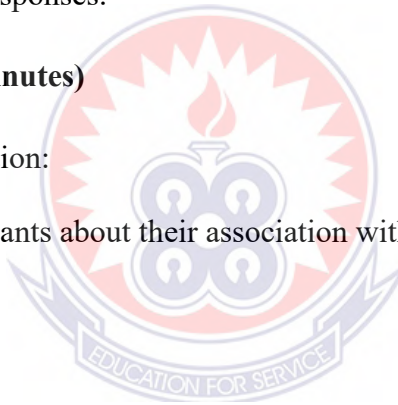
Introduction (10 minutes)

Facilitator's introduction

- Introduce yourself and your role.
- Outline the purpose and significance of the study.
- Highlight the value of participants' contributions. Assure confidentiality and anonymity of responses.

Setting the Tone (5 minutes)

- Warm-up Question:
 - Ask participants about their association with the school to ease into the discussion.
- Ground Rules:
 - Emphasise the importance of honest and open responses.
 - Clarify that all perspectives are valid.



Discussion Segments

Objective 1: Factors Contributing to Parental Disengagement (15 minutes)

- **Parents Group:**
 - Discuss personal or external factors affecting involvement in a child's education.
- **Teachers Group:**

- o Explore perceived reasons behind parental disengagement from their perspective.

Objective 2: Impact of Parental Disengagement on Students (15 minutes).

- **Parents Group:**
 - o Reflect on how their engagement level affects their child's learning and development.
- **Teachers Group:**
 - o Share observations on the effects of parental disengagement on students.

Objective 3: Existing Strategies and Interventions (15 minutes).

- **Administrators Group:**
 - o Describe current strategies to foster parental engagement
- **Teachers Group:**
 - o Discuss existing methods for involving parents in the educational process

Objective 4: Proposing New Strategies for Parental Engagement (20 minutes).

- **Parents Group:**
 - o Suggest innovative ways for the school to engage parents.
- **Parents and Administrators Group:**
 - o Propose new strategies to enhance parental engagement based on experience and context.

Probing and Follow-Up Questions (10 minutes)

- Engage with open-ended and follow-up questions for deeper insights.

Closing the Interview (10 minutes)

- Summary:
 - o Recapitulate key points discussed.
 - o Open the floor for any additional comments or insights.
- Summary and Next Steps:
 - o Express gratitude for participation.
 - o Explain how the findings will be used and how participants can access them

Total Duration: Approx. 1 hour 40 minutes.

