

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENTS TO THE  
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION OF EARLY GRADE  
LEARNERS IN SOME SELECTED SCHOOLS IN  
BOLGATANGA- EAST DISTRICT**



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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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AND EDUCATION OF EARLY GRADE LEARNERS IN SOME SELECTED  
SCHOOLS IN BOLGATANGA- EAST DISTRICT**



**A dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood Education,  
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of  
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**of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Education  
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**JUNE, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I, **Akazabre Belinda** , declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

**Signature:**.....

**Date:**.....

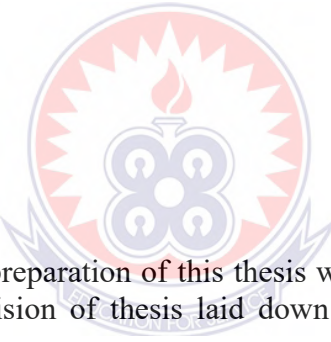
### Supervisor's Declaration

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

**Supervisor's Name: Dr. Hinneh Kusi**

**Signature:**.....

**Date:**.....



## DEDICATION

To my mother, Agambibsibono , my son Maximus Hansel Yintiib, my husband Patrick Nazor Piameng, and my best friend Millicent Atafu and Mr. and Mrs Peter Benim+ Director Benim Preparatoy Academy Bolgatanga .



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## ABSTRACT

The study sought to gain greater understanding of parental involvement by examining the specific aspects of parents' involvement that impact of learners and identifying the different effects of parent involvement. The study adopted the Ecological Systems Theory, Social Capital Theory, Epstein's Conceptual Model and Cultural Capital Theory and Attrition Theory as its theoretical framework. Pragmatism philosophical paradigm, mixed method approach and a concurrent triangulation design were used for this research. The target population for the study was all teachers and parents in Bolgatanga East District. The simple random sampling was used to select 75 teachers while purposive sampling was used to select 6 parents. Interview guide and questionnaires were used to collect data. The data from questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics whereas qualitative content analysis was also employed to analyse the interview data. The study found that Parents of pupils in Bolgatanga East District perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include: monitoring of children's progress, communicating children's conditions with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children. Parental involvement influences the academic performance and practical skills of their children. Identifiable school constraints and attitudinal barriers are major influencers of parental involvement in the education of their children. The study revealed that effective parent-teacher collaboration and parental education would enhance parental involvement. The study recommended that parents should continue to play their roles effectively, such as visiting the school to find out the progress of their children, including challenges and prospects. Parental involvement has proved to promote the academic performance of the learners. For this reason; parents should understand that they are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued. It is also recommended that the school authorities should consider parents' views in all important management decisions concerning the school and the wellbeing of the pupils. This would make them more involve in the activities of the school and in the education of their children. Meetings, seminars and workshops should be conducted for parents to facilitate parental involvement

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Background to the study**

Schools alone cannot address all the child's developmental needs. The meaningful involvement of parents and support from the community are essential. The government introduced the two years compulsory kindergarten education in 2007 and it was subsequently included as part of the main stream education in 2012, but the quality of the education the children received and the facilities as well as opportunities available for children to succeed continued to suffer. The 2015 Early Grade Literacy and Mathematics Assessment (Ghana Education Service 2015) revealed that by the second year of primary school, the majority of Ghanaian students were still unable to read fluently and accurately, and that after four years of compulsory education (two years of kindergarten and two years of primary school), only 2% of students met the required requirements, lack of parental involvement was cited as one of the causes.

The emphasis and focus on education has increased over the years, but there is still a prominent and ever-present achievement gap in our educational system between students and their peers. Research and literature have suggested that educational achievement has remained inequitable for a variety of reasons, one of which is the lack of parental involvement in their students' academic performance (Larocque, Kleiman & Darling, 2011).

The government of Ghana introduced two-years compulsory kindergarten education in 2007 and it was subsequently included as part of the main stream education in

2012. This was as a result of a Government White Paper that was released to redefine the initial nine-year Basic Education programme to include two years of kindergarten (KG) education making it eleven years of basic school education so as to promote proper management and transition of the learner. Enrolment levels since then has hugely increased, but the quality of the education the children received and the facilities as well as opportunities available for children to succeed continued to suffer. The 2015 Early Grade Literacy and Mathematics Assessment (Ghana Education Service 2015) revealed that by the second year of primary school, the majority of Ghanaian students were still unable to read fluently and accurately, and that after four years of compulsory education (two years of kindergarten and two years of primary school), only 2% of students met the required requirements, lack of parental involvement was cited as one of the causes.

Wilder (2014) reported that parental involvement was found to be one among the factors affecting student achievement. Several researches have indicated the significance of parental involvement which begins at early childhood throughout adolescence and beyond. Policy makers and educators continue to study the influence of parental-school collaboration as a method of improving educational success and socially accepted behaviour for children. Their findings suggest a positive outcome for children whose parents are involved or participate in their learning process. Parental participation in young children's education is a significant step towards positive learning outcome for children. It is a family involvement process that includes the attitudes, values and practices of parents in raising young children, nurturing warm, and responsive parent-child relationships in child-centered activities related to positive learning outcomes in early childhood.

Parental involvement can take on many forms and is seen as an effective strategy to enhance student success, as evidenced in studies done on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance in students (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Globally, parent involvement is a concern that has been researched extensively. However, the focus of this research has been narrowed down to parent involvement in early grade learners and the values placed on academics and development in the early years of education and how it affects student achievement.

Research indicates that parental involvement is an effective strategy to ensure student success (Barnard, 2004; Desimone, 1999; Hill & Craft, 2003; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Parental involvement has many positive effects on students other than academics, including increased motivation, self-esteem, and self-reliance, which may lead to academic success regardless of economic background. Conversely, research affirms that inadequate or no parental involvement contributes to low student achievement and engagement (Bower & Griffin, 2011). In essence, parents, siblings, and other significant relatives can create rich learning environments to enhance children's academic development.

Traditional forms of parent involvement include participating in school activities (e.g., Parent Teacher Associations [PTA]), back-to-school nights, open houses, parent-teacher conferences, or volunteering at the school. According to Bower and Griffin (2011), "Parental involvement through activities such as providing nurturance to their children, instilling cultural values, and talking with their children, do not align with traditional forms of parental involvement as defined by school".

Many researchers recognise the important role that strong positive bond between homes and schools, play in the development and education of children (Edwards &

Allred, 2000; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Richardson, 2009; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009).

Research has also shown that successful students' have strong academic support from their involved parents (Sheldon, 2009). Furthermore, research on effective schools, those where students are learning and achieving, has consistently shown that these schools despite often working in low social and economic neighbourhoods, have strong and positive school-home relationships (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009). More importantly, these effective schools with positive school climate, have made a real effort in reaching out to their students' families in order to bring about good cooperation. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) maintain that schools become successful when a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community has been established. All students' are more likely to experience academic success if their home environment is supportive (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009).

Epstein (2001, 2009) alleges that there are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership between school, family and community. The main reason for such a partnership is to aid students in succeeding at school. Other reasons include improving school climate and school programs, developing parental skills and leadership, assisting families in connecting with others in the school and the community, and assisting teachers with their work. All these reasons emphasise the importance of parents playing an active role in their children's education and keeping a strong and positive relationship with schools.

Parental involvement "has been operationally defined as parental aspirations for their children's academic achievement, parents' communication with their children about

education and school matters, parents' participation in school activities, parents communication with teachers about their children, and parental supervision at home" (Fan, 2011, p. 29).

Parental involvement can be defined in different ways. In this study, parental involvement includes parents' at-home interest, support and engagement such as communication about the expectations parents have from their children, support with the studies and homework, providing advice and encouragement and communicating with the teachers and with the children about their schoolwork (Skaliotis, 2009). Parents' involvement encompasses a range of actions and beliefs concerning sending a child to school and supporting the child's out-of-school learning through advocating on behalf of the child, communicating with the school staff and maintaining a presence in the school (Epstein, 1992).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Teachers and parents are the two key stakeholders in the overall development of children and they both need to be aware of the importance of parental involvement in children's learning. Therefore, it requires a two-way communication to create support for children's learning in and out of school. Teachers need to have awareness of the knowledge children bring to the class from home and other settings and the support they get out of school. However, in Ghanaian context, communication on parental role in learning and teachers' involvement of parent is very limited.

The researcher through her role as a teacher, head teacher, and coordinator have noticed that there exist a gap in the involvements of parents in school activities.

The No Child Left behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) mandated that schools close the student achievement gap by placing a high demand

on parental involvement. Lack of communication hinders parent participation in schools. Factors that contribute to this lack of communication include the inability to speak, read, and understand English in an academic or personal school setting and the belief of parents that they are overstepping their boundaries by questioning authorities or upholding the rights of their children in schools (Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008).

For example, some school sites do not have systems in place that promote parental involvement as an “invaluable asset” for student achievement. In addition, research suggests that schools often struggle with effectively involving parents in promoting their children’s achievement (e.g., limited bilingual staff, correspondences, newsletters, school calendars, lunch menus not written in the spoken language), which results in minimal communication with parents (Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008).

According to Dohner-Chávez, (2006), “Aside from ethnicity or economic background, parental involvement in a child’s education has a profound effect on academic success”. The need for adequate guidelines, strategies, and techniques to involve parents in school is crucial and should be a priority of any administrator. If public school educators want parents to assume more responsibility, schools need to take proactive approaches that identify solutions to remove barriers to parental involvement. (Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008). Parents are an important asset to improving academic achievement, and they should be given the tools necessary to be active in their children’s schools. There is not known much research on parents involvements in the development and education of their wards at the Early grade level at Bolgatanga East District, hence the need for this research.

Over the years, various studies have been done in the field of academia on child education and the involvement of their parents. Example, Mahmood’s (2013) research focused on the relationship between parents and preschool teachers in New Zealand.



This research covered the points of view of 14 new preschool teachers concerning their relationships with parents and the challenges that the teachers encountered during their first year. However, this research does not cover the parents' points of view as well, which is a gap that my research will cover. Because the teachers in Mahmood's (2013) study had only six to seven months of experience, this research lacked follow-up interviews after several years of their work as teachers. In addition, there was no indication as to whether the problems that the teachers mentioned in working with parents, such as conflicts with parents, cultural differences, and communication difficulty, were related to lack of experience or not. This study did not cover the differences and similarities between new and experienced teachers' problems working with parents.

Ramirez (2003) studied Latino immigrant parents regarding their children's schools. This research focused on three problems that prevent Latino immigrant parents from getting involved in their children's education, which are communication, expectations, and accountability. Concerning communication problems, Latino immigrant parents mentioned a lack of communication from the school, such as not being provided with language support for them as Spanish speakers. Another problem identified was expectations. Many Latino parents stated that teachers expected lower performance from their students compared to students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. The last problem that the Ramirez (2003) study mentioned was accountability. For example, parents mentioned that teachers in Mexico were more accountable toward parents and parents usually did not see their children's homework until the end of the school year.

However, this research focused only on Latino immigrant parents and used only interviews to collect data, while this research focuses on parents of wards in Zuarungu from different cultures in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of study was to examine the influence of parental involvement in the development in children's education at the Early Grade level.

#### **Objectives of the study**

The following objectives were to:

1. identify forms of parents involvement in the development and education of their early grade learners
2. identify inherent factors influencing parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners
3. find out what mechanisms can be put in place to enhance effective parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners

#### **1.5 Research questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent do the parents involve themselves in the development and education of early grade learners?
2. What inherent factors influence parental involvement in the development and education of their wards at the early grade level?
3. What are the mechanisms that could be put in place to enhance effective parental involvement in the development and education of their wards at the early grade level?

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study is significant as it offers additional research that may indicate student achievement is directly correlated to parental involvement. In turn, academic achievement may serve to motivate parents and families to continue or become more involved in school activities. Parents, students, and educators can use these findings to develop programs and strategies to increase parental involvement in schools.

This study would help to find out the influence of parents involvements to the development and education of early grade learners in Bolga East District of the upper east region and Ghana as a whole. This would enable the schools to explore suitable means of including all parents in the teaching and learning process.

The broad goal of early childhood education policy of Ghana is to create a systematic accountable frame work to strengthen the sub sector for efficient and effective Kg service delivery to improve equitable access and quality education for all four to five years olds. Specifically the policy goals include among others, ensuring families and communities are actively engage in their children early childhood education and so this study will enable families and communities understand the relevance of Kg and play their roles in their child's education. In addition, the results of the study would reveal how parental involvement in the education of their wards affects teaching and learning of students. Besides, the findings will enable teachers to identify the benefits of parental involvement in the education of their wards. The findings would also enable the teachers to find ways of eliminating any barrier inherent with parental involvements in the education of their wards.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the study**

The study is delimited to only Bolgatanga East District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. It was also delimited to only six basic schools in the Bolgatanga East District. The study was delimited to some selected teachers and parents of the three circuits in the bolgatanga east district to identify some forms and benefits , of parents involvement in the development and education of their wards, and to also identify the barriers that impedes parents involvement and the strategies that could be put in place to encourage a more meaningful parents involvement to the developments of early childhood centers.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

Access to information from some respondents was difficult; interviews were scheduled and were cancelled by the some respondents a couple of time, the researcher persisted and persuaded the respondents until the interviews were conducted.

Also, some respondents failed to respond to their questionnaires and return same to the researcher, the researcher had to look for other respondents within the population to administer the questionnaires. Fourteen respondents at a time opted out of the study, the researcher approached them again for discussion on the importance of the study and got six back into the study. Time was a restrain to this study, during school holidays most of the respondents were not available for interviews, the researcher had to wait for school to resume to be able to get the respondents.

## 1.8 Definition of key terms

Parental involvement-	The participation of parents in school events or activities, and teachers provide learning resources or information to achieve learning goals or impact children's academic performance.
Children-	They are young human beings who are yet to attain the status of adulthood, thus, under 18 years.
Learner-	Children who are attending kindergarten schools.
Learning outcome-	The academic performance of children or the extent to which children attain their educational goals.
Preschool-	School for children usually younger than the school going age.
Kindergarten (KG) -	It is a learning programme that seeks to build in children social and academic skills and prepare them for transition into primary schools through developmentally appropriate practices. It is usually for children from 4 to 6 years.
Academic performance-	The extent to which children achieve learning goals.
Literacy-	The intelligence and abilities that serve as a basis for reading and writing
Communication -	Interactions that take place between the school and parents relating to children's academic performance and development.

Influence- The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or the effect itself.

### **1.9 Organization of the study**

The study was arranged in five (5) chapters. Chapter one was the introduction which deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. Delimitation, limitation of the study and operational definition of terms are all part of chapter one. Chapter Two covered the review of literature, which mostly dealt with the writing of scholarly works in earlier studies conducted on the topic. Chapter Three discussed the methodology and dealt with issues such as the philosophy, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments for data collection, data collection procedure and data analysis. The results and discussion were focused on the Chapter Four. Chapter five summarized the findings drew conclusion, gave recommendations and provided Suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The following literature review will discuss research findings pertaining to parent involvement in pre-kindergarten, the benefits of parent involvement during this time, as well as barriers that hinder parent involvement in early childhood. The purpose of this study is to investigate how parents' involvement affects student achievement and academic success in Early Grade Learners. It is hypothesized that parents who display higher levels of involvement will have children that perform better academically.

The literature is reviewed under the following headings

- Theoretical framework of the study.
- The concept of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.
- Importance of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.
- Forms of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.
- Benefits of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.
- Barriers to parents' involvements to the development and education of early grade learners.
- Strategies of improving parental involvements in the development and education of the early grade learner.

## 2.1 Theoretical framework of the study

The theory that guided this study was the Epstein's topology of Parent involvement and other theories on child development. Epstein's theory of parental involvement has supported the meaning of parent involvement and identified the premise stating that parent involvement should go beyond school and home, inviting a partnership between homes, schools and communities (Wright, 2009)

In the 1980s Epstein developed theoretical model to explain parent involvement (1996; 214) underlying this, Epstein (1996; 121) identified three perspective which guide researchers and practitioners in their thinking about family and school relations.

The three guiding perspectives of family school relations or family-school relations enumerated by Epstein (1987b:121) include:

- Separate responsibilities of families and schools;
- Shared responsibilities of families and schools;
- Sequential responsibilities of families and schools.

Assumptions based on the separate responsibilities of institutions emphasized the inherent incompatibility, competition and conflict between families and schools.

It assumes that school bureaucracies and family organizations are directed by educators and parents respectively, who can best fulfilled their different goals, roles and responsibilities independently (Epstein 1987: 121).

The opposing assumptions based on shared responsibilities of the school and the home, emphasis the coordination, cooperation and complementarity, of schools and families, and encourages communication and collaboration between the two institutions (Epstein 1987b:121). It assumes that schools and families share



responsibilities for the socialization of the child. Educators and parents are believed to share common goals for children that are achieved most effectively when parents and educators work together.

Finally, according to the third perspective, the sequential perspective, the critical stages of parent's and educators' contribution to child development are emphasized (Epstein 1987b).

Parents teach needed skills to children until the time of their formal education around the ages of five or six. At that time educators assume primary responsibilities for children's education. These major theoretical perspective explain the basic difference in family and school relations.

The perspective on family- school relations do not, however, explain or remove boundaries between schools and families, nor the changing patterns in home -school relations. They also fail to explain the influence families and school have on each other or to take cognizance of students' development and the effect thereof on home-school relations.

From the above the Epstein's theory best explains the concept of parental involvement in the development and education of their wards hence using it as a theory guiding and backing this literature review.

## **2.2 The concept of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.**

Parental involvement like many other concepts is exposed to varied definitions. Reynolds and Clements (2005), consider parental involvement as parental behavior with, or on behalf of children, at home or at school. The purpose is to help shape the future of children. Another definition is one by Ho and Willms (1996) they are of the

view that parental involvement goes through four constructs - home discussion, home supervision, school communication and school participation. All the four constructs are activities meant to support children's learning. Mendez, & Downer (2007) have also considered parental involvement as participating in children's education through communication or behaviors. In another sense, Huang, & Mason (2008) have defined parental involvement as activities, attitudes, and behaviors from parents towards their children's education, which contribute to improving students' performance. Parents can take part in children's learning by helping them in school selection, engaging in school governance and decision-making, involvement in teaching and learning activities in the classroom and at home and ensuring effective communication between home and school. Parental involvement can also be said to be the extent to which parents participate in the child's education and school.

Some parents are more than willing to get involved by volunteering to help in their child's classroom learning activities, maintain effective communication with their child's teachers, helping children in with homework, and also enquiring about their child's academic strengths and weaknesses and making efforts in complementing teachers work in improving those weaknesses. The case is different for other parents who unfortunately do not get themselves directly involved in their children's learning process. So many schools in Ghana have programs intended at increasing parental involvement these include; PTA, SMC, SPAM, games and sports, home activities, and assorted opportunities for volunteers.

The significance of parental involvement in early childhood education is that it provides strong learning foundation for higher educational grades. This does not only help meet the children's needs for education, but also supporting children's development (Kocyigita, 2015). Some special benefits of parental involvement at a

preschool level are improvement in reading level and students showing improvement in their understanding, which allows them to move to the next level (Huang, & Mason, 2008). Academic achievement in subsequent school grades is determined during preschool (Kocyigita, 2015).

### **2.3 The importance of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners.**

(Fan & Chen, 2001; Okeke, 2014; Yoder & Lopez, 2013) indicated that much more research exists on the importance of parental involvement in the education of children in order to achieve academic excellence. These studies are not only in terms of academic achievement of children, but also in terms of cognitive, physical and social development of children and also of its immense benefit to parents and teachers. Nevski & Siibak, 2016, indicated that parental engagement in their child's schooling not only helps parents and teachers better understand their children and improve teaching, (Pineda et al., 2018), but it also helps parents and teachers better understand their children. The following are the vies of some researchers on the benefits of parental involvement; Silinskas & Kikas, 2019 indicated that it help students have better performance and motivate students, Mata et al., 2018 also said that it help parents increase their interaction and discussion with their children and are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, and intellectual developmental needs at home and in the school; according to Mata et al., 2018 it offer opportunities for parents and teachers to create mutual respect and understanding (e.g., attending school meetings, supporting school events, talking to teachers or volunteering at the school, help parents and teachers build a good relationship so that parents can have a better understanding of the teacher's job and school curriculum (Epstein, 2018; Owen, 2016); and Epstein, 2018 also believe that it help teachers

acquire a better understanding of families' cultures and diversity, and form deeper respect for parents' abilities and time.

Since infants spend much more time with their parents than with anyone else, teachers may gain a greater understanding of them by incorporating parental participation or involvement. Parents are their children's first teachers, and they continue to be involved in their education and general development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) found that students' achievement was often influenced by their lives outside of school, emphasizing the value of parental involvement. Therefore, what parents do towards their children can have a significant impact on their lives. Hill and Craft (2003) claim that increased parental involvement leads to increased social competence in adolescents, while Brody, Flor, and Gibson (1999) discovered that it led to increased social skills and the ability for students to control and self-regulate their own behaviors. Furthermore, many studies on parental participation have consistently been linked to improved language learning and skills that promote academic performance in early childhood, according to studies (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Early parental engagement has also been linked to improved reading and math scores, reduced absenteeism, and less behavioral concerns in students (Hiatt-Michael, 2001). Larocque, Kleiman & Darling, 2011, said that parents benefit from participation in school as well; they become more conscious of their children's educational needs, build more supportive relationships and attitudes toward teachers, and pursue higher educational opportunities for their children. Since the demand for parental transparency in the field of education is higher than ever, it is important that schools and families share responsibility and form alliances in order to ensure that every child succeeds (Hill & Taylor, 2004). A study conducted by Mahoney and Wiggers (2007) outlined several major reasons why it is incumbent on parents to play a more active

role in the developmental services their children receive. One explanation is that parents have more opportunities to affect their children's learning and growth than preschool and related educational service providers, and another is that parents have the ability to improve child success in early intervention programs. The fact that most parents are usually present in their children's lives during their early childhood years amplifies this effect. Moore (1990) concluded that if students are to meet new academic challenges and obtain success, the nation's schools must develop to the point where parents and schools get the most out of on each other's knowledge and abilities. This means that a collaborative effort between parents and schools would ensure that all children arrive at school ready to learn each day and this can lead to improvement in learning outcome

According to Spann, Kohler, and Soenksen (2003), parent involvement contributes to a variety of positive outcomes for children. Parent expectations of their child's academic attainment and satisfaction with their child's education at school have been found to be the most reliable predictors of academic achievement and social adjustment in children. When parents' expectation for their children is achieved at particular level of education, parents are likely to set higher goals for their children in the next academic level. This has the tendency of increasing academic success for children as parents are willing to support their children in attaining such goals. Research in the past decade have confirmed that children whose Parents are interested in their children's education have higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates; greater school attendance; improved enthusiasm, better self-esteem; lower suspension rates; reduced substance and alcohol use; and fewer incidents of violent behavior, according to decades of study. Huang, & Mason, 2008, also believed that the idea of

connection between home and school has a positive outcome for children's academic achievement, social development, and behavior and attitude.

Furthermore, researchers have extensively discussed the value of the relationship between parents and schools, with widespread consensus that it has a positive impact on children's learning outcomes. Ramirez, 2003, indicated that students whose first language is not English show an increase in academic achievement, an improvement in English language skills, better cognitive ability and better behavior in school as a result of increasing parental involvement. There is a strong relationship between parental involvement and children's learning outcome, especially at the early childhood level. This is in agreement with Mahmood, 2013 view that parental involvement is associated with increased reading and mathematics skills, improved social skills, and better academic motivation, he also believes that parental involvement has a significant impact on children's education, and both schools and teachers look for programs to improve its efficiency.

Because of the fact that parental involvement contributes significantly to children's learning outcome, teachers, administrators and researchers in the field of education and learning continue to investigate the possible ways to better collaborate with parents to enhance students' academic and behavioral outcomes.

Parents also want to learn how to collaborate and communicate with teachers in order to help their children do better in school. This relationship is vital to provide the needed support, encouragement and guidance from both parents and teachers to get the most benefit from the educational process for children. Huang, & Mason, 2008, believe that children's educational success is influenced by several factors that are related to teachers, home, curriculum and instruction. This emphasizes the significant role that parents play in the educational process of their children. They also

are of the view that parents' behaviors, activities, and attitudes toward their children's education at home and school affect the outcomes of their children's academic achievement and that there are long-term benefits of parental involvement that are related to children, such as improvement in reading skills.

Most researchers conducting studies about parental involvement agree that this involvement is beneficial for children's academic achievement in areas such as reading, writing as well as exhibiting positive behaviors. The time and resources that parents provides for their children might explain the positive effect of parental involvement, helping children with their homework and daily interactive reading means parents are committed to improving their children's skills through those shared activities at home. This home involvement allows parents to see the improvement in their children and alert teachers to areas where they have difficulty, thus working with teachers for the benefit of their children. Also, involvement means parents will explore other resources to advance their children's performance at school. Parental involvement becomes an engagement by parents with both the schools and teachers to develop their children academically and behaviorally.

According to the Michigan Department of Education (2001), families with triple-crown students have the subsequent characteristics: Establishing an everyday family schedule (providing time and a quiet house to browse, relegating chores, being strict regarding time of day, and ingestion dinner together);

- Monitored free activities, (setting limits on TV looking, checking au courant kids once folks don't seem to be home, composing for outside activities and supervised care);
- Modeled price of learning, self-discipline, and exertions, (communicating through questioning and speech, demonstrating that accomplishment comes

from operating hard); specific high however realistic expectations for accomplishment, (setting goals and standards that area unit applicable for children's age and maturity, recognizing and inspiring special abilities, informing friends and family regarding successes);

- Encourage children's development/ progress at school, (maintaining a heat and certificatory home, showing interest in children's progress at college, serving to with prep, discussing the worth of a decent education and doable career choices, staying connected with lecturers and faculty staff; and
- Encourage reading, writing, and discussions among relations. Examples: Reading, taking note of kids browse and talking regarding what's being browse.

Parents, educators, and family members should therefore collaborate with schools to promote children's learning, growth, and wellness. Efforts must be made to promote all the domains of child development, which includes children's social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

#### **2.4 Forms of parental involvement to the development and education of early grade learners**

Researchers have begun to focus on why parental involvement affects students, why parent do and do not get involve in their children education, and what role schools and teachers can play in creating parental involvement.

Wendy S. Grolnick and her colleagues, in articles published in 1994 and 1997 conceptualize three dimension of parental involvement based on how parent-child interactions affects students' schooling and motivation. Behavioral involvement refers to parent' public actions representing their interest in their child's education, such as



attending an open house or volunteering at the school. Personal involvement includes parent-child interactions that communicates positive attitudes about school and the importance of education to the child.

Cognitive/intellectual involvements refer to behaviors that promote children skills development and knowledge, such as reading books and going to museums or places of interest. Parental involvement, according to this theory affects students' achievements because these interactions affects students' motivation, their sense of competence and the belief that they have control over their success in school.

Joyce L. Epstein, in a 1995 article and a 2001 book titled, *School, Family, and Community Partnerships*, argued that school, family, and community are important “spheres of influence” on children’s development and that a child’s educational development is enhanced when these environments work collaboratively towards shared goals. Epstein encouraged schools to create greater “overlap” between the school, home and community through the implementation of activities across six types of involvement: Parenting, Communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaboration with the community. By implementing activities across all six types of involvements, educators can help improve students’ achievements and experiences in school.

## **2.5 Benefits of parents involvements in the development and education of early grade learners**

Research on the effects of parental involvement has shown a consistent, positive relationship between parents’ engagement in their children’s’ education and student outcomes. Studies have also shown that parental involvement is associated with

student outcomes such as lower dropouts and truancy rates. Whether or not parental involvement can improve student's outcomes is no longer in question.

According to John Hopkins University (JHU) report when there is good communication between parents and teachers absenteeism decreases.

Again, Academic performance such as comprehension and reading fluency increases when there is parental involvement, even more so when parents spend time reading with their children.(JHU).

Another point worth nothing by (JHU) report is that parents' involvement helps to improve the behavior of students in the classroom. Having students and teachers communicate more helps students feel more motivated in their classes, their self-esteem and attitudes in class improves.

John Hopkins University also reports that, parental involvements also improves teacher performance. When parents have better communication with teachers, they learn to value the work and the challenges teachers face which makes the teachers feel appreciated. It also helps the teachers get to know the students more.

## **2.7 Barriers of parents' involvements in the development and education of early grade learners.**

Although parental involvement is recognized as being of significance in the education of children, there remains great diversity concerning parental involvement. Some factors exist over which schools have little control and these factors have become of great interest to educational decision makers (Feurstein, 2000). Today's parents are often preoccupied with the distractions and demands of daily life. Burdened by low-income, inflexible work hours and language barriers, some parents are unable to attend school activities or participate in the schooling of their children on a regular

basis (Ho, 2009). Bæck (2010) as well as Lee and Bowen (2006) cite cultural norms, insufficient financial resources, and lack of educational attainment as barriers to parental involvement in school.

Davis (1996) found that many parents suffer from low self-esteem and others did not experience success in school themselves and therefore lack the knowledge and confidence to help their children. Parents who did not experience success in school may view it negatively (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

Parents may be intimidated by the language, the curriculum, and the staff; consequently they avoid communication with the school (Flynn, 2007).

Hill and Taylor (2004) assert that “parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face many more barriers to involvement, including nonflexible work schedules, lack of resources, transportation problems, and stress due to residing in disadvantaged neighborhoods” (2004, p. 162). Ascher (1988) reported that low-income urban parents can and want to participate in the education of their children as much as middle-class parents. She also reported that, single-parent participation is often hindered by inflexible leave policies and child-care responsibilities. Many school officials tend to decide in advance that single and low-income working parents cannot be approached or relied upon. They are not expected to participate in their children’s classroom, attend meetings, or provide assistance with home learning activities (Ascher, 1988). Williams and Sanchez (2011) identify four areas that are barriers to involvement: time poverty, lack of access, lack of financial resources, and lack of awareness. Johnson (1994) asserted that “feelings of inadequacy, limited school background, or preoccupation with basic necessities may prevent parents from communicating with schools” (1994, p. 46). Lee and Bowen (2006) and Dika and Singh (2002) cite social capital in families as being positively linked to their students’ achievement,

graduation rates, higher educational attainment, as well as motivation and involvement in school. Similarly, Ho (2009) discusses the benefit of parents' involvement in schools, noting that it helps parents overcome a lack of social capital. Likewise, Hill and Taylor (2004) assert that 146 parental involvement as a important factor for successful education parental involvement in the school supports students' achievement by increasing the parents' social capital. Students are a critical component for successful school, family, and community involvement and can create a barrier for partnerships when they fail to fulfill their duty (Epstein, 1995). Students are often responsible for delivering information and communicating with their parents regarding school programmes, activities, and events (Epstein, 1995).

In programmes that require high level of involvement, teachers help students understand their role and the importance of actively participating in the family, school, and community partnership (Epstein, 1995). Given decreased budgeted funds in education and increased expectations, school administrators and teachers must take the initiative to involve parents in an effort to assist the educational achievement of students (Wherry, 2009). Some school administrators and teachers may not know how to involve parents; therefore, educators lacking this knowledge could be taught techniques for involving parents and creating partnerships (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Administrators and teachers may not fully understand the importance of parental involvement and the effects of parental involvement on student achievement (Flynn, 2007). Often, teachers believe parents do not support the school and do not discipline children when there has been a problem at school. When teachers do not feel parental support, they often believe it is a waste of their time to contact parents (Flynn, 2007). To overcome the barriers preventing parental involvement, schools need to provide a welcoming climate where the school staff is respectful and

responsive to parents (Wherry, 2009). It is critical that administrators and teachers encourage respectful two-way communication between the school and home (Wherry, 2009). Bouie, an educational consultant stated, “The answer is to stop treating parents like „clients” and start treating them like „partners” in helping children learn” (as cited in Wherry, 2009, p. 7). A survey of parents in four school systems concluded that parents want to be treated with respect and do not want a professional client relationship (Davies, 1991). Failure to sufficiently train preservice teachers is a significant obstacle in promoting parental involvement in the schools (Epstein, 1995). Preservice teachers could work with parents as part of their teacher education programme and internship (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Classes could be incorporated into teacher education programmes and advanced degree programs to assist in defining an educator’s role in school, family, and community partnerships (Epstein, 1995).

Some school systems have employed parent involvement coordinators to lead and coordinate parental involvement activities and programmes within the system in an effort to overcome obstacles between the home and school (Epstein, 2001). Epstein (2009) described the role of parent involvement coordinators as a way of encouraging more parents to become involved in a variety of aspects of the school. Parent involvement coordinators often conduct workshops for parents to inform them of the school curriculum and remind them that they are their child’s most important teacher (Epstein, 2009). Adequately parent involvement: examples of good practice considering the research findings, their own practical experience, as well as discussions with other experts, Bouffard and Weiss (2008) summarize some of the basic principles that the process of involving families can make meaningful and useful. First, the involvement of parents must be part of a broader strategy of

complementary support learning and development as a systematic effort supported by joint action of all stakeholders. Furthermore, the involvement of parents should be viewed as a continuous process that has its evolutionary stages through childhood and adolescence, and is especially important in the periods of the transition of children from one to another level of schooling. However, not all parents have equal capacities for fuller participation in all activities and not all schools are interested and able adequately support participation in them.

One of the most difficult aspects of involving parents in a child's education is the lack of continuity between home and school literacy practices. Parents are often hesitant to work with their young children on academic skills for fear of teaching them differently than they are being taught in their early childhood center or program. For example, Schick (2014) examined 127 Latino preschoolers enrolled in a Head Start program to determine the effect of continuity on their language and literacy development. The study concluded that children who experience a lack of continuity between home and school have higher literacy outcomes and score higher on assessments measuring emergent literacy. The results were somewhat surprising, as one may think that continuity between home and school would be beneficial for literacy development. However, children scoring higher as a result of a lack of home and school continuity is a result of them being exposed to diverse book sharing styles, different discussion techniques, and a wider repertoire of styles both in the home and in the classroom. The results suggest that early literary practices do not need to be limited to traditional literacy practices and that discontinuity in certain emergent literacy practices can lead to positive outcomes for children (Schick, 2014). Nontraditional methods of engaging children are also beneficial for developing early literacy skills, in addition to the more traditional and dominant practices such as read-

alouds and book discussions. Hence, parents not in the mainstream can provide quality learning experiences for their children. Kocyigit (2015) discussed the problems some early childhood education centers face when attempting to involve parents in preschool. Kocyigit (2015) found that the following factors contributed to a lack of parental involvement in preschool: unwillingness to participate, a lack of time, too many obligations for families, a mismatch between information given and attitudes of the parents, and negative attitudes on the part of the parents. Teachers attempted to overcome these issues in several ways including speaking about the importance of preschool education and parent involvement, adjusting times of meetings, receiving help from school counselors, and trying to involve parents in decision making. This study concluded that the more parents were present in the school setting, the easier it was to overcome some of the challenges mentioned above. Home visits were also used as an option to meet parents, have discussions, and attempt in getting parents more active in their child's preschool (Kocyigit, 2015). While many challenges exist and need to be acknowledged, it is evident that parents play a critical role in their child's development, and early childhood education centers need to find ways to engage and inform parents. Several different factors must be taken into consideration when early childhood programs attempt to reach out and involve parents in education, and these factors can present themselves as challenges when attempting to involve parents in their child's education. One of those factors is the education level and involvement of one or both parents or guardians.

## **2.7 Strategies to improve parental involvement in the development and education of early grade learners**

According to Jay C. (2018) Engaging your students' parents these days is actually easier than ever, thanks to the many channels at your fingertips – and theirs.

Numerous studies have been conducted on parental involvements in their children's' education, and it tells us that an engaged parent equals successful students' there is therefore no doubt that parents involvement is critical to students success.

Jay C (2018) you probably know as well as any one that parents are busy these days. There may be two working parents in the home who are trying to juggle childcare with their carriers. You likely have many students who are raised by a single parent. To reach these busy parents, you have to make your communication convenient and quick to reach. You have to target your outreach efforts in a way that makes them more likely to be receive and digested. For most parents, that means online communications. Here are six best practices you can adopt today.

- **Parenting:** The first type of parental involvement is child rearing which has to do with the ability of parents in relation to child rearing and the support from teachers in helping parents with essential parenting skills that foster appropriate learning environments for children. When the school provide information and offer support for parents in child rearing, it increases parent's awareness and strengthen their skills to influence their child's learning and general development and advancement.
- **Communication:** This is the second type of parental involvement according to Epstein et al. (2011). It relates to parent and school contact with regards to school activities and student progress. They indicated that they should be a communication plan that enforces a continuous school-to-home home-to-school collaborations about school management, activities and student's learning progress. Sample communication activities may include: telephone calls, conferences, PTA meetings, students' report cards, home visits etc.



- **Volunteering:** It is the third form of parental involvement which is defined as recruiting and organizing parent help and support programs (Herrell, 2011). Here, the school seek support from parents in achieving the mission and vision of the school and to support student's leaning process. Examples of volunteering practices include parents volunteering in classrooms to help teachers, administrators, students and other parents (Epstein, 2010b).
- **Learning at home:** The fourth kind of parental involvement is learning at home which is are learning activities that parent engage their children to do at home. parents assist children at home with core curriculum-related activities at home, they also help children in decisions making, career selection, setting goals for each level of education.
- **Decision-making:** The next type of parental involvement is decision making which involve including parents in school decisions, it help make parents part of leadership in administrative duties within the school. Examples of Some of these activities involve parents' active participation in PTA, SMC, SPAM and advisory boards.
- **Collaborating with the community:** Effective school collaborating with the community is the sixth and final type of parental involvement. It is used to describe the relationship that should exist between the school and the community in which it operates for successful school agendas.

According to Bingham and Abernathy (2007), research on the impact of parental involvement on educational performance has suggested that parental involvement is linked to children's learning outcomes. Parents who are actively interested in their children's schooling are more likely to build a learning experience at home. Furthermore, parental participation has been shown to assist children with their

careers and lives in a prosperous community, in addition to preparing them for future schooling. Regarding children's academic outcomes, it is important to resolve the parent-teacher partnership for the benefits of children, parents and the school.

According to a report by Kocyigita (2015), teachers resolved problems through educational practices by coordinating with parents, holding more frequent learning events, shifting the dates of educational activities, taking guidance from the school counselor, and allowing parents to participate in decision-making, administrators were able to address their challenges by rearranging classroom schedules, enlisting the help of school counselors and other parents, and expressing their complaints with all parents, and the parents addressed their problems by asking for educational opportunities and exchanging their thoughts about problems with teachers and administrators. Teachers addressed family communication issues by using phone communication, providing a welcoming atmosphere conducive for easy communication, choosing the most appropriate medium for interacting with each parent, and attempting to reach parents on weekends. Administrators gave parents more time for outreach programs, updated the notice board to make it more appealing, and enlisted the support of parent-teacher groups. As parents dropped off and picked up their children, they communicated with teachers to fix their problems.

The report continued to state how other problems relating to parental involvement in children's learning can be solved. Kocyigita, 2015, also reported the following: Teachers were able to overcome their challenges by identifying parents who were willing to assist and engage in events, teachers were able to overcome their difficulties in engaging parents in in-class and out-of-class tasks by emphasizing the role of parental interest in their children's performance, He also said that administrators addressed their issues by including information about events at

meetings, and that parents suggested that they should be able to attend field trips without additional costs than what they pay for their children and that the issue of participation in out-of-class programs be solved by enlisting the services of counselors to assist their children who struggled to separate from them.

Kocyigita, 2015, also suggested that teachers overcame the difficulties of home visits by persuading parents of the value of such visits to their children's academic performance, by directing other parents toward shared choices, parents were able to address the issue of family participation in institutional and decision-making processes, administrators were able to resolve the issues by appreciating and listening to requests to participate in decision-making. Waanders et al., 2007, also mentioned that teachers' awareness of economic and social factors that influence parental involvement helps them to offer more positive attitudes for effective parental involvement.

According to a study by Huang, and Mason (2008), Parents must be motivated to engage in family literacy activities and be active in their children's learning processes. As a result, the study identifies three factors that assist parents in becoming inspired and motivated. First and foremost, parents must establish partnerships with others, which can be accomplished with the help of schools and teachers. Good partnerships with teachers and other parents, they believe, aid in increasing parental involvement. This is why they suggested that when parents are working with teachers and other parents encourages parents to participate more in parental educational programs, such as family literacy workshops or PTA meetings and that these educational programs help parents to support and learn from one another. As a result, schools should have family services that give parents more opportunities to meet, discuss, connect,

participate in decision-making, and help one another, and results from these programs should be given the needed support from the school.

The second motivation factor according to Huang, & Mason (2008), is to have strategies for parents to influence their children's learning. Parents need to know about how to support their children to learn and be involved children's education. Parental involvement is related to the knowledge and desire of parents to help their children excel in school. This suggests that awareness and resources are essential motivators for parents to participate. Other considerations require time and resources, all of which are influenced by work arrangements and other obligations. Parental engagement programs should consider parents' convenience in terms time and place. Parents can receive literacy services through seminars, parent engagement classes, family outreach programs, home visits, PTA meetings, daily take-home activities, and classroom volunteering opportunities.

Educational programs that ensure that their children learn and excel in school are the third element that empower and inspire parental involvement, according to Huang, & Mason (2008). When parents are confident in their children's academic performance, they are more likely to help them succeed. Parents are motivated to help their children achieve higher learning outcomes. Some of the things that the school should put in place to help children excel include proper finances, teacher qualification, curriculum, teaching and learning materials, standardized tests, and classroom size that is appropriate. When the necessary resources are provided for the success of children's learning in a school, parents feel motivated to participate. As a result, Huang and Mason (2008) found that parents are inspired by the goal of providing their children with a variety of learning experiences, that parents are mindful of the issues that concern their children's academic achievements, and that parents are willing to see

their children excel academically. Cankar et al. (2012), in a similar report, believe that the primary motivation for parents to become involved in their children's education is for them to succeed academically (Cankar, 2012). Parents who believe in the importance of their children's education are more likely to be involved in educational activities, according to Waanders et al., 2007, whereas parents who believe that teachers are the only ones responsible for the educational process are less likely to be involved.

There are multiple barriers to parental involvement, according to Wherry, 2009. To overcome these barriers, schools must have a supportive environment where faculty and staff are cordial and attentive to parents, and administrators and teachers must facilitate well-mannered two-way contact between the school and home. Bouie, (as cited in Wherry, 2009, p. 7) observed that parents should be considered as partners in education rather than view as clients. Parents and teachers should work together to help children succeed in education, and this relationship should be built on trust. In light of this, Mahmood (2013) stated that trust is an essential feature of teacher-parent relationships that aids in increasing teacher-parent partnership commitments. Teachers and parents should work together to establish mutual trust.

According to Cankar et al., 2012, regular contact between parents and teachers aids in the development of trusting and responsible relationships. Spann, Kohler, and Soenksen (2003) made a number of proposals on how schools and families should work together. Quality contact, encouraging parents to engage in school events, soliciting parents' feedback on educational choices for their children, and inspiring parents to take action that meets their own interests are only a few examples. Increased contact between teachers and parents can help strengthen relationships between home and education. Spann et al., (2003) published a report that looked at

the home-school relationship and how contact affected it. The researcher discovered that the most effective home-school communication took place on a routine basis and mostly concerned the child's teacher or paraprofessional.

## **2.8 Summary**

Parental involvement can take on many forms and is seen as an effective strategy to enhance student success, as evidenced in studies done on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance in students (Bower & Griffin, 2011). So in whichever way or form parental involvement may take it ought to be encourage for the maximum development and the education of early grade learners.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to present and describe the methodology adopted for this study. The methodology as indicated in this chapter, describes for the reader important components of this study, such as its research paradigm, research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument, validity and reliability of research instrument, pre-testing of instrument, ethical consideration, the procedure for collecting data and data analysis plan.

#### 3.1 Research Paradigm

Henn, Weinstein and Foard (2006) indicate that a paradigm is ‘a set of assumptions about how the issue of concern to the researcher should be studied’ (p.10). There are many research paradigms, each of which has an epistemological foundation. The most common paradigms identified in research literature are, however, the positivist, interpretive (Henn et al, 2006) and critical paradigms (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The positivist paradigm is located within the normative studies and is linked to the objectionist epistemological perspective. It argues that social reality exists ‘out there’ and is independent of the observer. Esterberg, (2002) believes that ‘the aim of the positivist researchers is to discover a set of laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human behavior’ (p.10).

Therefore, based on the two perspectives of the two main paradigms, the philosophical approach underpinning this study is the ideologist of both the

interpretivist and the positivist, which is pragmatism as philosophical approach for this research. The nature of this research problem, the purpose, research objectives and research questions raised as well as the research methodology was the reason for picking pragmatism philosophical approach. Bryman (2004) noted that when these two approaches (qualitative and quantitative) are combined, they help in supporting each other.

Pragmatism as a worldview arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions such as those in post positivism. There is a specific concern with applications, that is, what works as well as a solution to problems (Patton, 2007). Instead of focusing on methods, researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem. As a philosophical underpinning for mixed methods studies, its importance is in focusing attention upon a research problem in social science research and then using pluralistic approaches to derive knowledge about that problem. Pragmatism is typically associated with mixed-methods research (Creswell, 2014).

Also as stated in the above, Creswell (2014), was of the view that pragmatism embraces features associated with both positivism- post-positivism and constructivism worldviews. However, Hammond and Wellington, (2013) state that both pragmatism and transformative-emancipatory paradigms reject “the dogmatic either-or choice between constructivism and post-positivism and the search for practical answers to questions that intrigue the investigator”.



### 3.2 Research approach

Research approach is essential as it enables the researcher to focus and look at in-depth of the problem and make a decision on how to solve the problem, naming, and approaching the research topic (Saunders et al., 2012). In doing research the approach may be qualitative or quantitative or both. The former involves collecting data that is mainly in the form of words, and the latter involves data which is either in the form or can be expressed in numbers. It is often assumed that quantitative approaches draw on positivist ontologies whereas qualitative approaches are more associated with interpretive. A quantitative research is based on a positivist philosophy which tends to be based on deductive theorizing, where a number of propositions are generated for testing, with empirical verification then sought (Creswell, 2003). According to Creswell, a considerable data are often required as a positivist study would favor the use of quantitative method to analyze large-scale phenomena. Inherent in this overall approach to research is the view that it is possible to measure social behavior independent of context and that social phenomena are ‘things’ that can be viewed objectively.

Qualitative research emphasizes on subjective interpretation (Bryman, 2001) and facilitates effective and in-depth understanding of the research topic (Best & Kahn, 2006). The qualitative research method provides a deeper understanding, knowledge and insight into a particular phenomenon, by providing answers to questions of how rather than what? (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Qualitative research design, on the other hand, involves explaining ‘things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 2). In other words, Qualitative method of research involves the use of non-numerical data collection

techniques like interviews and observation, together with other data analysis procedures such as data categorization and content analysis (Saunders et al., 2012). Arguing strongly against Qualitative research design, Eldabi et al. (2002) intimated that the process of collecting qualitative data and the analysis of qualitative data could be tedious and complicated; to this end, there is an extent to which qualitative data could be generalized outside the boundaries of the research. However, Qualitative research design helps a researcher to overcome the issue of insufficient or hidden data that mostly come up in a pure quantitative study. Qualitative research design therefore help a researcher to acquire the convoluted details about phenomena such as the feelings, thought processes, and even the emotions that are often challenging if not impossible to come by when one uses quantitative methods (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Saunders et al. (2012) and many other scholars in social science have intimated that using either quantitative or qualitative approach alone in a study, could be problematic and narrow the scope of the study. Therefore, this study considers the mixed strategy research design or triangulation as most appropriate in this study.

Horn (2009) has termed the combination of qualitative and quantitative research (Mixed strategy) as triangulation. The mixed strategy or triangulation involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative research designs in a research work and the combinations can be done either together (parallel) or sequentially (one after the other) (Saunders et al., 2012). In the words of Hussey and Hussey (2009: 85), mixed strategy or triangulation involves” the use of multiple sources of data, different research methods and/or more than one researcher to investigate the same phenomenon in a study”.

Saunders et al. (2012) hold that it is a means of doing away with the challenges associated with either qualitative or quantitative research designs. With mixed strategy research design, researchers base their claim to knowledge on the pragmatism philosophy, which allows researcher to choose any method(s) to achieve the goal of the study.

Bryman and Bell (2011) have also enunciated that a researcher when selecting the research design should consider factors like the level of generalization and the level of depth of analysis. Therefore the study adopts the “Mixed strategy” research design or triangulation where both qualitative and quantitative research strategies were used in the collection and assaying of research data. Associating with the position of Stoop and Berg (2003) that a study which adopts the ‘mixed strategy’ often has the potency of having a deeper insight into the benefits and pitfalls of the implementation process of an information system, this study found it more apt to employ the mixed strategy. Hence, in using the ‘mixed strategy’ or triangulation, this study collected data with the aid of both close-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide. Further when it gets to the data analysis stage, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were compared and analyzed together. The fundamental premise for choosing mixed strategy research design is that it allowed the study the chance to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches to understanding the research problems better than using either approaches alone.

### **3.3 Research design**

The study employed concurrent triangulation design to explore parental involvement and its development of learners in the Bolgatanga-East District. The purpose of this design was to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic (Muijs, 2004) to best analyze the research problem.

Also, triangulation is thus defined as measuring the same concept using two or more methods. Indicators of the concept are first collected in each method, and the underlying or latent concept is measured within each method (Johnson & Christiansen, 2012). The measurements taken within each method are then correlated. The goal is that of a more accurate measure; that is, triangulations will achieve a better estimate of the error inherent in any measurement both within and between the methods. According to Gay, (2000) the mixed-methods design goes beyond the limitations of a single approach because it integrates both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The rationale behind this design is that the researcher values equally the two forms of data and treats them as such. Data is thereby merged, and the results of analyses are used simultaneously to understand the research questions through the comparison of findings from the quantitative and qualitative analysis. Cresswell, (2008) stated that during interpretation, this design helps the researcher “to directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings” in order to elaborate valid and well-substantiated conclusions about the problem under study. Again, quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently and later compared with the aim of determining convergence, differences and combinations. It sampled the views and opinions of respondents on parental involvement and its development of learners in the Bolgatanga-East District

### **3.4 Population of the study**

Kusi (2012) defines population as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2001), see population as a group of elements or causes, whether individuals or objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which one

intends to generalize the results of the research. The target population of the study was all teachers and parents in Bolgatanga-East District.

### **3.6 Sample size and sampling techniques**

According to Babbie (2010) a sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. Bell, (2005) suggests 10% of large populations and 20% of small populations as minimum. For interview schedules, Creswell (2003) recommends 3-5 respondents' whiles Jack and Norman, (2003) also suggest that a range of eight and fifteen respondents. These recommendations are premised on the claim that in qualitative studies, samples are typically small and based on information needs (Polit & Beck, 2010). Therefore, these have informed the choice of the researcher to interview six parents and administer questionnaire to 100 teachers.

A sampling technique gives the researcher an option to the entire population, as sampling provides the researcher the tool to reduce the amount of data needed for a research by considering only the data from relevant subgroups (Saunders et al., 2012). To this extent and again because of the researcher's inability to collect data from each member of the population, a sample of 81 participants in total was selected using simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling technique. Simple Random sampling according to Gupta (1993) is one where each item in the universe has an equal or known opportunity of being selected. The simple random sampling was used select 75 teachers. Based on a situational and contextual analysis (Henn, Weinstein, Foard, 2006), purposive sampling was used to select 6 parents in a non-random manner, based on member characteristics and specific criteria relevant to the research problem (Ofori, & Dampson, 2010). Purposive sampling as pointed out by Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001) is a sample chosen on the basis of some

characteristics possessed by the subjects and deemed important for the research based on the judgment of the researcher.

### **3.7 Instrumentation**

Two instruments were used in data collection, an interview guide and a questionnaire. Interviews are primarily done in qualitative or mixed methods research, they occur when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions, and record or take notes of their answers. Often audiotapes are utilized to allow for more consistent transcription (Creswell, 2012). The researcher often transcribes and types the data into a computer file, in order to analyze it after interviewing.

Interviews are particularly useful for uncovering the story behind a participant's experiences and pursuing in-depth information around a topic. Interviews may be useful to follow-up with individual respondents after questionnaires, for example, to further investigate their responses (Kothari, 2008). A strength of interviews is that a researcher can freely use probes (prompts used to obtain response clarity or additional information). Questionnaires have many uses, most notably is to discover what the masses are thinking. These include market research, political polling, customer service feedback, evaluations, opinion polls, and social science research (O'Leary, 2014).

#### **Interview guide**

An interview is an interaction between two or more individuals with the aim of obtaining some material information (Robson, 2002). Interviews may well be structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Saunders et al, 2012; Ibid). Structured interviews, involves the interviewer (researcher) designing a set of pre-defined questions, and restricting the answers, strictly within the precincts of those pre-

defined questions. And with unstructured interviews, the interviewer does not necessarily develop any pre-defined questions, rather interviewees are made to answer questions regarding a wide range or area of interest. Also, with semi-structured interviews, the interviewer designs a set of pre-defined questions, but here, the interviewer (researcher) is at liberty to modify these set of questions as and when they suit the issues under discussion. As Saunders et al. (2012) put it, semi structured interviews are in the middle of structured and unstructured interviews, which are mostly used for the in-depth case studies. This study adopted the semi-structured method of interviews where the researcher had some set of pre-defined question but the interviewees were also allowed the freedom to provide answers to other range of issues which came up during the actual interview process. According to Kumar (1999), this is the best way to go when investigating multifaceted and sensitive areas, as the interviewer can repeat a question, ask a follow-up question (s) or even change the structure of the questions entirely.

The interview items were built on the major variables that were the key themes in the research questions. The questions were also central in triangulating the responses from the questionnaire and in maintaining the focus of the research in order to avoid concentrating on less important points. Though the interview guide was semi-structured, it was interactive and the new issues and ideas that emerged in the course of the interview were further investigated. A tape recorder and notebook were used to accurately record the responses. This saved much time and helped the researcher to devote full attention to listening to the respondents. The tape recorder helped the researcher to avoid bias and distortion of the responses. After each interview session, the tape was played over and over to make the researcher familiar with the issues for easy transcription of the data and arrange it into common themes. These instruments

offered teachers and parents the opportunity to express their views and feelings on issues in detail. It also allowed the researcher to seek clarifications on issues during the interview process. The interviews were conducted within a period of 3 weeks and this was subjected to changes to allow for adjustments and reschedule of interview appointment.

### **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is given to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own.

According to Jack and Norman (2003), there are two forms of questionnaire: closed-ended and open-ended form. The closed-ended form is also known as restricted or structured calls for short, check-mark and require the respondent to provide “yes” / “no” responses or rank alternatives provided based on how one feels about the issue. The respondent’s choices are limited to the set of opinions. However, the open-ended questionnaire which is also termed as unrestricted or unstructured calls for a free response in the respondent’s own words. The respondent frames and supplies the answers to the questions raised in the questionnaire. Questionnaires were used because it provided a quick way of collecting and assessing the data without having much influence on the way they gave their responses. Questionnaires are used when researchers want to obtain information on a large number of issues and from large sample size. Consequently, questionnaires are usually employed in survey researches.



The researcher using the research questions as the basis designed the questionnaire for the survey. The questionnaires were used to elicit information from respondents. The questionnaire consisted of items related to the research questions. Closed ended questions were used in the questionnaire to allow the study gather vital information. Again, Likert scale type questions were used where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Every section of the questionnaire began with specific instructions as to the intent of the items as well as how to respond to items in that section. The choice of the instrument was because the nature of data needed for the study do not involve or require time series over several monitoring rounds of data. It involves collection of information from a sample that had been drawn from a predetermined population at one point in time (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

### **Pre-testing of instruments**

The questionnaire was presented to the research supervisor. The researcher obtained feedback on the questions in the questionnaires and suggestions from them went into modifying some specific questions. The study supervisor also suggested a different kind of questionnaires to be designed for student and teachers to reflect the similarities or differing opinions. Again, twenty teachers were randomly selected to respond to the survey questionnaires and their recommendations were effected into the final questionnaire. The purpose of the pre-testing of instruments was to enable the researcher test the reliability and validity of the instruments. Further, the pre-test study enabled the researcher to reconstruct the instruments to ensure that they included items that adequately measure the variables of the study.

### **Validity of instruments**

Validity is concerned with accuracy of measurement. Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure. The purpose of validity is to ascertain the degree the measure is accurate for specific purpose (Agyedu, 2013). It is also a means of ascertaining the accuracy of the instruments by establishing whether the instruments focus on the information they are intended to collect. Kothari (2007) pointed out that validity measures the accuracy of the instruments in obtaining the anticipated data which can meet the objectives of the study.

### **Face validity**

Face validity is a measure of how representative a research project is 'at face value,' and whether it appears to be a good project. Face Validity refers to the appearance of validity to test users, examiners, and especially and the examinees. Bryman (2012) opine that face validity might be established by asking other people whether the measure seems to be getting at the concept that is the focus of attention. In other words, people, possibly those with experience or expertise in a field, might be asked to act as judges to determine whether on the face of it the measure seems to reflect the concept concerned (Bryman, 2012). In order to ascertain face validity, the researcher presented the instruments constructed to his colleagues Master of Philosophy Educational Administration and Management students for constructive criticisms.

### **Content validity**

Content validity is the extent that a research instrument covers the content that it is intended to measure. It is also refers to whether an instrument provides adequate coverage of a topic. Expert opinions, literature searches, and pretesting of open-ended questions help to establish content validity (Wilkinson, 1991). Creswell (2009) stated,

"It is the extent to which the questions on the instrument and the scores from these questions represent all possible questions that could be asked about the content or skill. The researcher prepared the instruments in close consultation with his supervisor, senior lecturers and ensured that the items in the questionnaire and interview guide cover all the areas under investigation. Best and Khan (2006), point out that content validity of the research instruments is enhanced through expert judgment. The researcher's supervisor and lecturers, as experts, helped to assess the validity of instruments.

### **Reliability of instruments**

Reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subjects (Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng, 2013). The purpose of reliability is to assess the instrument's ability to measure the same way in each administration to the same sample. To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, a pre-test, was conducted in two schools in Bolgatanga-East District, the researcher established the reliability of the instruments. The results obtained were correlated using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formulae. The more the correlation coefficient was closer to 1.00 the more reliable the instrument was. A score of 0.84 was obtained indicating that the instrument was reliable.

### **3.8 Data collection procedure**

A letter of introduction from the Educational Administration and Management Department of University Education, Winneba granted me the permission to first collect data for the study. The letter assisted to introduce myself, established rapport with the respondents and sought permission from all the respondents before the due

date to administer the questionnaire and interview them. I addressed all requests for clarification on the questionnaire. The respondents were comfortable in responding to the questionnaire because I assured them of strict confidentiality. The questionnaires were administered to the teachers using the drop and pick technique of visiting the sampled schools to distribute the questionnaires then come to pick them from the headteacher on the next day.

As part of the data collection an agreed date and time was scheduled with the six (6) parents for the interview. An interview guide was designed to guide the interview process between the researcher and the teachers. In order to ensure the validity of the interview schedule they were designed to reflect on the research objectives and questions. Like the questionnaire, the interview guide was divided into sectors covering the critical areas of the research questions of which answers could not be obtained with the use of the questionnaire. The interview guide provided the opportunity for the researcher to directly interact with the respondents and as such, obtained direct answers to the questions. This actually helped provide satisfactory answers to the research questions.

The face-to face interview is presented as enabling a “special insight” into subjectivity, voice and lived experience (Kvale, 2009). To ensure that ethical issues were not violated, before each interview, I briefly talked about the purpose of the interview and gave an overview of the research being conducted. I also sought permission from interviewees to record the interview and to take notes and assured them of anonymity and the fact that the recordings and the notes will be destroyed as soon as the research is over. At the beginning and throughout the interview, I stressed the importance of confidentiality to the participants and that made them feel

at ease to talk to me in confidence. It took five (5) working days for interviewing and administering questionnaires.

### **3.9 Data analysis**

Data analysis is important for interpreting raw data, in order to obtain the meaning and pattern from data (Bell, 2010). The answered questionnaires were grouped according to the categories of respondents. Questionnaires for each category of respondents was numbered serially to ensure easy coding and checked for blank options and out of range responses. The coded responses were fed into the computer using the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS version 21) for Windows, which is capable of analyzing data fed into it. The data was summarized into tables using descriptive statistics.

A qualitative content analysis was also employed. A qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying patterns (Creswell, 2014). It is an approach of empirical analysis of texts considering their context of communication. The content analysis helped the researcher to focus on the examination of meaning occurring within a particular context. It also helped the researcher to describe the narrative of the qualitative responses generated through the interview

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues are highly relevant and require serious considerations. Therefore, to create a mutual respect and win-win relationship with the respondents before the commencement of the data collection, a letter was obtained from the Department of Educational Administration and management indicating the purpose of the study and

its significance to the teachers and head teachers in the selected public basic schools, and the Director of Education in the Bolgatanga-East District. In addition, a covering letter was obtained from the Bolgatanga-East District Director of Education to introduce the researcher to the head teachers of the various schools. The head teachers also introduced the researcher to the teachers. Furthermore, each questionnaire had an opening introductory letter requesting for the respondent's cooperation in providing the required information for the study. The respondents were further assured that the information provided shall be used for academic purposes only (confidentiality).



## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of findings on the parental involvement and its development of learners in the Bolgatanga-East District. Demographic data of the participants are first presented and followed by the analyses of the research questions. In the course of analyzing the teacher's data, responses involving "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" were merged as "Agreed" while "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were combined as "Disagreed". The parents' interview data were used to triangulate the teachers' perspectives.

#### 4.1 Demographic Distribution of Teachers

The demographic data of the teachers such as sex, age and academic qualification were analysed. These pieces of information were used to enable the researcher know the type of participants involved in the study. The first part of the analysis deals with gender of teachers for the study. The results are presented in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Teachers**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	45	60
Female	30	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field worky (2021)*

Table 4.1 shows the demographic information of teachers by gender. From the Table, 45 teachers representing (60%) were males while 30 representing (40%) were

females. This indicates that there were more male teachers involved in the study than female teachers. The ages of the teachers were also sought and presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Teachers**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21-30 years	15	20.0
31-40 years	40	53.3
41 years and above	20	26.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field work (2021)*

Table 4.2 shows that 15(20%) of the participants were between the ages of 21-39 years, 40 (53.3%) were between 31-40 years and 20(26.7%) were 41 years old and above. It can be construed from the results that majority of the teachers in Bolgatanga-East District Schools appeared quite youthful to effectively facilitate learning among learners. The academic qualifications of the participants are shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Academic Qualifications of Teachers**

Certificate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	20	26.7
First Degree	40	53.3
Master's Degree	15	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field survey (2020)*

As shown in Table 4.3, 20(26.7%) of the teachers were diploma holders, 40(53.3%) were first-degree holders, and 15(20%) were master's degree holders. It can be deduced from the results that majority teachers in the Bolgatanga-East District schools had degrees, which is in the right direction for teachers who teach at basic



schools. The learners in Bolgatanga-East District schools are in hands of professionally-trained teachers, and that could help with their cognitive, social and psychomotor development. The teaching experience of the teachers was also investigated and the results are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Teaching Experiences of Teachers**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Less than 5 years	10	13.3
5 - 10 years	35	46.7
11 – 15 years	15	20.0
More than 15 years	15	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field survey (2021)*

Table 4.4 shows that, 10(13.3%) teachers had spent less than 5 years teaching, 35(46.7%) had spent 5-10 years teaching, 15(20%) had spent 11-15 years teaching and 15(30%) had spent more than 15 years teaching. Research findings have also established that teacher's teaching experience is positively correlated with learning outcome. Akinsolu (2005) advocated that experienced teachers need to be retained in schools if higher productivity is to be obtained because learners achieve more from these teachers. Raw (2003), asserted that teachers with years of experience in the profession turned out students with higher academic performance. Experienced teachers can identify student's problems and be able to change methodology to aid effective teaching and learning (Raw, 2003).

#### 4.2.2 Demographic distribution of parents

The demographic data of parents such as sex and age were sought and analysed in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6 respectively. The first part of the analysis deals with gender of parents used in the study and the result is presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Gender Distribution of Parents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	1	16.7
Female	5	83.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field work (2021)*

Table 4.5 shows the demographic information of parents by gender. From the Table, 1 (16.7%) was male while 5 representing (83.3%) were females. The ages of the parents were also sought and presented in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Age Distribution of Parents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 years and below	-	-
31-40 years	2	33.3
41 years and above	4	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field work (2021)*

Table 4.6 reveals that, 2 (33.3%) of the parents were between the ages of 31-40 years and 4 (66.7%) were 41 years and above. None was 30 years and below. The age variation suggests that the more one ages the greater he/she attaches great importance in the education of children. The marital status of the parents were also sought and presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Marital Status of Parents**

<b>Marital status</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Single	1	16.7
Married	3	50
Divorced	2	33.3
Separated	-	-
Widowed	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Field work (2021)*

Table 4.7 above shows the marital status of respondents (parents) for the study. one (1) parents representing 16.7% are single; three (3) representing 50% are married while two (2) representing 33.3% were divorced. Four (4) representing 10% are widowed and two (2) representing 5% are separated. The data clearly shows half of the parents (50%) that is the total percentage of parent are married. A home with two parents can provide more support towards a child's needs than single and divorced parents' homes. Two parents can monitor one another's parenting, as well as relieve one another when they find that parenting is becoming difficult or tiresome. On average, two parents are able to devote more time, affection, and monitoring to their children than are divorced and single-parents. Consequently, the overall quality of parenting tends to be higher in two-parent families, compared with single-parent families.

Ham (2004), asserted that students who live in single-parent homes tend to perform at a lower standard in comparison to students who live in married households. According to Amato and Keith (2001) the divorce rate has also increased automatically and hence a creation of single parenthood which impacts negatively on

academic performance. Two (2) parents representing 33.3% are divorced thus increasing the number of single parenthood. Parents should now be aware that divorce not only interrupts family structure but also academic abilities. The educational background of the parents were also sought and presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Educational Background of Parents**

<b>Education</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No. Education	2	33.3
KG1	2	33.3
Class 2	1	16.7
Diploma	1	16.7
Degree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field survey (2020)*

From Table 4.8 above, 2(33.3%) of the parents did not attend school, 2(33.3%) of them completed Junior High, 1(16.7%) was able to attain the Senior High certificate and another 1(16.7%) of the parents had possessed diploma certificates. Krashen (2005) asserts that students whose parents are educated score higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. The level of education of parents had a direct and positive relationship on the academic achievement of their children (Ryan & Deci 2000). The relationship between the level of education of parents had an impact on their children academic performance (Pamela and Kean 2010). Educated parents can better communicate with their children regarding the schoolwork, activities and the information being taught at school. They can better assist their children in their work and participate at school. The results show that, some of the

parents have no education or lower level of education and are therefore unable to assist their children school work and this is likely to negatively affect their involvement in their children' learning in school. The number of children per parent were also sought and presented in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Number of children per parents**

<b>Number of children</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
0	-	-
1	-	-
2	-	-
3	-	-
4	-	-
5	4	66.7
6	-	-
7	2	33.3
8 or more	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field work (2021)*

The data in Table 4.9 indicates the number of children per parents. 4(66.7%) of parents had five children each and 2 (33.3%) of the parent had seven children each. A careful examination of the data indicates that, all the parents have five or more children that is large family sizes. For the purpose of this study the researchers considered large family size as a family with five or more siblings. Parents with low socio economic status who have from five to ten children may not have adequate resources to cater for educational and other needs of all the children. Studies have

shown that parents who cannot provide the basic needs of their wards are found in the lower class.

Children from these families lack love and affection which leads to negative cognitive development. This is because as explained by Seigal (2007) parental attention by parents declines as the number of siblings increases. According to Shema (1999) the size of the family is also determines by the academic performance in school. The family size from which students come from have a negative correlation to the academic performance of the children, which implies that the more the children are in the family the less the performance of the student gets. The data suggest that most of the learners are from larger families and has negative effect on their academic performance. These findings supports the findings by Lacovou (2001) who felt that children from larger families perform worse than children from smaller families and Oppong's (2013) that, family structure and large family size or sibling size with poor socio-economic background were revealed to be obviously responsible to make learners perform poorly academically. The occupation of parents were also sought and presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Occupations of parents**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Trader	2	33.3
Driver	1	16.7
Hairdresser	3	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field work (2021)*

The data shown in Table 4.10 depict the occupational background of the parents. 1(16.7%) of them was a driver, 2(33.3%) of them were traders and 3(50%) are hairdressers. It was realized that most of the parent fall within low socio economic status because they were engaged in low paid jobs. Hill et al. (2004) have suggested that the socioeconomic status of parents not only influences the development of children at home but it also develops a competition among the students belonging to persons of different social and economic strata.

The children of parents belonging to low socio-economic status feel depressed against the students from higher socioeconomic and this affects their academic performance. The data revealed that most of the children hail from low socio economic homes and this has negative effect on their academic performance. Hill et al. (2004) who concede that the children from low socioeconomic homes score lower in standardized test than children from high socioeconomic homes.

#### **4.3. Results**

The number of questionnaires administered were 100 and 75 were collected for analysis, this gives a response rate of 75%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) affirmed that over 50% responses rate is adequate for analysis while over 70% is rated as very good. Results of the analysis are presented under three research questions. On each research question, tables were used to present the results, followed by interpretations and discussions.

#### 4.3.1 Research Question 1:

**To what extent do parents involve themselves in the education of their children in Bolgatanga-East District?**

The research question sought to find out the extent to which parents involved themselves in the education of children in Petepom schools in Bogoso. The analysis is in frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Parental involvement in the education of their children as reported by teachers**

Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
Parents regularly communicate children's study habit at home to the school authorities	45	60	30	40
Parents monitor children's academic progress in school and at home.	50	66.7	25	33.7
Parents attend PTA meetings and other school functions.	30	40	45	60
Parents provide children with learning materials.	40	53.3	35	46.7
Parents fulfill all financial obligations to the school.	45	60	30	40
<i>Field survey (2021)</i>		<i>Frequency = F</i>	<i>Percentage = %</i>	

With regard to item 1, that was to find out from teachers whether parents regularly communicate children's study habit at home to the school authorities, a total of 45(60%) of the participants agreed with the statement while 30(40%) disagreed with the statement. As regards item 2 that was to find out whether parents monitor children's academic progress in school and at home, 50(66.7%) of the teachers agreed and 25 (33.3%) disagreed. Regarding Item 3, which was to find out whether parents



attend PTA meetings and other school functions, a total of 30(40%) of the teachers agreed and 45(60%) of them disagreed to the statement. The fourth item was to find out whether parents provide children with learning materials, 40 (53.3%) agreed and 35(46.7%) disagreed. Finally, the teachers were asked to indicate whether parents fulfilled all their financial obligations to the school, and that 45 (60%) agreed and 30 (40%) disagreed.

The parents' perspectives were also solicited on the extent to which they get involved in the education of their children. Narrative accounts of some parents are presented below;

*“Parental interest is about supporting the children in education by providing their educational needs for them. In addition, two parents emphasized that, it's the support that is necessary and enables children to have a brighter future (A verbatim expression by parent 1 ).*

One parent said:

*“I communicate with my child's teachers to know the progress of my child and also provide them with information on my child's behaviour and needs” (Verbatim response from parent 2)*

Another parent expressed:

*“I want my child to be either a doctor or lawyer but I am not much involved in her education. I just pay her fees and nothing more...Besides, the school is well endowed with competent and professionally trained teachers who know how to teach children” (A verbatim response from parent 3).*

Another parent stated:

*“I make sure I buy all the recommended learning materials and those I found to be useful for my child's education.” (A verbatim response by parent 4).*

A parent said:

*It's about allowing the children to attend school to the highest level without hindering them. And also coaching them as parents as to what courses to offer rightly according to their abilities (A verbatim expression by parent 5).*

Another parent said:

*It's how parents value education and so put much effort into supporting their children's education. She added, parents who do not value education will surely not show interest in their children's education because it demands a lot from a parent to educate a child (A verbatim expression by parent 6).*

For Research Question 1, the results suggest that parents perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include monitoring children's progress, communicating children's performance with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children.

Apparently, parents' understanding on parental interest was sought, per the various explanations, it was revealed that, some parents understood parental interest as the way parents show care and concern towards their children's education and having so much knowledge about what is meant by educating a child and making plans towards it accordingly. Another understood it as giving the children an opportunity to attend school to the highest level without hindering them. And also coaching them as parents as to what course to offer rightly according to their abilities. The fifth parent said, the interest of parents is the value parents place on education and so put some much effort into supporting their children.

The Smith Family CEO Wendy Field (2015) said, "*Parents do not need to be experts- they just have to show an interest and be engaged in their child's education p.11*".

The way parents relate with their children influence them because showing interest in

the studies of a child gives the child a good start up for life. Positively, the child's life is influenced such that, the high expectation of parents that their children become better than them eventually happens. Parental interest also has to do with supporting what the child is taught in the classroom with some activities that includes learning in the family. The revealing fact is that, parents need to be authentically interested and keenly engaged in their child's education to grant their children a better hope for the future.

The position of these participants is supported by Sayed (2002) who obviously regarded parental involvement as communicating with teachers. It is the responsibility of parents to provide important contextual information to teachers about the developmental characteristics of their children (Christenson & Nicholas, 2005). It is also worthwhile for parents to have adequate data about the children's academic achievements. All these activities go in a long way in providing some appreciable sense of bondage between the school and parents of children.

Another role reported was payment of fees. Parents could develop negative attitude towards the education of children due financial obligations. Emerson and Einfeld (2010) agreed that some parents find themselves overwhelmed by various basic needs and educational responsibilities of their children. Such parents are more unlikely to honour all financial obligations to the school to keep their children in school. Surprisingly, this position appears to be associated with a male parent. This explains why some fathers relatively do not involve themselves in the education of their children beyond the payment of school fees. Probably, they are overwhelmed by their other responsibilities. Finally, the study revealed that most parents understand the importance of learning materials in the education of their children. The provision of

these learning materials would facilitate the child's academic progress and the absence of them would impede their functionality in academics.

#### 4.3.2 Research Question 2:

**What inherent factors influence parental involvement in the education of their children in Bolgatanga-East District?**

The research question sought to find out the inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of their children in Bolgatanga-East District. The analysis is in frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of their children**

Statements	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
Parents have limited access to school decisions.	30	40	45	60
Parents' lack interest in child's education due to work commitment	50	66.7	25	33.3
Parents complaint that they are unable to get reliable data on children from the school	45	60	30	40
Parents' level of education influences parental involvement in their children education.	45	60	30	40
Parents are not financially sound to involve effectively in the education of their children.	35	46.7	40	53.3
<i>Field survey (2021)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>		<i>Percentage = %</i>	

Participants were asked to agree or disagree to the statements measuring the inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of their children. On whether parents have limited access to school decisions, 30(40%) agreed while 45(60%) disagreed. On whether parents' lack interest in child's education due to work

commitment, 50(66.7%) agreed while 25(33.3%) disagreed. On whether parents complain about the difficulties in getting reliable data on children from the school, 45(60%) agreed while 30(40%) disagreed. Regarding whether parents level of education influences parental involvement in their children education, 45 (60%) agreed while 30 (40%) disagreed. Finally, on whether parents are not financially sound to involve effectively in the education of their children, 40(53.3%) agreed while 35(46.7%) disagreed.

The parents' perspectives on this theme were also elicited to answer the research question. Significant among them are reported below:

“There are many decisions taken by the school which parents were not consulted. If we are indeed stakeholders of the school, then things must change for the better “(A verbatim response from parent 1)

One parent responded that,

*The interest I have in educating my children enables me to strive hard to provide whatever my children ask for that is in support of their education all alone without any support from their father. This causes me to sometimes go out and borrow money for their use as pocket money in school since I do not want them to absent themselves from school (A verbatim expression by a parent 2).*

A parent responded that,

*I am educated so my interest helps me show concern in the education of my child thereby providing his needs such as buying both text and exercise books which is supposed to be the government's responsibility, payment of P.T.A dues and other levies, provision of school uniform for the children anytime the need arise, Teaching the child at home, helping the child do his or her homework, Finding out what the child learnt at school, checking on the child's performance in class from the teacher and finding a good teacher to teach the child at home after school, and provision of pocket money whenever he is going to school ( Verbatim expression by parent 3).*

Another parent responded,

*“My interest influences me to provide every need of my daughter both at home and in school so she can concentrate and study hard. I also finding out from the child the challenges she faces in school. Even though she is not my own daughter, I cannot seat and watch her waste her life all because she is an orphan. She is a female like me and just as I was not hindered from being educated years ago, I cannot allow her to stay home. I am ready to give her my full support” (A verbatim expression by a parent 4).*

Powell, Son, File and San Juan (2010) posited that parent -school relationship has two dimensions: parents’ school involvement and parents’ perceptions of teacher responsiveness to children. Parents’ involvement at home, their educational level and families, influence the involvement of parents on their children’s academic outcomes.

Here are some responses from them:

A parent answered:

*“When I’m invited to meetings of the school that involve the gathering of parents, I feel honored and belonging. This serves as a motivation factor to me and keeps me on my toes to provide the educational needs of my daughters that is within my limit because I feel am known by the teachers and if I do not provide I was going to disgrace myself before them” (A verbatim expression by parent 5).*

Another parent responded:

*The performance of my son influences me a lot. When he performs well in school I feel encouraged to help him in both his studies at home and also provide his educational needs but when he drops in his performance it makes me more reluctant and sometimes desire to withdraw from some of the activities that keeps me more involvement (A verbatim expression by parent 6).*

A parent says:

*“My involvement is influenced by the constant advice and motivation that I receive from my ward’s teachers, which has kept me on till now. I’m also influenced for the fact that my continuous involvement will not be in vain but will lead to the brightness of my ward’s future” (A verbatim expression by parent 2).*

One parent also said:

*Seeing my child improves daily in writing and reading influence and motivates me to involve myself in his education. Teacher unfriendliness and poor performance of my child will be the negative aspect that will deter me from involving myself (A verbatim expression by parent 4).*

Another parent retorted:

*“When I see my daughter perform well in school and sticks to her studies seriously, I always have the urge to involve myself in her education no matter the situation at hand. I will be negatively influenced when teachers begin to discriminate among we the parents and the learners as well on whom to be communicating with frequently and which child to give more love and attention to most” (A verbatim expression by parent 1).*

The results suggest that some identifiable school constraints and attitudinal barriers are major influencers of parental involvement in the education of their children. A cursory survey of the data suggests that certain policies and procedures within the school establishment are influencing the extent to which parents get involved in the education of children. The parents felt that the school and teachers are not giving them the needed chance to fully participate in the education of their children beyond the home. Probably, some teachers may feel that their work must be protected against unwarranted intrusions from parents. This may lead to the creation of difficult conditions for parental involvement. Such teachers may only invite parents only when there is a problem concerning the child (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

According to the data gathered from the responses of the participant, it was also clear that, all the parents who participated in the study have specific factors that negatively or positively influence their involvement in the education of their children. It seems evident from the responses that some of the factors influencing the involvement of the participants in the education of their children are summarized in three categories these are the academic performance of their children, the school relationship with parents and students and the attitude of teachers towards parent of children. Mwoma (2009) indicated that, parent-child conversation, parents visits to school to collect relevant information, dialoguing with teachers on children's improvement or to discuss developing problems faced by their children in school have positive effect on children's educational growth and performance. A research by Chowa et. al. (2012) in Ghana, explained that Ghanaian parents frequently have engaged in the education of their children's learning in one form or another. In addition, parents' involvement in the school setting appears to be high in school meetings, attendance, and discussion of their expectations with their children while others never help their children directly with homework. This is because such meetings were frequently obligatory and also to accrue penalties if they refused to attend.

#### **4.3.3 Research Question 3:**

**What mechanisms can be put in place to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of their children in Bolgatanga-East District?**

This research question explored the mechanisms that could enhance effective parental involvement in the education of children in Bolgatanga-East District. The analysis is described as frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 4.13.



**Table 4.13: Mechanisms to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of their children**

<b>Mechanisms</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Getting parents to attend training programme on how to get involve in their children education.	80	20
There should be parent-teacher collaboration.	100	-
Frequent school durbars and special events should be encouraged in the school.	80	20
Benefits of educating children should be made known to parents in the language they understand.	100	-
Regular updates on the progress made by the child.	66.7	33.3
There must be system of communication where all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents.	60	40
Giving students practical home activities that would require parental involvement.	26.7	73.3
Time for PTA's, open days and durbars should be made flexible to enable parents' active involvement.	66.7	33.3
<i>Field survey (2021)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>	<i>Percentage = %</i>

From Table 13, a total of 60 (80%) of the teachers agreed that parents be made to attend training programmes on how to get involve in their children education while 15(20%) disagreed. Regarding whether there should be parent-teacher collaboration, 75 (100%) overwhelmingly agreed to the mechanism. Concerning the organization of frequent school durbars and special events, 60(80%) agreed that it would enhance parental involvement while 15(20%) disagreed. On whether benefits of educating children should be made known to parents in the language they understand, 75(100%) agreed that benefits of educating children should be made known to parents in the language they understand. Regarding regularly updating parents on the progress made

by children, 50(66.7%) agreed that this strategy would enhance parental involvement while 25(33.3%).

Table 4.13 further revealed that 45(60%) agreed that there must be system of communication where all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents while 30(40%) disagreed. Furthermore, a total of 55(73.3%) do not think that by giving students practical home activities, there is going to be effective parental involvement while 20(26.7%). Finally, 50(66.7%) participants agreed that the time for PTA's, open days and durbars should be flexible to enable parents' active involvement while 25 (33.3%) disagreed.

The parents' views were also used to answer the research question. The narrative accounts from of the parents are presented below;

“The school should involve parents in the day-to-day affairs of the school since any decision from the school significantly affects my children” (Verbatim response from parent 2).

“PTA meetings, durbar and open days should be organized on holidays to enable us attend fully” (Verbatim response from parent 5).

From the results, it could be seen that the participants agreed to parent-teacher collaboration. Epstein (2001) agreed that there should be educational programmes for parents that give them knowledge, skills and suggestions explaining how they can get involved in their children's education. However, in getting such parents, Van Noort (2001) recommends that there should be an offer of food, incentives and other motivations. Effective educational programme improves parental involvement.

On the part of parents, they want some modifications in the existing structures of the school to enable them to be part of the decision making process and in the organization of special events in the school. This finding supports the assertion by

Epstein (2001) who believed that structures between the school and parents including parent associations and parent-teacher associations have great impact on the home-school relation for educational activities. Schools should be more open to parents, providing detailed progress report on their children.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The study also sought to gain greater understanding of parental involvement by examining the specific aspects of parent involvement that impact academic achievement and identifying the different effects of parent involvement. The study adopted the Ecological Systems Theory, Social Capital Theory, Epstein's Conceptual Model and Cultural Capital Theory and Attrition Theory as its theoretical framework. Pragmatism philosophical paradigm, mixed method approach and a concurrent triangulation design were used for this research. The target population the study was all teachers and parents in Bolgatanga-East District. The simple random sampling was used select 75 teachers while purposive sampling was used to select 6 parents. Interview guide and questionnaires were used to collect data. The data from questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics whereas qualitative content analysis was also employed to analysed the interview data.

The main findings of the study are:

1. Parents of learners in Bolgatanga-East District perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include: monitoring of children's progress, communicating children's conditions with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children.

2. Parental involvement influences the academic performance and practical skills of their children.
3. Identifiable school constraints and attitudinal barriers are major influencers of parental involvement in the education of their children.
4. The study revealed that effective parent-teacher collaboration and parental education would enhance parental involvement.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

1. Regarding the extent which parents involved themselves in the education of their children in Bolgatanga-East District, the study concluded that parents of showed good level of involvement. Only a negligible percentage of parents showed parental involvement below the good level. It was concluded that learners' academic performance and practical skills would improve significantly when parents are much involved in their education.
2. It was also included that the inherent factors to parental involvement are multi-faceted. This means that any attempt to improve upon parental involvement should emanate from different angles.
3. Finally, on mechanism to enhancing parental participation, it can be concluded that both the parents and the school authorities is inevitable.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

1. Based on the findings of the study that parents of Bolgatanga-East District showed good level of involvement it is recommended that parents should continue to play their roles effectively, such as visiting the school to find out the progress of their children, including challenges and prospects. Parental involvement has proved to

promote the academic performance of pupil. This reason, parents should understand that they are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued.

2. Based on the findings of the study that inherent factors to parental involvement are multi-faceted it is recommended that the school authorities should consider parents' view in all important management decisions concerning the school and the wellbeing of the learners. This would make them more involving in the activities of the school and in the education of their children.
3. Meetings, seminars and workshops should be conducted for parents to facilitate parental involvement. Follow-up programs should also be conducted to ensure effective involvement of parents in their childrens' education.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

A similar study can be conducted in other municipalities to find the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of children. This study could not investigate into the effects of parental attitude (both positive and negative) on their children's educational achievement, effects of divorced/step parenting on parental contribution and the kind of parental occupation and its impacts on how parents contribute; which were realized by the researcher as potential factors that could affect parental contribution to education. These are areas that could be investigated in future. This will enable stakeholders to have a comprehensive view about parental involvement in educating the child

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