

NON SCHOLAE,  
SED VITAE  
DISCIMUS

**Parental involvement in single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian  
school-learner households, in Durban, South Africa**

by

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## DECLARATION

**This study represents original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form to another University. Where use was made of the work of others, it has been duly acknowledged in the text.**

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Nirvana Gounden - 37362771

## **DEDICATION**

To my parents, Henry & Rani.

*From the Fairy-tales and Flash-cards to the Stanzas and Soliloquies...*

*Thank you for the education.*

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I would like to thank all the people that helped and supported me with this milestone academic endeavour.

To my brothers, Denzil & Mershen, *from the comradery and compassion to the exploits and explorations...Thank you for my juvenescence.*

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To my husband, Sumir, *from the sapience and support to the love and laughter...  
Thank you for my sparkle.*

## **ABSTRACT**

With the quality of our South African public education system internationally in question we need to look into supplemental ways to improve the education of our country's children. Numerous studies have shown that parental involvement has a positive effect on student academic achievement. This study aimed to quantitatively determine the current extent and types of parental involvement in the education of their school-going children, in single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. This included General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) levels. The method of time-space sampling was used to administer a researcher-created questionnaire – based on Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of involvement – pertaining to parents/guardians in the Durban CBD. The findings of the study resulted in recommendations pertaining to: the aspects of parental involvement that elicited low levels of involvement such as significant numbers of parents from single-parent households indicating that they would attend parent days at school if they were given a choice of possible attendance days; the need to identify and support parents that are unable to participate as much as they would like to by offering transportation for school meetings or activities, including school governing body and budget meetings; and the requests from parents/guardians regarding the use of technology in the form of sms communication in helping them to stay more informed regarding the progress etc. of their child at school.

### **Key terms:**

Parental involvement; Single-parent/guardian households; Two-parent/guardian households; Time-space sampling; Parenting; Communicating; Volunteering; Learning at home; Decision making; Collaborating with community

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANA	Annual national assessment
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
CBD	Central business district
CDC	Centre for disease control
CHE	Council for higher education
DBE	Department of basic education
FET	Further education and training
GET	General education and training
IEC	Independent electoral commission
KMO	Kaiser Meyer Olkin
NSC	National senior certificate
OECD	Organisation for economic co-operation and development
PISA	Programme for international student assessment
PPVT	Peabody vocabulary test
SACMEQ	Southern and eastern Africa consortium for monitoring educational quality
SASA	South African schools act
SEDL	Southwest educational development laboratory
SGB	School governing body
SMS	Short messaging service
SP	Single-parent
SPH	Single-parent household
TERCE	Third regional comparative and explanatory study

TIMSS	Trends in international mathematics and science study
TP	Two-parent
TPH	Two-parent household
VDT	Venue date time
WEF	World economic forum

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

“I believe the children are our future,  
Teach them well and let them lead the way...” (Houston, 1985).

Whitney Houston has never been more prophetic and insightful than in her hit single “Greatest Love of All”. But who was she addressing when she said “teach them well”? Teachers? Schools? Parents? Communities? Or was she perhaps concurring with education specialist Dr Joyce Epstein, in addressing all education stakeholders, when she spoke of the partnership amongst the school, teachers, parents and the community resulting in most effective student learning (Epstein, 1995)? Extensive research, as will be discussed further on, has proven the invaluable contribution that the adequate involvement of parents makes to a child’s educational attainment. This study aims to determine the current levels of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent GET and FET learner households in Durban, South Africa.

With the quality of our public education system internationally in question, “South Africa is almost dead last among 140 countries in terms of its maths and science education, according to the 2015 World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness report.” (News24, 2015). We therefore need to look into supplemental ways to improve the education of our country’s children. From my experience as a mathematics educator of eight years in South Africa’s public education system, I have experienced a great lack of parental involvement at the Durban secondary schools at which I have taught. I have seen first-hand how some school management teams shirk the issue of trying to improve the level of parental involvement in their own schools. Granted, management teams do have a lot on their plates, especially in our secondary schools with the all-important yearly academic matric results – which is the one and only direct reflection upon the school. However, it seems to me that school management teams either lack the time and skills necessary to institute effective parental involvement improvement programs, addressing the issue of parental involvement in a child’s education does not feature high enough on their list of educational importance to do something about it. Let’s, hypothetically, take the latter to be true – this would mean that individual research

studies on this topic must be conducted at each school to highlight the importance of parental involvement to the school management team, for them to maybe do something to improve it. This would be far too costly and time consuming to be effective. The instruction to school management teams needs to come, in a clearly worded plan of action, from a higher authority, from district or provincial level – similar to what the SEDL, an American Research Institute, produces an issue called *SEDL Insights* which outlines district supports that can lay the foundation for high-impact family engagement (SEDL, 2014). At the moment in South Africa, the majority of school governing bodies (one of the means by which parents are to be involved in the school), can be considered to be dysfunctional. The Minister of Basic Education has realised this and has run a few roadshows recently to try to improve parental involvement in our schools. But it can be argued that addressing parents as one big group is not necessarily the most intelligent way forward. Parents, like their children, come from different backgrounds, and they have different barriers to overcome for them to involve themselves in their children’s schooling effectively. The educational authorities of our country need to identify these issues and barriers and subsequently problem solve them. Instruction can then be sent down to school-level to help parents become more involved. This research study aims to contribute to this by first ascertaining the current levels of parental involvement in the city of Durban, the Durban CBD, South Africa.

It has been determined that South Africa has one of the world’s highest percentages of non-marital childbirths and the highest percentage in the world of children living in single-parent households (The Sustainable Demographic Dividend, 2011, p. 33). Research studies have also shown that teachers reported lower levels of school involvement for single-parents (Epstein, 1984; Kohl et al., 1994; Reynolds, 1992; Harvard Family Research Project, 2005).

I propose that in the light of the fact that approximately 63% of South African children do not live in a two-parent home (World Map, 2013) research needs to be done to determine whether or not single parenthood in Durban is associated with lower levels of parental involvement when compared to two-parent households – and what parents/guardians suggest can be done to improve their level of involvement.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

The importance of parental involvement is echoed in the next statement: “While involving parents in school activities has an important social and community function, it is only the engagement of parents in learning in the home that is most likely to result in a positive difference to learning outcomes” (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 277).

A study conducted in the United States by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in 2002, analysed several different pieces of existing research on parent involvement in education from all regions of the United States, from early childhood through high school. Results of the study found that students whose parents are actively involved in their education were more likely to attend school regularly, adapt well to school, take advanced classes and excel academically. These students in America also tended to have had better social skills, and were more likely to graduate from high school and attend post-secondary school (Hinkle, 2013). Further evidence that children learn more when their parents are directly involved in their education comes from another study done in the United States, the Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkin, & Closson (2005) study, which showed that whether construed as home-based behaviours (e.g. helping with homework), school-based activities (e.g. attending school events), or parent-teacher communication (e.g. talking with the teacher about homework), parental involvement has been positively linked to indicators of student achievement, including teacher ratings of student competence, student grades, and achievement test scores.

Student learning is most effective when it is the result of a partnership among the school, teachers, parents and the community (Epstein, 1995). Children of involved parents are more familiar with the tasks required of them at school because parents share this kind of information with them (Pomerantz et al., 2007). A recent study conducted in Limpopo, South Africa by Makgopa & Mokhele (2013) explored teachers’ perceptions regarding parental involvement. Using qualitative research interviews they discussed what teachers thought parental involvement is and how it should be carried out. Their results showed that teachers clearly indicated that parents can indeed be of great help, because it is the parents who can influence certain aspects of the learners’ lives – aspects to which teachers simply do not have access.

The theoretical framework that I based my research on are the six types of parental involvement as outlined by Epstein et al. (2009, pp 61-79). These are:

1. *Parenting* - Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
2. *Communicating* - Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
3. *Volunteering* - Recruit and organise parent help and support.
4. *Learning at home* - Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities.
5. *Decision making* - Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
6. *Collaborating with community* - Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

According to the South African Department of Education (South African Government, 2015), the Minister of education announced, on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015, that the matric pass rate for the National Senior Certificate exams in 2014 was 75.8% for the 688,660 matriculants that wrote. According to statistics from the department of education, for the year 2003, 1,252,071 pupils entered into the South African public schooling system in grade 1 – these pupils would become the class of 2014. This means that only 55% of the learners who started school in 2003 made it through 12 years of education. Approximately 41.7% of learners who started school attained a NSC, while 59.2% did not (BusinessTech, 2015).

According to a 2012 TimesLive article, Minister Angie Motshekga and associates addressing reporters in Pretoria, January 2012 stated that about 30% of the schools in South Africa have dysfunctional governing bodies and this is likely to correlate with dismal exam results and that much of the problems at many government schools are likely the direct result of a lack of parent involvement; where parents cede their responsibility towards their children once they are dropped off at the school gates.

Hosegood, Mcgrath & Moultrie (2009) from fifteen rounds of population-based surveillance data showed that the declines in marriage in KwaZulu-Natal identified in the 1960s have not been reversed but rather the proportion of the adult population ever married has continued to decline between 2000 and 2006. An International Report from the Social Trends Institute showed that children in South Africa are by far the least likely, globally, to live in a two-parent home (58 percent do not) (The Sustainable Demographic Dividend, 2011).

An international study done in eleven countries: United States of America, Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Scotland found that single parenthood is associated with lower math and science achievement among young children (Pong, Dronkers & Hampden-Thompson, 2003). Approximately 63% of South African children do not live in a two-parent home (World Family Map, 2013). This study looked into the matter in South Africa and considered whether single-parent homes is a factor leading to lower levels of parental involvement.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Focussing on parental involvement in South Africa, this study looked at the question of whether single-parent and two-parent households are linked to different extents and types of involvement in GET (Grades 1 – 9) learner and FET (Grades 10 – 12) learner households in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. I examined the current extent and types of parental involvement, under the categories of Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at home, Decision making and Collaborating with the community in the education of their GET (Grades 1 – 9)/ FET (Grades 10 – 12) school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

### **1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

It is the aim of this study to determine, by testing various hypotheses, what is the current extent and types of parental involvement in the education of their GET/FET

school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

The objectives of this study will be to determine what is the current extent and types of parental involvement in single-parent households and two-parent households and whether there is a significant difference in parental involvement across these two family structures, in Durban, South Africa.

It will also be determined whether there are differences in parental involvement in the GET (Grade 1 – 9) level of schooling in single-parent and two-parent households and how these compare and contrast.

It will also be determined whether there are differences in parental involvement in the FET (Grade 10 – 12) level of schooling in single-parent and two-parent households and how these compare and contrast.

It will also be determined whether there is a significant difference in parental involvement in the GET (Grade 1 - 9) and FET (Grade 10 - 12) levels of schooling.

The results of this research, discussed in detail in Chapter 5, could be used by various education stakeholders in the province, including school district managers and school management teams, to address the categories of parental involvement that are found to have lower levels of involvement, regarding parents/guardians from single-parent and two-parent households.

This study which I have conducted involved 101 parents/guardians of GET (General Education and Training GR1 – 9) and FET (Further Education and Training GR10 – 12) learners in the Durban CBD area, regarding their type and extent of the parental involvement they are engaged in. This study will investigate if there is a relationship between single versus two-parent households and the extent (and type) of involvement of the parent in their GET/ FET child's education. Parents/guardians were selected using time-space probability sampling (Parsons, Grov & Kelly, 2008), as is outlined later on.

This was achieved by attempting to answer the outlined sub-questions, using parents/guardians as participants in this research as they are the people most

commonly used, as other successful parental involvement research studies such as Furstenburg (1995) and Singh et al. (2004) have done, to collect information.

**Research questions to guide the study:**

1. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **single-parent households (SPH)** most engaged in?
2. What types of involvement that **parents/guardians** from **two-parent households (TPH)** most engaged in?
3. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians** from **SPH** and **parents/guardians** from **TPH**?
4. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)** most engaged in?
5. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)** most engaged in?
6. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **GET learners compare and contrast**?
7. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)** most engaged in?
8. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)** most engaged in?
9. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **FET learners compare and contrast**?
10. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians of GET learners** and **parents/guardians of FET learners**?

## **1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

This section covers the research design which comprises the research paradigm, the research approach and the research strategy. This section will also cover the research methods which comprises the selection of participants (sampling), the data collection, the data analysis, as well as trustworthiness and ethical considerations for this study.

### **1.5.1 Research design**

For this study, a positivist research paradigm was used and the research approach was a quantitative, non-experimental, survey design. The research type/strategy used is that of descriptive research (used to describe a behaviour or type of subject). The type of descriptive research used was field surveys whereby participants were asked to complete a structured questionnaire. Time-space random sampling was used to select participants, as is explained further on. I used the time-space sampling approach as developed by Semaan et al., 2002.

#### **1.5.1.1 Research paradigm**

The research paradigm in this study is that of positivism. The ultimate proposal of the positivist research paradigm is that “there is an objective reality that can be investigated with the expectation that we will obtain an understanding of reality that we can trust ... to be as close as possible representation of it” (Indiogene, 2010, para. 14). What I tried to do via my research was find out about the reality of connections between types of family structure and types and extent of parental involvement in schooling. I was hoping to come to some understanding of this by organising the questionnaire items to tap into this and by analysing the data in a descriptive fashion.

#### **1.5.1.2 Research approach**

A quantitative, non-experimental, survey research design was adopted for this study. A quantitative research design was chosen as quantitative research designs emphasise objectivity in measuring and describing phenomena. As a result, the research designs maximize objectivity by using numbers, statistics, structure, and control (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 21). A nonexperimental research design

was chosen as it describes a phenomena and examines relationships between different phenomena without any direct manipulation of conditions that are experienced (McMillan, & Schumacher, 2010, p. 22) – an experimental design by contrast manipulates variables in order to examine cause-effect relationships between independent and dependent ones. However, my study did not involve manipulation of any conditions.

A questionnaire (employing both open and closed ended questions) was used because questionnaires are economical, and allowed me to reach a sample of 101 participants, Also, I used standard questions and uniform procedures, which Vaisali notes are usually easy to score and the use of questionnaires provides time for subjects to think about responses (Vaisali, 2015, para. 21).

#### 1.5.1.3 Research type/strategy

Descriptive research was used in this study. The main idea behind using this type of research is to better define an opinion, attitude, or behaviour held by a group of people on a given subject (Fluid Surveys, 2014). In this case I was attempting to describe the behaviour of parents – as self-reported by them via my questionnaire. That is, the questionnaire items asked parents to report on different aspects of their parental involvement and I then analysed their answers in order to generate accounts of links if any between type of family structure and type and extent of parental involvement. So I could then say whether the group of parents who are engaged in single parenting or in dual parenting shared similar responses in terms of involvement in their children's school activities.

### **1.5.2 Research methods**

Below I discuss the selection of participants (sampling), the data collection, the data analysis, the trustworthiness as well as the ethical considerations for this study.

#### 1.5.2.1 Selection of participants/sampling

One sample of 101 parents/guardians was randomly selected in the Durban CBD, using time-space probability sampling as developed by Semaan et al., 2002. A VDT

(Venue, Date, Time) schedule was drawn up and adhered to for the purpose of participant selection. This will be detailed in Chapter 3.

#### 1.5.2.2 Data collection

The researcher-constructed questionnaire for this study is based on the six types of parental involvement by Joyce Epstein (2009). I have constructed the question items afresh, bearing in mind her six types of parental involvement. This theoretical framework has been used successfully in numerous other South African educational studies involving parental involvement (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2006; Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Makgopa & Makhele, 2013). The questionnaires to these parents/guardians were administered at pre-determined times and venues, after the participants answered a few qualifying questions, either in person, or via the telephone (i.e. a mixed-mode strategy).

#### 1.5.2.3 Data analysis

All questionnaires were sorted and coded (Please see Appendix II). The data from the questionnaires was transferred into Microsoft Excel™.

For each strategy, the highest possible response was “Always”, and it received a value of five. The lowest possible response was “Never”, and it received a value of one. A response of two, three, or four indicated a response between the “Never” and “Always” response level, which were labelled as “Rarely”, “Sometimes” and “Very often”, respectively. Each category was then given a raw score by totalling the values indicated in the questions that were mapped to each of the six categories. These scores were then arranged in ascending order and the frequencies of total scores were tabulated for each category. Microsoft Excel™ Data Analysis ToolPak™ was the statistical package used to analyse the data.

For research sub questions 1; 2; 4, 5, 7 and 8, descriptive tests such as calculation of means, totals, standard deviation and distribution curves was done for each of the six involvement categories. Data on parental involvement obtained are presented in the form of histograms for each denomination i.e. Single-parent/guardian households, Two-parent/guardian households, Single-parent/guardian GET households, Two-parent/guardian GET households, Single-parent/guardian FET households, Two-

parent/guardian FET households, parent/guardian GET households as well as for parent/guardian FET households. For research sub questions 3 and 10, means and standard deviations were calculated for each family structure and an independent samples t-test determined whether the differences between them are statistically significant. For research sub questions 6 and 9, ANOVA was used within each family structure to determine any significant differences in the parent population, single-parent/guardian households versus two-parent/guardian households for both GET and FET levels. Questions 34 and 35 were analysed to provide more depth to the data.

#### 1.5.2.4 Trustworthiness

The validity of the questionnaire was tested using factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and Bartlett's test were performed to test the construct validity. The KMO values for Parent involvement Type 1 (*Parenting*), Type 2 (*Communicating*), Type 3 (*Volunteering*), Type 4 (*Learning at Home*) and Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) were found to be at "meritorious" levels of validity, with KMO values > 0.8 and parent involvement Type 5 (*Decision making*) was found to be at a "marvellous" level of validity with the KMO value being >0.9. The Bartlett's Sphericity test was calculated to be <0.005 which together with the KMO results prove the construct validity. Content validity was enhanced by using a wide variety of parent involvement activities in the survey to represent all facets of parental involvement. To also reinforce the validity of the instruments, the anonymity of the subjects was kept throughout the research process.

The reliability of the instruments was determined by utilising Cronbach's alpha to find the internal consistency of the survey. The reliability of the survey was calculated as,  $\alpha = 0.889$ . Due to the values found using Cronbach's alpha, a measure of reliability, the results were deemed reliable.

I was hoping that I could be as objective as possible by avoiding the use of subjective language, leading questions, or double-barrelled questions in the construction of the questionnaire itself.

#### 1.5.2.5 Ethical considerations

##### *Informed Consent*

All respondents were asked to give their informed consent before participating in

the research. I informed the respondents of the study's purpose of determining the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa, content, duration, and potential risks and benefits. Before requesting completion of the questionnaire, I informed the respondents, verbally, that they did not have to answer all the survey questions. I also, verbally, informed the respondents that they could stop participating in the study at any point.

#### *Confidentiality*

I kept all respondents' identities confidential. Respondents were not asked to divulge any personal identifiers such as Name, Identity number etc.

#### *Anonymity*

Anonymity of respondents is ensured by the fact that the researcher is unable to link respondents' names to their surveys.

## **1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION**

The chapters of this dissertation are presented as follows:

### *Chapter 1 Overview*

The first chapter provides an introduction and the background to the research. The problem statement, aims and objectives are also presented. An explanation of the research design and methods follows. This includes the research paradigm, research approach, research type/strategy, selection of participants/sampling, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the data and the ethical considerations in the study.

### *Chapter 2 Parental involvement*

The second chapter serves as a review of the literature on parental involvement. The contextual framework and the conceptual framework, which comprises information on Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of involvement, of the research study follows. Thereafter I discuss the theoretical framework which has subsections (based in relevant literature) of the following:

- parental involvement and academic achievement;

- parental involvement in single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households;
- parental involvement and age of child (with GET and FET SA school completion statistics); and
- SA scholastic performance – ANA/ TIMSS/ SACMEQ and parental involvement in mathematics achievement.
- Lastly, the priorities for empirical investigation are mentioned.

### *Chapter 3* Research design and methods

The third chapter details the rationale for empirical research, the research design, the research paradigm, the research approach and the research type/ strategy. The research method is then presented and includes the selection of participants/respondents/sampling, the data collection, the data analysis, the measures for trustworthiness and the ethical measures undertaken. Finally, the procedures for data processing and data interpretation are described.

### *Chapter 4* Data analysis and interpretation

The fourth chapter details the research process and the data analysis. The biographical data of the participants in the study are presented and all research sub-questions are dealt with by presenting data in the forms of figures and tables. A synthesis of the open-ended questions and all interpretation of the data follows. A summary of the chapter and concluding remarks for the chapter are also presented.

### *Chapter 5* Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The fifth chapter presents a summary of the research findings, the research conclusions, recommendations and avenues for further research. This chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and ends with the concluding remarks for the study.

### *References*

A list of references used in the study are provided.

## **CHAPTER 2: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

According to Rose, Gallup & Elam (1997), lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing public schools. Rose et al. based this pronouncement on their annual survey research that measures Americans' opinions of K-12 public schools in the U.S. and addresses key issues facing public education in the country, such as preparation for college and career, the achievement gap, learning assessment, and the general perception of the state of public education.

South Africa has one of the world's highest percentages of non-marital childbirths and the highest percentage in the world of children living in single-parent households (The Sustainable Demographic Dividend, 2011). As will be discussed in this chapter in more detail, will be parental involvement research across the globe and also in South Africa Ginther & Pollak, 2004; Manning & Lamb, 2003; Epstein, 1984; Kohl et al., 1994; Reynolds, 1992; Myers & Myers, 2015, have shown that single-parent households, when compared to two-parent households, have a more negative effect on student academic achievement. This study will look to identify the current levels of parental involvement, in both single and two-parent households at present in Durban, South Africa. According to the National Household Education Surveys Program of 2012, the most common school-related activity that parents reported participating in during the school year was attending a general school or a parent-teacher organization or association (PTO/PTA) meeting (87 percent) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). This study will go one step further and also seek to identify the types of parental involvement, in GET and FET student households in Durban, South Africa. That is, it will seek to identify the types of parents/guardians and the specific areas of their parental involvement that need to be addressed.

### **2.2 CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an organisation that is a source for information on the state of education around the world.

It provides data on the output of educational institutions; the impact of learning across countries; the financial and human resources invested in education; access, participation and progression in education; and the learning environment and organisation of schools.

The 2015 edition, which is entitled *Education at a Glance*, introduces more detailed analysis of parental participation in early childhood and tertiary levels of education. The report also examines first generation tertiary-educated adults' educational and social mobility, labour market outcomes for recent graduates, and participation in employer-sponsored formal and/or non-formal education. Readiness to use information and communication technology for problem solving in teaching and learning is also examined. The report covers all 34 OECD countries and a number of partner countries (Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, and for the first time, Costa Rica and Lithuania). The maths and science rankings were based on a combination of international assessments, the OECD's PISA test (which, according to Wikipedia (2015) is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and is a worldwide study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations of 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance on mathematics, science, and reading), the TIMSS tests and TERCE (Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study) tests conducted in Latin America.

The TIMSS study showed South Africa's maths and science education has been shown to be among the worst in the world – placing at number 75 of the 76 countries involved (OECD iLibrary, 2015). The paper examined the extent to which parental involvement matters not only in terms of cognitive skills – as measured by reading proficiency at age 15, but also whether students who have parents with higher levels of involvement are better equipped to continue learning throughout their lives. PISA found that certain activities were more strongly related to better student performance than others such as talking with adolescents about topical political or social issues are shown to have a positive impact on children's learning. My research looked at identifying the types of parental involvement that parents/guardians in single-parent and two-parent households are involved in, in Durban, South Africa.

The OECD report found that some parents believe that once their child begins formal schooling, only teachers are responsible for educating them. But education is a shared responsibility; and results from the PISA study's parent involvement questionnaires, which comprised questions similar to Epstein et al. (2009) six types of involvement, to parents in 70 countries, show that even older students benefit when their parents are actively engaged in their education (OECD, 2012). The conclusions drawn from the PISA tests are relevant to the South African education system even though South Africa was not part of this specific global study.

According to the South African Department of Education, the matric pass rate for the National Senior Certificate exams in 2014 was 75.8% for the 688,660 matriculants that wrote. According to statistics from the department of education, in 2003, 1,252,071 pupils entered into the South African public schooling system in grade 1 – these pupils would become the class of 2014. This means that only 55% of the learners who started school in 2003 made it through 12 years of education. This means that only around 41.7% of learners who started school attained a NSC, while 59.2% did not (BusinessTech, 2015, para.6).

According to a 2012 TimesLive article, Minister Angie Motshekga and associates addressing reporters in Pretoria, January 2012 stated that about 30% of the schools in South Africa have dysfunctional governing bodies and this is likely to correlate with dismal exam results and that much of the problems at many government schools are likely the direct result of a lack of parent involvement, where parents cede their responsibility towards their children once they are dropped off at the school gates. An adequate number of parents must be present at specific governing body meetings such as election meetings and budget meetings for the meeting to continue. If the number of parents present does not constitute an adequate quorum, then the meeting is postponed or cancelled. This is one way that governing bodies can be seen as being dysfunctional.

The Minister's plan to remedy this situation was to introduce stricter guidelines for the election of governing body members (Times Live, 2012). She said in her Statement at media launch of School Governing Body (SGB) elections, Pretoria: "The President called on all our teachers, learners and parents to work together with government to turn our schools into thriving centres of excellence. It is precisely in pursuance of this

national imperative that we welcome the critical role of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in SGB elections” (PoliticsWeb, 2012). According to the Western Cape Government, regarding School Governing Bodies, it says that the School Governing Body (SGB) is a statutory body of parents, educators, non-teaching staff and learners (from Grade 8 or higher) who seek to work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the school community and thereby enhance learning and teaching. Section 20 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended (SASA) determines various functions applicable to all SGBs (Acts online, 2015). From my personal experience as an educator in a public school over the past eight years, it is a common occurrence for SGB elections and budget meetings to be cancelled or postponed due to lack of a quorum, of parents in general, not necessarily just those serving on the School Governing Bodies, at these meetings. Attendance by parents, whether elected or not, at SGB meetings is poor.

This is a problem that the Department of Basic Education has recognised and SGB roadshows, fronted by the Minister of Education, were held in provinces around the country early in 2015, to create awareness amongst parents about the SGB elections and to stress upon the community the importance of taking part in these elections (KZN Department of Education, 2015). This is a step in the right direction, by the Department of Education, in trying to increase parental involvement in South African schools, as the importance of parental involvement in the South African education system is echoed in the findings of the next study. Msila and Netshitangani (2015) reported on the findings of a study that was conducted in a South African rural area. The study was conducted as principals raised concerns about the conspicuous absence of parents in school governance and they attributed underperformance of their schools’ effectiveness to this. The qualitative study sought to determine how parents saw their role in governance and management by investigating what the district officials, principals and their school management teams expected from parents. The parents highlighted a number of aspects on what could be done to involve them, including the use of traditional leaders in fostering collaboration. My research too, looked at the issue of parental involvement from the perspectives of the parents/guardians, themselves, in an attempt to determine the current levels of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent GET and FET learner households in Durban, South Africa.

A recent study conducted in Limpopo, South Africa by Makgopa & Mokhele (2013) explored teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement. Using qualitative research interviews they discussed what teachers thought parental involvement is and how it should be carried out. Their results showed that teachers clearly indicated that parents can indeed be of great help, because it is the parents who can influence certain aspects of the learners' lives – aspects to which teachers simply do not have access.

A study conducted in 2011 by American Associates found that more than 60 percent of parents reported being involved with their child's homework once a week and 35 percent indicated being involved every day or more than once a week. Only four percent said they are never involved in their child's homework (American Associates, 2011). My research aims to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa, which includes parent/guardian involvement in their children's homework – Epstein's Type 4 of her Framework of Six Types of Involvement (Epstein et al., 2009). Lemmer and Van Wyk (2006) examined school practices of home-school communication in South African primary schools using quantitative data derived from a survey of primary schools and qualitative data derived from interviews held with a small sample of primary school principals who also participated in the survey. The aims in their research endeavour were twofold: to explore the nature, frequency and effectiveness of home-school communication practices, and to make recommendations how home-school communication could be improved to facilitate better home-school partnerships. They found that virtually all the respondents (94.6%) reported that their schools regularly communicated with the home in writing about school matters however their survey showed that only two-thirds of the schools (66.1%) held regular parent-teacher conferences where parents could meet class or subject teachers and view learners' work. My research study looked at the current levels of parental involvement from the perspectives of the parents/guardians in Durban, South Africa.

## **2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework that I will be basing my research on are the six types of parental involvement as outlined by Epstein (2009, pp. 61-79). These are:

Type 1 – *Parenting* – “Help all families establish home environments to support children as students. Sample practices include suggestions for home conditions that support learning at each grade level; Workshops, videotapes, computerised phone messages on parenting and child rearing at each age and grade level; Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credit, family literacy.); Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services; Home visits at transition points to pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school. Neighbourhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families” (Epstein, 2009, p. 61).

Type 2 – *Communicating* – “Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress. Sample practices include Conferences with every parent at least once a year, with follow-ups as needed; Language translators to assist families as needed; Weekly or monthly folders of student work sent home for review and comments; Parent/student pickup of report card, with conferences on improving grades; Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications; Clear information on choosing schools or courses, programs, and activities within schools; Clear information on all school policies, programs, reforms, and transitions.” (Epstein, 2009, p. 64)

Type 3 – *Volunteering* – “Recruit and organise parent help and support. Sample practices include school and classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents; Parent room or family centre for volunteer work, meetings, resources for families; Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers; Class parent, telephone tree, or other structures to provide all families with needed information; Parent patrols or other activities to aid safety and operation of school programs.” (Epstein, 2009, p. 68)

Type 4 – *Learning at Home* – “Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning. Sample practices include information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade; Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home; Information on how to assist students to improve skills on various class and school assessments; Regular schedule

of homework that requires students to discuss and interact with families on what they are learning in class; Calendars with activities for parents and students at home; Family math, science, and reading activities at school; Summer learning packets or activities; Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.” (Epstein, 2009, p. 72)

Type 5 – *Decision Making* – “Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives. Sample practices include Active PTA/PTO or other parent organisations, advisory councils, or committees (e.g., curriculum, safety, personnel) for parent leadership and participation; Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements; District-level councils and committees for family and community involvement; Information on school or local elections for school representatives; Networks to link all families with parent representatives.” (Epstein, 2009, p. 76)

Type 6 – *Collaborating with the community* – “Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development. Sample practices include Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs or services; Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students; Service integration through partnerships involving school; civic, counselling, cultural, health, recreation, and other agencies and businesses; Service to the community by students, families, and schools (e.g., recycling, art, music, drama, and other activities for seniors or others); Participation of alumni in school programs for students.” (Epstein, 2009, p. 79)

The researcher-generated questionnaire for this study is based on these six types of parental involvement by Epstein et al. (2009). I have constructed the question items afresh, bearing in mind her six types of parental involvement. This conceptual framework has been used successfully, by also generating questions based on Epstein’s Framework of Six Types of Involvement, in numerous other South African educational studies involving parental involvement (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2006; Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Makgopa & Makhele, 2013).

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this section I refer to research around the issue of parental involvement and its potential link to academic achievement of learners. I refer to research done in countries in various parts of the globe and also in South Africa.

### **2.4.1 Parental Involvement and academic achievement**

In a study in 1997 undertaken in the USA, Rose et al. (1997) found that 86% of the American general public believes that support from parents is the most important way to improve the schools (Rose, Gallup & Elam, 1997). This is consistent with Williams & Chavkin, who from their analysis of interviews and reports of parent involvement programs in the South-West states of America, found that for the better achievement of students, the more parents participate in schooling in a sustained way, at every level - in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fund-raisers and boosters, as volunteers and para-professionals, and as home teachers, the better the students performed (Williams & Chavkin, 1989). More recently, Ross (2016) study on the differential effects of parental involvement on high school completion and postsecondary attendance found that parent participation in school functions to be a significant positive predictor of both high school completion and postsecondary enrolment.

Research, in the United States of America, evaluating the effects of intervention programs (including early childhood and preschool programs to help elementary and middle schools work more closely with families, and high school programs and community efforts to support families in providing wider opportunities for young people) and studies on the way that families behave and interact with their children in terms of involvement in schooling indicate that when parents are involved in their children's education at home, by creating a home environment that encourages learning, by expressing high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers as well as by becoming involved in their children's education at school and in the community, suggest that their children do better in school (Henderson & Berla, 1994). Similar results were found by Wang, Haertel & Walberg (1997), when analysing 11 000 statistical findings regarding school-level student learning, comprising handbook chapters and reviews, research syntheses and

educational researcher surveys, in the United States. They found that the home environment (parental involvement ensuring the completion of homework) had a greater influence on learning than did student demographics (socioeconomic status).

According to Jeynes (2010, p. 291), Walberg's productivity model serves as a general framework to understand family influences. Factors such as ability and motivation are influenced directly by parents and the students, particularly in the home environment (Walberg, 1984). Parents can directly influence the student by altering two factors, namely home environment and time spent outside of school (e.g. monitoring television and extra-curricular activities). Walberg's (1984) study, based on Walberg's nine-factor productivity model, revealed that family participation in elementary and high school education, when looking at factors influencing learning, including student characteristics such as: ability; development and motivation; instructional factors (e.g. the quantity and quality of the learning experience); and environmental factors such as the home, the classroom social group, the peer group outside school and the use of out of school time, were considerably predictive of students' academic success.

My research will aim to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa across Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of parental involvement. Two types of this framework that relate to parental involvement in the home are Type 1 (*Parenting*) which concerns parents/guardians establishing home environments that support children as students and Type 4 (*Learning at Home*) which concerns parents/guardians helping students with homework and other curriculum related activities were used to develop questions for the questionnaire that was used in this research study. Although most parents do not know how to help their children with their education, with guidance and support, they may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for and to guide their children (Roberts, 1992).

Children of involved parents are more familiar with the tasks required of them at school because parents share this kind of information with them (Pomerantz et al., 2007). Student learning is most effective when it is the result of a partnership among the school, teachers, parents and the community (Epstein, 1995). Four types of Epstein's (2009) framework that relates to this statement are Type 2 (*Communicating*) which concerns school to home communications about school programs and children's

progress; Type 3 (*Volunteering*) which concerns parent help and support at school; Type 5 (*Decision making*) which concerns involvement in school decisions such as governing body elections and meetings as well as budget meetings; Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) which concerns involvement in services and resources from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development. The questionnaire for this research study was therefore based on all six types of Epstein's (2009) framework of parental involvement in order to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa.

A meta-analysis undertaken by Jeynes (2007) which comprised an overall measure of all components of academic achievement in the United States of America combined the following: grades; standardised tests; and other measures that generally included teacher rating scales and learner behaviours. This meta-analysis indicated that the influence of parental involvement overall is significant, regarding educational outcomes, for secondary school children. Another meta-analysis undertaken by Wilder (2014) synthesised the results of meta-analyses that examined the impact of parental involvement on student academic achievement, and identified generalisable findings across the meta-analyses regarding the relationship between these two construct searches of major databases. There were 51 studies that met the required criteria and that examined the relationship between parental involvement programs and the academic achievement in pre-K to 12th grade. Their results also indicated that there was a positive relationship between parental involvement programs and the academic success of students.

A study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in the United States of America, 2002, analysed several different pieces of existing research on parent involvement in education. Results of the study also found that students whose parents are actively involved in their education are more likely to attend school regularly, adapt well to school, take advanced classes and excel academically. These students also tend to have better social skills, and are more likely to graduate from high school and attend post-secondary school (Hinkle, 2013). Further evidence that children learn more when their parents are directly involved in their education comes from research undertaken in the United States of America Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkin, & Closson (2005). Their study showed that whether construed as home-based behaviours (e.g. helping with homework), school-based

activities (e.g. attending school events), or parent-teacher communication (e.g. talking with the teacher about homework), parental involvement has been positively linked to indicators of student achievement, including teacher ratings of student competence, student grades, and achievement test scores.

The importance of parental involvement is echoed in the next statement : “While involving parents in school activities has an important social and community function, it is only the engagement of parents in learning in the home that is most likely to result in a positive difference to learning outcomes” (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Their conclusion, however, is in stark contrast to the findings of the studies mentioned above which does not state that just one type of parental involvement alone is most likely to result in a positive difference to learning outcomes.

Hence, my research study included all types of parental involvement as laid out by Epstein et al. (2009) in her framework of six types of involvement. I, however, looked to see if indeed learning at home, or any of the other factors is more influential as a factor than any of the other types of involvement in Durban, South Africa.

#### **2.4.2 Parental Involvement in Single-parent/guardian and Two-parent/guardian households**

The family makes critical contributions to student achievement from pre-school through high school. A home environment that encourages learning, by the creation of a home environment that supports children’s learning, is more important to student achievement than income, education level, or cultural background (Henderson & Berla, 1994). Most students at all levels – elementary, middle, and high school – as indicated by their own self- reports, want their families to be more knowledgeable partners about schooling. However, students need much better information and guidance than most now receive about how their schools view partnerships and about how they can conduct important exchanges with their families about school activities, homework, and school decisions. (Epstein, 1995). This study, thus aimed to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa.

Individuals from intact families (two-parent households) completed, on average, more years of schooling and were also more likely to graduate from high school, attend college, and complete college compared to peers raised in single-parent families (Ginther & Pollak, 2004). It was determined by the 2004 Page and Stevens study into

the economic consequences of absent parents that financial resources are increased by marriage. It can thus be proposed that two-parent families, due to the potential increase in finances and leisure time would be in a better position to provide their children with the resources and home environment they need to develop properly (Thomson, Hanson, and McLanahan 1994), and hence better achieve academically (Gershoff, Aber, Raver, and Lennon 2007; Linver, Brooks-Gunn, and Kohen 2002). This study will examine this contention in the context of South Africa, with reference to the Durban area.

On the Peabody Vocabulary Test (PPVT), an indicator of cognitive development, children living in married-parent families with stepfathers and those living with married biological parents in the United States of America performed similarly; however, compared to adolescents in married biological-parent families, those living in single-mother families or those living with single mothers and their cohabiting partners tended to fare worse on the PPVT (Manning & Lamb, 2003).

Teachers often think that low-income parents and single-parents will not or cannot spend as much time helping their children at home as do middle-class parents with more education and leisure time (Rose, Gallup & Elam, 1997; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Walberg, 1984; Williams & Chavkin, 1989). As with school-based involvement, it can be the teachers who hesitate to give these children (*those of single-parents*) work to take home, wrongly fearing that the parents will not be available to help. However, when teachers reach out to parents, these parents are generally more than willing to help. More impressive, when teachers help parents to help their children, these parents can be as effective with their children as those parents with more education and leisure, whom teachers expect to help their children (Epstein, 1984, April).

I will aim with this research study to determine the current levels of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, across the six types of involvement in order to determine more specifically the levels of involvement in each type of parental involvement aspect for each type of family structure.

Epstein in 1984 determined that single-parents felt more pressure than did married parents to be involved with their children in learning activities at home. Married parents spent more time assisting teachers at school. Single-parents had better relations with

teachers whose philosophy and practices lead them toward more positive attitudes about parents. She also found that teacher leadership, not parent marital status, influenced parent awareness, appreciation of teachers' efforts, and knowledge about the school program. In fact, low-income single and working parents often can and do spend as much time helping their children at home as do middle-class parents with more education and leisure (Epstein, 1984). There is contention in the literature here, and my study examines this further.

There have, however been numerous research studies, in which teachers reported lower levels of school involvement for single-parents (Epstein, 1984; Kohl et al., 1994; Reynolds, 1992). Jafarov's (2015) study which examined the factors affecting parental involvement by evaluating and analysing literature about parental involvement in education concluded that family structure is a factor that affects the level of parental involvement. This study will similarly look at levels of parental involvement, but from the perspectives of the parents in Durban, South Africa themselves, for which there isn't much data on parent's/guardian's perspectives in South Africa. Taking into account research such as that of Epstein that states that single parenting does not necessarily mean less involvement (in various forms of involvement) – this is what I will be examining in this research study more closely now.

Hosegood, Mcgrath & Moultrie (2009) from fifteen rounds of population-based surveillance data showed that the declines in marriage in KwaZulu-Natal identified in the 1960s have not been reversed but rather the proportion of the adult population ever married has continued to decline between 2000 and 2006. An International Report from the Social Trends Institute showed that children in South Africa are by far the least likely to live in a two-parent home (58 percent do not) (The Sustainable Demographic Dividend, 2011).

An international study done in eleven countries: United States, Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Scotland found that single-parenthood is associated with lower math and science achievement among young children (Pong, Dronkers & Hampden-Thompson, 2003). Again, there is contention that exists in the research regarding single-parenthood and academic achievement of children, which is why this research study is delving into this topic in Durban, South Africa. Approximately 63% of South African children do not live in a

two-parent home (World Family Map, 2013). Could the increasing single-parenthood in South Africa be a possible factor leading to lower levels of parental involvement experienced? In the light of various differing views as expressed in previous research I delve further into this.

### **2.4.3 Parental Involvement and Age of child (with GET and FET SA school completion statistics)**

Despite the finding that parental involvement in both primary and secondary schooling is helpful for student achievement, it has been found in various research studies across the globe that parental involvement actually declines as students grow older (Stouffer, 1992; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mutua & Sunal, 2004, Child Trends, 2013; Public Agenda, 2015; Perriel, 2015). According to Spera (2005), by the time a child reaches secondary school there is a decline in parental involvement in the educational process.

According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2012, p. 6): “When parents are involved in a school’s adolescent education strategies, teenagers are less likely to be at risk for adverse educational outcomes”. – Could a lack of parental involvement in South Africa be contributing to the adverse educational outcomes of the ANA tests (ANA report, South Africa, 2014) as well as those beyond our borders like the SACMEQ and TIMSS?

In the United States of America, Epstein found that school activities to develop and maintain partnerships with families decline with each grade level, and drop dramatically at the transition to middle grades (Epstein, 1992). Although reasons for this are multiple and varied, this fact cannot be ignored. This research aimed to consider this in the context of South Africa, by including GET and FET learner-households in terms of parental involvement.

As mentioned earlier, one of Epstein’s six types of parent involvement is: “Learning at Home. Involve families with their children in academic learning at home, including homework, goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities. Encourage teachers to design homework that enables students to share and discuss interesting tasks.” (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). The assistance of teachers to involve parents in their

children's learning is of great importance, especially in the higher grades as parent involvement is proven to drop. This study will attempt to determine the current levels of parental involvement across each of the six types of involvement in order to determine which types of involvement and at which levels, i.e. the GET/FET levels that involvement is to be found to be lower so that informed decisions can be made to improve levels of involvement where necessary. Parental involvement is necessitous to their children's academic achievement. This study will also thus look at parental involvement across the spheres of GET (General Education and Training – Grade 1 to Grade 9) and FET (Further Education and Training – Grade 10 – Grade 12) in Durban. The "real" matric pass rate or the throughput-pass-rate is about 36% for 2014, down from 40% in 2013. The through-put pass rate is calculated as the number of students who started school in 2003 and who passed matric in 2014 (Africa Check, 2015).

"Low quality education combined with high and lenient grade progression up until grade 11 means that when a standardised assessment occurs, i.e. the Matric examination, this serves to filter a large proportion of weak students out of further attainment. Many of those who do attain a Matric Certificate are still not able to gain entrance into tertiary institutions. Therefore, low-quality education up until grade 11 can be regarded as the root cause of low attainment beyond grade 11." (Van der Berg et al., 2011). Rumberger and Thomas (2000) found, in urban and suburban high schools in the United States of America, that the higher the quality of the teachers as perceived by the students, the lower the dropout rate. The highest drop-out rates, in South African public schooling occur in Grades 10 and 11 (Department of Basic Education, 2013). Reasons for these high dropout rates, are stated in the Department's report as due to inadequate early learning achievement "assessments reflect that our children are taking far too long to acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills". In the way of remedies to the situation, they cite targeting teacher development programmes, remedial education programmes to assist the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy in the early grades and the strengthening of recent initiatives such as the Annual National Assessments and the DBE Workbook programme. Masitsa (2006, p. 175) cited inadequate parental support as a frequent cause of learner dropouts in schools in Cape Town, South Africa. An American study by Hess and Copeland (2001, p. 399) over the span of 3 years cited 16 parents' non-interaction with their children about their education as a prediction for dropping out. It

is surprising that the department, in their report, does not mention strengthening the parental involvement aspect in the effort to lower these dropout rates.

#### **2.4.4 SA Scholastic performance – ANA/ TIMSS/ SACMEQ**

The ANA examinations is a standardised national assessment written by learners in the GET phase of education in South Africa (Republic of South Africa Department of Education, 2015). This standardised assessment at this level of education can be therefore considered to give a good indication into the progress and achievements of learners before they reach the FET, and more importantly the matric year.

According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) website, “ANA was put in place by the DBE as a strategy to annually measure progress in learner achievement towards the 2014 target of ensuring that at least 60% of learners achieve acceptable levels in Literacy and Numeracy.” (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education 2012). The report on the Annual National Assessment (ANA) of 2013, available also on the Department of Basic Education website (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education 2012) shows the 2012 Grade 9 Mathematics results of learners to be at 13% and the 2013 Grade 9 learner results to be at 14%. The ANA report of the 2014 results show that the national average percentage marks for mathematics achieved by the learners is 11% (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education 2014). This is the lowest achievement in Grade 9 Mathematics by South African learners over the three year duration of the ANA program.

These mathematics results are in accordance with those of TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2011 which stated that there was evidence of many very low performing ninth grade students in all three countries, with the percentage of students with achievement too low for estimation exceeding 25 percent in South Africa (TIMSS 2011). An eNCA news report recently stated that “...out of the 45 participating countries, 42 countries administered the test to Grade Eight learners, while South Africa, Honduras and Botswana gave the same test to Grade Nine learners. Despite administering the test to a higher grade, South Africa still scored the lowest on the TIMSS tests among middle-income countries in 2011.” This is cause for concern (eNCA, 2014).

The Annual National Assessment Report of 2012 (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education, 2012) concluded as a way forward in its report that the introduction and provision of specialised workbooks would be the answer to these poor mathematics results. These workbooks were used in schools in 2013. The Department of Basic Education's conclusions and way forward in response to the 2013 ANA results were more varied with short term programme strategies and long term programme strategies. Short term programme strategies proposed were feedback to schools; guidelines and exemplars for use by schools; a comprehensive school readiness programme; rollout of the Literacy and Numeracy strategy in primary schools and the long term strategy is the strengthening of the ANA design. The 2014 ANA report states that as a way forward, they would develop an intensive intervention and support programme which will be announced by the Department, and rolled out early in 2015.

There is one major factor that the TIMSS report of 2011 states as vital for mathematics achievement that the ANA reports of 2012, 2013 and 2014 overlook – this is the importance of Home Environment Support for Mathematics Achievement. The TIMSS 2011 report states that “Internationally, IEA studies in mathematics through four cycles of TIMSS have found a strong positive relationship between students’ mathematics achievement at the fourth and eighth grades and home environments that foster learning by for example parents engaging in early numeracy activities with their children, providing home resources for learning and parents having high expectations for their children’s learning.” The TIMSS study also found that mathematics achievement was higher for students who frequently speak the language of the test at home. Regarding South Africa, the study found that “Among the ninth grade participants, both Botswana and South Africa had very low percentages of students always or almost always speaking the language of the test at home (12% and 26%, respectively).” This revelation surely has implications on parental involvement in the home pertaining to their children’s education – These statistics question whether or not the majority of South African parents are adequately, actively engaging, across all six types of Epstein’s (2009) framework of involvement, with their children regarding their educational endeavours at the GET and FET school levels.

#### **2.4.5 Parental Involvement in Mathematics Achievement**

As a subject, Mathematics and its student's results have been most frequently studied internationally (TIMSS, SACMEQ, OECD's Education at a Glance studies). If we are, for this research, to compare the South African education system and its outputs on an international scale, we must look at the link between parental involvement and mathematics achievement. Parental involvement is found to positively predict a child's mathematics achievement (Reynolds, 1992; Gonzalez & Wolters, 2006; Yinsqiu, Gauvain, Zhengkui, & Li, 2006; Olatoye & Agbatogun, 2009; Pangen, 2014; Fajoju, Aluede & Ojugo, 2016). Results in the USA suggest that parental involvement, regardless of the child's gender or SES, is a dynamic force influencing students' academic success. The effect holds for total reading achievement reading comprehension, total mathematics achievement, and application of mathematics concepts (Shaver & Walls, 1998).

Further analyses in the USA indicate that effective implementation of practices that encouraged families to support their children's mathematics learning at home, such as homework requiring parent-child interaction or materials that required families to work on at home, was associated with higher percentages of students who scored at or above proficiency on standardised mathematics achievement tests (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). Vukovic, Roberts & Wright (2013) also indicated that parents influence children's mathematics achievement by reducing mathematics anxiety, particularly for more difficult kinds of mathematics, such as the influence of parental home support and expectations on children's performance on word problems and algebraic reasoning by reducing children's mathematics anxiety.

The following poignant statement was mentioned in the Orange County Register in the United States of America (2014): "When parents are afraid of math themselves, children are more likely to be afraid of math down the road". Perceived lack of content knowledge is one of the possible reasons that parents choose not to involve themselves in their children's education. Space has been provided for in the questionnaires of my research study for parents/guardians, in Durban, South Africa, to offer possible reasons as to why, if so, they choose not to be involved in aspects such as assisting with homework.

Closer to home, multiple regression analyses were conducted on the 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) data in a study done by Visser, Juan & Feza (2015) to determine the resources factors that influence South African learners' performance in mathematics. Their findings also revealed that both school and home environments play significant roles in learners' mathematics performance.

SACMEQ is a survey that is conducted in 14 African countries and tests Grade 6 students in mathematics and language, teacher content knowledge, student background, school facilities etc. South Africa's Grade 6 learners from poor backgrounds are the second-worst readers from a group of 15 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa. The average reading skills of South Africa's grade 6 learners only score 10th and their maths skills score only eighth out of the 15 participating countries. Nic Spaull, economics researcher at the University of Stellenbosch states that this is probably because richer schools have better school management, more involvement from parents and governing bodies, good discipline, high quality and motivated teachers and exist in a generally more functional environment (News24, 2011). I refer you now to the research by Wang, Haertel & Walberg (1997), who found that the home environment (parental involvement ensuring the completion of homework) had a greater influence on learning than did student demographics (socioeconomic status). This study, thus aimed to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa with the sample comprising parents/guardians from a wide spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds.

## **2.5 PRIORITIES FOR EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION**

The US Department of Education with the Institute of Education Sciences published a report titled "Parent and Family Involvement in Education", from the National Household Education Surveys Program 2012. The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education. They are intended to be independent and non-partisan. Their mission is to provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents,

policymakers, researchers, and the public. It was created as part of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (IES, 2015). Their report shows that

- 87% of students' parents attended a general meeting, which could correspond to that of Epstein's involvement type 5 – *Decision making*.
- 76% of student's parents attended schedule meeting with teacher, which could correspond to that of involvement type 2 – *Communicating*.
- 42% of parents volunteered or served on a committee, which could correspond to involvement type 3 – *Volunteering*.
- 86% of students had a place set aside for them in their home to do homework, which could correspond to involvement type 1 – *Parenting*.
- 67 percent had an adult in the household who checked that their homework was done, which could correspond to involvement type 4 – *Learning at Home*.
- 54% of parents attended a community/religious/ethnic event, which could correspond to involvement type 6 – *Collaborating with community* (NCES, 2012).

To address the issue of low levels of parental involvement in South Africa, this study aims to identify the types of parental involvement that are present across the two family structures in our country i.e. single-parent and two-parent households, in Durban, South Africa.

## **2.6 SUMMARY**

It is already well documented that parental involvement increases academic achievement (Williams & Chavkin, 1989; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Epstein, 1995; Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1997; SEDL, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkin, & Closson, 2005; Jeynes, 2007). Research has also shown that parental involvement decreases as children grow older (Stouffer, 1992; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mutua & Sunal, 2004, Child Trends, 2013; Public Agenda, 2015). Some research has furthermore shown that single-parenthood is generally associated with lower academic achievement (Linver, Brooks-Gunn & Kohen, 2002; Manning & Lamb, 2003; Pong, Dronkers & Hampden-Thompson, 2003; Ginther & Pollak, 2004; Gershoff, Aber, Raver & Lennon 2007). As mentioned earlier, just under

two thirds of children in South Africa do not live in a two-parent home (World Map, 2013). The purpose of this study was to delve further into the issue of parental involvement in a region of South Africa (namely Durban), by setting out to determine the extent (and types) of parental involvement in the education of their GET/ FET school-going children, across two family structures (single-parent and two-parent households) in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The area in and around the Durban CBD was chosen to enlist participants for this study because the Durban CBD is frequented by numerous individuals, from various socio-economic backgrounds, from across the Durban area.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 I discussed parental involvement and academic achievement, parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent households, parental involvement and the age of the child in respect of the relevant literature and South Africa's scholastic performance. I indicated the intended contribution of the study in seeking to identify whether parents/guardians from different family types are practicing different levels of involvement and more specifically, in which areas (categories of involvement) this is the case.

The research design used to investigate the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their GET/FET school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, will be discussed in this chapter. The research aims, hypotheses and the selection of the sample will be elaborated on. I will also discuss the data collection methods, ethical considerations and statistical analyses.

### 3.2 RATIONALE FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

There is not much current literature in the South African context available on this topic. Literature is available on the effect that parental involvement has on scholastic academic achievement but not empirically on the current practices of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, South Africa. It is thus the aim of the researcher to use field-work to identify the areas of parental involvement and the categorisations of parents/guardians that need to be addressed and improved upon in order to be able to ultimately optimise the academic achievement of the students.

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What is the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their GET/FET school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, South Africa?

### **Research questions to guide the study:**

1. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
2. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
3. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians** from **SPH** and **parents/guardians** from **TPH**?
4. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
5. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
6. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **GET learners compare and contrast**?
7. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
8. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
9. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **FET learners compare and contrast**?
10. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians of GET learners** and **parents/guardians of FET learners**?

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design used is that of descriptive research (used to describe a behaviour or type of subject). The type of descriptive research used was a field survey whereby participants were asked to complete a questionnaire (which included mainly closed

and some open-ended questions). Time-space random sampling was used to select participants, as is explained further on.

### **3.3.1 Research paradigm**

An epistemological philosophical position which can be called positivist or post-positivist was chosen for this study. Epistemology is the study of our method of acquiring knowledge. It answers the question, "How do we know?" It encompasses the nature of concepts, the constructing of concepts, the validity of the senses, logical reasoning, as well as thoughts, ideas, memories, emotions, and all things mental. It is concerned with how our minds are related to reality, and whether these relationships are valid or invalid (Landauer & Rowlands, 2001, para. 1).

The research paradigm in this study is that of positivism or post-positivism defined as a position where it is posited that that "there is an objective reality that can be investigated with the expectation that we will obtain an understanding of reality that we can trust ... to be an as close as possible representation of it" (Indiogene, H, 2010, para. 14).

### **3.3.2 Research approach**

A quantitative research design was adopted for this study. Quantitative research designs emphasise the quest for objectivity in measuring and describing phenomena. As a result, the research designs maximise objectivity by using numbers, statistics, structure and control (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 21). A quantitative design was chosen as quantitative research allows the researcher to measure and analyse data, and hence to try to be more objective about the findings of the research. Among the possible methods, I chose a nonexperimental design. Nonexperimental research designs describe phenomena and examine relationships between different phenomena without any direct manipulation of conditions that are experienced (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 22).

The type of nonexperimental design was that of a survey research design. In a survey research design, the investigator selects a sample of subjects and administers a questionnaire or conducts interviews to collect data. Surveys are used frequently in educational research to describe attitudes, beliefs, opinions and other types of

information. Usually, the research is designed so that information about a large number of people (the population) can be inferred from the responses obtained from a smaller group of subjects (the sample) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 23). Questionnaires (employing both open and closed ended questions) were used because they are economical and they enable a researcher to ask standard questions and to use uniform procedures. As noted by Vaisali (2015, p. 21), they are usually easy to score and the use of questionnaires provides time for subjects to think about responses.

### **3.3.3 Research type/strategy**

Descriptive research is often used in survey research, as was also the case in this study. Unlike exploratory research, which is associated with more interpretive or qualitative research approaches, descriptive research based on questionnaire data is pre-planned and structured in design so the information collected can be statistically inferred in relation to a population. The main idea behind using this type of research is to better define an opinion, attitude, or behaviour held by a group of people on a given subject (Fluid Surveys, 2014).

## **3.4 RESEARCH METHOD**

Data was collected by means of a researcher-constructed questionnaire entitled “Parental Involvement Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians” and was completed by 101 participants. All questions were created afresh and were based on Epstein’s (2009) framework of six types of involvement (see section 2.3 in Chapter 2 above). Ten questions were biographical questions. Two of the question items were open-ended and produced soft data. These items concerned perceptions of how parents/guardians could be assisted by the schools, when assisting with homework completion and being better informed of their children’s progress at school. Twenty-three closed-ended items focused on the six types of parent involvement in schools as mentioned in Epstein (2009). Space was also provided below most closed questions to allow for additional comments. The questionnaire was piloted, following the same data collection techniques as used in the study, that of time space probability

sampling as outlined by Semaan et al. (2002), to 10 parents/guardians in the Durban region. The questions were read to the participants and their reactions were observed. Respondents did not appear to be confused or hesitant to answer. Verbal individual feedback was sought regarding the clarity and appropriateness of the questionnaire and the questionnaire was found to be clear and appropriate to the study.

After the pilot study of the questionnaire, a minor modification was made to the biographical questions portion of the questionnaire – the grade indication for children was now grouped to increase the ease and efficiency of filling in the biographical details of participants. As there were no significant changes made to the questionnaire, the results obtained from the pilot study were included in the research sample.

Data was then analysed by performing statistical testing using Microsoft Excel™ Data Analysis ToolPak™ and XLStat2015™.

#### **3.4.1 Selection of participants/respondents/sampling**

One sample of 101 parents/guardians was randomly selected, using time-space probability sampling as developed by Semaan et al., 2002. The Durban CBD region was chosen as the “race” demographics (in terms of categories to categorise racial groupings as given during apartheid and continuing today) were similar to the demographics of Ethekeini and the province of KwaZulu-Natal (Census 2011) – Black African 86.81% vs 80.08%; Indian/Asian 7.37% vs 12.66%; Coloured 1.38% vs 2.87%; White 4.18% vs 2.4% and Other 0.26% vs 1.99%. This ensured a racially representative sample. In terms of economics, according to Stats SA (2011) and Durban Metro Stats, the average monthly income per capita is on par with each other in Ethekeini and Durban CBD. Thus an economically representative sample was also ensured. The questionnaires to these parents/guardians was administered either in person, face-to-face or via the telephone (i.e. a mixed-mode strategy). Recently in survey practice multiple modes of data collection or mixed-modes have become more and more popular (de Leeuw, 2005, p. 233).

Regarding the construction of the questionnaire I created the question items afresh, bearing in mind Epstein’s (2009) six types of parental involvement. The questionnaires to these parents/guardians were administered at pre-determined times and venues, after the participants answered a few qualifying questions, either in person, face-to-

face or via the telephone (i.e. a mixed-mode strategy). To minimise potential respondent satisficing (where respondents seek to generate answers quickly) I spoke more slowly in “everyday” talk; and encouraged respondents to take their time while answering in order to reduce the overall difficulty of the task. Regarding coverage error and non-response error, I take it that there was no mode effect as all participants were recruited in the same way – that is, face-to-face. Regarding measurement error, the mode effect was minimal as the two modes employed (in person and via telephone) were both “interviewer assisted” (that is, the researcher was available to assist in both cases). If a parent/guardian did not agree to participate, another parent/guardian with similar characteristics according to the sampling strategy mentioned above was chosen, making up 101 participants overall.

One sample of 101 parents/guardians was selected and subsequently separated for analysis, according to the categories of parents/guardians from single-parent households, parents/guardians from two-parent households, parents/guardians from GET learner households and parents/guardians from FET learner households, as was required to answer the various sub-questions. Time-Space Probability Sampling has been used to generate representative samples of both hard-to-reach and location-based populations, where a sampling frame is not available – as is the case in this study. I established a sampling frame, which included all possible venues, days, and times (VDT units) from which the sample was to be drawn. By so doing, time and place are the primary sampling units, and respondents are recruited through random sampling in places and at times where they are expected to gather (Semaan et al., 2002). This determination is based on “social viability” (Kelly et al., 2006), which assures that an adequate number of the target population will be found at the venue, and suggests the times that this population can be engaged. Once an exhaustive list of VDT units is identified, they are randomly sampled over the course of the recruitment period. This is indeed how I proceeded, as explained further below.

Time and space were randomised using a sampling frame of Durban CBD Street Names and Time periods of operation, as advised by Semaan et al. (2002). There were 32 streets that fell within the Durban CBD area (See Appendix III). Participants were selected over a period of five days. Each day was divided into three time sets (8:00 – 11:00; 11:15 – 14:15 and 14:30 – 17:30). Two random time sets were chosen per day together with two randomly selected streets- there were thus 10 VDT (Venue-

Date-Time) units in total. Using a random digit generator app program (Dean, N, 2013), a random number was drawn for each recruitment day. Each random number drawn corresponded to a given street. This process yielded our schedule of streets and times (VDT Schedule) for the data collection period (See Appendix IV).

Once at a selected street, individuals crossing a pre-determined imaginary threshold at the venue were chosen randomly.

Participants were selected according to the following qualifying criteria:

- he/she was the parent/guardian of a Grade 1 to Grade 12 school learner in the Durban region of South Africa.
- he/she was living in either a single-parent or a two-parent household.

A total of 101 participants, fulfilling these criteria, were randomly selected, using time-space sampling selection, from the population in and around the Durban CBD.

### **3.4.2 Data collection**

Data, in the form of (structured) questionnaires was collected from one sample of 101 parents/guardians. This sample was later separated into categories for analysis. The categories were parents/guardians from single-parent households, parents/guardians from two-parent households, parents/guardians from GET learner households and parents/guardians from FET learner households, as was required to answer the various sub-questions.

The questionnaires were predominantly closed ended by means of a five-point Likert scale (ranging from Never to Always), although in addition there were a few open-ended questions. This was so that upon analysis, the answers would provide more depth to the data.

The area in and around the Durban CBD region was selected as the racial demographics here are similar to the demographics of the province of KwaZulu-Natal (Census 2011)- Black African 86.81% vs 80.08%; Indian/Asian 7.37% vs 12.66%; Coloured 1.38% vs 2.87%; White 4.18% vs 2.4% and Other 0.26% vs 1.99%. Thus using the areas in and around the Durban CBD I hoped to ensure that my sample was representative of these racialised groups (as defined under apartheid, as these categories are still being used today). Time-space sampling, as mentioned above, was

the strategy used. Once at the pre-selected venue, as per the data collection schedule (Appendix IV) I approached individuals and explained to them more about the research being conducted – that the research investigated the types and extent of parental or guardian involvement in learners' schooling. These individuals were asked to voluntarily complete a questionnaire (comprising both open and closed ended questions) on educational issues, after they agreed to answer the following qualifying questions:

1. Are you the parent/guardian of a Grade 1-12 school-going learner, in the Durban region of South Africa?
2. Are you living in either a single-parent or a two-parent household?

A total of 101 participants, fulfilling these criteria, were selected, using time-space sampling selection, from the population in and around the Durban CBD, as explained above.

Researcher-constructed questionnaire items were based on Epstein's (2009) six types of parental involvement. I have constructed the question items afresh, bearing in mind her six types of parental involvement. The questionnaires were administered either face-to-face or via telephone: participants were given a choice of whether they would like to complete the questionnaire there on site or if they would prefer to complete the questionnaire over the phone at a time more suitable to them. The face-to-face participants were requested to read and sign the consent form and complete the questionnaires on site. The participants were provided with chairs. Questionnaires were administered orally to participants and I filled in their responses on the questionnaire. As the questionnaires were administered face-to-face this allowed for clarification of potentially complex or sensitive issues as well as for a better quality and depth of data. Participants requesting to complete the questionnaire via telephone were asked to read and sign the consent form and a reference number (to ensure anonymity) was written on the top right corner of the covering letter that was given to them. I kept a record of this reference number together with the participant's telephone number and an arranged suitable time to call them.

A Telephone Interview Script (see Appendix V) was used to administer the questionnaires to those participants who chose to complete the questionnaire telephonically.

### **3.4.3 Data analysis**

There were 101 questionnaires completed by 101 randomly selected participants. There were no unspoiled questionnaires as the completion was done face-to-face or via telephone, and was researcher-assisted. The reason for the completion of the questionnaires being researcher-assisted as opposed to self-administered is that I wanted to obtain a statistically random sample of participants. I did not want to exclude potential participants on the basis of their educational attainment or ability.

All questionnaires were sorted and coded. The data was transferred into Microsoft Excel™.

Questions 1-10 are biographical data. Questions 11-33 – for each of the responses, a value was given to items on the questionnaire as follows: “Never” (1); “Rarely” (2); “Sometimes” (3); “Very Often” (4) and “Always” (5). These scores were exported into Microsoft Excel™ Data Analysis ToolPak™. All data was then merged into one data file in order to run statistical tests. In order to answer research (sub) questions 1; 2; 4, 5, 7 and 8, descriptive tests such as calculation of means, totals, standard deviation and distribution curves was done for each of the six involvement categories. Data on parental involvement obtained are presented in the form of histograms for each denomination i.e. Single-parent households, Two-parent households, Single-parent GET households, Two-parent GET households, Single-parent FET households, Two-parent FET households, parent/guardian GET households as well as for parent/guardian FET households. For research (sub) questions 3 and 10, means and standard deviations were calculated for each family structure and an independent samples t-test determined whether the differences between them are statistically significant. For research (sub) questions 6 and 9, ANOVA was used within each family structure to determine any significant differences in the parent population, single-parent households versus two-parent households for both GET and FET levels. Questions 34 and 35 – which were the open-ended questions – were analysed to

provide more depth to the data. The open-ended questions were analysed by tabulating parent/guardian responses.

#### **3.4.4 Measures for trustworthiness**

In quantitative research, validity describes whether the data collected really measure what the researcher set out to measure. Valid measurements represent the essence or content upon which the construct is focused (Recker, 2013, p. 73). Research Design Validity means the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomena match reality. It refers to the quest to establish as far as possible the truthfulness of findings and conclusions. Explanations about observed phenomena approximate what is reality or truth, and the degree to which explanations are accurate comprises the validity of design (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 104).

Construct validity is an issue of operationalisation or measurement of constructs. The concern is that instrument items selected for a given construct are, when considered together and compared to other latent constructs, a reasonable operationalisation of the construct. Maybe some of the questionnaire items, the wording in the interview script, or the task descriptions in an experiment are ambiguous and are giving the participants the impression that they mean something different from what was intended. There are numerous ways to assess construct validity. Typically, one tries to establish statistically that items that are meant to converge (measure the same constructs) have similar scores whilst also being dissimilar to scores of measures that are meant to measure other constructs. This could be done by comparing item correlations and looking for high correlations between items of one construct and low correlations between those items and items associated with other constructs. More sophisticated tests include exploratory factor analysis or principal component analysis, statistical tests that assess whether items “load” appropriately on higher-order factors (Recker, 2013). The validity of the questionnaire used for both single-parent/guardians and two-parent/guardians was tested using factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett’s test were performed to test the construct validity.

Table 1. Interpretations of KMO measure (Real Statistics, 2016).

KMO	Interpretation
.9 and above	marvelous
.8 - .9	meritorious
.7 - .8	middling
.6 - .7	mediocre
.5 - .6	miserable
under .5	unacceptable

The KMO values for Parent involvement Type 1 (*Parenting*), Type 2 (*Communicating*), Type 3 (*Volunteering*), Type 4 (*Learning at Home*) and Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) were found to be at “meritorious” levels of validity, with KMO values > 0.8 and parent involvement Type 5 (*Decision making*) was found to be at a “marvellous” level of validity with the KMO value being >0.9. The Bartlett’s Sphericity test was calculated to be <0.005 which together with the KMO results prove the construct validity (See Appendix VI).

Content validity was enhanced by using a wide variety of parent involvement activities in the survey to represent all facets of parental involvement. These strategies were developed by Dr. Joyce. Epstein, who is widely considered an expert in the field of parental involvement and they incorporated a variety of parent involvement activities as outlined by Epstein’s guidelines to fit within her six parent involvement dimensions. The questions were constructed afresh, according to Epstein’s (2009) framework of six types of involvement. To also reinforce the validity of the instruments, the anonymity of the subjects was kept throughout the research process, to ensure better responses.

The open-ended items and the space provided for comments produced some qualitative data which ensured some data triangulation. Triangulation literally means doing more than just one thing... through triangulation of data, researchers can gain a more nuanced picture of the situation, and increase reliability and validity of their findings (Recker, 2013, p. 95). I was able to gain a more nuanced approach by including the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, although full triangulation was not effected as I did not triangulate with in-depth qualitative investigation. Nevertheless, I sought credibility for my study by trying to provide sufficient

substantiated evidence for the interpretations offered in the qualitative data analysis (see tables 28 and 29).

Reliability describes the extent to which a variable or set of variables is consistent in what it is intended to measure (Recker, 2013). Internal consistency (split-half; KR; Cronbach's alpha) can be described as the comparability of halves of a measure to assess a single trait or dimension. To administer one test and correlate the items to each other. (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010, p. 181). This reliability test was undertaken for this study.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by utilising Cronbach's alpha to find the internal consistency of the survey. The reliability of the survey was calculated as,  $\alpha = 0.889$ . The results were deemed reliable as the calculated alpha value is  $> 0.7$ , which is considered to be a good measure of reliability (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010, p. 184).

Macmillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 8) suggest that we can consider objectivity as being both a procedure and a characteristic. To the lay person, objectivity means unbiased, open-minded, and not subjective. As a procedure, objectivity refers to data collection and analysis procedures from which a reasonable interpretation can be made. Objectivity refers to the quality of the data produced by procedures that either control for bias or take into account subjectivity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

I tried to strive for objectivity by avoiding the use of subjective language, leading questions, or double-barrelled questions in the construction of the questionnaire itself.

### **3.4.5 Ethical measures**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the CEDU Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection (questionnaire administration) (See Appendix VII).

#### **Informed Consent**

All respondents were asked to give their informed consent before participating in the research (Appendix I). I informed the respondents of the study's purpose, content, duration, and potential risks and benefits. I informed the respondents that they did not have to answer all the survey questions. I also informed the respondents that they could stop participating in the study at any point.

I kept all respondents' identities confidential. Respondents were not asked to divulge any personal identifiers such as Name, Identity number etc.

### **Anonymity**

Anonymity of respondents was ensured by the fact that I (and anyone else) was unable to link respondents' names to their surveys.

### **3.4.6 Procedures for data processing and data interpretation**

According to the Likert scale, each question in the questionnaire was given a score from 1 to 5 (Never to Always). Each category was then given a raw score by totalling the values indicated in the questions that were mapped to each of the six categories. These scores were arranged in ascending order and the frequencies of total scores were tabulated for each category.

Research sub-questions one, two, four, five, seven and eight were addressed by using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. Histograms were also created to show how answers were distributed in each category throughout both populations (single-parent and two-parent households). Research sub-questions three and ten were addressed by using an independent samples *t*-test (two-tailed) to search for the statistical significance of the responses to the questionnaires by the two populations, namely parents/guardians from single-parent/guardian households and parents/guardians from two-parent/guardian households. Independent samples *t*-tests were used as this is a popular and appropriate statistical test to perform on randomly selected samples (Statistics Solutions, 2015). Research sub-questions six and nine were addressed by using ANOVA to look for significant differences between demographics and responses within each population.

One way ANOVA was chosen as it is an appropriate statistical analysis when the purpose of research is to assess if mean differences exist on one continuous dependent variable by an independent variable with two or more discrete groups (Statistics Solutions II, 2015). Data interpretation followed the appropriate guidelines for each statistical procedure utilised, and was carried out in numerical order from Sub-question one to sub-question ten.

### **3.5 SUMMARY**

The purpose of this research study was to determine what involvement strategies parents/guardians were most engaged in and to compare and contrast the current levels of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent households for learners at GET and FET levels, also considering combinations of these two dimensions, namely family structure and learner grade level. In this chapter, the methodology of the research was detailed. A descriptive survey design was used, in the form of a researcher-constructed questionnaire that was based on Epstein's six types of parental involvement, to answer the research questions. The following chapter will analyse and interpret the results of the research.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is organised according to the research question and the research questions to guide the study posed in Chapter 1.

#### **Research Question:**

What is the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their General Education and Training (GET)/ Further Education and Training (FET) school-going children, in Single Parent (SP) and Two Parent (TP) households in Durban, South Africa?

#### **Research questions to guide the study:**

1. What types of involvement are parents/guardians from SP households most engaged in?
2. What types of involvement are parents/guardians from TP households most engaged in?
3. Is there a significant difference between parental involvement of parents/guardians from SP households and TP households?
4. What types of involvement are parents/guardians of GET learners from SP households most engaged in?
5. What types of involvement are parents/guardians of GET learners from TP households most engaged in?
6. How does the involvement of parents/guardians of GET learners in SP households and TP households compare and contrast?
7. What types of involvement are parents/guardians of FET learners from SP households most engaged in?
8. What types of involvement are parents/guardians of FET learners from TP households most engaged in?

9. How does the involvement of parents/guardians of FET learners in SP households and TP households compare and contrast?

10. Is there a significant difference between parental involvement of parents/guardians of GET learners and parents/guardians of FET learners?

Each of these questions will be addressed by using the data obtained from the “Practices of Parental Involvement” questionnaire administered in Durban, South Africa.

## **4.2 RESEARCH PROCESS**

A total of 101 questionnaires were completed in Durban, South Africa. The purpose of the questionnaires was to investigate the practices of parental involvement of parents/guardians of GET and FET learners in single-parent and two-parent households. This was done according to Joyce Epstein’s (2002) framework of six types of involvement. These six categories are *parenting*, *communicating*, *volunteering*, *learning at home*, *decision making*, and *collaborating with the community*. The final section of the questionnaire gave the parents/guardians an opportunity to add more depth to their responses on parental involvement. For each strategy (in the closed-ended questions), the highest possible response was a response of Always, and it received a value of five. The lowest possible response was a response of “Never”, and it received a value of one. A response of two, three, or four indicated a response falling in between the “Never” and “Always” response level, which were labelled as Rarely, Sometimes and Very often, respectively. Each category was then given a raw score by totalling the values indicated in the questions that were mapped to each of the six categories. These scores were then arranged in ascending order and the frequencies of total scores were tabulated for each category. Microsoft Excel Analysis ToolPak was the statistical package used to analyse the data.

Research sub-questions one, two, four, five, seven and eight were addressed by using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. Histograms were also created to show how answers were distributed in each category throughout both populations. Research sub-questions three and ten were addressed by using an independent samples *t*-test to search for the statistical significance of the responses

to the questionnaires by the two populations. Research sub-questions six and nine were addressed by using ANOVA to look for significant differences between demographics and responses within each population.

Regarding the reliability of the data, a Cronbach’s alpha test was performed on the composite scores of the data set. The reliability of the subscale scores was calculated to be  $\alpha = 0.889$ . This indicates a good measure of reliability as the Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to be  $\alpha > 0.7$ .

### 4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

This section will cover the graphical presentation, the statistical analysis and the findings of the data. It will also offer my analysis of the open-ended questions to further deepen the interpretation of the quantitative data.

#### 4.3.1 Biographical data

The first part of the questionnaire covered biographical factors such as the respondents’ age, race, marital status, child’s school and grade, highest educational qualification, employment status, household income and current living arrangement. Although all the biographical data was not central to the study, this data helped contextualise the findings as well as the formulation of appropriate recommendations.

Table 2. Summary of participants’ biographical data.

<b>Race</b>	Black – 77	Indian – 18	White – 1	Coloured–5	
<b>Gender</b>	Male – 35	Female –66			
<b>Age</b>	18-24 – 15	25-34 – 23	35-44 – 29	45-54 – 29	55-64 – 5
<b>Income</b>	0-5k – 59	5-20k – 32	20-50k – 10	>50k – 0	
<b>Education</b>	AS – 39	GS – 34	AC – 10	GC – 11	PD – 7
<b>Employment</b>	None – 9	1 parent–72	2 parent– 20		
<b>Marital Status</b>	M – 30	S – 44	SD – 23	W – 4	
<b>Family Structure</b>	SPH – 70	TPH – 31			
<b>Child’s School</b>	Urban – 66	Rural – 8	Township–27		
<b>School resources</b>	Well – 46	Average–38	Poor – 17		
<b>Child’s Level</b>	GET – 74	FET – 27			

### 4.3.2 Research sub-question one: Types of Parent/Guardian involvement in Single-Parent (SP) households

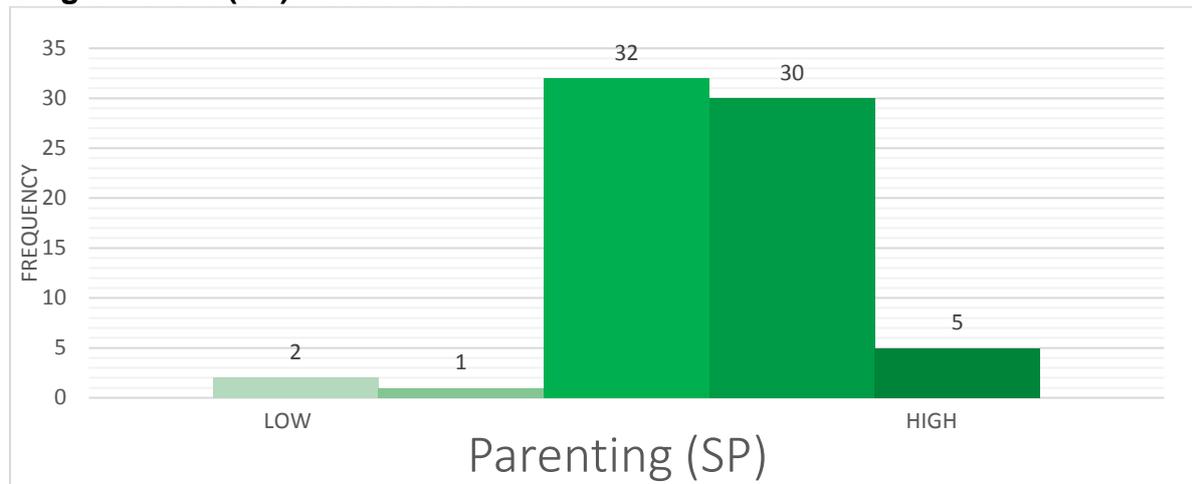


Figure 1. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

In her six types of engagement, Epstein defines what she calls *Parenting* (see Section 2.3 in Chapter 2). Figure 1 shows that in single-parent households the level of parent/guardian involvement in this type (Type 1) is average and above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects sometimes to very often.

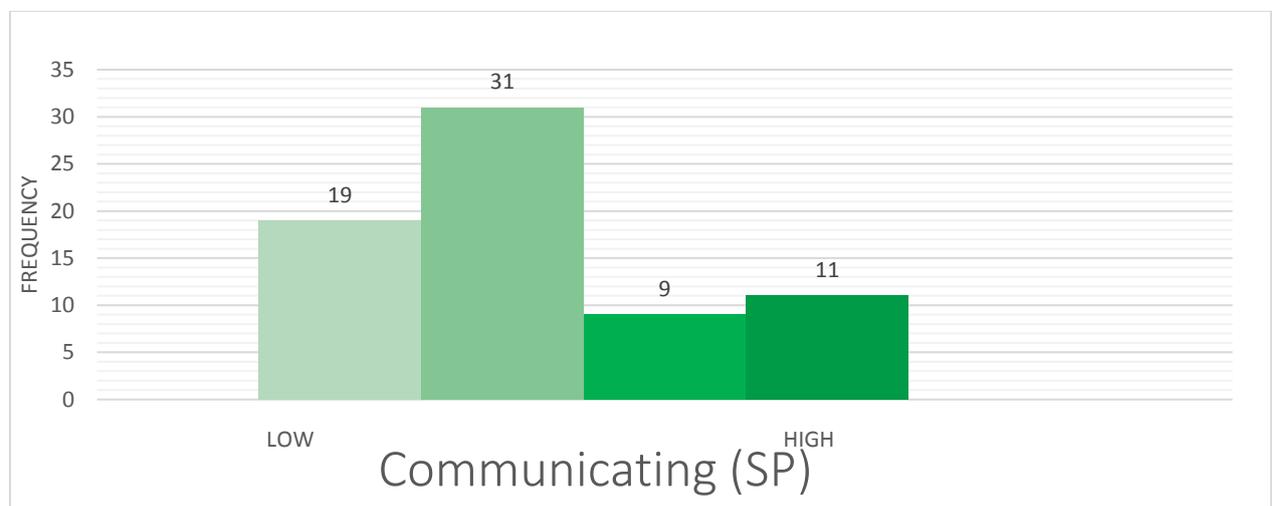


Figure 2. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 2 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in single-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average to low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects, such as home-school communication, never to rarely.

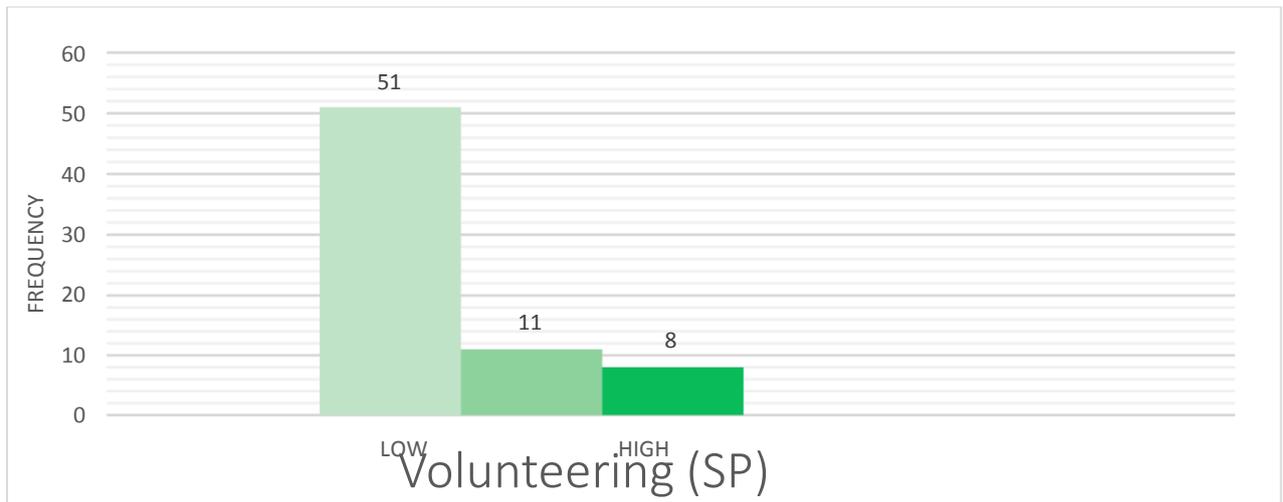


Figure 3. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 3 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in single-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects never and rarely.

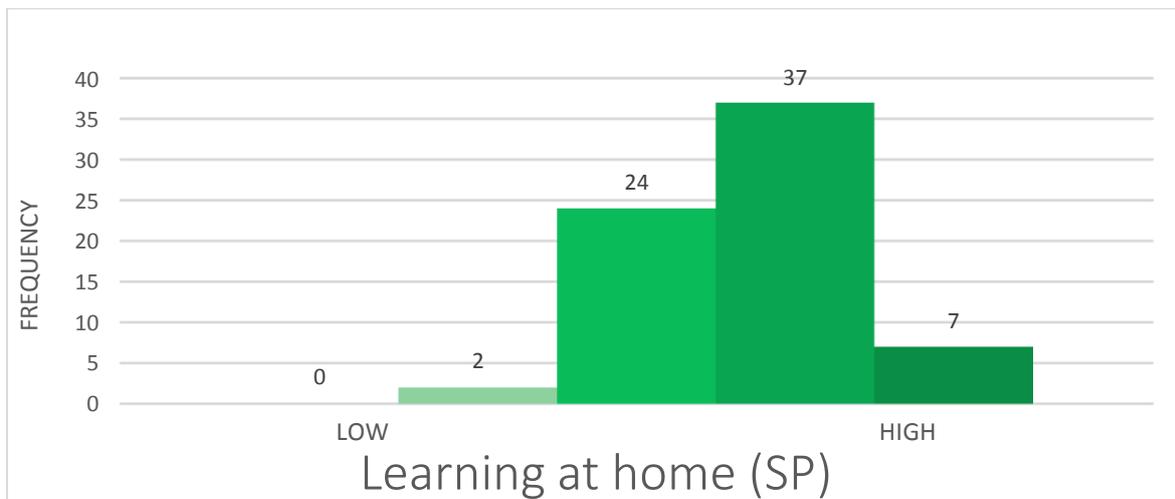


Figure 4. The *Learning at home* aspect (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 4 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in single-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects sometimes and very often.

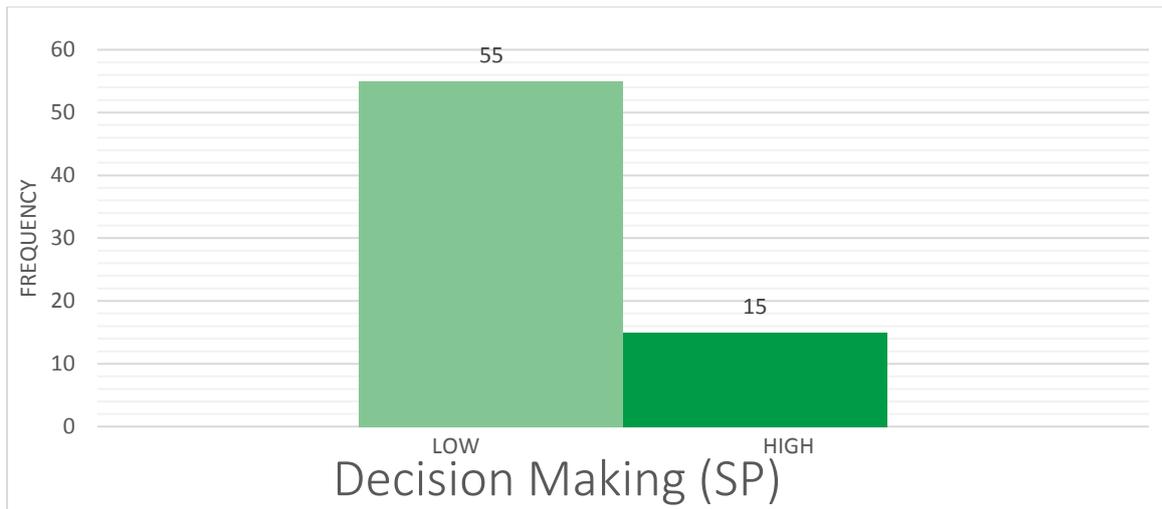


Figure 5. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 5 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in single-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in decision making aspects never to rarely. That is *decision making* aspects such as attending school governing body meetings or school budget meetings.

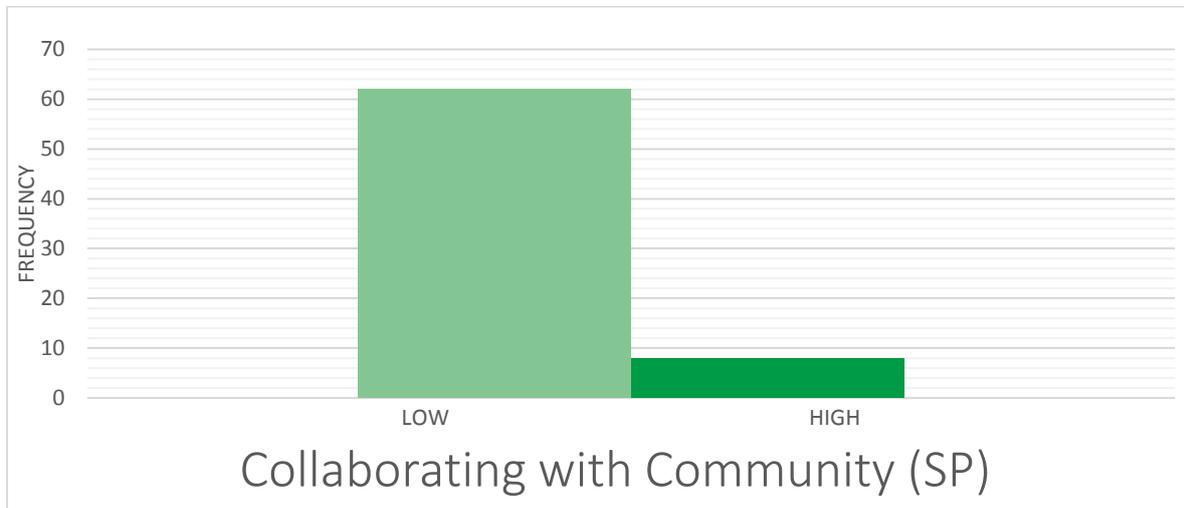


Figure 6. The *Collaborating with Community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 6 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in single-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never to rarely.

### 4.3.3 Research sub-question two: Types of Parent/Guardian Involvement in Two-Parent (TP) households

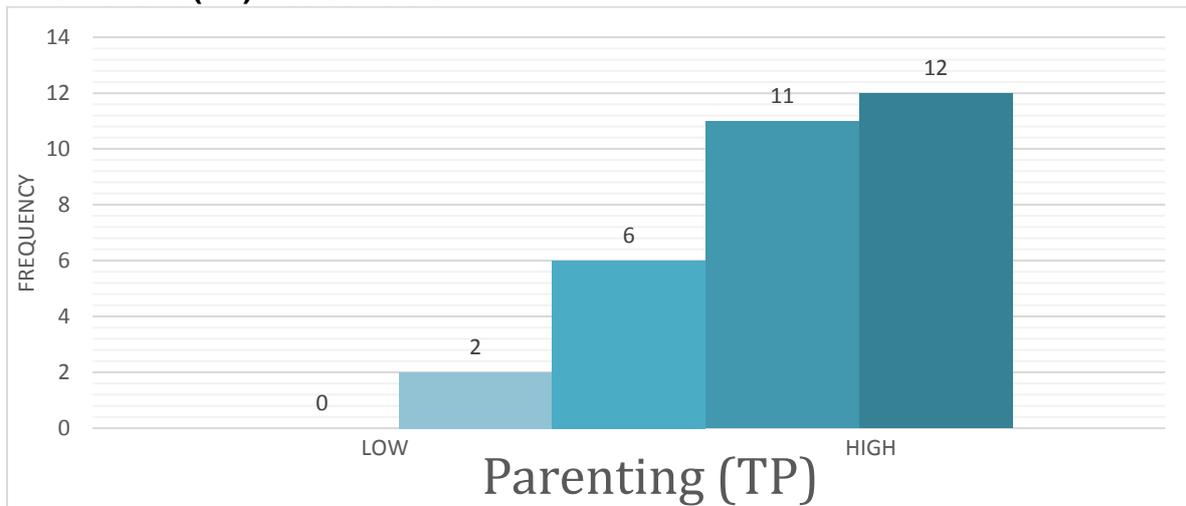


Figure 7. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 7 refers to Type 1 (*Parenting*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects very often to always.

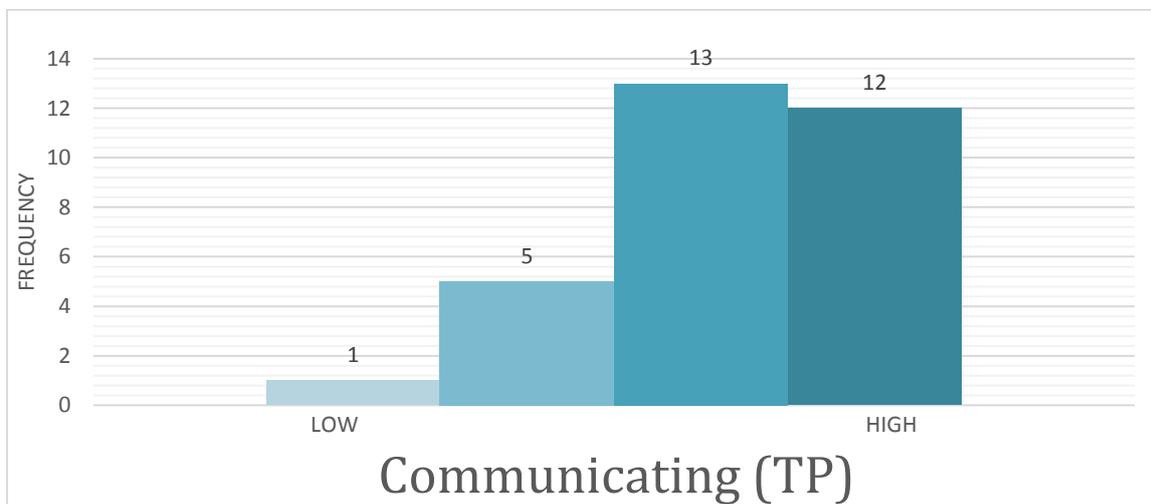


Figure 8. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 8 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects, such as home-school communication like school visits, meeting with form teachers and attending parent days, very often to always.

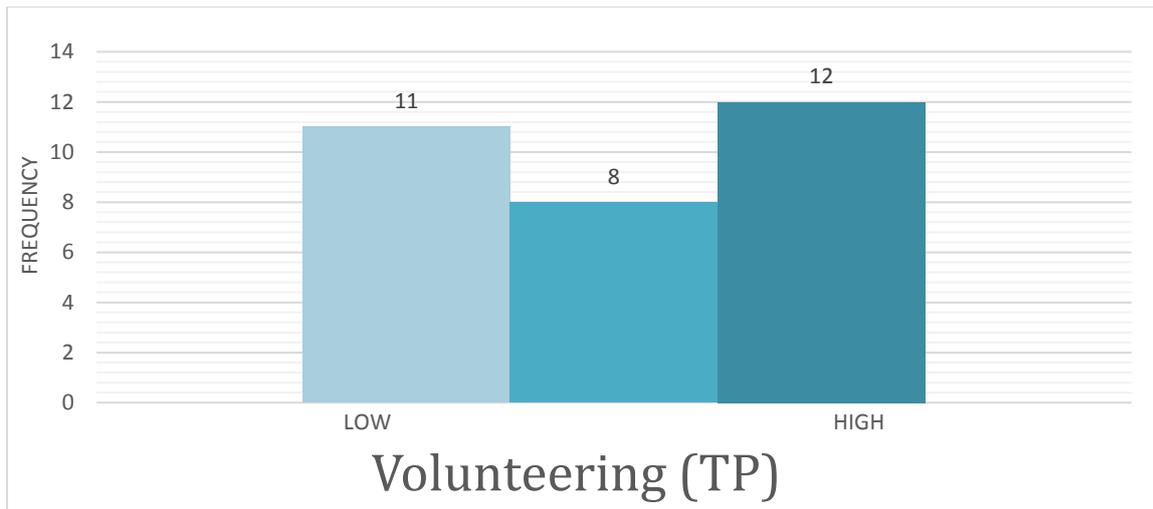


Figure 9. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 9 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be spread from low to high i.e. all participant responses indicate that parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects from never to always.

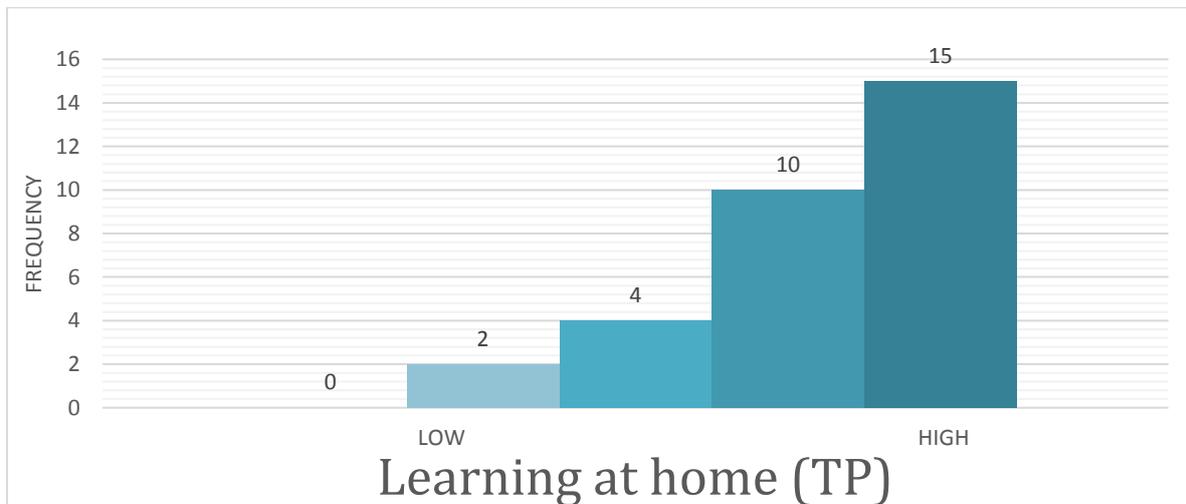


Figure 10. The *Learning at home* (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 10 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects very often to always.

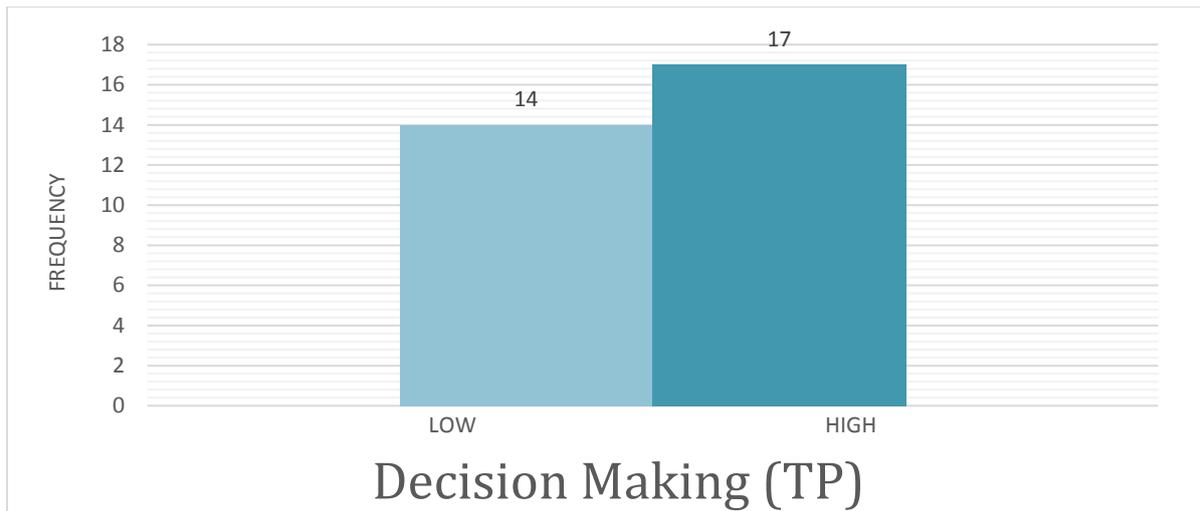


Figure 11. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 11 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be slightly higher i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *decision making* aspects, such as attending governing body meetings and school budget meetings, very often to always.

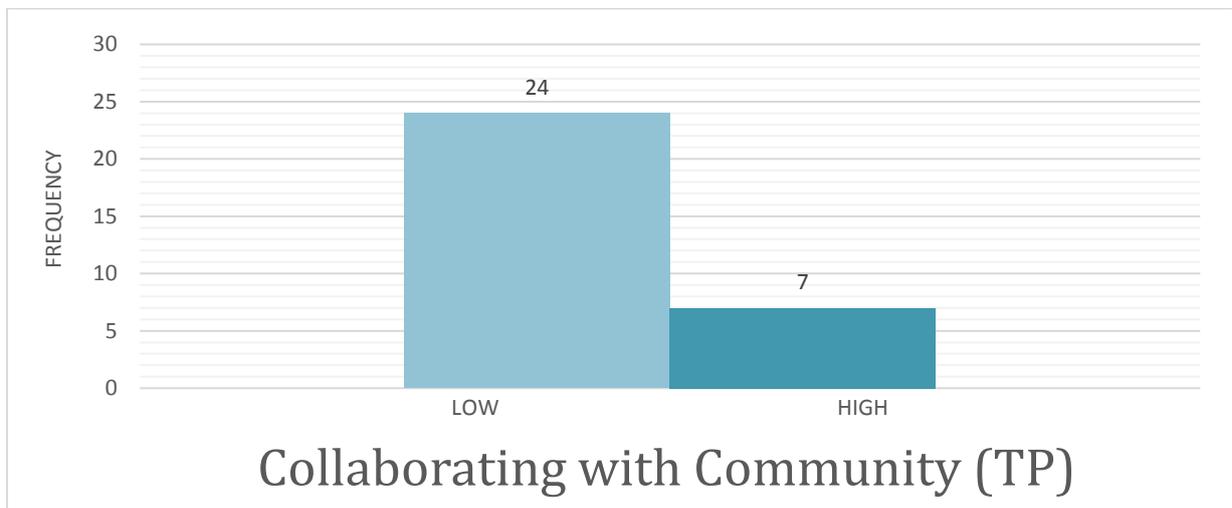


Figure 12. The *Collaborating with community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 12 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in two-parent households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never to rarely.

#### 4.3.4. Research sub-question three: Parent/Guardian Involvement in SP and TP households

Table 3. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Parenting* in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between the *parenting* aspect (Type 1) of Epstein's (2009) six types of involvement in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 2.005$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ )

##### Parenting SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	15.13	17,94
Variance	14,67	16,93
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
Df	54	
t Stat	-3,23	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,001	
t Critical one-tail	1,67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,002	
t Critical two-tail	2,005	

Table 4. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Volunteering* (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between *volunteering* in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 2.01$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ )

##### Volunteering SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	5,16	8,39
Variance	7,38	12,11
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	47	
t Stat	-4,59	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1,68E-05	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3,36E-05	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 5. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Communicating* (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between *communicating* in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 1.99$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ )

Communicating SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	8,8	13,71
Variance	24,8	15,75
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
Df	71	
t Stat	-5,29	
P(T<=t) one-tail	6,54E-07	
t Critical one-tail	1,67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1,31E-06	
t Critical two-tail	1,99	

Table 6. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Learning at Home* (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between *learning at home* in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 2.01$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ )

Learning at home SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	16,16	19,10
Variance	11,15	17,82
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
Df	47	
t Stat	-3,43	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,0006	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,0013	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 7. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Decision making* (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between *decision making* in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 2.02$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ )

Decision making SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	3,46	6,26
Variance	5,27	13,46
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	41	
t Stat	-3,92	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,0002	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,0003	
t Critical two-tail	2,02	

Table 8. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Collaborating with Community* (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *collaborating with community* in single-parent and two-parent households ( $t = 2.00$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ )

Collab with community SP and TP

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	SP	TP
Mean	3,2	3,94
Variance	4,57	4,13
Observations	70	31
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
Df	60	
t Stat	-1,65	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,05	
t Critical one-tail	1,67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,10	
t Critical two-tail	2,00	

**4.3.5. Research sub-question four: Types of Parent/Guardian involvement in Single-Parent (SP) households – GET learners**

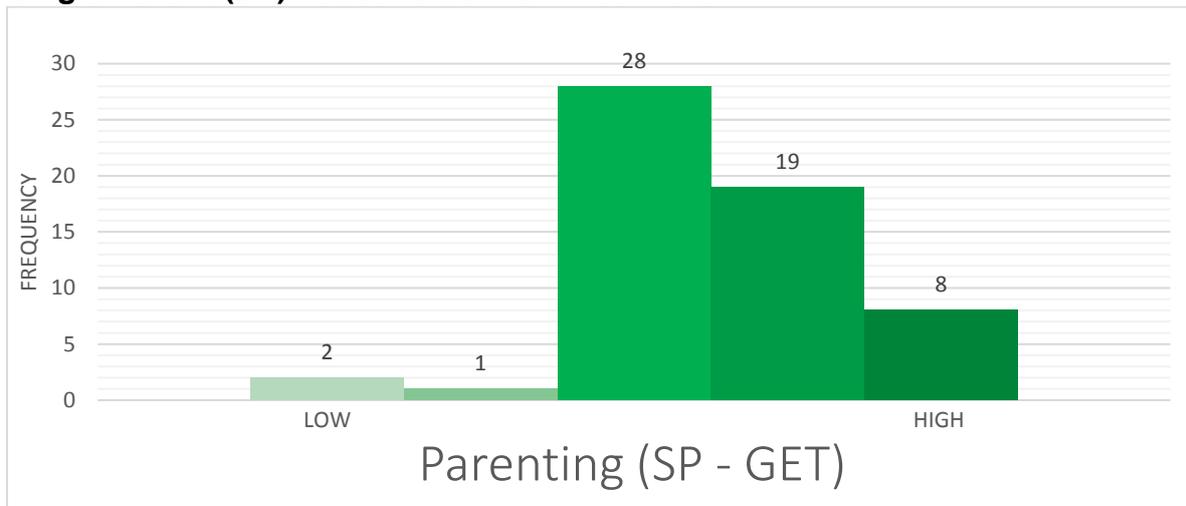


Figure 13. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 13 refers to Type 1 (*Parenting*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects, such as those in the home environment like homework supervision, sometimes and very often.

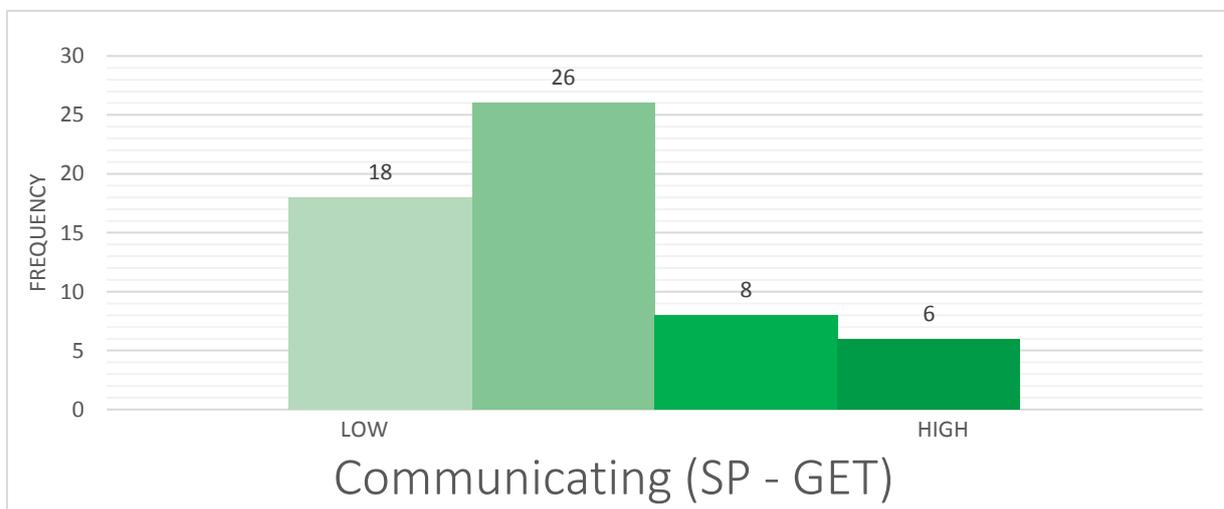


Figure 14. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 14 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low and below average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects never and rarely.

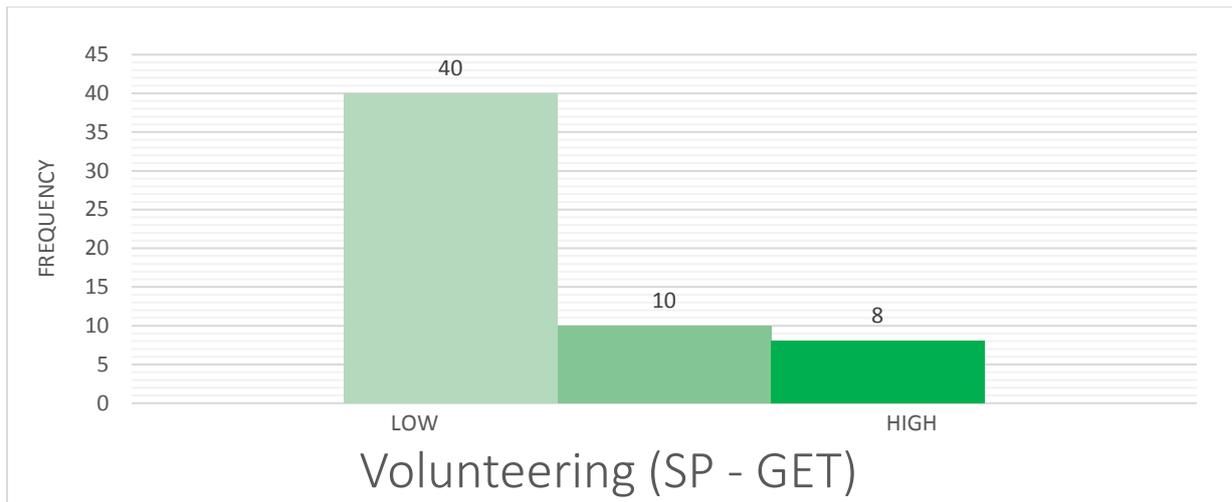


Figure 15. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 15 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects never and rarely.

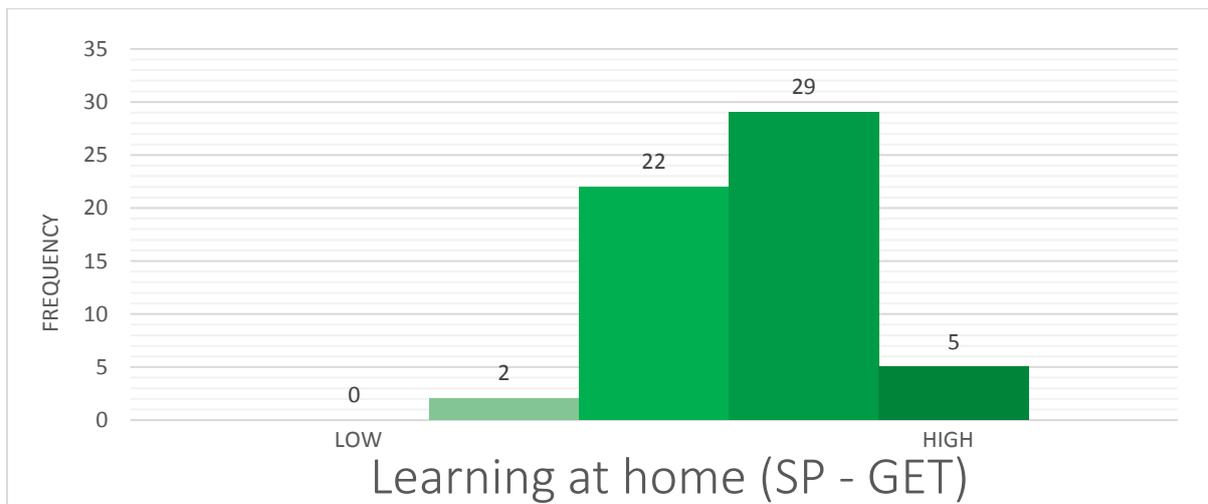


Figure 16. The *Learning at home* aspect (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 16 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects sometimes and very often.

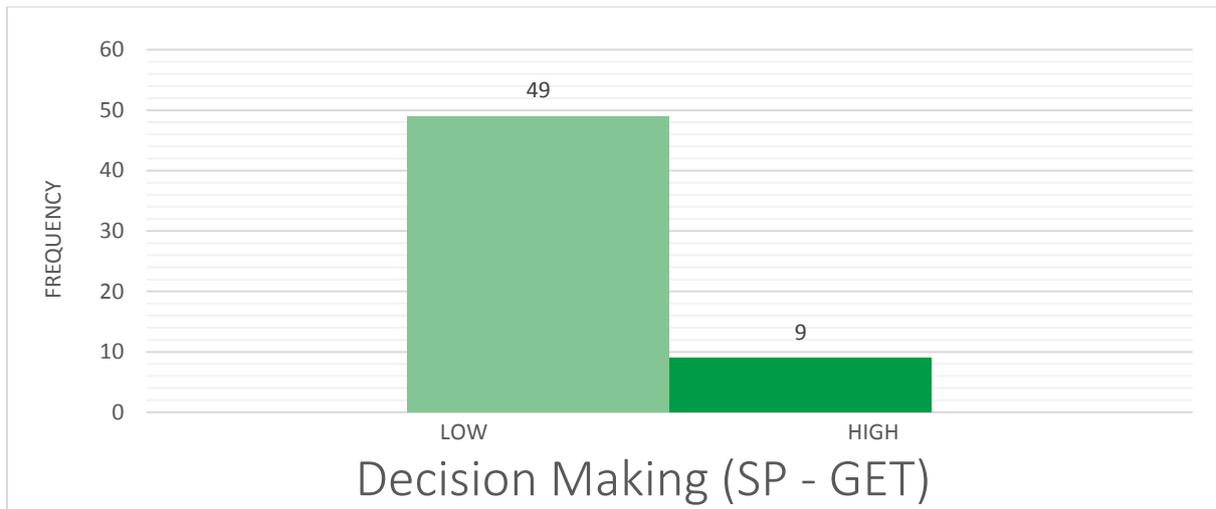


Figure 17. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 17 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *decision making* aspects never and rarely.

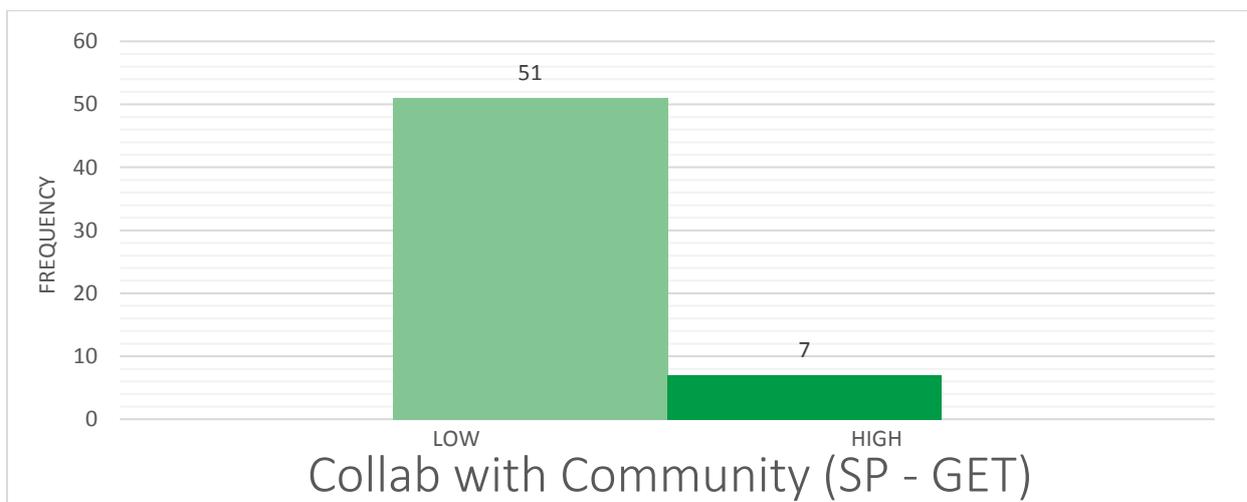


Figure 18. The *Collaborating with community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein's six types of engagement, Figure 18 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in single-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never rarely.

**4.3.6. Research sub-question five: Types of Parent/Guardian Involvement in Two-Parent (TP) households – GET learners**

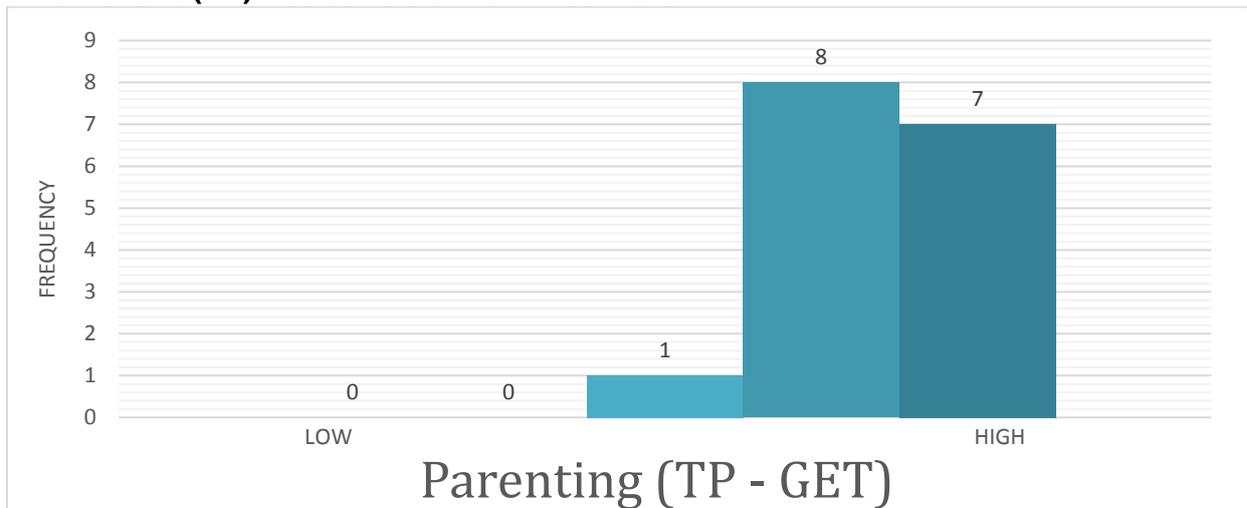


Figure 19. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 19 refers to Type 1 (*Parenting*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be above average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects very often and always.

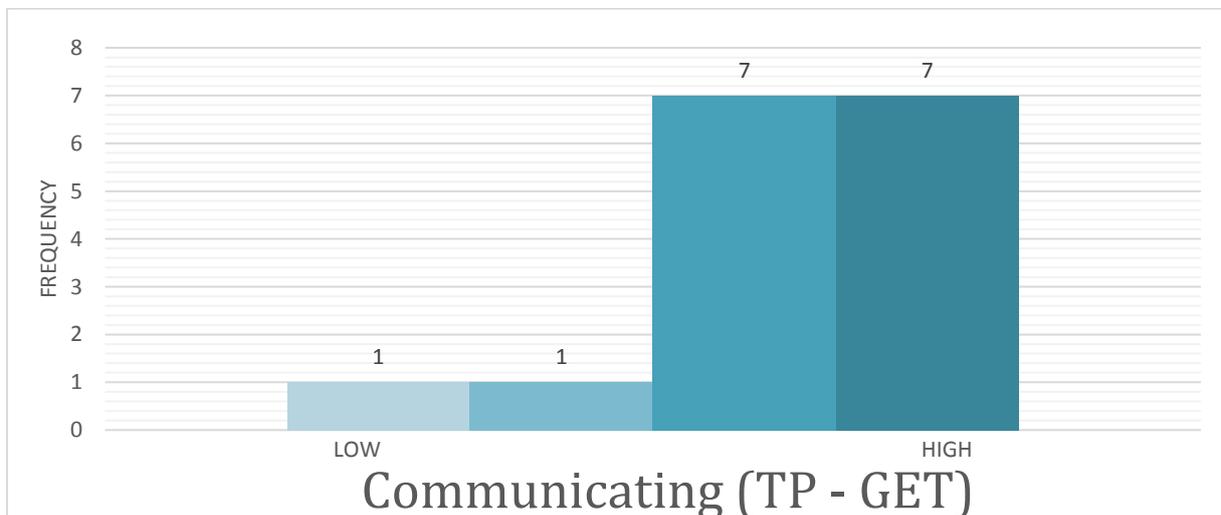


Figure 20. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 20 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be above average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects very often and always.

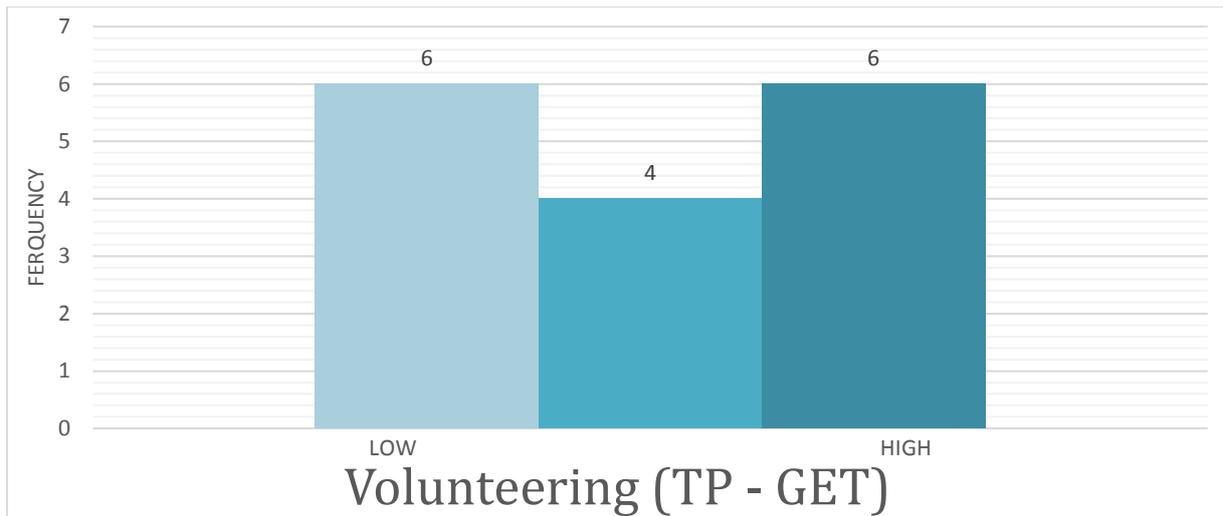


Figure 21. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 21 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be spread from low to high, in a symmetric distribution i.e. equal numbers of parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects from never to always.

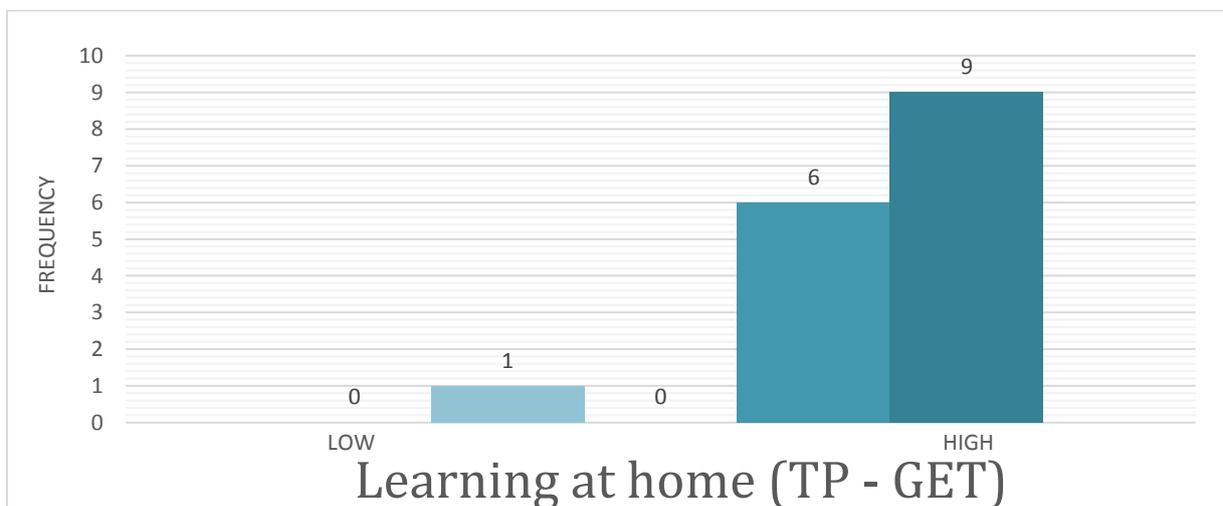


Figure 22. The *Learning at home* aspect (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 22 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be above average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects very often and always.

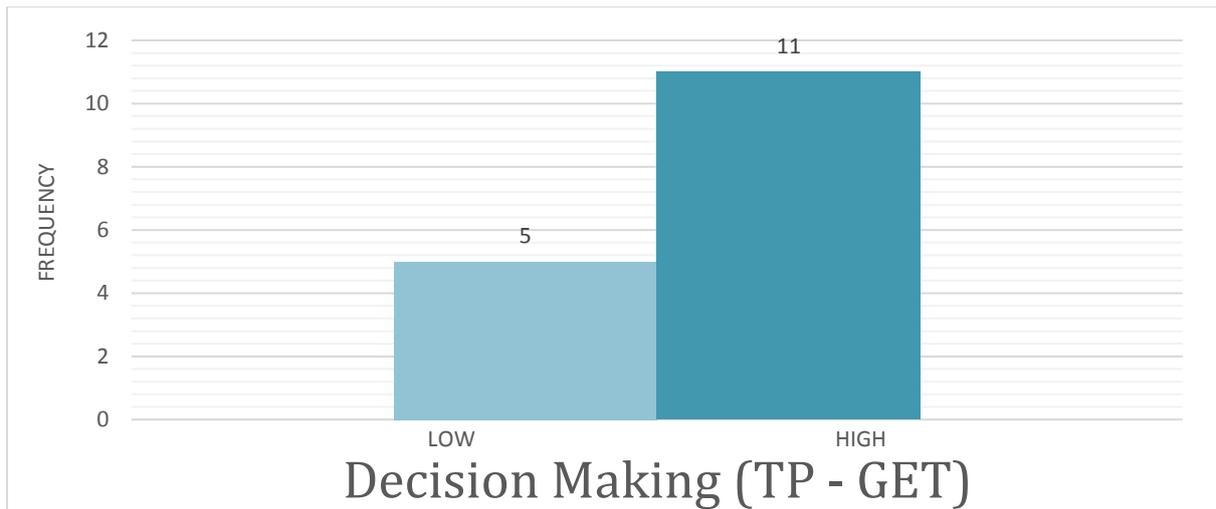


Figure 23. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 23 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *decision making* aspects very often and always.

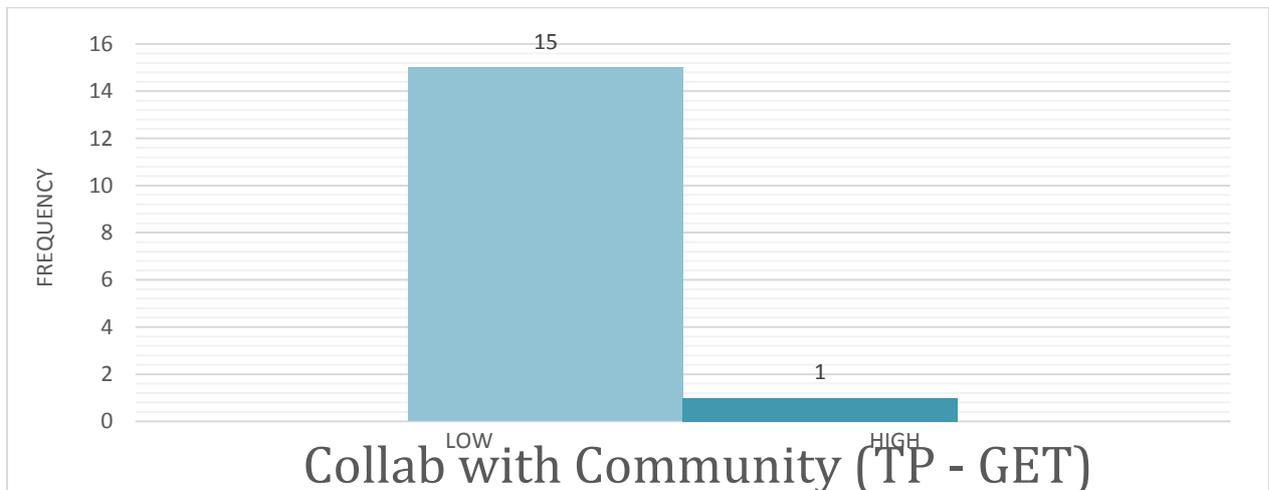


Figure 24. The *Collaborating with community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 24 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in two-parent GET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never and rarely.

**4.3.7. Research sub-question six: Comparison of Parent/Guardian Involvement in SP and TP households – GET learners**

Table 9. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Parenting* (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *parenting* in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Parenting. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	873	15,05172	15,2078
TP	16	309	19,3125	7,429167

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	227,6636	1	227,6636	16,75567	0,00011	3,973897
Within Groups	978,2823	72	13,58725			
Total	1205,946	73				

Table 10. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Communicating* (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *communicating* in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Communicating. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	480	8,275862	22,13309
TP	16	225	14,0625	16,72917

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	419,9222	1	419,9222	19,98937	0,000028	3,973897
Within Groups	1512,524	72	21,00727			
Total	1932,446	73				

Table 11. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Volunteering* (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *volunteering* in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Volunteering. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	314	5,413793	8,176649
TP	16	133	8,3125	12,49583

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	105,3719	1	105,3719	11,60934	0,001077	3,973897
Within Groups	653,5065	72	9,076479			
Total	758,8784	73				

Table 12. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Learning at Home* (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *learning at home* in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Learning at Home. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	935	16,12069	12,21325
TP	16	325	20,3125	11,69583

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	220,3533	1	220,3533	18,20281	0,00006	3,973897
Within Groups	871,5927	72	12,10545			
Total	1091,946	73				

Table 13. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Decision making* (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *decision making*, which involved school involvement decision making aspects such as attendance of school governing body meetings and school budget meetings, in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Decision making. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	189	3,258621	4,826679
TP	16	115	7,1875	10,82917

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	193,5769	1	193,5769	31,853	0,0000003	3,973897
Within Groups	437,5582	72	6,077197			
Total	631,1351	73				

Table 14. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Collaborating with Community* (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of GET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between parenting *collaborating with community* in SP and TP households of GET learners.

Collab with Community. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	58	189	3,258621	4,475802
TP	16	52	3,25	1,4

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	0,000932	1	0,000932	0,000243	0,987605	3,973897
Within Groups	276,1207	72	3,83501			
Total	276,1216	73				

**4.3.8. Research sub-question seven: Types of Parent/Guardian involvement in Single-Parent (SP) households – FET learners**

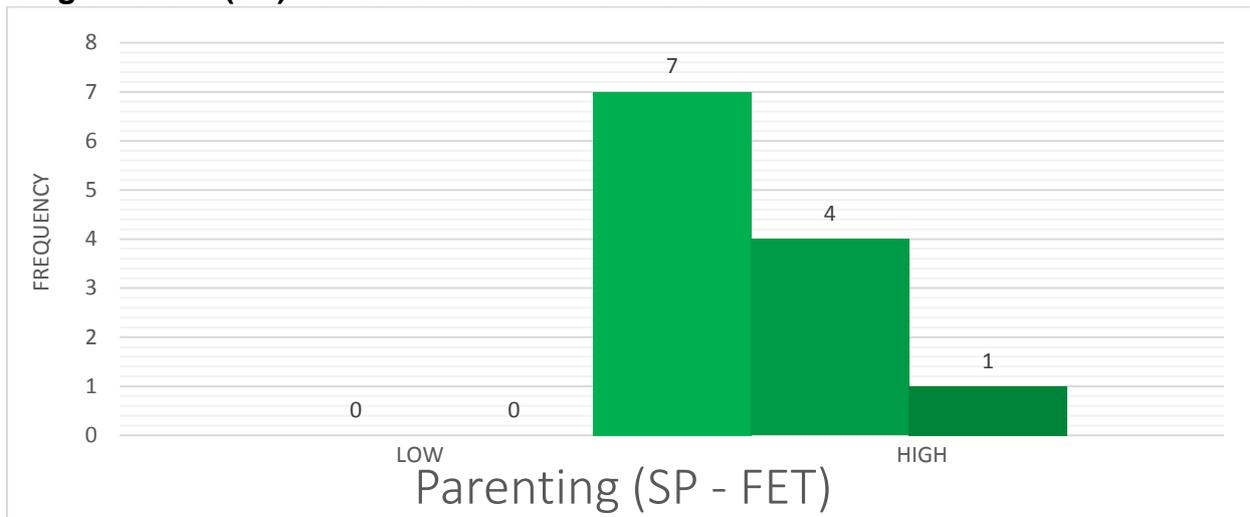


Figure 25. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 25 refers to Type 1 (*Parenting*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects sometimes and very often.

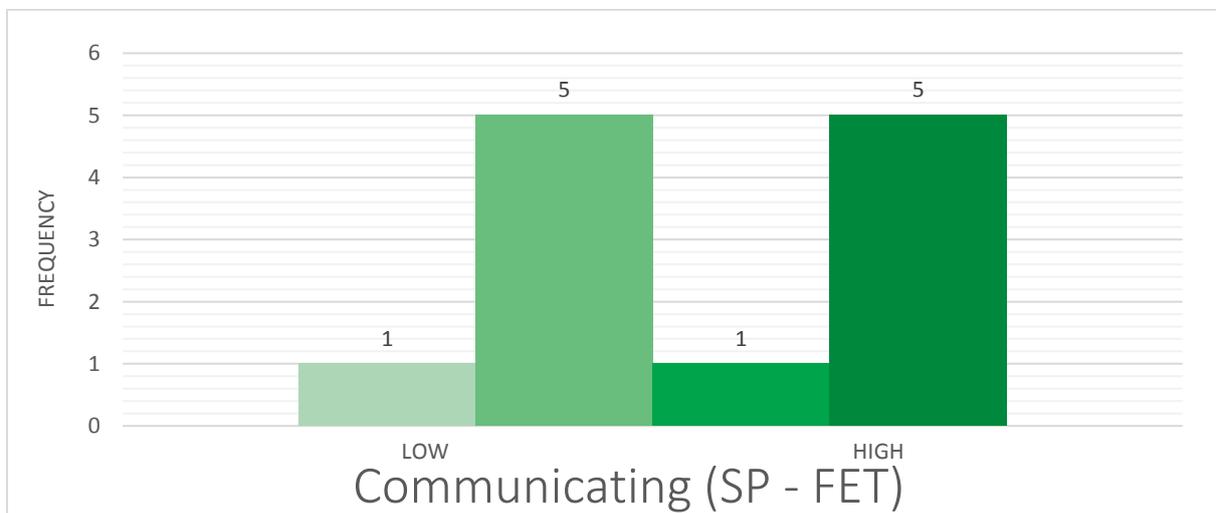


Figure 26. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 26 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects sometimes and always.

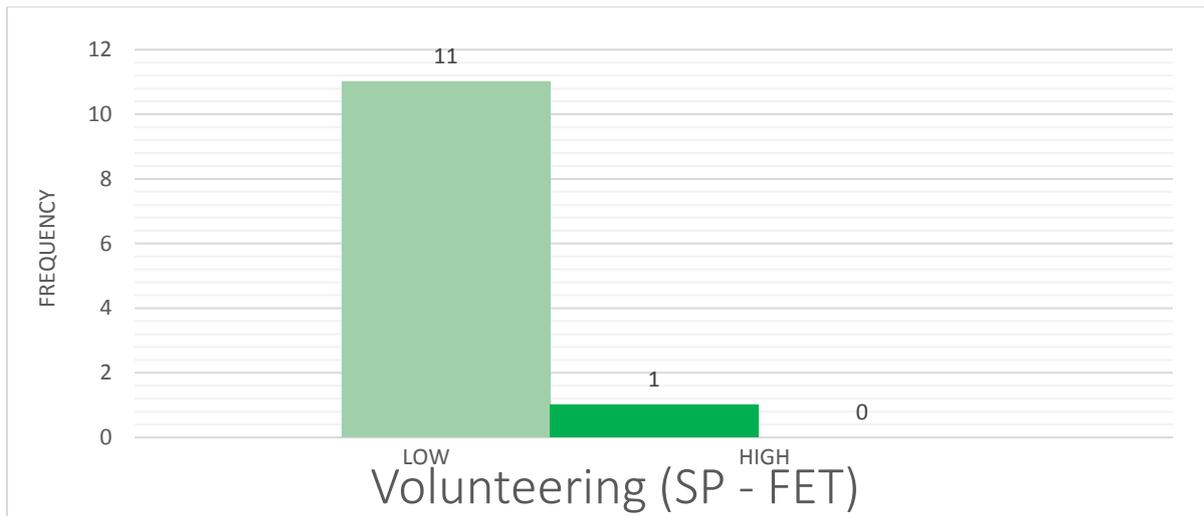


Figure 27. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 27 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects never and rarely.

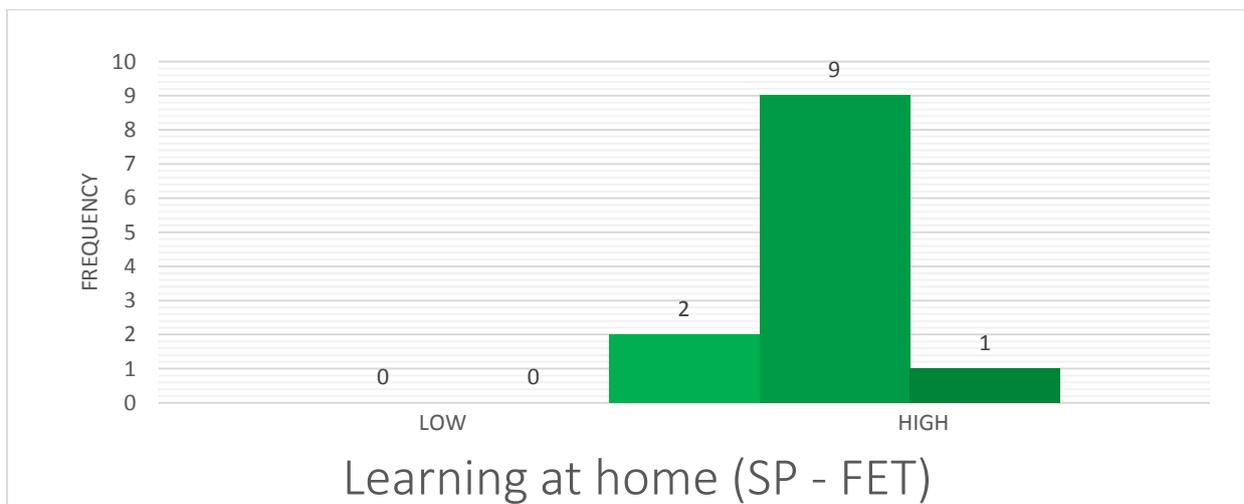


Figure 28. The *Learning at home* aspect (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 28 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be above average i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects very often.



Figure 29. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 29 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be of uniform distribution i.e. equal numbers of parents/guardians were involved in *decision making* aspects never and always.

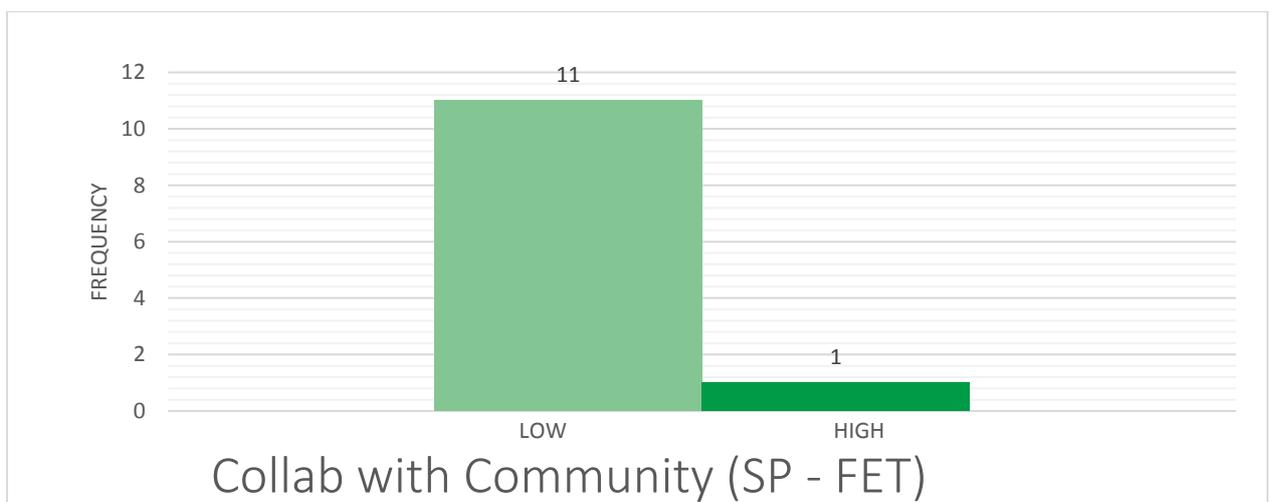


Figure 30. The *Collaborating with community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 30 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in single-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never and rarely.

**4.3.9. Research sub-question eight: Types of Parent/Guardian Involvement in Two Parent (TP) households – FET learners**

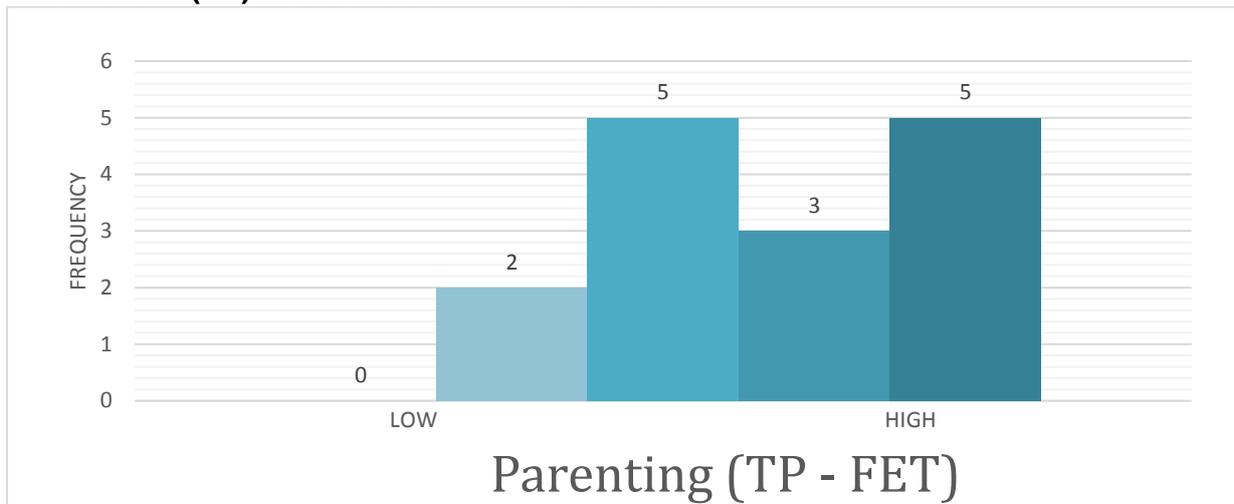


Figure 31. The *Parenting* aspect (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 31 refers to Type 1 (*Parenting*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average, above average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *parenting* aspects sometimes, very often and always.

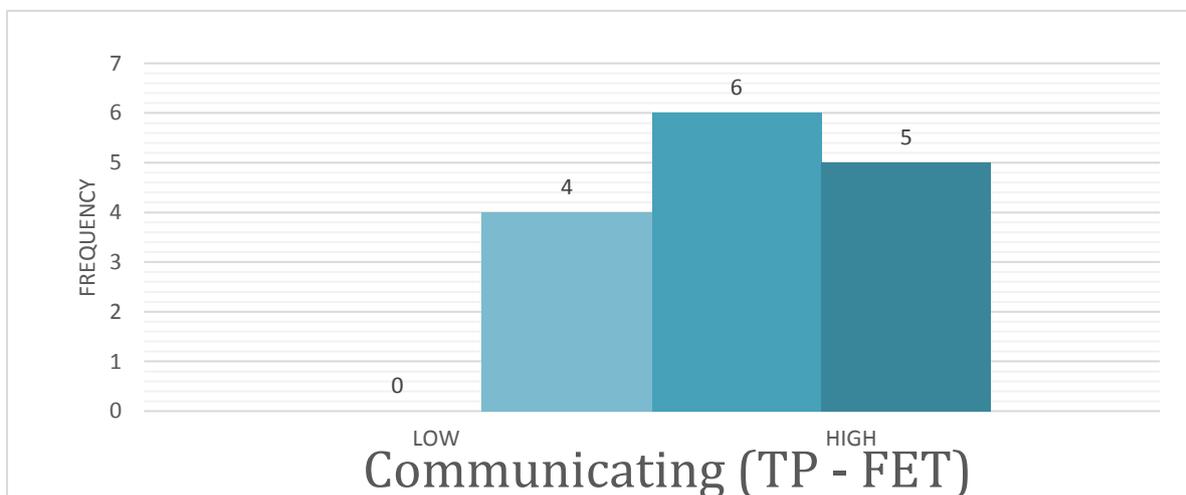


Figure 32. The *Communicating* aspect (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 32 refers to Type 2 (*Communicating*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *communicating* aspects sometimes, very often and always.

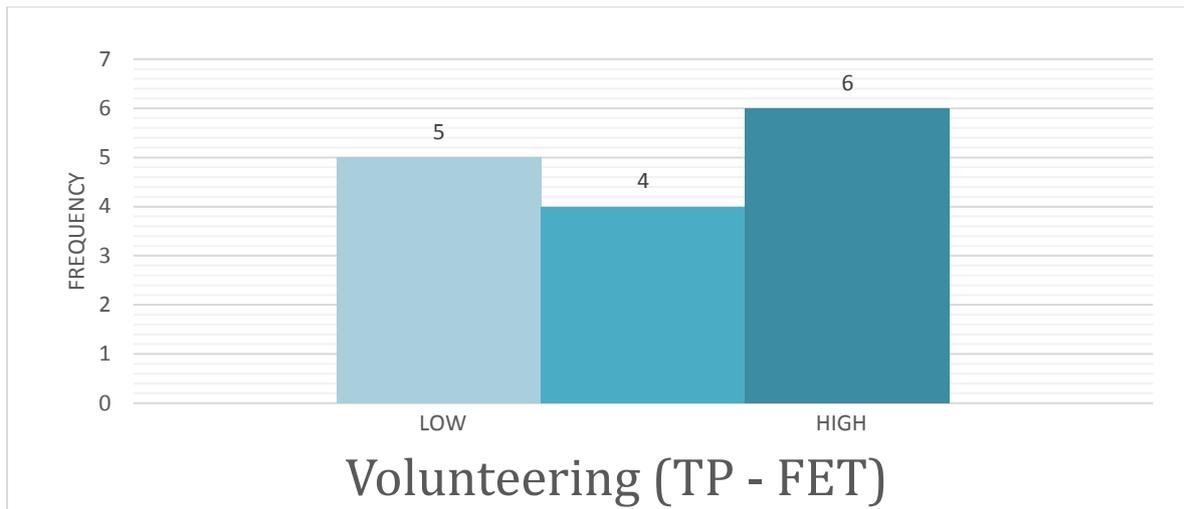


Figure 33. The *Volunteering* aspect (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 33 refers to Type 3 (*Volunteering*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average to high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *volunteering* aspects sometimes, very often and always.

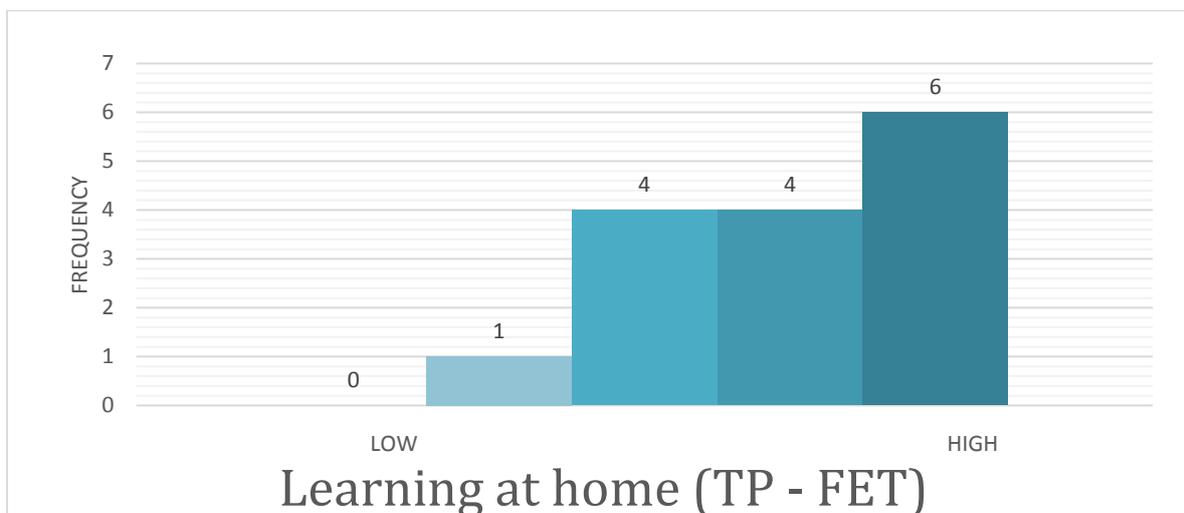


Figure 34. The *Learning at home* aspect (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 34 refers to Type 4 (*Learning at home*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be average, above average and high i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *learning at home* aspects sometimes, very often and always.

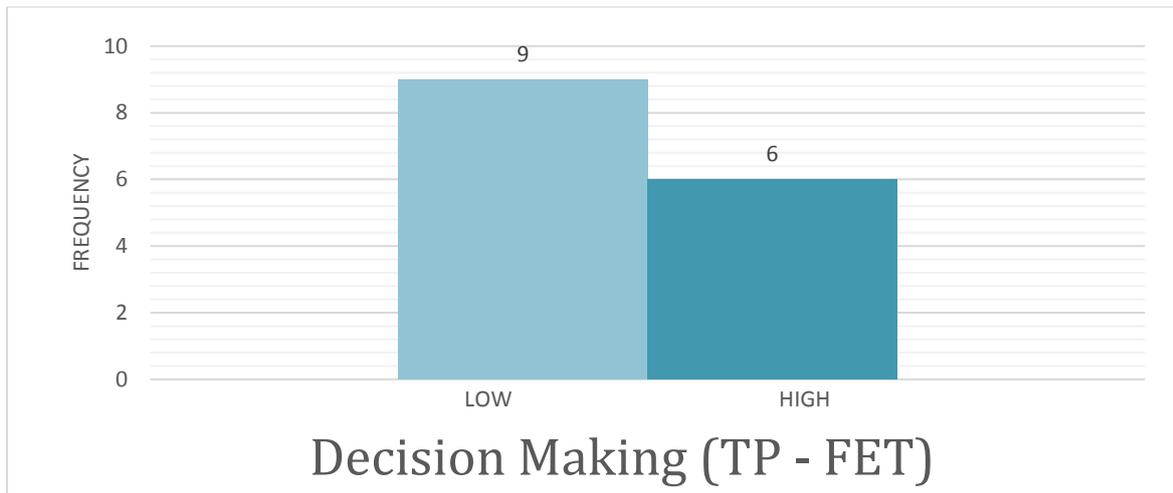


Figure 35. The *Decision making* aspect (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 35 refers to Type 5 (*Decision making*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *decision making* aspects never and rarely.

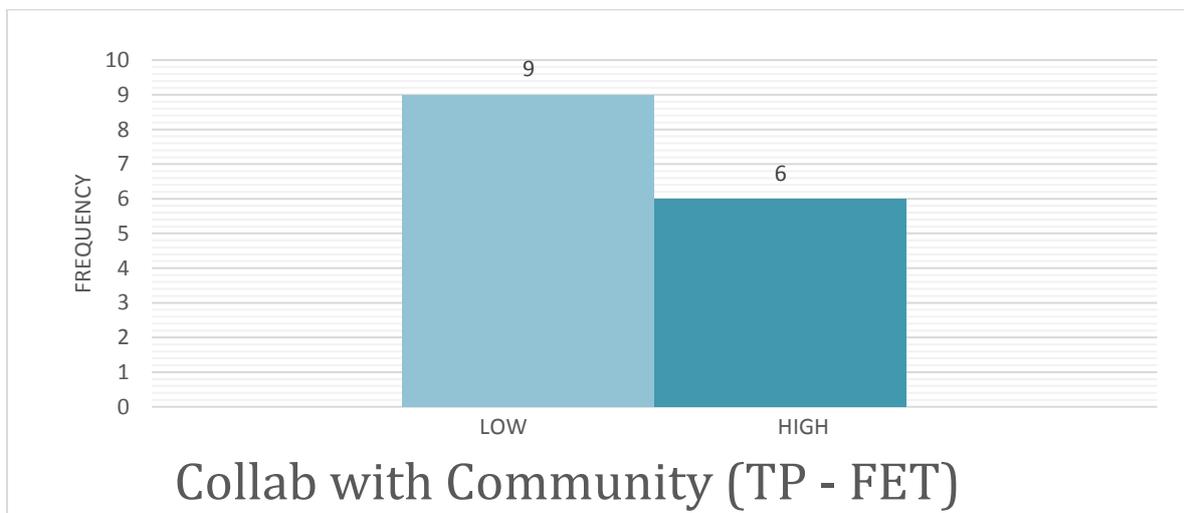


Figure 36. The *Collaborating with community* aspect (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009)

Using Epstein’s six types of engagement, Figure 36 refers to Type 6 (*Collaborating with community*) in two-parent FET learner-households. It indicates the level of parent/guardian involvement to be low i.e. the majority of parents/guardians were involved in *collaborating with community* aspects never and rarely.

**4.3.10. Research sub-question nine: Comparison of Parent/Guardian Involvement in SP and TP households – FET learners**

Table 15. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Parenting* (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between *parenting* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Parenting. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
SP	12	186	15,5	13
TP	15	247	16,46667	23,8381

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	6,22963	1	6,22963	0,326683	0,572722	4,241699
Within Groups	476,7333	25	19,06933			
Total	482,963	26				

Table 16. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Communicating* (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between *communicating* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Communicating. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
SP	12	136	11,33333	32,42424
TP	15	200	13,33333	15,52381

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	26,66667	1	26,66667	1,16144	0,291457	4,241699
Within Groups	574	25	22,96			
Total	600,6667	26				

Table 17. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Volunteering* (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F > F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is a significant difference between *volunteering* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Volunteering. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	12	47	3,916667	1,901515
TP	15	127	8,466667	12,55238

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	138,0167	1	138,0167	17,54598	0,000305	4,241699
Within Groups	196,65	25	7,866			
Total	334,6667	26				

Table 18. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Learning at Home* (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between *learning at home* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Learning at Home. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	12	196	16,33333	6,606061
TP	15	267	17,8	22,17143

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	14,34074	1	14,34074	0,935917	0,342597	4,241699
Within Groups	383,0667	25	15,32267			
Total	397,4074	26				

Table 19. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Decision making* (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between *decision making* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Decision making. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	12	53	4,416667	6,810606
TP	15	79	5,266667	15,20952

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	4,816667	1	4,816667	0,418331	0,523665	4,241699
Within Groups	287,85	25	11,514			
Total	292,6667	26				

Table 20. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Collaborating with Community* (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in SP and TP households of FET learners. The ANOVA results show that  $F < F_{crit}$ , which tells us that there is no significant difference between *collaborating with community* in SP and TP households of FET learners.

Collab with Community. Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
SP	12	35	2,916667	5,356061
TP	15	70	4,666667	6,238095

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	20,41667	1	20,41667	3,490028	0,073504	4,241699
Within Groups	146,25	25	5,85			
Total	166,6667	26				

**4.3.11. Research sub-question ten: Parent/Guardian Involvement of parents/guardians of GET and FET learners**

Table 21. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Parenting* (Type 1), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *parenting* in relation to school involvement in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.02$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ ).

Parenting - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	15,97	16,04
Variance	16,52	18,58
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	44	
t Stat	-0,07	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,47	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,95	
t Critical two-tail	2,02	

Table 22. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Communicating* (Type 2), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is a significant difference between *communicating* in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.01$  and  $p \leq 0.05$ ).

Communicating - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	9,53	12,44
Variance	26,47	23,10
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	49	
t Stat	-2,65	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,005	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,01	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 23. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Volunteering* (Type 3), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *volunteering* in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.02$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ )

Volunteering - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	6,04	6,44
Variance	10,40	12,87
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	42	
t Stat	-0,51	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,30	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,61	
t Critical two-tail	2,02	

Table 24. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Learning at Home* (Type 4), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *learning at home* in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.01$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ )

Learning at Home - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	17,03	17,15
Variance	14,96	15,28
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	46	
t Stat	-0,14	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,45	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,89	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 25. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Decision making* (Type 5), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *decision making* in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.02$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ )

Decision making - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	4,11	4,89
Variance	8,65	11,26
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	41	
t Stat	-1,07	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,15	
t Critical one-tail	1,68	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,29	
t Critical two-tail	2,02	

Table 26. Parent/Guardian Involvement factor: *Collaborating with Community* (Type 6), as identified by Epstein (2009) in her six types of engagement, in GET and FET households. This table shows that there is no significant difference between *collaborating with community* in GET and FET households ( $t = 2.02$  and  $p \geq 0.05$ )

Collab with community - GET and FET

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	GET	FET
Mean	3,26	3,89
Variance	3,78	6,41
Observations	74	27
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0	
df	38	
t Stat	1,18	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,12	
t Critical one-tail	1,69	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,25	
t Critical two-tail	2,02	

Table 27. The six parental involvement factors. The descriptive statistical breakdown of the six types of parental involvement across all denominations.

TYPE 1 - PARENTING

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	15,13	34,75	15,05	19,31	15,50	16,47	15,97	16,04
Mode	16	17	13	17	11	10	13	17
Standard Deviation	3,83	95,20	3,90	2,73	3,61	4,88	4,06	4,31
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

TYPE 2 - COMMUNICATING

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	8,80	26,56	8,28	14,06	11,33	13,33	9,53	12,44
Mode	4	16	4	16	6	14	4	16
Standard Deviation	4,98	72,81	4,70	4,09	5,69	3,94	5,15	4,81
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

TYPE 3 - VOLUNTEERING

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	5,16	16,25	5,41	8,31	3,92	8,47	6,04	6,44
Mode	3	5	3	12	4	5	3	4
Standard Deviation	2,72	44,61	2,86	3,53	1,38	3,54	3,22	3,59
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

TYPE 4 - LEARNING AT HOME

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	16,16	37,00	16,12	20,31	16,33	17,80	17,03	17,15
Mode	16	22	18	23	16	22	18	16
Standard Deviation	3,34	101,36	3,49	3,42	2,57	4,71	3,87	3,91
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

TYPE 5 - DECISION MAKING

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	3,46	12,13	3,26	7,19	4,42	5,27	4,11	4,89
Mode	2	10	2	10	2	2	2	2
Standard Deviation	2,29	33,38	2,20	3,29	2,61	3,90	2,94	3,36
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

TYPE 6 - COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

	<i>SP</i>	<i>TP</i>	<i>SP- GET</i>	<i>TP- GET</i>	<i>SP- FET</i>	<i>TP- FET</i>	<i>GET</i>	<i>FET</i>
Mean	3,2	7,63	3,26	3,25	2,92	4,67	3,26	3,89
Mode	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2
Standard Deviation	2,14	20,97	2,12	1,18	2,31	2,50	1,94	2,53
Count	70	31	58	16	12	15	74	27

**4.3.12. Parents/Guardians responses to how they could be assisted and be better informed**

Table 28. This table is a synthesis of the parent/guardian responses to Question 34 of the questionnaire: Please indicate how you could be assisted regarding your child's homework completion. 101 parents/guardians responded by choosing one of the three options. If "other" was chosen, these responses were filled in the space provided. Some of the "other" responses included requests for the provision of the teacher's personal telephone number; request for the school to telephone the parent if homework was not done etc.

	Receive Homework timetable from school	Receive homework guidelines for parents	Other
<b>SPH</b>	33	16	21
<b>TPH</b>	15	15	1
<b>SPH – GET</b>	13	29	16
<b>TPH – GET</b>	7	9	0
<b>SPH – FET</b>	3	4	5
<b>TPH – FET</b>	8	6	1

Table 29. This table is a synthesis of the parent/guardian responses to Question 35 of the questionnaire: Please indicate how you could be assisted to become better informed regarding your child’s progress. 101 parents/guardians responded by choosing one of the three options. If “other” was chosen, these responses were filled in the space provided. Some of the “other” responses included requests to set up own homework timetable for when parents/guardians are free; the school to send notes home etc.

	Be given a choice of parent days to attend	Use of technology communication e.g. sms/ email	Other
<b>SPH</b>	19	43	8
<b>TPH</b>	3	26	2
<b>SPH – GET</b>	11	40	7
<b>TPH – GET</b>	1	14	1
<b>SPH – FET</b>	2	9	1
<b>TPH – FET</b>	1	13	1

#### 4.4 DATA INTERPRETATION

This section focuses on the interpretation of the data as a whole, including some interpretation based on responses from some participants when further detail on their responses to the closed-ended questions was solicited. All of the 101 participants offered further detail on either the majority or all of the respective questions.

*Research sub-question one:* Parental involvement in single-parent households – The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting* and *Learning at home* in single-parent households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspects of *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Decision making* or *Collaborating with community* which all show low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 64 out of the 70 parents/guardians from single-parent households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels

of involvement, from single parents/ guardians, ranged from lack of financial resources to lack of free time and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question two:* Parental involvement in two-parent households – The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating* and *Learning at home* in two-parent households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspects of *Decision making* and *Collaborating with community*, which show low levels of involvement. The aspect of *Volunteering* showed equally both high and low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 28 out of the 31 parents/guardians from two-parent households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels of involvement, from parents/guardians from two-parent households, included the non-existence of community programs and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question three:* Investigating where there is a significant difference between single-parent and two-parent households in relation to Epstein's (2009) six types of involvement. Significant differences were found in the aspects of *Parenting*, *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and in *Decision making* between single-parent and two-parent households. There was no significant difference found between single-parent and two-parent households in the parental involvement aspect of *Collaborating with community*.

*Research sub-question four:* Parental involvement in single-parent GET households. The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting* and *Learning at home* in single-parent GET households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspects of *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Decision making* or *Collaborating with community* which all show low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 54 out of the 58 parents/guardians from single-parent GET households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels of involvement, from single parents/guardians GET learner households, ranged from lack of financial resources to lack of free time and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question five: Parental Involvement in two-parent GET households.* The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting, Communicating, Learning at home* and *Decision making* in two-parent GET households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspect of *Collaborating with community* shows low levels of involvement. The parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering* shows uniform distribution with equal numbers of parents/guardians showing high and low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 15 out of the 16 parents/guardians from two-parent GET households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels of involvement, from parents/guardians from two-parent GET learner households, included the non-existence of community programs and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question six: Parental Involvement in GET single-parent and two-parent households.* Significant differences were found in the parental involvement aspects of *Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at home* and *Decision making*. There was no significant difference between single-parent and two-parent GET households found in the aspect of *Collaborating with community*.

*Research sub-question seven: Parental Involvement in single-parent FET households.* The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting, Communicating* and *Learning at home* in single-parent FET households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspects of *Volunteering* and *Collaborating with community* shows low levels of involvement. The parental involvement aspect of *Decision making*, such as attending school governing body elections and meetings and school budget meetings, shows uniform distribution with equal numbers of parents/guardians showing high and low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 10 out of the 12 parents/guardians from single-parent FET households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels of involvement, from single-parents/ guardians FET learner households, ranged from lack of financial resources to lack of free time and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question eight:* Parental Involvement in two-parent FET households. The data indicates that the aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating* and *Learning at home* in two-parent FET households shows higher levels of parental involvement than the parental involvement aspects of *Decision making* and *Collaborating with community* shows low levels of involvement. The parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering* shows uniform distribution with equal numbers of parents/guardians showing high and low levels of involvement. From the questions that had space provided for elaboration, 13 out of the 15 parents/guardians from two-parent FET households offered further detail. I was able to determine that reasons for low levels of involvement, from parents/guardians from two parent FET learner households, included the non-existence of community programs and lack of confidence concerning the attendance and participation in school budget and governing body meetings.

*Research sub-question nine:* Parental Involvement in FET single-parent and two-parent households. Significant differences were found in the parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering*. There were no significant differences found in the aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home*, *Decision making* or *Collaborating with community* in single-parent and two-parent FET households.

*Research sub-question ten:* Investigating whether there is a significant difference between GET and FET households. Significant differences were found between GET and FET households in the parental involvement aspect of *Communicating*. There were no significant differences found in the aspects of *Parenting*, *Volunteering*, *Learning at home*, *Decision making* or *Collaborating with community* in GET and FET households.

*Open-ended questions:* All 101 respondents responded to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire (See Tables 28 and 29).

The data showed for Question 34 – “Please indicate how you could be assisted regarding your child’s homework completion” – that the majority of parents/guardians from single-parent households would like to receive homework guidelines for parents from the school. The data further showed that the parents/guardians from two-parent households were split between receiving homework guidelines for parents from the school and receiving homework timetables from the school. Some of the other responses included requests for the provision of the teacher’s personal telephone

number; request for the school to telephone the parent if homework was not done; requests for extra lessons for learners over the weekends; request for school not to give learners homework over the weekends; school to send notes and examples of exercises for parents/guardians; requests for funding.

The data showed for Question 35 – “Please indicate how you could be assisted to become better informed regarding your child’s progress” – that the majority of parents/guardians from both single-parent and two-parent households would like the use of technology communication e.g. email/sms to be used by the school as a means of communicating information to parents. Some of the other responses included requests to set up own homework timetable for when parents/guardians are free; the school to send notes home; requests for funding.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

In summary, we see that the types of involvement that single-parents/guardians are engaging in are those of *Parenting* and *Learning at home*. This was seen when looking at the single-parent/guardian sample as a whole as well as when looking at the GET single-parent/guardian portion of the sample and the FET single-parent/guardian portion of the sample. (An analysis of the single-parent/guardian FET portion of the sample also indicated that these parents were also highly involved in the *Communicating* aspect).

In two-parent/guardian households, the results indicate that parents/guardians are highly involved in *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*. This was seen when looking at the two-parent/guardian sample as a whole as well as when looking at the GET two-parent/guardian portion of the sample and the FET two-parent/guardian portion of the sample, except for the aspect of *Decision making*.

In the single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian portions of the sample, there were significant differences found in five of the six aspects of parental involvement: *Parenting*, *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*. In all five aspects higher levels of involvement were found in two-parent households, when compared to single-parent households.

In the GET learner household portion of the sample, significant differences were also found in the same five aspects of parental involvement, again with higher levels of parental involvement being found in two-parent households.

In the FET learner household portion of the sample, a significant difference was only found in the parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering*, with data indicating that two-parent households exhibit a higher level of involvement.

Only the *Communicating* aspect of parental involvement showed a significant difference between the GET and the FET portions of the sample. This means that parental involvement did not decrease with the age of the child, as other research has shown. In fact, the data shows that the *Communicating* aspect had higher levels of involvement in the two-parent portion of the sample.

A look at the spaces provided to parents/guardians for elaboration as well as a look at the open-ended question results, suggested to me that the majority of parents/guardians from both single-parent and two-parent households preferred the option of using technology to be informed of their children's progress at school rather than being given the option of a choice of days to visit the school in person.

#### **4.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Two-parent households showed higher levels of involvement in more aspects of parental involvement than single-parent households (five out of the six types of parental involvement studied).

The levels of parental involvement in GET and FET households were about the same, with no significant differences found, except for one type of parental involvement (*Communicating* was higher in two-parent households).

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What is the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their GET/FET school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, South Africa?

**Research questions to guide the study:**

1. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
2. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
3. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians** from **SPH** and **parents/guardians** from **TPH**?
4. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
5. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
6. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **GET learners compare and contrast**?
7. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?
8. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?
9. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **FET learners compare and contrast**?
10. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians of GET learners** and **parents/guardians of FET learners**?

Scholarly review findings that are well documented indicate that parental involvement increases academic achievement (Williams & Chavkin, 1989; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Epstein, 1995; Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1997; SEDL, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkin, & Closson, 2005; Jeynes, 2007). Research has also shown that parental involvement decreases as children grow older (Stouffer, 1992; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mutua & Sunal, 2004, Child Trends, 2013; Public Agenda, 2015). Research has furthermore shown that single-parenthood is generally associated with lower academic achievement (Linver, Brooks-Gunn & Kohen, 2002; Manning & Lamb, 2003; Pong, Dronkers & Hampden-Thompson, 2003; Ginther & Pollak, 2004; Gershoff, Aber, Raver & Lennon 2007).

The dissertation explored these issues via a researcher-constructed questionnaire based on Epstein's (2009) six types of involvement. The types and extent of parental involvement were explored across two family structures, namely, single-parent/guardian households and two-parent/guardian households. This chapter will present a summary of the research findings as well as the research conclusions, recommendations, limitations, avenues for future research and concluding remarks.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

To investigate the issue of low levels of parental involvement in South Africa, this study aimed to identify the types of parental involvement that are in need of development, across two family structures in our country i.e. single-parent and two-parent households, in Durban, South Africa.

Hosegood, Mcgrath & Moultrie (2009) from fifteen rounds of population-based surveillance data showed that the declines in marriage in KwaZulu-Natal identified in the 1960s have not been reversed but rather the proportion of the adult population ever married has continued to decline between 2000 and 2006. An international report from the Social Trends Institute showed that children in South Africa are by far the least likely to live in a two-parent home (58 percent do not) (The Sustainable Demographic Dividend, 2011).

An international study done in eleven countries: United States, Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Scotland found that single-parenthood is associated with lower math and science achievement among young children (Pong, Dronkers & Hampden-Thompson, 2003). Approximately 63% of South African children do not live in a two-parent home (World Family Map, 2013). This dissertation aimed to determine the current levels of parental involvement in Durban, South Africa in single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households.

There have been numerous research studies, in which teachers reported lower levels of school involvement for single parents (Epstein, 1984; Kohl et al., 1994; Reynolds, 1992). This study similarly looked at levels of parental involvement, albeit from the perspectives of the parents in Durban, South Africa themselves. The findings of this study concurred with previous findings and found similarly that there were lower levels of parental involvement in single-parent households compared to that of two-parent households; however there was no significant difference found between levels of parental involvement in GET and FET learner households. Lower levels of parental involvement in single-parent households were found in the aspects of *Communicating*, *Volunteering*, *Decision making* and *Collaborating with community*. Similar low levels of involvement were found in single-parent GET learner households. Lower levels of involvement for FET learner single-parent households were found in the aspects of *Volunteering* and *Collaborating with community*.

This study also aimed to determine the current levels of parental involvement in the GET and FET learner households in Durban, South Africa. The findings of this study indicated no significant difference between parental involvement in GET learner households and parental involvement in FET learner households. This finding does not concur with Epstein's (1992) research study that showed that parental involvement declines with grade level.

The IES (Institute of Education Sciences) and the US government mission is to provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public. It was created as part of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (IES, 2015).

Their report had similar aims to my research study, regarding levels of parental involvement in single-parent and two-parent households. I will therefore, now compare the findings of their study to the findings of my research study, in order of Epstein's (2009) framework of six types of parental involvement, upon which my questionnaire was based.

The IES study showed that:

1. 86% of students had a place set aside for them in their home to do homework, which could correspond to involvement type 1 – *Parenting*. My research study, which asked participants questions on *Parenting*, regarding a specific place and time where and when their child completes their homework, indicated that the level for the aspect of *Parenting* is at 60.52% for single-parent/guardian households and 71.76% for two-parent/guardian households, both below that measured in the IES study.

2. 76% of student's parents attended schedule meeting with teacher, which could correspond to that of involvement type 2 – *Communicating*. My research study, which asked participants questions on *Communicating*, regarding meeting with form teachers and school visits, indicated that the level for the aspect of *Communicating* is at 44% for single-parent/guardian households and 68.55% for two-parent/guardian households, both below that measured in the IES study.

3. 42% of parents volunteered or served on a committee, which could correspond to involvement type 3 – *Volunteering*. My research study, which, asked participants questions on *volunteering* services at school and attendance of extra-curricular activities, indicated that the level for the aspect of *Volunteering* is at 34.4% for single-parent/guardian households and 55.93% for two-parent/guardian households, single-parents/guardians below and two-parent/guardian households scoring above that measured in the IES study.

4. 67% had an adult in the household who checked that their homework was done, which could correspond to involvement type 4 – *Learning at Home*. My research study, which asked participants questions on providing assistance with schoolwork at home and homework study aids like homework timetables, indicated that the level for the aspect of *Learning at Home* is at 80.8% for single-parent households and 95.5% for two-parent households, both higher than that measured in the IES study.

5. 87% of students' parents attended a general meeting, which could correspond to that of Epstein's involvement type 5 – *Decision making*. My research study, which included questions on attendance of governing body and budget meetings, determined that the level for the aspect of *Decision making* is at 34.6% for single-parent/guardian households and 62.6% for two-parent/guardian households, both below that measured in the IES study.

6. 54% of parents attended a community/religious/ethnic event, which could correspond to involvement type 6 – *Collaborating with community* (NCES, 2012). My research study, which included questions on involvement in community based activities, indicated that the level for the aspect of *Collaborating with community* is at 32% for single-parent/guardian households and 39.4% for two-parent/guardian households, both below that measured in the IES study.

It is evident, regarding single-parent/guardian households that the parents/guardians in my research study, from Durban, South Africa, showed lower levels of parental involvement than the parents/guardians in the IES study, from the United States of America, in all types of involvement, with the exception of Type 4 – *Learning at home*.

It is also clear, regarding two-parent/guardian households that the parents/guardians in my research study, from Durban, South Africa, showed lower levels of parental involvement than the parents/guardians in the IES study, from the United States of America, in four of the six types of involvement, with the exceptions being Types 3 and 4 – *Volunteering* and *Learning at home*.

### 5.3 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What is the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their GET/FET school-going children, in single-parent and two-parent households in Durban, South Africa?

**The sub questions that were addressed via this study were:**

1. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?

The parental involvement aspects of *Parenting* and *Learning at home* were found to be most engaged in by parents/guardians from single-parent households.

2. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians** from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?

The parental involvement in aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making* were found to be most engaged in by parents/guardians from two-parent households.

3. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians** from **SPH** and **parents/guardians** from **TPH**?

The findings suggests that significant differences were found in the aspects of *Parenting*, *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*.

4. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?

The parental involvement aspects of *Parenting* and *Learning at home* were found to be most engaged in by parents/guardians from single-parent GET learner households.

5. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of GET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?

The parental involvement aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making* were found to be most engaged in by parents/guardians from two-parent GET learner households.

6. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **GET learners compare and contrast**?

There were significant differences found in the aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Volunteering*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*, all of which were found to be higher in two-parent households at the GET level.

7. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **single-parent households (SPH)**, most engaged in?

Parents/Guardians from single-parent FET learner households were found to be most engaged in the parental involvement aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating* and *Learning at home*.

8. What types of involvement are **parents/guardians of FET learners**, from **two-parent households (TPH)**, most engaged in?

Parents/guardians from two-parent FET learner households were found to be most engaged in the parental involvement aspects of *Parenting*, *Communicating* and *Learning at home*.

9. How does the involvement, in **single-parent households (SPH)** and **two-parent households (TPH)**, of **FET learners compare and contrast?**

There was only a significant difference found in the parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering* at the level of FET.

10. Is there a **significant difference** between parental involvement of **parents/guardians of GET learners** and **parents/guardians of FET learners?**

There was only a significant difference found in the parental involvement aspect of *Communicating*.

My main research question was: What is the current extent and type of parental involvement in the education of their General Education and Training (GET)/ Further Education and Training (FET) school-going children, in Single-Parent (SP) and Two-Parent (TP) households in Durban, South Africa? In relation to this question we see that the types of involvement that Single-parents/guardians are most engaging in are those of Parenting and Learning at home. This was seen when looking at the single-parent/guardian sample as a whole as well as when looking at the GET single-parent/guardian portion of the sample and the FET single-parent/guardian portion of the sample. (An analysis of the single-parent/guardian FET portion of the sample also

indicated that these parents/guardians were also highly involved in the *Communicating* aspect). As was shown in the data, this implies that single-parents/guardians show low levels of involvement in the other aspects of parental involvement, i.e. *Volunteering*, *Decision making* and *Collaborating with the community*.

In two-parent/guardian households, the results indicate that parents/guardians are highly involved in *Parenting*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*. This was seen when looking at the two-parent/guardian sample as a whole as well as when looking at the GET Two-parent/guardian portion of the sample and the FET two-parent/guardian portion of the sample, except for the aspect of *Decision making*. As was shown in the data, parents/guardians from two-parent households exhibit low levels of involvement in the other two aspects of parental involvement, i.e. *Volunteering* and *Collaborating with the community*.

In the single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian portions of the sample, there were significant differences found in five of the six aspects of parental involvement: *Parenting*, *Volunteering*, *Communicating*, *Learning at home* and *Decision making*. In all five aspects higher levels of involvement were found in two-parent households, when compared to single-parent households.

In the GET learner household portion of the sample, significant differences were also found in the same five aspects of parental involvement, again with higher levels of parental involvement being found in two-parent households.

In the FET learner household portion of the sample, a significant difference was only found in the parental involvement aspect of *Volunteering*, with data indicating that two-parent households exhibit a higher level of involvement.

Only the *Communicating* aspect of parental involvement showed a significant difference between the GET and the FET portions of the sample. This means that parental involvement did not decrease with the age of the child, as other research has shown. In fact, the data shows that the *Communicating* aspect had higher levels of involvement in the two-parent portion of the sample.

The open ended questions were analysed by tabulating the responses of the participants (See Tables 28 and 29).

The data showed for Question 34 – “Please indicate how you could be assisted regarding your child’s homework completion” – that the majority of parents/guardians from single-parent households would like to receive homework guidelines for parents/guardians from the school. The data further showed that the parents/guardians from two-parent/guardian households were split between receiving homework guidelines for parents/guardians from the school and receiving homework timetables from the school. Some of the other responses included requests for the provision of the teacher’s personal telephone number; request for the school to telephone the parent/guardian if homework was not done; requests for extra lessons for learners over the weekends; request for school not to give learners homework over the weekends; school to send notes and examples of exercises for parents/guardians; requests for funding.

The data showed for Question 35 – “Please indicate how you could be assisted to become better informed regarding your child’s progress” – that the majority of parents/guardians from both single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households would like the use of technology communication e.g. email/sms to be used by the school as a means of communicating information to parents/guardians. Some of the other responses included requests to set up own homework timetable for when parents/guardians are free; the school to send notes home; requests for funding.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

*For Education Systems at District Level I suggest the following:*

1. Allow for some flexibility in teachers’ and principals’ schedules, in schools that can justify a need for this (from for example parents/ guardians written requests), so that they can be available to meet with parents. Results from the open ended questions in this study showed that a significant number of parents/guardians from single parent/guardian households would attend parent days at school if they were given a choice of possible attendance days.
2. Attempt to identify and support parents/guardians that are unable to participate as much as they would like to by offering transportation for school meetings or activities,

including school governing body and budget meetings. From the analysis of the questionnaire, both parents/guardians from single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households showed low levels of parental involvement in the *Decision making aspects* (Epstein's (2009) Type 5) which comprised attendance of school governing body meetings (including elections) and school budget meetings as well as low levels of parental involvement in the *Volunteering aspects* (Epstein's (2009) Type 3)) which comprised volunteering of services to the school and attendance of extra-curricular activities. A significant number of parents/guardians from both single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households indicated, in the spaces allowed for elaboration, that they were unable to attend these meetings as they did not have the finances to commute to the schools.

3. Develop partnerships with organisations outside school to promote avenues of parental involvement such as indicated by Epstein's (2009) Type 2 – *Communicating*. This is recommended as, it was found from the results of this study that, the majority of both parents/guardians from single-parent households and two-parent households indicated that the use of technology in the form of sms communication would help them stay more informed regarding the progress etc. of their child at school.

*For the School Level I suggest the following:*

1. Survey parents/guardians of learners on the ways they can and want to be involved by sending out written communications to them with return slips for parents/ guardians to complete indicating how they could be assisted to attend school meetings/ events. The schools can then collate these responses, which would justify an identified need, and approach their district office for assistance of the parents/ guardians identified.

2. Diversify the forms of involvement to cater to and provide individualised support for children whose parents/guardians have only limited possibilities for involvement. This study showed that two-parent/guardian households showed higher levels of involvement in more aspects of parental involvement than single-parent/guardian households (in five out of the six types of parental involvement studied). The majority of parents/guardians from single-parent/guardian households indicated that they would prefer the use of technological communication, of information regarding their

children, in the form of email/ sms. An effort should be made to create a database of these parents/guardians and follow through with this type of communication, by for example planning fund-raising activities in the community, which may also consequentially increase the low levels of parental involvement found in this study regarding Epstein's (2009) Type 6 aspect – that of *Collaborating with the community*.

*For the Parent/Guardian Level I note that:*

1. Low levels of involvement were found regarding parents/guardians from single-parent/guardian households were found in the aspects of *Volunteering* (Type 3), *Decision making* (Type 4) and *Collaborating with the community* (Type 6). Responses from the spaces on the questionnaire allowed for elaboration indicated that reasons for this low level of involvement in these aspects were due to a lack of time and financial resources. A significant number of single parents/guardians did, however, indicate that they would be more in attendance of meetings and events if these issues were addressed via funding and a choice of dates for attendance of parents meetings. It is therefore recommended that parents/guardians who find themselves in these situations approach their child's school for assistance in this regard.

2. A significant number of parents/guardians from both single-parent and two-parent households indicated in the open ended questions portion of the questionnaire that they could be assisted to become better informed regarding their child's progress if the school would use technological communication such as sms or email. It is thus recommended that parents/guardians bring this request to the attention of the school management team. This could be done when visiting the school, or even at a bigger forum such as those of parent meetings and governing body meetings.

## **5.5 AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research should be done on a bigger scale and should involve more locations, possibly provincially, with varied locations of data collection, or at least at a school district level. Findings of these studies should be relayed to the relevant districts and schools who are able to identify with the findings could apply the recommendations to

their own schools and make the necessary changes or improvements to their current parent involvement strategies. The findings of this study will be distributed to schools and district offices in the nearby vicinity (as funds will permit).

## **5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was conducted by a single researcher. This led to the research sample comprising just 101 participants. Open ended questions were asked of the participants, in person, who may not have had sufficient time to have given more thought to their responses – this can be seen as a limitation to the study. Participants may not have necessarily been asked questions in their native languages, the responses of some parents/guardians may have been limited by a small vocabulary. Acknowledging the limitations of the study, as mentioned above, more research is required to further explore the above findings.

## **5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The recommendations to school district office personnel and to school level management teams, teachers and parents/guardians as well as the areas for future inquiry have been suggested. It is desired that the schools and district offices, in Durban, South Africa, that receive copies of this effort, appreciate the potential significance of this study and consider implementing some (or all) of the recommendations made regarding the parental involvement of the parents/guardians of their learners. It is the hope of this researcher that the academic world, through continuing research in the field of South African family structures in education, can influence policy to ensure that all South African children, whether from single-parent/guardian households or two-parent/ guardian households, receive a holistic education with buy-in from all relevant stakeholders, as discussed above, during their years of formal schooling.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### QUESTIONNAIRE COVERING LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Title of questionnaire: CURRENT PRACTICES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, Durban, KZN

Dear potential respondent

This questionnaire that you will see below forms part of my Master's research for the degree of M Ed at the University of South Africa in education: My study is about the current extent of parental involvement in the education of secondary school learners across two main family structures (single and two parent/guardian structures), regarding GET and FET phases. I also will be seeking input from other parents of school learners in Durban, KZN. You have been selected by a sampling strategy from the population of Durban, to be one of one hundred participants. Hence, I invite you to take part in this survey, by completing the questionnaire.

In short, my study is aimed at investigating the current extent of parental involvement in the education of their secondary school-going children, across the two main family structures in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, with the hope of improving parental involvement in the GET and FET phases. The findings of the study should benefit the various education stakeholders in the province to put in place structures to remedy any shortfalls regarding current parental involvement, and ultimately the learner population therein.

You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire, comprising 35 questions as honestly and frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. No foreseeable risks are associated with the completion of the questionnaire which is for research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

You are not required to indicate your name or organisation and your anonymity will be ensured; however, indication of your age, gender, occupation position etcetera. will contribute to a more comprehensive analysis. All information obtained from this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you have the right to omit any question if so desired, or to withdraw from answering this survey without penalty at any stage. After the completion of the study, an electronic summary of the findings of the research will be made available to you on request, and a forum can be held in the Durban CBD if so required.

Permission to undertake this survey has been granted by the University of South Africa and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. If you have any research-related enquiries, they can be addressed directly to me or my supervisor. My contact details are: 0784254030 e-mail: nirvanagounden@hotmail.com and my supervisor can be reached at College of Education, UNISA, e-mail: rommnra@unisa.ac.za

----- ✕  
I hereby give my consent to participate in this research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Please hand in the questionnaire to the researcher once completed.

Yours sincerely,



Ms NIRVANA GOUNDEN

Med (ADULT EDUCATION) STUDENT – UNISA – 2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## APPENDIX II

### PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

#### QUESTIONNAIRE : PRACTICES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, Durban, KZN

1. Are you : Black White Indian/Asian Coloured  
Other

Male  Female

2. What is your age?

18 – 24  25 – 34  35 – 44  45 – 54  55 – 64   
>65

3. What is your monthly income?

R0 – R5000  R5001 – R20 000  R20 001 – R50 000  > R50 000

4. What type of school does your child attend?

Urban Rural Township

5. Would you class this school in terms of resources and teaching staff, as being

Well – resourced Average Poorly resourced

6. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

Attended secondary school  Graduated secondary school

Attended college

Graduated college

Postgraduate degree

Other \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your marital status?

Married

Single, never married

Separated / Divorced

Widowed

8. What grade is your child in?

Grade 1 - 3  Grade 4 – 6  Grade 7 - 9  Grade 10 - 12

9. Are both parents living in the same household or are you a single parent/guardian at the moment?

Both living at home  Single parent/guardian

\* If you are a single parent, please specify from when (For the last year; the last 2 years etc.)

10. How many, if any, of the parents (or guardians) are employed?

None

1 parent

2 (Both parents)

\*If employed outside the home, what kind of employment are you engaged in:  
Please specify:

11. How often does your child use a specific place at home to complete his/her homework?

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Very often

Always

12. How often do you supervise your child doing his/her homework?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\* Please specify, if you do, the type of support you offer your child (ren) if they tell you that they are having problems with the homework:

---

13. How often does your child do his/her homework at a set time of the day?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

14. How often is your child out of view of the television while doing his/her homework?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

15. How often do you talk to your child about school?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

16. How often does your child discuss school tasks, such as homework, assignments and/or tests with you?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

17. How often do you assist your child with his/her homework?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\* Please elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

18. Over the past year, how often have you met your child's Form teachers?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

19. How often do you visit your child's school to check on your child's progress?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ times per year

20. How often do you attend termly parent days?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

21. How often do you attend school extra-curricular activities?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

22. How often do you volunteer any of your services to the school?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

23. How often do you give any donations to any of the school's extra-curricular programs/ activities?

\* Please elaborate

---

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

24. How often does your child use a homework/ study timetable?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

25. How often do you encourage your child (ren) to discuss their homework with you?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\* If you offer encouragement, in what way(s) do you offer this encouragement (please specify):

---

26. How often do your children read for leisure/ play educational games e.g. board games at home?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

27. How often do you encourage your child after performing below your expectations in a test/ exam?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\* Please offer more detail regarding your reaction/response

---

28. How often do you attend School Governing Body meetings?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

29. How often do you attend School Budget meetings?

Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please elaborate on these responses

---

---

---

30. How often are you involved in community based activities taking place in your area?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

31. How often are you involved in any community based school activities taking place in your area?

- Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Very often  
Always

\*Please can you give more detail:

---

32. How important do you feel, that succeeding at school, is for the future of your child?

- Very Low       Low       Moderate       High       Very High

33. How would you rate your own current level of parental involvement?

- Very Low       Low       Moderate       High       Very High

34. Please indicate how you could be assisted regarding your child's homework completion

- Receive homework timetable from school  
 Receive homework guidelines for parents  
 Other
- 

35. Please indicate how you could be assisted to become better informed regarding your child's progress.

- Be given a choice of parent days to attend  
 Use of technology communication e.g. sms / email

Other \_\_\_\_\_

---

### APPENDIX III

#### List of Durban CBD streets

1.	Fountain Lane	17.	Hermitage Road
2.	Leopold Street	18.	Florence Nzama Street
3.	Archie Gumede Place	19.	Joe Slovo Street
4.	Bond Street	20.	Joseph Nduli Street
5.	Grey Street	21.	Soldiers Way
6.	Ingcuce Road	22.	Dr Pixley Kaseme Street
7.	Bertha Mkhize Street	23.	Church Street
8.	Dennis Hurley Street	24.	Dorothy Nyembe Street
9.	Commercial Street	25.	Braam Fischer Road
10.	J N Singh Street	26.	Monty Naicker Road
11.	K E Masinga Road	27.	Dr Goonam Street
12.	Maud Mfusi Street	28.	Acutt Street
13.	McArthur Street	29.	Albany Street
14.	St Andrews Street	30.	Samora Machel Street
15.	Dullar Omar Grove	31.	Stanger Street
16.	Salmon Lane	32.	Anton Lembede Street

## APPENDIX IV

VDT Schedule:

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
<b>08:00 – 11:00</b>	-----	Grey Street	Samora Machel Street	-----	Anton Lembede Street
<b>11:15 – 14:15</b>	Monty Naicker Road	-----	-----	Dennis Hurley Street	Dr Pixley Kaseme Street
<b>14:30 – 17:30</b>	Bertha Mkhize Street	Joe Slovo Street	Commercial Street	Leopold Street	-----

## APPENDIX V

### Telephone Interview Script

Hello, my name is Miss Gounden and I am calling regarding the research I am doing for my Masters degree in Education at the University of South Africa. If R answers phone or comes to phone, go to 1.

If R is not available or not home: When would be a good time to call back?

If don't know, schedule soft call back for different day/time.

If informant offers day/time, schedule call back appointment.

Hello Sir/ Mam. My name is Miss Gounden and I'm calling from the University of South Africa and I am conducting a research study that is collecting information from parents/guardians in Durban on experiences and views on parental involvement in education.

1. Am I speaking with the individual that I have spoken to earlier today/ yesterday etc. ?

If YES, Go to 2.

If NO, schedule soft call back for different day/time.

2. Do you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study that I can answer for you at this time?

[ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THE RESPONDENT MAY HAVE, THEN READ STATEMENT BELOW.]

Before we get started, let me tell you a little more about what we are asking you to do. The telephone interview will take about 10 minutes of your time and will focus on your parental involvement experiences and views. I will ask you questions about your experiences and views on parental involvement. Everything you tell me will be kept confidential. UNISA will not release any information that identifies you to anyone without your prior consent, except as required by law. The information you give during the interview will be used only for research purposes. You may choose to participate or not.

Once we start the interview, you can refuse to answer any question you don't want to answer. Just tell me and we will skip to the next one. If, after we start the interview, you need to take a break or need to stop the interview for any reason, just let me know.

Is this a good time to do the interview?

[IF R INDICATES THAT IT IS NOT A GOOD TIME:] Is there a day and time that would be more convenient for you? [SCHEDULE CALLBACK APPOINTMENT.]

[IF YES:] That's great. Thank you. Before we get started I just want to remind you that, if you need to take a break or stop the survey for whatever reason, just let me know.

[START SURVEY]

## APPENDIX VI

### Statistical Tests for Validity

Bartlett's sphericity test:

Chi-square (Observed value)	329,70 7
Chi-square (Critical value)	24,996
DF	15
	<
p-value	0,0001
alpha	0,05

Test interpretation:

H0: There is no correlation significantly different from 0 between the variables.

Ha: At least one of the correlations between the variables is significantly different from 0.

As the computed p-value is lower than the significance level  $\alpha=0,05$ , one should reject the null hypothesis H0, and accept the alternative hypothesis Ha.

The risk to reject the null hypothesis H0 while it is true is lower than 0,01%.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy:

TYPE 1 (25)	0,886
TYPE 2 (20)	0,854
TYPE 3 (15)	0,876
TYPE 4 (25)	0,876
TYPE 5 (10)	0,910
TYPE 6 (10)	0,879
KMO	0,879

Cronbach's alpha:

Cronbach's alpha	
F1	0,889

## APPENDIX VII

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

2015 -10- 22

Office of the Executive Dean

UNISA



### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

14 October 2015

Ref # **2015/10/14/37362771/17/MC**

Student#: Mrs N Gounden

Student Number #: 37362771

Dear Mrs Gounden

**Decision: Ethics Approval**

#### **Researcher:**

Mrs N Gounden

Tel: +27315631568

Email: [nirvanagounden@hotmail.com](mailto:nirvanagounden@hotmail.com)

#### **Supervisor:**

Prof. N Romm

College of Education

Department of Adult Basic Education and Youth Development

Tel: +2782 406 0585

Email: [rommnra@unisa.ac.za](mailto:rommnra@unisa.ac.za)

**Proposal:** Parental involvement, in GET and FET learners, in single-parent/guardian and two-parent/guardian households in Durban, KZN

**Qualification:** M Ed in Adult Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for the duration of the research.

*The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee on 14 October 2015.*

*The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:*

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.*
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee.*

*An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for*



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*the research participants.*

- 3) *The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.*

*Note:*

*The reference number **2015/10/14/37362771/17/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Education RERC.*

Kind regards,



**Dr M Claassens**  
**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**

[mcdtc@netactive.co.za](mailto:mcdtc@netactive.co.za)



**Prof VI McKay**  
**ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN**