

**The development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase through comprehensive  
parent involvement**

by

JEANNE-MARIE LOTTER

submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

SOCIO-EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR LM LUVALO

MARCH 2019

I declare that

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A READING CULTURE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE  
THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part thereof, for examination purposes at Unisa for any other qualification or at any other higher education institution.



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Jeanne-Marie Lotter

## **DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I dedicate my dissertation to my wonderful husband who supported me throughout my studies and who has always been there to motivate me and encourage me to do my best.

I would like to thank my Heavenly Father for giving me the opportunity to further my studies.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr L.M. Luvalo for your support and guidance. Your words of encouragement have truly been an enormous motivation during this process.

I would like to thank my family for supporting me for the duration of my studies and for always encouraging me to achieve success.

In addition, I would like to thank the SGB, principal, HOD's, teachers, parents and learners at the primary school where I conducted my research.

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation study, entitled ‘The development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase through comprehensive parent involvement’, focused on the challenge of developing a reading culture in which a positive change takes place in the learners’ attitudes towards reading and in particular, towards reading for enjoyment, when parents are comprehensively involved in the process. The research is found to be relevant as many of the learners in the participating school showed little to no interest in reading for enjoyment and saw reading merely as a means of studying.

The methodology used in the study is qualitative in nature and included a literature review, case studies and semi-structured interviews. The results of the study showed that the implementation of a comprehensive parent involvement model has a positive impact on the creation of a reading culture. The learners were more inclined to read for enjoyment when their parents participated both in reading programmes and in fun reading activities at home. The learners and parents who actively participated in this study all indicated that they had a greater appreciation of reading for enjoyment after the implementation of the programme. Based on the study findings, recommendations were made for improvements to assist in the issue of creating a reading culture in schools.

**Key words:** Parental involvement, reading culture, reading for enjoyment, Foundation Phase, qualitative approach, maximum variation sampling, case studies, semi-structured interviews, reading achievement and primary educators

## SAMEVATTING

Die studie getiteld 'Die ontwikkeling van 'n lees-kultuur in die Grondslagfase deur omvattende ouerbetrokkenheid', het gefokus op die uitdaging om 'n lees-kultuur te ontwikkel waar 'n positiewe verandering in leerders se gevoel teenoor lees plaasvind, spesifiek lees vir genot, wanneer hulle ouers intensief betrokke is in die proses. Die navorsing is relevant aangesien baie van die leerders in die betrokke skool min tot geen belangstelling getoon het teenoor lees vir genot en het lees bloot as 'n metode van studie beleef.

Die metodologie wat in die studie gebruik was was kwalitatief van aard en het 'n literatuurstudie, gevallestudies en semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude ingesluit. Die resultate van die studie het getoon dat die implementering van 'n omvattende ouer-betrokkenheid model 'n positiewe impak op die ontwikkeling van 'n lees-kultuur gehad het. Die leerders was meer geneig om vir genot te lees wanneer hulle ouers deelgeneem het aan die lees-program en aan die pret lees-aktiwiteite tuis. Die leerders en hulle ouers wat aktief deelgeneem het aan die studie, het almal aangedui dat hulle 'n groter waardering vir lees vir genot gehad het na die implementering van die program. Voorstelle om te help met die ontwikkeling van 'n lees-kultuur is gemaak wat gebaseer was op die bevindings van die studie.

Sleutelwoorde: Ouerbetrokkenheid, lees-kultuur, lees vir genot, Grondslagfase, kwalitatiewe benadering, maksimum variasie steekproefneming, gevallestudies, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, lees-prestasie en primêre opvoeders.

## HO HLOKA

Thuto, e nang le sehlooho se reng 'Ho nts'etsa pele setso sa ho bala ka Sekhahla sa Motheo ka ho kenyeletsa ho kopanyelletsa ha motsoali', ho lebisitse phephetso ea ho hlaolela setso sa ho bala moo phetoho e ntle e etsoang ka maikutlo a barupeluo a ho bala le ka ho khetheha, ho bala bakeng sa thabo, ha batsoali ba ikakhela ka setotsoana mosebetsing ona. Phuputso e fumanoa e le ea bohlokoa ha ba bangata ho baithuti sekolong se kenang sekolo ba sa bontšhe thahasello ho bala bakeng sa thabo 'me ba bona ho bala feela e le mokhoa oa ho ithuta.

Mokhoa o sebelisoang thuputsoeng ea lipatlisiso e ne e le mokhoa oa boleng bo botle 'me o kenyelelitse tlhahlobo ea lingoliloeng, lipatlisiso tsa liketsahalo le lipuisano tse sa tšoaneng. Liphello tsa phuputso li bontšitse hore ts'ebetso ea kakaretso ea ho kenya letsoho ho motsoali e na le tšusumetso e matla ho thehoa ha setso sa ho bala. Barupeluo ba ne ba rata ho bala bakeng sa thabo ha batsoali ba bona ba ne ba kopanela ka bobeli mananeong a ho bala le mesebetsing e monate ea ho bala lapeng. Baithuti le batsoali ba ileng ba kenya letsoho thuputsoeng ena bohle ba bontšitse hore ba ananela haholo ho bala bakeng sa thabo ka mor'a kopo ea ts'ebetso. Ho itšetlehile ka liphuputso tsa lithuto, liphuputso li entsoe bakeng sa ntlafatso ea ho thusa tabeng ea ho theha setso sa ho bala likolong.

Mantsoe a bohlokoa: ho kenyeletsa batsoali, mokhoa oa ho bala, ho bala bakeng sa thabo, Phase ea Motheo, mokhoa oa boleng bo phahameng, litekanyetso tse sa tšoaneng tsa lipuisano, lipuisano tsa liketsahalo, lipuisano tse hlophisitsoeng hantle, katleho ea ho bala le barupeli ba ka sehloohong.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### 1.1. Introduction

In South Africa assessment studies have shown that the educational achievement of learners is unacceptably low (Nel 2011:40). The Department of Education conducts annual systemic evaluations that indicate low levels of literacy among learners. According to the Report on the Annual National Assessment of 2011, 22% of Grade 4 and 5 learners in South Africa only passed the low reading benchmark in 2006 (Department of Education: Report on the Annual National Assessments 2011:20). According to Chambers (2017) 80% of Grade 4 learners are not able to read at an acceptable level. Chambers (2017) also highlighted that The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study conducted in 2016 revealed that South African learners were last out of 50 countries with regards to reading literacy and that there had been no improvement in the preceding five years.

Reading is a skill that needs to be developed at a very young age as suggested by Keyser (2017). Reading helps people to discover new things, to develop their imaginations, to increase creativity and it helps to build a healthy self-image. A person needs to be able to read to function effectively in society. Reading is the foundation to all academic subjects. An active reader interacts with the text by predicting what will happen next, by investigating the main ideas and characters and by connecting what they read to their prior knowledge. Learners who cannot read fluently and spend a lot of time decoding the words, do not fully understand what they read. It is therefore of vital importance that reading skills need to be developed by the time a child is in Grade 3.

The way schools care about children is reflected in the way schools care about the children's families, this is the opinion shared by Epstein (2002:20). The child cannot be seen as an isolated entity. It is, thus, imperative that schools realise the importance of the child's family environment in the education of the child with successful collaboration between parents/caregivers and teachers playing a vital role in the education of the child. Parents have a significant role to play in the child's success at school. Parental involvement is compelling not only in terms of what it will demand of the parents, but also in terms of what it may offer

the parents. Successful parental involvement programmes provide the link between the home and school that is essential to the growth and development of children, and also enable principals, teachers and parents to work together in the interests of a shared mission on behalf of the learners (Lewis 1996). Arnold (2016:286) believes that it is important for schools to collaborate with parents and that parents are more positive about change when they feel included in such change.

In view of the evident lack of a reading culture in many South African schools, the aim of my research in this study was to collect and analyse data gathered through case studies and interviews on the experiences of learners and their parents in the implementation of a comprehensive parent involvement model, with the focus on creating a reading culture.

## **1.2. Background to the study**

The benefits of parental involvement for the learners, teachers, schools and parents are well known with research indicating that children, in particular, demonstrate improved academic performance, more positive attitudes towards learning, decreased drop-out rates, increased emotional stability and improved behaviour and school attendance (Van Wyk and Lemmer 2009:14-16). There are also numerous benefits for the schools and parents. According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:15), one of the benefits of parental involvement for the teachers is an improved knowledge of the children's home situation and this may have a positive impact on their education. It is not possible to separate the family life of the child and his/her experiences at school. Of the 168 hours in a seven day week, learners spend approximately 30 to 35 hours at school in a formal learning situation. This is a clear indication that learners spend the majority of their time at home. Both the family life and home situation have a significant influence on a learner's development in the various facets of life. According to Egalite (2016) research conducted in the United States of America indicates that the family background has a strong influence on a learner's performance at school while Graue (1999) highlights that both parents and educators have a significant influence on learner success in school. Richards (2016:2) believes that collaboration between all the stakeholders may be extremely beneficial to all parties involved and that it should result in shared responsibility.

Parental involvement has been defined in various ways. One of the most important parental involvement models worldwide is Epstein's (1987; 2002) comprehensive model for parental

involvement in schools. Epstein developed a framework of six types of involvement for comprehensive parental involvement programmes. These include collaboration with parents regarding parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community (Epstein 2002:27). Epstein's model for parental involvement in schools formed the basis of this study with the model forming the baseline that was followed during the study to ensure the development of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the participating school.

Emphasis on the parental role is shared by Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:7), stating that although the school exerts a powerful influence on the child it can only build on the foundation laid by the family because the parents are the child's primary educators. The most important function of the family is to ensure the education and socialisation of the child (Pretorius 2011:39). The family plays a significant role in the education of the child and family life may, in fact, be described as an educative environment (Pretorius 2011:53). It is vital that teachers and parents support each other in the education of the child. Ballantine, Hammack and Stuber (2017:4) believe that learning takes place both in school (formally) and within the family (informally). The collaboration between parents and teachers is, thus, of the utmost importance in the development of the child. Pretorius (2011:61-70) describes the roles of the family in education and provides an outline of the different family types from a socio-pedagogical perspective. The family is described as an educative environment in which the child is exposed to different learning situations. A description of the different types of child rearing styles is also given. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:7) highlight that fifteen percent only of the child's life is spent in school and the remaining eighty-five percent is spent in the home and in the community. It is, therefore, clear that parents are the child's primary educators. The family is an important structure that lays the foundation of a child's development even before the child is born. It is in the family that the child acquires the skills required for education (Grieve, Van Deventer and Mojapelo-Batka 2006:147).

An outline of the different types of parenting styles and the effects thereof on the learning success of children is given by Woolfolk (2010:68). The first context for development is in the mother's womb. However, the influence of the family extends further to the education of the child. Woolfolk (2010) supplies certain guidelines for schools to use to connect with families and highlights that teachers should take into consideration that some learners' families may have had negative experiences with schools and that teachers should engage with them in

environments in which they are comfortable. Van Wyk (2004:87) maintains that educators should be willing to collaborate with anyone who is caring for the child and not limit this relationship to the biological parents of the child. Not only does the family lay the educational foundations for the child but it is also primarily responsible for building on these foundations to guide the child towards achieving success. The family's involvement has a profound influence on a child's achievement in school (Ballantine et al 2017:4).

In order to effect improvements in the language literacy achievements of learners, early educational interventions have been found to produce meaningful, lasting effects on cognitive, social and schooling outcomes (Barnett 2011:975). The Foundation Phase (Grade R to Grade 3) is a critical stage in the formation of the educational abilities of the child as well as the creation of a reading culture. Children are taught how to read in the Foundation Phase, and if problems with reading are not addressed during this phase, children will, in all likelihood, struggle in their future studies.

Early reading experiences with their parents prepare children for the benefits of formal literacy instruction (Bus, Van Ijzendoorn and Pellegrini 1995). Involvement with reading activities at home has significant positive influences not only on reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills, but also on the pupils' interest in reading, attitudes towards reading and attentiveness in the classroom (Rowe 1991). According to Mahala, Deputy Director: Books and Publishing, National Department of Arts and Culture, there is a lack of a reading culture in South Africa. He believes that simple interventions may serve to foster a culture of reading in our society (Mahala 2010:12). According to Clark and Rumbold (2006), pupils with positive attitudes towards reading tend to report greater reading enjoyment and higher reading proficiency than their more negative counterparts. They believe that other benefits of reading for pleasure include text comprehension and grammar, positive reading attitudes, pleasure in reading in later life and increased general knowledge (Clark and Rumbold 2006:10). Reading books makes one a better thinker and it improves the span of concentration, vocabulary, memory and creative skills of an individual (Mukichi 2013). The love of books may help people to become divergent thinkers. Mukichi (2013) believes that it is extremely important to develop a reading culture. Parents and the home environment are essential to the early teaching of reading and fostering a love of reading with children being more likely to continue to be readers in homes where books and reading are valued (Clark and

Rumbold 2006). According to Chacko, Fabiano, Doctoroff and Fortson (2017) involving fathers in reading activities with children leads to an improvement in language development.

This study focuses on developing a reading culture and improving learners' attitudes towards reading for enjoyment in the Foundation phase, by utilising Epstein's model of parental involvement as a tool in the creation of a comprehensive parental involvement programme.

### **1.3. Problem statement**

The challenge of learner ability to read with comprehension has been researched in South Africa and in other societies. Wilkinson (2017) conducted research to determine the number of South Africans who are active readers. Her research showed that 25 % only of adult South Africans read books and that 58% of South Africans live in houses where there are no books. These findings clearly indicate the lack of a reading culture in South Africa. As revealed by these percentages, the lack of a reading culture is a problem that affects the majority of South Africans. If a reading culture is instilled at a young age, this will create future adults who love reading. The lack of a reading culture affects readers of all ages. It must, however, be noted that research conducted in various countries indicates that it is not a problem that affects South Africans only, but the lack of a reading culture is a universal problem. According to Snow (2016) all forms of literacy is only possible if children achieve the ability to read at a young age. Burns, Griffin and Snow (1998) state that it is important to encourage experiences with language and literacy in the early years of a child's life, in order to encourage an appreciation for different forms of literature. It is important to address this issue at a young age to create future generations who read for enjoyment.

### **1.4. Research question**

In the context of developing a reading culture through comprehensive parental involvement, the following main research question was formulated: How may the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the Foundation Phase contribute to the development of a reading culture?

The main research question may be subdivided into the following sub-questions:



How is parental involvement described in the relevant literature and how have parental involvement models been implemented in primary schools with particular reference to the development of a reading culture?

What contextual factors shape the development of a reading culture among Foundation Phase learners in South African schools?

How may the process and outcomes of the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model aimed at improving the reading culture both at home and at school in the Foundation Phase at a selected primary school in Roodepoort, Gauteng be described?

What recommendations may be made based on both the literature and the empirical study in respect of parental involvement with regard to the development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase of primary schools?

### **1.5. The aim of the research**

The main aim of the research was to explore the contribution of the implementation of a comprehensive model of parental involvement in the Foundation Phase to the development of a reading culture.

The main research aim may be sub-divided into the following objectives:

To define and describe parental involvement and also how parental involvement models have been implemented in primary schools with particular reference to the development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase or its equivalent.

To explore the contextual factors that shape the development of a reading culture among Foundation Phase learners in South African schools.

To analyse the outcomes of the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model aimed at improving the reading culture of the home and the school in the Foundation Phase of a selected primary school in Roodepoort Gauteng.

To make recommendations based on literature and the empirical study on how to improve parental involvement with regard to the development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase in primary schools.

## **1.6. Research design and methodology**

This study adopted the qualitative research approach in view of the fact that a reading culture focuses on emotional responses to reading that cannot be described in terms of numbers and statistics. In qualitative research, the researcher collects and works with non-numerical data and seeks to interpret meaning from the data collected in order to understand the social situations of a targeted group of people (Crossman 2018)

The effects of parental involvement on the development of a reading culture among children, is investigated through a literature review and was guided by systematically obtained evidence and data through an empirical enquiry which was conducted using a qualitative approach (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:9).

### **1.6.1. Literature study**

A literature review on the research topic was conducted to determine the importance of parental involvement in the development of a reading culture and its effects on the educational success of learners. The study investigated important aspects regarding the research topic that were not addressed in the existing literature. The work of both local and international writers were consulted to establish a theoretical framework for the research topic as well as to identify studies that supported the importance of parental involvement. Published literature emphasising the importance of the family in the education of the child, with special reference to encouraging a culture of reading at home and at school was included in the literature review. Timkey (2015) describes the influence of parent attitudes and involvement on the literacy achievement of children while case studies that were conducted in Ugandan primary schools provide guidelines and strategies for developing a reading culture in schools (Nalusiba 2010). Otike (2011) provides a Kenyan perspective to the cultivation and promotion of a reading culture among pupils. These works and others are explained in depth in Chapter 2.

## **1.6.2. Empirical inquiry**

A qualitative approach is used to investigate the research problem. As the researcher I made use of case studies in which the participants were examined over time, which used multiple sources of the data found in the setting (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:24). I used a phenomenological study and conducted interviews with the participants to gain an understanding of their perspectives of parental involvement. For the purposes of the study learners in the Foundation Phase (Grades R to 3) and their parents and teachers were interviewed and examined over time to investigate their opinions of the phenomenon in question, to monitor their experiences over time and to assess the success of the reading programme which had been implemented.

### **1.6.2.1. Selection of site and participants**

The particular sampling site is chosen as a result of my convenient access to the site and the participants. The research site selected was a public primary school in Roodepoort, Gauteng. At the time of the study, I was a teacher at the school and, thus, I had direct access to the school and the participants. The participants were twenty Foundation Phase learners, their parents and the Foundation Phase teachers. There was, thus, a possibility of research bias due to the fact that I conducted the research at the school where I was working. In order to avoid any bias in the research process as well as in the findings, the advice given by writers such as Trowler (2011), was taken into account. Trowler (2011) states that the researcher should be aware of potential blind spots in the research before the research commences. These blind spots include the selection of participants, interview questions etc. To avoid being biased, as the researcher, I ensured that I obtained constant feedback from the participants in order to verify the findings. The participants had the opportunity, on a regular basis, to comment on the findings and state whether they agreed or disagreed with the findings. In addition, I endeavored to be as truthful and ethical as possible. Baseline support's (2018) online article, "Avoiding bias in qualitative data analysis", provides guidelines on the way in which bias may be avoided. These include using multiple people to code the data, to ensure that the participants review the data and to review the findings with peers. These steps were all followed to ensure that the study findings

were a correct and true reflection of the experiences of the participants. The site was also chosen due to the large number of learners in the Foundation Phase who were scoring average to below average marks for reading on their report cards. A further reason why this particular site was selected was due to the large number of learners who agreed that they did not read for enjoyment and that they read in school only because they had to. The results of the Annual National Assessment scores of the Grade 3 learners in the school, who are not allowed to be guided by the teachers during the assessments, show that the learners struggle to understand what they read when the questions posed are not orally explained to them.

The majority of the learners of the school come from high-income families. The school fees are approximately R12000 a year and few of the parents struggle to pay the monthly instalments. In addition, many of the learners have stay-at-home mothers. The possibility of easily obtaining volunteer mothers to help with reading programmes at school is also a factor that was taken into consideration in the selection of the site.

The participants were chosen using maximum variation sampling, which involves divergent participant groups (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:327). Patton (2002) describes maximum variation sampling as a method whereby different key dimensions of variations are identified and then finding cases that vary from each other. The researcher then has to identify important patterns that form across these variations. On the other hand, Suri (2011) explains maximum variation sampling by stating that essential and variable features among varied contexts should be identified and that a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in question should be formed. Accordingly, learners from Grades R to 3, with different opinions on reading and reading for enjoyment, and their parents were chosen to participate in the research. The fact that these learners had varied opinions regarding reading for enjoyment meant that maximum variation sampling was deemed to be the best method to use as there was a variation in the opinions on the same phenomenon.

The participant group comprised of learners in each grade who loved to read on their own as well as learners who read only when it was absolutely necessary. All the participants came from homes with different socio-economical statuses and incomes. The family structures also differed from each other. Some of the families consisted of full-time working parents where others consisted of one or both parents who were stay-at-home parents. The reading programme catered for the needs of both working parents and stay-at-home-parents, each

according to their individual needs. Different activities were given to the working parents to allow them to make the most of the time they had at their disposal. In order to avoid bias in the selection of the participants, learners in the researcher's class were not chosen to participate in the study.

#### **1.6.2.2. Data gathering**

The requisite data was gathered through case studies which involved an in-depth analysis of single entities. George and Bennet (2005:5) define a case study as a detailed examination of an aspect to test historical explanations that may have general similarities to other events. According to Yin (1984:23), the case study is a research method that investigates a particular phenomenon within a real-life context, while Gustaffson (2017) states that a case study is an intensive study of a person or group aimed at finding general similarities in opinions and experiences. An instrumental case provides insights into a specific theme or issue (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:345). The case studies in this research study focused on the issue of the love of reading and the amount of reading for enjoyment among learners in the Foundation Phase. The case studies aimed at finding similarities and differences in respect of the experiences of the participants while they carried out activities in their real-life natural settings. With the case studies I was trying to determine whether there were similar changes in the attitudes towards reading for enjoyment when the parents were comprehensively involved in reading activities with their children or if no change occurred.

The data was collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews which were conducted with the participants. As the researcher, I conducted interviews with the HOD of the Foundation Phase in the school, teachers, parents and participating learners. These interviews were used to gather information on the viewpoints and experiences of the participants before, during and after the implementation of Epstein's parental involvement model. It was anticipated that the interviewees would be able to provide perspectives on any changes that had occurred both in the reading culture and the love of reading among the learners during the implementation of the parental involvement model.

### **1.6.2.3. Data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships between the categories (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:367). I used the inductive analysis method to analyse the specific data which had been gathered through the interviews and case studies to identify patterns that had formed through the process. I then used coding to identify the patterns that had emerged during the interviews and observations to interpret the data that had been gathered during the research (Saldana 2016:4).

The experiences and viewpoints of the different participants gathered during the interviews were compared to ascertain whether specific patterns had formed. The information gathered through the case studies was then analysed to find out whether a pattern of improvement in the love of reading had emerged among the participant learners. This improvement was analysed from the commencement of the implementation of the parental involvement model to the active model of parental involvement implemented.

### **1.6.2.4. Issues regarding the trustworthiness of data**

The validity of qualitative research designs refers to the degree to which the interpretations made have mutual meanings for both the researcher and the participants (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:330). According to Phillimore and Goodson (2004), a lack of objectivity is often associated with qualitative research. On the other hand, credibility in research is defined as the confidence that may be placed in the research findings (Holloway and Wheeler 2002) and whether the findings are correct interpretations of the participants' original views (Graneheim and Lundman 2004). Veal (2011) believes that trustworthiness in research includes credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Validity in research is ensured through strict ethical measures being taken (Marshall and Rossman 2016).

The trustworthiness of the data gathered during this research was ensured through prolonged and persistent fieldwork. The participants were observed in their natural settings over a period of time without interference from me as the researcher. The data gathered during this process was regularly analysed to match the evidence gathered with the realities of the participants.

The trustworthiness of the research was ensured through using multi-method strategies, with case studies as well as interviews being used and the findings compared to ensure that they corroborated the data which had been gathered.

The data was mechanically recorded through the use of videotaping during the interviews. This was done with the consent of the participants. These videotapes were reviewed to ensure that the findings were consistent with the information gathered during the interviews. In addition, videotaping ensured that no important information provided during the interviews was omitted.

In addition, member checking was used during the prolonged fieldwork to ensure that the findings corroborated the views of the participants. This was done through casual conversations between myself, the researcher, and the participants during the course of the research. Informal interviews were also held during the course of the research to ensure that the participants agreed with the findings.

Participant reviews were used to ensure the validity of the data gathered during the interviews with the participants being asked to review the conclusions after the interviews. If the participants felt that they disagreed with the findings, they were allowed to edit the transcripts so that their viewpoints were correctly reflected in the findings.

#### **1.6.2.5. Ethical measures**

In qualitative research it is important to ensure that ethical measures are in place to protect both the participants and the researcher.

Research ethics include informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, empowerment, caring and fairness (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:339). Resnik (2015) defines ethics as a method, procedure or perspective in relation to the analysis of complex problems. Beauchamp and Childress (2001) cite four groups of principles that outline the ethical aspects of research study. These groups include respect for autonomy where the participants willingly choose either to participate or not to participate in the study in question, non-maleficence which ensures that no harm is inflicted on participants, beneficence by ensuring that the research has value and justice which is guaranteed by treating people fairly and equally.

#### Informed consent:

Written consent to conduct the research at the public school in Roodepoort Gauteng, was obtained from the principal of the school as well as the school governing body. The parents of the participants were also requested to give their written consent that both they and their children would participate in the research. The Gauteng Department of Education gave written consent that research may be conducted at the participating school (Appendix F).

#### Confidentiality and anonymity:

Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured through the use of pseudonyms instead of the participants' actual names. The participants chose their own pseudonyms. During the videotape interviews, the participants' faces were not visible on the recordings to protect their identities while the participating parents and learners signed consent forms indicating whether they were prepared to be videotaped. No recognisable characteristics were identifiable on the video recordings and, thus, learners and their parents were not recognisable on the footage.

#### Privacy and empowerment:

I informed the participants of the steps involved in the research process and the power that they, as participants had in the research process. They were not deceived as to the nature and purpose of the research and all the information regarding the research was available to them.

#### Caring and fairness:

The participants were treated in a fair and caring way to ensure that they were not either humiliated or hurt during the research process. They were all treated as important and equal individuals without any bias or prejudice.

Ethical clearance to conduct the research was obtained from the following entities/people:

- College of Education ethics committee
- Gauteng Department of Education
- The principal of the school
- The HOD of the school's Foundation Phase
- Parent and teacher volunteers implementing the comprehensive parental involvement programme directed at the development of a reading culture



## **1.7. Clarification of key concepts**

### FOUNDATION PHASE

According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9, the Foundation Phase may be defined as the phase that stretches from Grade R to Grade 3 (Department of Education: Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9, 2002).

### COMPREHENSIVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The term “parental involvement” refers to the willing and active participation of parents in a wide range of school and home-based activities (Van Wyk and Lemmer 2009:14).

Comprehensive means including all, or almost all (Hornsby 2005:297).

Thus, comprehensive parental involvement refers to the active participation of parents in all or almost all of the given activities.

### READING CULTURE

For the purpose of this study reading culture may be defined as the collective way in which a school or community approach reading (Paine 2007) and the development of a love of reading among learners (Clark and Rumbold 2006).

## **1.8. Chapter division**

CHAPTER 1: Presents a background to the study, problem statement, and aim of the research, clarification of key concepts and the research design and methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 2: Review of relevant literature which provides a detailed description of parental involvement and describes how parental involvement models have been implemented in primary schools in South Africa and in other countries with particular reference to the development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase or its equivalent.

CHAPTER 3: Describes the research methodology and data collection methods used in the study.

CHAPTER 4: Presents a description of the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 5: Contains the conclusion to the research and recommendations for further research and practice.

### **1.9. Summary**

The aim of this chapter was to give orientation and overview of the study. The focus of the study is to examine whether comprehensive parental involvement has an influence on how learners, with particular reference to the Foundation phase, view reading and reading for enjoyment, in particular. The research questions have been highlighted and the methodology and methods that will be employed in the study in order to answer the researched problem. Preliminary literature has alluded to a lack of a reading culture in South African families in general. Qualitative research paradigm has been deemed suitable for this study and qualitative methods like interview, and observations will be suitable. The issues of ethics have been adhered to as per the requirements of the institution and procedures to acquire relevant consents have been covered. The samples from which data will be gathered from have been identified and lastly the structure of the thesis has been outlined. Following is a chapter that will review literature that focus on the culture of parental involvement in reading of their children.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter contains a review of relevant literature which focuses on the creation of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase through comprehensively involving parents in the education of the child and in reading activities. The importance of the family in education and the need for a reading culture are explained. Accordingly, this chapter explains what is meant by parental involvement and a reading culture, the role of the parents in the creation of a reading culture and the importance of parental involvement in the education of the child. Studies conducted in South Africa and other countries on the influence of parental involvement on the creation of a reading culture are discussed. The chapter then proceeds to explain the gaps in the existing literature on the research topic.

A reading culture may be described as people's beliefs in and attitudes towards reading and the formation of a habit of reading not only for work purposes but also for pleasure. A reading culture may be formed through the example set and the creation of positive experiences. If the parents have a positive reading culture and, thus healthy patterns of behaviour, practices and beliefs about reading, they will, in all likelihood, create a culture of reading at home that sets an example for their children to follow.

#### **2.2. Defining parental involvement**

It was important to define the term *parental involvement* in context as it related to this study. There are numerous definitions for the term parental involvement but only those relevant to this study are discussed. Lemmer (2009:14) defines parental involvement as the willing and active participation of parents in a wide range of school and home-based activities. Lemmer (2006:132) further defines parental involvement as a dynamic process whereby educators and parents work together for the ultimate benefit of the learner. Thus, parental involvement means that parents participate on a regular basis in different school activities and that they are actively

involved in their child's academic learning at school. Wolfendale (2017) describes parental involvement in reading as a vehicle with which to reach certain aims in children's learning. The parents of the child are not always the child's biological parents. Some children live in foster homes while others live with their grandparents or other family members or caregivers. The parents of a child may, therefore, be defined as any person or persons who take care of the needs of the children. Van Wyk (2004:87) believes that it is essential that educators are willing to collaborate with any person caring for the child and not only the biological parents of the child. When defining parental involvement it is, thus, important to bear in mind that there are different family-structures and that schools and teachers need to be sensitive to these differences. South Africa is a diverse country with many different ethnic groups and types of family-structures. It is, therefore, not possible to categorise parents and families into one specific group.

Section 1 of the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 defines a parent as the biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner, the person legally entitled to custody of a learner, the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person (referred to in the above) towards the learner's education at school. This definition makes it clear that there are different types of parents in South Africa. In a South African context, in particular, the term 'parent' does not necessarily refer to the biological parents of the child, but could be a family member, friend or adoptive parent. There are many children in South Africa whose primary caregivers are their biological grandparents. In the context of parental involvement in schools, these grandparents would be regarded as the parents of the child. Despite the fact that these caregivers are not the biological parents of the child, it is their responsibility to instil a culture of reading at home. As they are primarily responsible for the child's learning at home, it is their responsibility to provide the child with reading material and expose them to different reading situations.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:9) provide a description of a few of the common family structures that are found in South Africa: Nuclear families: husband, wife and children who form an economically self-sufficient unit. Extended families: husband, wife, children and other relatives. Single parents: divorced, widowed, separated or never married. Blended families: parents who have children from previous marriages and who marry each other. Parental cohabitation: unmarried couple who lives together with children and multiple families: common in South Africa where one man has multiple wives. Another type of

family that has become more common in the last few years is a same-sex family where two parents of the same gender live together with children. In a South African context, thus, it is important that teachers do not have the expectation that all families are the same. Teachers need to understand the backgrounds and family lives of the children in their classes to enable them to implement parental involvement programmes successfully.

The family has various functions, according to (Pretorius 2011:42-46). The focus of this study was on the recreational- and educational functions of the family with the study investigating the influence of the parents on both the reading development (educational function) of the child and the development of an enjoyment of reading (recreational function). Unfortunately, not all families are healthy structures with all the functions being performed successfully. In all the various cultures in South Africa, there are children whose needs (as mentioned above) are not completely met by their families. It is important for teachers to bear this in mind when working with individual children and involving their families.

It is clear from the above that families and parents differ from one child to another in a South African context. It is incumbent on teachers to be aware of these differences when they attempt to implement parental involvement programmes and that provision is made to cater for these differences. In short, parental involvement is a collaboration between the parents and the school (partnership) with the aim of creating the best possible opportunities for the children to succeed. Parents are active participants in the education of the child and this task must not be left to the teachers and the school.

### **2.3. Parents as the child's primary educators**

Parents are a child's primary educators and it is within the family structure, particularly in relation to the parents, that a child is first introduced to the world and to learning opportunities. The family is the centre of education and, thus, an important function of the family is to ensure the education and socialisation of the child (Pretorius 2011:39). Education begins at home and it is within the home that a child develops interests and various emotions in relation to objects and experiences. In addition, it is within the family that the child acquires social and moral values. Thus, the first form of education takes place in the family. I agree with Pretorius (2011) that the family is the centre of education and that it is within this centre that a child develops either an appreciation for reading or a dislike for reading. According to Pretorius

(2011:39-41), the family is a unit of growth, experience and fulfilment. The family has an important role to play in cooperating with the school and the wider community in providing educational and learning experiences for the child with education within the family creating the foundation for all future education. As a teacher I have seen and experienced the important role that the family plays in the education of a child. In my experience learners tend to achieve better outcomes and adapt easier in difficult circumstances at school when their parents are actively involved in their education.

There are four stages of cognitive development as described by (Woolfolk 2010:33): infancy (sensorimotor stage). Early childhood (preoperational stage). Later elementary (concrete-operational stage) and high school and college (formal operations). During infancy and early childhood, the parents are the primary and sometimes, the only source of education and educational provision. There are certain milestones that children must reach during each stage. During infancy the child must develop an understanding that objects have a separate and permanent existence, while during early childhood, the child develops the ability to use symbols such as language, pictures or signs, gestures etcetera (Woolfolk 2010:33-34). It is the parents' primary responsibility to help their children to reach these milestones. If they are not reached, children will, in all likelihood, struggle to read and form symbols when reading later in life. Proper cognitive stimulation at home is important in providing the basis for children to reach these milestones. Parents are not only responsible for helping their children to reach their reading milestones but they must also create an atmosphere where reading is perceived as enjoyable. Wolf (2008) explains five different stages of reading development that starts when the child is as young as six months old. These stages are: Emergent pre-reader, novice reader, decoding reader, fluent and comprehending reader and finally expert reader. If enough attention is given to developing these stages from the pre-reader phase onwards, learners will be able to read more efficiently which leads to greater confidence in their reading ability, which may have an influence on how they view reading for enjoyment. According to Wolf (2008) even in the pre-reader phase, written work is important. If parents are actively involved in and focused on developing a love of reading, there is a greater possibility of creating a positive reading culture at home than my otherwise have been the case.

According to Burton (2013) children need their parents to be their reading role models with daily practice in order to navigate successfully through the acquisition of the basic literacy skills. Children follow by example and, thus, if their parents model positive attitudes towards

reading, their children will probably demonstrate the same behaviour. In his online article, *Parents have a role to play in developing a reading culture*, Mugisha (2011) states that it is the role of the parents to develop a reading culture for their children. Studies into the human brain development have shown that parents are their children's primary teachers. He believes that parents should use the school holidays as an opportunity to create exciting reading opportunities and to engage in reading activities with their children. I agree with both Burton (2013) and Mugisha (2011) that parents set the tone in the household in respect of behavioural practices. Children follow the examples set by the adults around them. I believe that parents should use every opportunity available to them to develop healthy educational practices at home such as the development of a reading culture.

Biology, as well as the environment (education, parenting, culture, etc.) have an equal effect on a child's behaviour and interests (Woolfolk 2010:27). This implies that parents have a significant influence on how their children behave and how their interests develop. In other words, parents have a direct influence on a child's view of reading and a reading culture. I agree with Woolfolk (2010) that parents not only influence their children in a biological sense, for example, eye colour, etcetera, but also that the environment that parents create for their children has an even greater influence on how they view the world around them. If parents create an environment in which educational practices are encouraged and seen as important, their children will also view education as important. According to Snow (2017) teaching children how to read is an important role of society (parents) and it equips them with the Life Skills needed for further education.

A culture of reading is a process and Mulgrew (2012) believes that a reading culture is not possible until learners fall in love with reading material. Parents are the first people who introduce children to books and reading and they are, thus, the ones who, above all, may help their children to "fall in love" with reading. I agree with this statement, because a reading culture involves an attitude towards and a love of reading. If parents are able to provide exciting and enjoyable reading material for their children, the likelihood of the children developing a greater appreciation for the material is increased. Even as adults people tend to gravitate towards activities that they find enjoyable. If an activity or reading material does not interest the person involved, the expected outcome will be a negative attitude towards the activity.

The family is the centre of education and the school may be seen as the outer or border area. In other words, the primary responsibility to educate children and create life-experiences through which they may learn and form habits, lies with the family and parents or guardians, in particular (Pretorius 2011:40). Pretorius (2011:309) explains that children who are milieu deprived and who live in a negative environment, often show evidence of impeded reading and writing skills and poor reading habits. Milieu deprivation does not just involve a child's physical environment, but also parent-child communication and a lack of cultural values and experiences (Pretorius 2011:307-308). Thus, I believe that, if children are not exposed to cultural experiences through their parents, even if they are provided with all that they need in a physical sense, they will probably develop poor reading habits and may even not be interested in reading at all. I believe that human development entails far more than the provision for physical needs. Parents should expose their children to experiences that fulfil their emotional- and cognitive needs as well as physical needs.

The above mentioned clearly indicates that education starts at home and that parents have the responsibility to teach, mentor and guide their children towards achieving success. For the purpose of this study, the role of the parents as the primary educators and their influence on the creation of a reading culture is investigated in depth.

#### **2.4. A need for parental involvement in South Africa**

In the South African schooling context, it is important to realise that, as mentioned above, the children all come from different family backgrounds and parenting-structures. It is, thus, essential that children not be seen as isolated entities who attend school. A child spends most of his/her time at home and with his/her family and it is thus important that the family, or parents, are involved in the educational process.

As teachers, we want what is best for the children in our classes. South Africa has been described as the "rainbow nation" due to its diversity. Parental involvement in education creates opportunities to bring diverse cultures and communities together in a way that has never been done before. South Africa has been fragmented in the past through cultural differences and economic influences. There is now a need for unity and mutual respect. Through parental involvement, parents from different backgrounds may be brought together through a common interest, the educational wellbeing of their children. In a sense, parental



involvement is a wonderful tool which may be used to create unity and break down social- and cultural barriers.

## **2.5. The importance and benefits of parental involvement in education**

There are benefits of parental involvement at schools, according Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:14- 15), particularly in South African schools. They indicate that positive parental involvement not only leads to improved academic achievement, but also to improved attitudes towards learning. When parents show an interest in their children's education, they encourage the positive attitudes that are the keys to achievement. This includes whether children develop positive or negative attitudes towards reading. If the parents themselves show an interest in reading, there is a likelihood that their children will also form positive attitudes towards reading. Redding (2005:485) is of the opinion that children learn best when they benefit from both good teaching and a supportive home environment. When a parental involvement model has been successfully implemented, the parents are likely to develop a better sense of what a supportive home environment actually means. Epstein (2002:16) states that one of the benefits of successful parental involvement in schools is the fact that parents learn how to support, encourage and help their children at home. As an educator, I have experienced many instances in which parents ask for help and guidance as to how to support their children at home. Accordingly, I agree that it is important to equip parents with the knowledge and skills required to help their children to achieve academic success. I am convinced that when people feel confident about a certain concept, they tend to feel empowered enough to make a greater effort. If parents are confident in their ability to help in the educational support of their children, they will spend more time helping them at home.

There are many benefits to parental involvement in schools. Schneider and Coleman (2018:1) believe that parental involvement is one of the most important factors that has a bearing on a child's success in school. Parental involvement may be beneficial to the learners, parents, teachers and the school as a whole. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:14-16) provide a detailed explanation of the benefits of parental involvement. These include improved academic achievement, improved attitudes towards learning, improved relationships between parents, teachers and schools, and an improvement in the parents' development of the required skills to teach their children. If parents are equipped to effectively help their children in the educational process at home, they will probably have more success in creating and developing a positive

reading culture at home than may otherwise have been the case. I am of the opinion that many parents do not know how to create a positive reading environment and, thus, they shy away from taking the responsibility of creating a reading culture at home.

The various results that may be expected from the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement programme are outlined by Epstein (2002:14-16). Some of these results include improved school attendance, the creation of a positive learning atmosphere at home and an increase in the support teachers give to parents. Children and parents develop a better understanding of the actions required to improve their grades. Parents develop a better understanding of the teacher's job and are better able to carry out school activities at home. Parents learn how to support their children's learning at home and the development of a positive attitude towards school work. In their words, parental involvement leads to a higher level of success in schoolwork (Schneider and Coleman 2018:1).

Parental involvement in school is also important in that it enables the teachers to assist parents in their parenting tasks. The teachers may advise the parents on how to create a positive learning atmosphere at home and also assist parents with any questions that they may have regarding the education, discipline and guidance of the child. In turn, the parents may also provide extra support to the teachers in their task of educating the child.

## **2.6. Defining a reading culture**

The main aim of this study was to explore the influence of comprehensive parental involvement on the creation of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase of primary schools. It was therefore important to define the term 'reading culture' in order to explore the topic further. The National Library of New Zealand (2018) states that reading for enjoyment has a positive influence on a child's enthusiasm for learning throughout life and that a positive reading culture encourages reading not only at school, but also at home. According to Otike (2011:1), the main objective of a reading culture is to make reading a habit that is appreciated and loved by citizens. When children develop a habit of reading, it is highly likely that a positive reading culture would stem from it.

The *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (Hornsby 2005:667) defines a habit as something that a person does often and almost without thinking, especially something that is hard to stop doing. A reading culture is in essence the creation of a reading habit.

Jonsson and Olsson (2007:4) collectively define a reading culture as a culture in which reading is valued highly and is a habit among its members. Behrman (2004) describes a culture as an integrated pattern of behaviour, practices, beliefs and knowledge. These constitute the operating rules by which people organise themselves. I believe that, when developing a reading culture, especially with young children, it is important that certain patterns in behaviour are changed. Children have to learn certain behavioural patterns such as choosing to read a book rather than to watch television. Developing new patterns takes practise and it is important to spend time on such activities.

According to Educational Technologies Limited (2017), reading habits are important for a variety of reasons. Reading develops children's vocabulary in that they learn new words and are exposed to language use with which they would not come into contact on a daily basis. A child's attention span is increased in that reading helps the child to focus for a longer period of time than may otherwise have been the case. Children who read on a regular basis are more adaptable to a school environment. If a child's reading habits are developed at an early stage, he/she will, in all likelihood, enjoy reading later in life. Children who read often develop a better interest in learning about other cultures and the world around them.

Reading has a variety of different functions such as processing, interpreting, decoding etcetera. Greaney and Neuman (1990) did research that involved fifteen different countries and more than three thousand school learners. They concluded that the three most important functions of reading, as uncovered by their research, are utility, enjoyment and escape. To me this is a clear indication that reading for enjoyment plays an important role when it comes to the functionality thereof. In order to sufficiently develop the functions of reading, the challenges that learners face when it comes to reading need to be addressed. Amato (2016) explained that challenges that hinder reading are short attention spans, responsibilities at home, extracurricular activities, and a lack of interest, a lack of motivation and no quiet places to read at home. In order to effectively develop a reading culture, these challenges need not be ignored.

Literacy is the cornerstone of all development, as Kimanuka (2015) argues. He believes that reading plays an important and crucial role in life-long learning. If a reading culture is developed in students at a young age, life-long learning is made possible. As a Foundation Phase teacher I am faced with the consequences of a lack of literacy skills in young learners on a daily basis. I have witnessed, as Kimanuka (2015) points out, that reading plays a crucial part in learning. Learners who struggle to read, struggle to complete the other educational tasks that are expected of them. As learners are required to read in order to study the academic material, and they are required to read the questions in a test, they will not be able to successfully reach the outcomes needed to achieve a pass mark if they cannot read.

## **2.7. The role of parents in encouraging their children to read**

Parents have a role to play in encouraging their children to read for enjoyment. Various studies have been conducted around the world that indicate that there is a correlation between parental involvement and the academic development and motivation of children (Gottfried, Fleming and Gottfried, 1994). Parents play an integral role in motivating their children to succeed academically. According to King and Goodwin (2002:15) most parents want to participate in their children's education within the context of a supportive community. Patrikakou (2008:2) believes that social and emotional learning has been shown to be fundamental to children's academic learning and also that social learning has an influence on a child's motivational learning. Wolfendale (2017) believes that parental modelling may have a powerful effect on children with regard to reading. I agree with the above statements that parents are primarily responsible for motivating their children to strive for academic success. As human beings we are motivated through our social experiences with others and I believe that it is within our closest relationships, for example, the parent-child relationship, where we learn the most and receive the most encouragement to succeed in life.

The research conducted over the past few decades has demonstrated that parental involvement significantly contributes to improved student outcomes and success (Carter 2002:1). According to Weinberger (1996:9) children who are read to on a regular basis act like readers themselves while children who are read to more frequently at home from a young age show increased interest in reading at a later stage. Weinberger (1996:18) points out that different surveys that have been conducted have all indicated that parents play an integral role in the development of their children's literacy experiences.

parents support children's language learning through conversation, encouraging imaginative play, reading stories, singing nursery rhymes and buying books. If language and print (reading) are incorporated into everyday activities through playful ways, children have the opportunity to discover the importance of the written word (Snow 1998). I believe that it is thus not enough for parents merely to have conversations with their children to develop language learning but, if possible, parents need to provide additional resources such as storybooks to help with effective language learning. The written word is a form of language learning that plays a crucial role in our experiences as human beings.

Parents can help learners by equipping them with the tools they need in order to think about a text. Different reading strategies as provided by Neese (2017) include activating prior knowledge, questioning, visualisation, clarification, drawing inferences, summarising and retelling. Visual readers interpret what they read through forming mental pictures of what they are reading. The ability to interpret and evaluate visual messages is called visual literacy (Bristor and Drake 1994). As our reading skills develop, our brains do not really notice individual letters, but it recognises entire words as a whole. Our brains are decoding the information on the page so that we can read at a higher speed and comprehend and store vital information (Berg 2018). It is important to develop these visual reading skills at a young age. Parents can help their children by providing reading material which they would find easy to connect to a mental picture.

As motivation for this study I, the researcher believe that parents who encourage reading at home have a positive influence on their children's desire to read. Children follow by example and, thus, parental modelling with regard to reading is extremely important (Wolfendale 2017). When parents enjoy reading and have a variety of reading materials available, children will naturally also develop a positive attitude towards reading. Not only will this lead to a love of reading, but also to higher achievements in regard to reading progress and success. According to Weinberger (1996:28), the level of the parents' encouragement in respect of literacy and their provision of literacy resources fully explain the differences in children's progress in reading in school. Weinberger (1996) believes that children whose parents encourage literacy, achieve higher success in reading as compared to their counterparts whose parents are not involved.

Studies were conducted by Walker and Kuerbiz (1979) with the parents of elementary school children to determine how often the parents shared stories with their children and what the response of the children was. They concluded that positive story-time experiences had a positive influence on successful reading and the enjoyment of reading in the early years of these children's schooling. Through positive story-time experiences the imaginations of young children are stimulated and they learn that storybooks provide an escape into a "magical" imaginary world. However, not all children are the same and their interests differ. It is important that parents take note of what the interests of their children are, so that they may provide reading material that their children will enjoy and be able to relate to. It is difficult to encourage children to read subject material in which they have no interest. It is, therefore, the parents' responsibility to provide interesting reading material in order to encourage their children to read more. It is also of cardinal importance that parents make time to read to their children. In my experience I have seen that children who do not have story time experiences with their parents, as was the focus of the study by Walker and Kuerbitz (1979), do not realise that they have been deprived of positive experiences. They also often struggle to explain and describe the types of reading material in which they would be interested.

Parents and schools should form an effective partnership to create a positive learning environment for the children. According to Lemmer (2006:142), educators should assist parents in supporting learning at home. She suggests a number of activities that parents may do at home to help their children. These include telling stories, reading to children and listening to them when they read. Lemmer (2006) believes that it is important to involve parents in the schooling and learning process to enable the children to achieve optimum success. Parents have a responsibility to read at home and to encourage their children to read more often. As a teacher I agree with Lemmer (2006) that we, as educators, have a responsibility to help parents to encourage learning and reading at home as our focus is on helping each learner to achieve optimum success.

According to Nebor (1986), the effects of positive parental influence are always beneficial to their children's education. Schiefelbein (2008:1) states that if poor literacy is not addressed before the child reaches the age of eight, it is likely that the problem will persist in the future. In view of the fact that parents and the school should collaborate as a team, it is their responsibility to address any deficiencies in literacy learning during the Foundation Phase of

schooling. It was, in fact, for this reason that this study focused primarily on the creation of a reading culture during this phase.

## **2.8. The influence that parents' personal background has on their view of reading**

Throughout the world, and in South Africa in particular, there are many adults who are illiterate and who have never had the opportunity to learn to read and write. If a parent of a child is not able to read or write, it is difficult for such a parent to encourage the child to read. If a parent has a background of illiteracy, the parent will not easily understand the importance of reading and the joy that it may bring. In addition, unfortunately, in South Africa, many of the parents of today did not receive education in their mother tongue but, instead, they were forced to receive instruction in a second, third or even fourth language. The result is that these parents often have a negative association with reading and the written word. This may affect the way in which they approach reading for the rest of their lives and also the example that they set for their children.

There are two types of coding namely restricted- and elaborated codes, according to Bernstein (1971). To understand and use restricted codes one needs background information and prior knowledge. Elaborated codes are full of detail and easy to understand without prior knowledge. Society places different values on the two different codes. The family, peer group, school and work environment determine which code is used by an individual. Bernstein (1971:135) believes that a working class person uses restricted codes and a middle class person uses elaborated codes as well. This is due to the conditions in which they were raised. I believe that the codes that people use in their daily lives has an influence on the type of reading material that they would prefer, and whether they would find reading important at all. Haralambos and Holborn (1990) state that situational constraints explains the behaviour of the poor. People's way of life is influenced by their economic status. If people come from low socio-economic status, they tend to place less value on the written word. Teachers need to be aware of the dangers of forming assumptions about learners based on their socio-economic background. Delpit (2006) explains that teachers often make assumptions about learners' academic capabilities based on their socio-economic status.

Research with pre-kindergarten children in America was conducted by Timkey (2015). She used case studies and surveys which involved children from different socio-economic backgrounds and family lives. She noted that children whose parents have a positive background and attitude towards reading, influenced their children to develop positive attitudes as well. Timkey (2015:40) noted that parents bring their own unique perspectives to the individual needs of their children. Those parents who did not regard reading as an integral and important part of their daily lives, did not encourage their children to be active readers. Parents who regarded reading as an important function, encouraged their children to be active readers themselves. I agree with Timkey (2015) that parents have their own perspective on which needs are important to address when it comes to the education of their children. However, I also believe that we as educators have a responsibility to help these parents to realise the importance of reading and to encourage them to be active readers that set a good example for their children.

Parents have an enormous influence on their children's education for several reasons, but most importantly because they are their children's first teachers. It is unfortunate that less educated parents are less likely to be involved in their children's education process as compared to their more highly educated counterparts. Parents who do not have a high regard for education will most likely not be involved in the education of their children (Gratz 2006:2-4). Unfortunately, I have noticed that many of the parents of today had negative experiences at school and in the educational process as a whole. This has a direct influence on how, for example, they perceive reading. If a parent was forced to read material in which he/she had no interest in as a child, that parent will most likely not have a positive regard for reading. These parents will in turn influence their children to view reading as a negative experience.

The parents' own socio-economic status also has an influence not only on their view of reading and a reading culture, but also on the amount of reading materials that they are able to afford. According to Uccelli, Galloway, Barr, Meneses and Dobbs (2015) children from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds, scored lower on tests aimed at assessing core academic language skills. Naicker (2010:187) states that a large percentage of younger parents in South Africa have limited educational resources while they also lack a print culture. The result is often few books, a lack of reading and little interest in school work. The development of a reading culture is only possible if there are reading materials available that the learners will enjoy. As an active reader myself I have seen that quality reading material is often extremely



expensive and not affordable for the broader population. It is therefore important that we guide those parents who struggle to afford their own reading material towards knowing where their local libraries are where they may access reading material at little to no cost. Learners in the participating school come from different socio-economic backgrounds. A large number of the learners come from middleclass homes where obtaining interesting reading material is not a difficult task. Other learners, however, come from homes where the provision of basic needs such as food and electricity is a daily struggle. These learners do not have the same opportunities and exposure to literary works as do the other learners. The parents of the learners who come from low-income homes are also more focused on providing basic necessities and thus do not regard reading for enjoyment as an absolute priority. The influence of the parents' financial situation has a ripple effect on the creation of a reading culture. These parents are naturally more focused on other life-essential needs.

## **2.9. Studies on the influence of parental involvement on children's reading culture**

There have been a number of different studies and also research conducted throughout the world on the implementation of a parental involvement programme, to develop reading skills and to create a reading culture in different communities. For the purposes of this literature review I focused only on some of the most important research programmes and results that correlate to the current research that is being conducted in this study.

### **2.9.1. Studies conducted in South Africa**

a family literacy project to get parents involved in four different preschools in various provinces in South Africa, was conducted by Machet and Pretorius (2003) . They wanted to improve literacy in South Africa through family or intergenerational literacy. Their aim was to teach illiterate adults how to read and then to use their newly acquired reading skills to read to preschool children. The results of the study showed that the children who participated in the study had a greater awareness of literacy practices and behaviours as compared to those children who were not part of the study. Their study showed that children develop a greater appreciation for reading when adults (particularly their parents) are involved.

A study on the reading habits and interests of parents and their influence on the reading habits and interests of their children in the Umlazi Township has been conducted by Mngoma

(1997). She found that the home influence (influence of parents) appeared to be fairly strong with regard to children in the Foundation Phase. Mngoma (1997) found that, of all the factors limiting reading, the children's home background (parents) had the greatest influence on their attitudes towards leisure reading. If their parents had a negative attitude towards reading, the children also developed negative attitudes towards reading and vice versa.

I agree with the findings of Machet and Pretorius (2003) that children become excited when adults, especially their parents, are involved in their activities. I believe that children learn behavioural traits as well as attitudes towards certain aspects in life from their parents, as the findings of Mngoma (1997) indicate. In view of the fact that parents are their children's primary role models early in life, children tend to resemble their parents in their actions, speech- and behavioural patterns. I believe that children tend to adopt the attitudes of their parents and, thus, if their parents are positive about a certain aspect, they will probably be positive about it too.

### **2.9.2. Studies conducted in other African countries**

A research study on reading culture, parental involvement and children's development in the formative years, was carried out by The Covenant University in Nigeria, according to (Akindele 2012). According to Akindele (2012), a reading culture and parental involvement are the two most crucial factors which form the foundation of the child's education. The sample study comprised of 211 parents and their children. The aim of the study was to determine the percentage of parents who read to their children and what influence it had on their reading culture. The results of the study concluded that there was an increase of more than 80% in respect of a love of reading on the part of children whose parents spent time reading to them. I agree with Akindele's (2012) findings, as the focus of this research study was to ascertain whether or not parental involvement in reading activities at school and fun reading activities at home may increase a love of reading in children.

Another research on strategies for the development of a reading culture in Ugandan primary schools, was conducted by Nalusiba (2010). She used 77 respondents in her study. The requisite data was gathered through interviews and observation. The results of the study showed that only 22% of learners read daily due to a lack of interest in reading. Nalusiba (2010) found that one of the major factors influencing a negative attitude towards reading

was a lack of parental involvement. I agree with Nalusiba (2010) that learners do not read enough due to a lack of interest. However, I disagree that only 22% of learners read on a daily basis. Reading is part of the learning process at school and it is impossible for a school learner not to read, in some form, on a daily basis. Nevertheless, I do agree that only a small percentage of learners read for enjoyment on a daily basis.

Research into the roles of teachers and parents in improving the reading culture in the Gucha South district in Kenya was conducted by Ronald, Bernard and Ondari (2014). The aim of their study was to explore the possible causes of a non-reading culture in schools and the roles played by teachers and parents in contributing and promoting a reading culture among students. The results of their study indicated that the majority of the respondents in the study agreed that the fact that teachers as well as parents did not motivate students to read, was the major cause of a non-reading culture. I agree that parents and teachers play an important role in motivating students to read.

### **2.9.3. Studies conducted in America**

Research into the impact of parental involvement on the reading achievement of fourth grade African American males in Virginia was conducted by Bradley (2010). Bradley (2010) used Epstein's model of parental involvement (Epstein 2002:41-63) to determine the effects of parental involvement on the reading achievement of these fourth grade boys. Quantitative research was used to determine whether parental involvement improved reading achievement. The findings of Bradley's (2010) research showed that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement activities and improvement in the reading achievement of these fourth grade boys. This study was qualitative in nature and focused on the creation of a positive attitude towards reading. However, Bradley's (2010) research showed that parental involvement not only has an influence on children's attitudes towards reading but also on their reading achievement.

Faires, Nichols and Rickelman (2000) conducted a study to determine whether parental training and involvement in teaching reading lessons to first graders would increase the first graders' reading levels. They concluded that significant progress was made in the reading achievements of the learners whose parents were involved in the study. I also believe that it

is important to train parents and equip them with the skills required to teach reading lessons to their children.

The above studies all indicate that, no matter in which country or in which culture the research was conducted, all the studies concluded that parental involvement has a positive impact on children's love for reading and their reading achievements. Through this study I aimed to support their findings to the effect that parental involvement increases a reading culture in young children.

## **2.10. Major points uncovered by the literature review**

All of the above studies that were conducted in South Africa and other countries came to the same conclusion, namely, parental involvement is cardinal in creating a positive reading culture for children. As previously stated, education begins at home and the parents are primarily responsible for ensuring a positive first introduction to learning and reading. "It is important that children learn how to be excited about learning from an early age. Parents are the ones who need to instil this excitement in their children" (Gratz 2006:3).

### **2.10.1. Parental involvement improves reading ability and achievement**

As may be seen through the results of the studies conducted by Bradley (2010) and Faires, Nichols and Rickelman (2000) that were carried out in America, parental involvement has a significant effect on the reading achievement of children. Children who are confident readers and who are able to fully understand what they read, tend to be more successful in all other subjects in school. Reading forms the foundation of studying and if reading achievement increases, so does achievement in all academic areas. It is, thus, recommended that parents become more involved by reading with and to their children on a daily basis. This not only involves listening to their children when they read their prescribed homework material, but also reading bedtime stories to their children, allowing their children to read instructions aloud when following a recipe, asking their children to read road signs while travelling and playing board games where children have to read out loud. These are only a few examples of how parents may help to improve their children's reading.

### **2.10.2. Parental involvement has a significant impact on how children view reading**

The studies conducted by Machet and Pretorius (2003), Mngoma (1997), Akindele (2012), Nalusiba (2010) and Ronald, Benard and Ondari (2014), all indicate that parents have a significant influence on how their children view reading. According to Mngoma (1997), the home backgrounds of children have a marked influence on their attitudes towards reading. Akindele (2012) and Machet and Pretorius (2003) indicated that children develop a better attitude towards reading when their parents read to them. Story-time spent with parents where parents read interesting stories to their children, has an enormous impact on how their children view books and reading.

### **2.10.3. When parents and teachers are not motivated, children are not motivated to read**

Ronald, Benard and Ondari (2014) indicated that, when parents and teachers are not motivated to read, children are naturally also not motivated to read. Parents and teachers set an example to children on how to view reading. Motivation plays an important role in creating a reading culture. Thus, parents first need to be motivated to read before they are able to motivate their children to read.

### **2.10.4. Parents need to be equipped to help to create a reading culture**

When illiterate adults are taught how to read and write, a positive reading culture is a natural consequence of this (Machet and Pretorius 2003). In South Africa there is an urgent need for illiterate adults to be taught how to read and write. If parents are not able to read, their children will most likely not be able to read, nor will they be motivated to read. It is, thus, of the utmost importance that parents be equipped sufficiently to enable them to create a positive reading culture for their children.

I believe that many parents who are literate do not know how to effectively support their children in the creation of a reading culture. It is, thus, important that teachers with knowledge in this area provide sufficient support and information to parents on how they may help their children in the creation of a positive reading culture. One of the fundamental practices of parental involvement in school, is the equipping of parents with the skills

required as well as guidance from the teachers on how to create a positive learning environment at home.

### **2.11. Significance of the literature review to the research project**

As may be seen in the literature review above, there is a lack of significant research on the issue of creating a positive reading culture in Foundation Phase learners through comprehensive parental involvement. The studies on parental involvement and its impact on children's reading habits, as cited above, all indicate that there is a positive correlation between parental involvement and reading abilities and attitudes towards reading. Through this research study I also aimed to indicate whether there is a positive correlation between parental involvement and a positive attitude towards reading.

As is evident in the research by Bradley (2010), the use of Epstein's model of parental involvement, is an extremely effective way of equipping parents to create a positive reading environment. I also made use of Epstein's model of parental involvement in this research. Epstein's model has been implemented in several states in America with great success. Through this research I aimed to find out whether it is a model that may be used successfully in South African schools.

The literature review above not only indicated a positive change in attitudes towards reading when parents become involved, but also a positive change in academic achievement. Despite the fact that the focus of this study was on creating a positive reading culture it was also expected that there would also be an improvement in the academic results of the learners.

The focus of this study was to determine whether parental involvement leads to an improved attitude towards reading for enjoyment in Foundation Phase learners. During this study parents and their children were observed while doing fun reading activities over a period of three months. Parents were also involved in reading activities at school. Interviews were held with the parents, children and teachers that participated in the study. Through these activities, I aimed to find whether the results of this study corroborated the results as found in the studies mentioned in the literature review.

## **2.12. Summary**

Despite the fact that I was able to find several studies conducted in other countries that had focused on creating a positive reading culture through parental involvement, there has clearly not been sufficient research conducted specifically in South Africa on this subject. I was able to find a large number of quantitative research studies on academic improvement and achievement related to parental involvement but not on a positive attitude towards reading. This was one of the main reasons for this research study. I wanted to find out what the correlation was between parental involvement and the creation of a positive attitude towards reading. Through case studies and interviews I aimed to determine whether parental involvement in South Africa has a significant effect on the creation of a reading culture.

Although a limited number of studies have been conducted in South Africa on the research topic, as was evident in the above mentioned studies in the literature review, there is a proven correlation between positive parental involvement and an improved reading culture among children. Through the research, I aimed to provide further proof of the positive effects of the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model on the creation of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase in primary schools in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter 2 presented a theoretical framework for this research study. This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used in the study. This includes a description of the purpose of the study, research design, and population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis, ethical issues and a summary of the specific research questions that guided the research procedures. The role of the researcher in the research project is described before a detailed description of the methodology and data collection methods used is given.

#### **3.2. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the Foundation Phase of a primary school had a positive effect on the creation of a reading culture within the school. Thus, the study aimed to determine whether involving parents in the reading process had an effect on their children's view of reading.

#### **3.3. Research design and methods**

A qualitative research design was chosen for the purpose of this study. Crossman (2018) describes qualitative research as a way in which to interpret meaning from social data which has been collected rather than working with numerical data. De Franzo (2011) defines qualitative research as research which is used to gain an understanding of opinions and motivations. In view of the fact that a reading culture focuses on human experience and non-numerical data, a qualitative design was deemed to be the most appropriate research design for the purposes of this study. The research methods used in this study were observations through case studies and interviews.



### **3.4. Research questions**

The following research questions were to be investigated in the study:

What were Foundation Phase learners' perceptions of reading and, specifically, of reading for enjoyment? What influence did the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model have on learners' perceptions of reading for enjoyment? What visible changes occurred in the behaviours and attitudes of learners when their parents were involved in reading activities?

### **3.5. The role of the researcher**

As a qualitative researcher, my role as the researcher was to identify a topic and then to design a comprehensive research plan to investigate whether parental involvement has a positive influence on the way in which learners view reading, particularly reading for enjoyment.

As qualitative research was done, it was my responsibility to ensure that I did not form any personal biases and that my interpretation of the views expressed by participants was aligned to their true opinions. I had the responsibility of allowing participants to respond without any interference. The participants were expected to respond honestly to ensure that the outcome was a true reflection of their views. Thus, as the researcher, I had to avoid forcing my own personal ideas onto the participants. According to Wesely (2018) both the interviewer and the interviewee construct stories and narratives during the interviews. It is thus important that the researcher should pay special attention to not construct and conduct interviews in such a way that his/her own opinions form the basis for the questions posed.

It was also my responsibility as the researcher to collect and analyse the data in such a way that was true to the responses of the participants. In addition, I had to ensure that ethical measures were followed and that participants felt safe in expressing their true opinions. Baker, Phelan, Snelgrove, Varpio and Maggi (2016:607) provide examples of two types of ethics. The first is "procedural ethics" which refers to the ethical clearance granted by the

ethics board of the university while the second is “practical ethics” that has to do with the ethical decision-making during the interviews conducted. It is important that the researcher ensures that ethical practices are followed throughout the research period and that every measure is taken to act in an ethical manner.

### **3.6. Selection of participants (sampling and sampling techniques)**

Participants were chosen through maximum variation sampling which involved divergent participant groups. According to Elder (2009), maximum variation sampling is a technique that involves selecting participants who include all the extremes within the population in question. This technique ensures that participants with different views on the research topic are included in the research. Through using maximum variation sampling, I was able to acquire a better understanding of the effects of parental involvement on the learners’ view of reading from learners with different opinions about reading for enjoyment. Twenty learners from the Foundation Phase, specifically grade 1 to grade 3 learners, and their parents were chosen to participate in the study. All of the Foundation Phase teachers at the school (Grade 1 to grade 3) were also chosen as participants to ensure a maximum variety of views and opinions regarding reading and reading for enjoyment.

#### **3.6.1. Establishing contact**

During the first contact session that I had with the participants, I explained the purpose of the research and the research methods that would be used. I explained that participation was voluntary and that people who were not willing to participate in the research were under no obligation to do so.

Before each interview I made sure that my interview questions were in order as well as all the equipment that I used, for example, a video recorder. This was to ensure that the contact sessions proceeded smoothly without any disturbances. Before conducting the interviews, I made sure that the interview protocol was in place. Castillo-Montoya (2016:812) provides a four-phase interview protocol to follow when conducting interviews with participants. These phases include ensuring that the questions posed during the interviews are based on the research question, asking questions and not giving scenarios, receiving feedback from the participants regarding the questions and interview process and then following the tested and

proved protocol for interviews in the interviews that follow. As the interviewer I followed these steps when conducting the first interviews and then applied the knowledge I had acquired to the interviews that followed. Luo and Wildemuth (2017:252) highlight that it is important that careful preparation takes place before the interviews are conducted.

### **3.6.2. Participant profiles**

I constructed individual participant profiles which contained their personal information, their answers to the interview questions and their own personal views and experiences regarding reading. These profiles were used to ensure that the data collection was done in a logical and administratively ordered way to ensure that the data analyses for each participant was carried out without confusing it with another participant's answers and experiences and remained true to the individual participant's views and opinions.

### **3.7. Data collection methods**

In order to ensure that the results of the study were true and reliable, I made use of various strategies to collect the requisite data. Case studies were done over three months and semi-structured interviews with the participants were held during the entire process. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2018:4) explain that a researcher *should form a hypothetic pattern that explains the case in question* while Eisner (2017:204) explains that it is likely that readers will determine their own findings in case studies even though the researcher might make generalisations in respect of the study findings. According to Luo and Wildemuth (2017:250) a semi-structured interview in the research context is a conversation between two people that was started by the interviewer with the goal in mind of gaining research related information.

#### **3.7.1. Case studies**

According to the *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (Hornsby 2005:218), a case study is a detailed account about a person or group and their development over time. Hancock and Algozzine (2017:16) defines case studies as the intensive investigation of people of interest in their natural settings. Case studies were used in this research project to track the development of participants' love of reading for enjoyment over the period of three months. As qualitative research involves views and opinions rather than numerical data, case studies

and observations helped me to observe changes in participants' attitudes towards reading over time. I made use of Epstein's model of parental involvement in schools (Epstein 2002) to carry out case studies with the participants during the months of research.

#### Parenting:

I conducted meetings with the participant parents and provided guidelines on how to create a positive reading environment at home. I held regular contact sessions with the parents to monitor their progress and give guidance during the process.

#### Communicating:

I communicated regularly with the participant parents via written as well as oral communication. I also conducted contact sessions to discuss the progress made.

#### Volunteering:

I recruited enough parents to act as volunteers to read stories to each Foundation Phase class over a period of three months for twenty minutes each afternoon.

#### Learning at home:

I developed a "Reading is Fun" game that was sent home with the participant parents to play with the entire family on a regular basis. The game included aspects of reading for information, acting out what the family members had read, the development of jokes and the writing and reading of pleasurable content that was shared with each other.

#### Decision-making:

I involved parents in the decision making and sharing of ideas regarding certain reading programmes and activities that were held at school.

#### Collaborating with the community:

An event was organised where the entire school donated storybooks and other reading material to an underprivileged community. The entire school and not just the Foundation Phase, was involved in this process.

During the entire period of the implementation of Epstein's model to develop a reading culture in the school, I observed the actions of all the participants (teachers, volunteer

parents, learners in class and learners who played the game at home). During this period of time, I observed a change in attitude towards reading for pleasure. I also sent questionnaires home in order to obtain a better indication if there had been a change in attitude towards reading during this period.

### **3.7.2. Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews are interviews where there are predetermined questions, but where the order of the questions may be changed or where the questions may be modified upon what the interviewer deems appropriate, according to (Van Teijlingen, 2014). I conducted semi-structured interviews with the participant learners, parents and teachers before, during and after the implementation of the reading programme. The aim of these interviews was to determine the effect of parental involvement on learners' views of reading and whether any changes in attitudes towards reading had taken place during the period of time in question.

#### **3.7.2.1. Interview questions**

I used the guidelines as set out by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:206) on how to develop semi-structured interview questions. I gave no specific choices from which the participants could choose answers, but instead I constructed open-ended questions to allow for individual responses from the participants. By doing this I ensured that my own opinions did not influence the reflections and feelings of the participants, but that they had the opportunity to give answers in a manner which expressed their true views and opinions.

When developing and constructing the questions for the interviews, I followed McMillan and Schumacher's guidelines for effective interviewing (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:358-359).

*Interview probes:* I took care with the placement of probes and the wording that I used to ensure the correct responses from the interviewees.

*Statements of the researcher's purpose and focus:* At the beginning of each interview, I explained the purpose of the interview and explained that the participants' identities and answers would be kept confidential.

*Order of questions:* I started the interviews with broader questions and then moved on to more specific topics.

*Demographic questions:* I asked questions regarding the participants' age, race and gender at the beginning of the interviews to establish a general idea of the backgrounds of participants.

*Complex, controversial, and difficult questions:* I kept the complex and difficult questions for the end of the interviews in the interests of gaining a better understanding of the participants' true beliefs regarding reading for enjoyment.

### **3.7.2.2. Recording of semi-structured interviews**

The interviews were recorded using a video recorder so that I would be able to refer back to the recordings at a later stage and to ensure that I recorded the true responses and feelings of the participants. After watching the video recordings, I wrote down the answers and responses of the participants to be able to easily refer back to them.

### **3.8. Data analysis**

According to O'Connor and Gibson (2003:65) there are several different components to qualitative data analysis. They provide a list of steps that guide the process of data analysis. For the purposes of this study, I made use of these steps in analysing the data which emerged throughout the research. These steps include the following: Organising the data, finding and organising ideas and concepts, building overarching themes in the data, ensuring reliability and validity in the data analysis and in the findings and finding possible and plausible explanations for the findings (O'Connor and Gibson 2003:65).

### **3.8.1. Organising the data**

According to Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen Irvine and Walker (2014:131), it is important that the researcher organises the data into a manageable form. I organised the data by first selecting which questions were pertinent to the research hypothesis and analysing the answers given to these questions by the participants. I then examined the answers given to other questions, and remarks given by participants, which gave further information that were not originally part of the research questions. This step helped me in the organising and analysis of certain concepts and themes that arose from the participants' responses.

### **3.8.2. Finding and organising ideas and concepts**

The researcher must find various patterns in terms of which to organise the research results (Bryman 2016:108). When analysing the data, I found certain recurring themes and words used by the participants that lead to the findings of the analysis. I was able to use the words and phrases that the participants had used, to gain a general understanding of their feelings towards the topics raised in the questions. I also had to search for deeper meaning in the words that the participants had used regularly to express their feelings. I made sure that I recorded the exact words of the participants during the interviews to obtain a true reflection of their own words and feelings.

According to O'Connor and Gibson (2003:71), the researcher must organise the phrases and expressions used by participants into various themes or categories. After reviewing the interviews, I organised the responses of the participants into various main categories that had emerged in the responses of the majority of the participants. This ensured a true reflection of the overall feeling regarding certain topics.

### **3.8.3. Building overarching themes in the data**

Different categories may be collapsed under one main over-arching theme (O'Connor and Gibson 2003:71). Bernard, Wutich and Ryan (2017:114) explain that you can assemble a set of themes through sorting data into piles of similar meaning.

After organising the different phrases and words used by the participants into various categories, I was able to find specific main themes into which these categories could be divided. Phrases and words were organised into the following groups: Positive responses towards reading, negative responses towards reading and neutral responses towards reading. Through this I was able to get a better understanding of the over-arching feelings of the participants towards reading for enjoyment and the influence of comprehensive parental involvement on these feelings.

#### **3.8.4. Reliability and validity in the data analysis and in the findings**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 330), there are ten possible strategies which may be used to enhance validity during data collection and data analysis. I made use of some of these strategies to aim for increased reliability in the analysis of the data that I had collected and to stay true to the original responses of the participants. A further explanation of these steps and how I used them is provided in section 3.9.

Ethical concerns and the trustworthiness and validity of data are all intertwined. It is not possible to separate validity from ethicality. Ethical measures are important factors in aiming to ensure the validity of the data (Marshall and Rossman 2016).

#### **3.8.5. Identifying possible and plausible explanations for the findings**

It is important that the researcher should search for plausible explanations for the data (Marshall and Rossman 2016). I started this step by making summaries of the main themes and findings that I had uncovered during the research. I then compared these findings to those of the other studies as described in the literature review, to discover whether there were any differences and whether my findings were similar to those of the other studies. I also examined the physical and contextual circumstances of the participants more closely to find plausible explanations for the findings.



### **3.9. Reliability of results**

In order to ensure that the results of the study were accurate and true to the responses and feelings of the participants, I made use of the following steps as suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:330).

#### **3.9.1. Prolonged and persistent fieldwork**

Hammett, Twyman and Graham (2015:61) describe fieldwork as activities that take place outside of the classroom. They believe that sound planning and preparation while conducting fieldwork research minimises possible negative experiences. I conducted case studies with the participants over the period of three months to intensely study the effects of parental involvement on the learners' attitudes towards reading. During this time I observed the participants and their responses without any interference from me as the researcher. This ensured that my findings represented the true responses of the participants, without any interference from myself as the researcher and without the participants being influenced by my own opinions and views on the topic in question.

#### **3.9.2. Multi-method strategies**

Combining various types of research activities in a multi-method approach, enhances the solid evidence found during the research, as stated by Seawright (2016:190). I made use of interviews as well as case studies to collect the requisite data. The use of interviews allowed me to record the true responses of the participants to the semi-structured interview questions, without only observing and giving my own opinion on what I had observed. This ensured the validity of the data collected, as they were the true "word for word" responses of the participants.

#### **3.9.3. Participant language**

I recorded the exact responses and words of the participants in their home language, without making any alterations, to ensure that the records were both true and valid.

### **3.9.4. Mechanically recorded data**

I used a video recorder to record the interviews and to ensure a precise record of the responses of participants. I then used these video recordings at a later stage to write down the participants' answers to the questions in a precise manner so that I was able to obtain an accurate understanding of their opinions. Ethical clearance for using the video recordings was given through the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), the University of South Africa Ethical Board as well as the parents and participant learners.

### **3.9.5. Member checking and Participant review**

Member checking in research is used to demonstrate the accuracy of the findings (Creswell 2014:250). According to Saldana (2015), member checking is an effective way of validating findings. I regularly confirmed my findings with the participants to ensure that I had recorded their true responses. I asked some of the participants to review my findings to ensure that they were accurate and reflected the true feelings of the participants. I also allowed participants to make alterations where they thought that I had not given a true reflection of their feelings.

### **3.10. Ethical measures**

Resnik (2018) maintains that ethics in research are important to eliminate the abuse of human subjects and ethically questionable research. When conducting research it is important to adhere to certain ethical measures to ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and their responses are maintained. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:338), a credible research design involves not only the selection of participants and accurate research strategies, but also the adherence to research ethics.

I made sure that I observed ethical measure in various ways. I obtained written consent from all the participants. I obtained consent from the College of Education ethics committee. I obtained written consent from the Principal of the school to be able to use the school's premises and to use parents, learners and teachers from the school as participants in the study. I also obtained written consent from the HOD of the school's Foundation Phase to make use of Foundation Phase learners and their parents as well as teachers as participants in the study.

Written consent was given by the parent and teacher volunteers that were willing to partake in the study. Written consent was obtained from the Gauteng Education Department to conduct the research at the participating school.

Guaranteeing their anonymity would make participants feel confident enough to give their true perspectives and opinions (Curtis, Murphy and Shields 2014). Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured in the following ways: During the video interviews I ensured that the faces of the participants would not be visible so that they could be identified at a later stage. In the written consent forms given to parents and teachers, I asked them to write down the pseudonyms that they would like me to use instead of their real names. In so doing, I ensured that their privacy was protected.

### **3.11. Summary**

This chapter explained the purpose of the study and discussed the research questions that were to be answered. The researcher's role in the study was discussed and the sample and sampling techniques used were described. The data collection methods were discussed in detail as was the data analysis process. An explanation of the ethical measures taken was also provided. Chapter 4 contains a detailed explanation of the findings.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Introduction

This research study made use of case studies that were conducted over a period of three months as well as semi-structured interviews that were also conducted during this period.

This chapter contains a detailed explanation of the study findings as concluded from the data that was collected during the case studies and interviews. The chapter also includes a summary of the various themes and categories that were identified through the research. It then presents a comparison between the findings of this study and those of other studies as described in the literature review to determine whether there was a correlation between the former and those cited in the literature review in Chapter 2. Based on the findings and this comparison, the chapter then discusses whether the research question, namely, *How the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the Foundation Phase contributes to the development of a reading culture* (section 1.4), has been answered.

Physical and contextual circumstances that provide plausible explanations for the findings are explored. The study made use of the steps as given by O'Connor and Gibson (2003:65) and O'Leary (2018) on how to analyse the data. These steps include coding the themes which emerged from the data, identifying the patterns that arise, verifying theories and drawing conclusions from the data.

In order to present the findings I first organised the data which had been collected from the interviews and case studies. I then organised the various ideas and concepts that had emerged from the data analysis and built overarching themes in the data. I explained how the reliability and validity of the data was ensured. Possible and plausible explanations for the findings are given by comparing the findings of this study with those of the studies as described in the Literature Review as well as through giving a description of the physical and contextual circumstances of the participants that may have played a role in such plausible explanations for the findings. This chapter concludes with a summary of the study findings.

According to McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig (2003) an important aspect of preparing data for analysis is the careful review of transcripts. Through carefully reviewing and working through the transcripts, I identified certain patterns that had arisen. The transcripts used in this study were the answers to the interview questions that were gathered through videotaping the interviews, as well as the observation schedules that were held during the case studies. I observed the parents and learners while doing the activities and made notes of their behaviour and participation. I reviewed these notes and interview answers in order to make sense of the patterns in behaviour and attitude that had arisen.

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among these categories (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:367). Saldana (2016:4) highlights that coding is used to translate the data that was gathered during the research. I made use of coding to identify patterns that has arisen during the interviews and observations.

## **4.2. Organising the data gathered during the interviews**

The analysis of the data recorded during the research period could be divided into two sections. The first section comprises the information gathered during the interviews with the participants while the second section comprises the information gathered during the observation of participants while carrying out the research activities.

### **4.2.1. Data gathered during the interviews**

During the careful analysis of the interview transcripts, I uncovered various themes. Questions and answers that were pertinent to the research question and research hypothesis were analysed and placed into overarching themes or categories. I made use of the inductive analysis process to move from specific data to general categories (McMillan and Schumacher 2011:367). According to Luo and Wildemuth (2017:319) when conducting qualitative data analysis, it is essential that the researcher pay attention to unique themes that arise. I organised the themes that I had uncovered during the interviews into various categories.

The pseudonyms given by the participants during the first interviews are given in the responses below. These names were written on the interview transcripts and are not the real names of the participants.

### **Category 1: Participants' views of reading**

Of the twenty parents who participated in the study, the majority indicated that they enjoyed reading, but that they did not have sufficient time to read on a regular basis. One of the Grade 3 parents (Mia's mother) stated that *"I love reading, but unfortunately my schedule is so busy that I am not able to read as often as I would like."* The number of parents who read for enjoyment on a regular basis were far fewer. Only six of the parents responded that they read for enjoyment on a regular basis. A Grade 2 parent (Tristan's mother) exclaimed: *"Oh, yes! I love reading!"* Out of the group of participants, only two of the parents (both Grade 3) indicated that they did not enjoy reading at all as one of them (Michelle's mother) clearly stated that *"Reading is not one of my favourite pastimes."* The implications of the parents' views of reading in this study, included the fact that parents' personal views of reading has an influence on how their children view reading (sections 2.7. and 2.8.). According to Timkey (2015:40), parents who do not regard reading as an important aspect of their lives, do not encourage their children to read on a regular basis.

When the learners were asked about their own enjoyment of reading, the majority of the twenty learners stated that they did not enjoy reading and that they read only because they had to. It was interesting that most of these learners referred to reading as boring as one boy (Tristan – Grade 2) said: *"No! Reading is boring! My mom forces me to read my homework. It is not fun."* Jayden (Grade 3) indicated that he became nervous when he had to read aloud, saying that *"I hate it when I have to read to my teacher."* Only six out of the twenty learners indicated that they loved reading and that they read as often as they could. Mia (Grade 3) responded with the following: *"Yes, I love reading!"* All of the teachers stated that they observed that only a few learners in the class enjoyed reading and that many learners were anxious when they had to read. One of the Grade 3 teachers (Mrs. T) responded with the words: *"I find that the learners in my class would rather listen to music or watch a DVD than to read a book. There are many different books in my reading corner, but it feels like it just gathers dust."* The responses of the learners and the teachers regarding learners' views of reading for enjoyment is a clear indication that there is a lack of a reading culture in the

participating school. Section 1.1. cited the findings of Nel (2011) and Chambers (2017) which indicated a low level of literacy development in South Africa. These findings and the responses of the learners highlighted the need for the development of a reading culture in the participating school.

When asked about the reading activities that were part of this study, the majority of the twenty parents responded that their children enjoyed reading during these activities.

Michael's mother (Grade 3) said that she could "*see that (her) my son enjoys the activities and it seems like he enjoys reading more. It looks like his confidence has grown*". Two of the parents (Grade 2 and Grade 3) responded by stating that their children enjoyed reading more than before as Khea's mother (Grade 2) said: "*(Laughing) We have so much fun during the activities. My child acts like a clown when she has to read the jokes out loud!*" "*I think my child enjoys reading more... it looks like it.*" The literature review (Chapter 2) cited various studies indicating the role that parental involvement has to play in the creation of a reading culture. Mulgrew (2012) stated that parents are the ones who can make children fall in love with reading. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) indicate that parental involvement in reading activities leads to an improved attitude towards reading. Parents are the ones who instil excitement about reading in their children (Gratz 2006:3). These activities were developed to get parents involved in an informal manner during reading activities. The majority of learners enjoyed the activities when their parents were involved.

As compared to the parents, the teachers answered from a different perspective and focused more on the growth in confidence that the learners showed regarding reading and a willingness to read more often. The majority of the teachers stated that learners had become more confident when they had to read aloud to them. "*I can see that they are more relaxed when they read to me.*" (Mrs. D – Grade 3). Most of the teachers also indicated that the learners were more willing to read books and other reading material that was available to them in class after they had completed their class-work. "*I have made a point of telling the learners in my class to choose a book from the bookshelf when their work is done. They are more willing than before to read when they have extra time. I think the learners are more aware of the importance of reading.*" (Mrs. B – Grade 2). The teachers' responses provide evidence that involving parents in activities with their children may lead to a positive growth in confidence when the children are required to read. In addition, the fact that the children were more willing than before to read for enjoyment showed that there had been a positive change in attitude towards reading after their parents had become more involved in reading

activities. Akindele (2012) found that there was an 80% improvement in a love of reading on the part of learners whose parents had become more involved. The findings of this study that the willingness of learners to read more often after their parents had spent time doing reading activities with them, indicated that Akindele's findings were true and also applicable to this research project.

When the programme was completed the participants were asked if they had noticed a change in attitude towards reading. The parents who had actively participated in the research programme responded that their children had had a positive change in attitude towards reading after the implementation of the programme. *"I think the programme has changed my child's attitude towards reading."* (Jayden's mother – Grade 3). Whereas, the parents who had not participated in the programme on a regular basis, were not able to see a significant change in their children's attitudes towards reading. *"I don't really notice a change, it might be my fault though..."* (Mpho's mother – Grade 2). The majority of the parents responded that the programme had been fun and that their children had enjoyed reading in such a fun manner. They had even noted that it had made homework easier as Michael's mother (Grade 3) said: *"Oh, yes. It has made a difference! Homework is a lot easier now."* A few of the parents stated that it had brought them closer together as a family and that their children enjoyed it when their parents read to and with them. *"My child loves reading now. We made a point of spending a lot of time reading together as a family and it has made a huge difference in our household. My husband and I even read more."* (Michelle's mother – Grade 3). The responses of the parents regarding a change in their children's attitudes towards reading, is a concrete indication that parental involvement may lead to a greater love of reading on the part of children as was the findings of Machet and Pretorius (2003), Mngoma (1997) and Akindele (2012) as stated in the literature review in Chapter 2.

When the learners were asked about the influence that the programme has had on their view of reading and their view of the activities, the majority of the twenty learners stated that they enjoyed reading more after the implementation of the programme. *"I like reading stories. Dinosaurs are cool..."* (Arno – Grade 3). *"Yes, it was fun playing the game and making cookies. I like reading the jokes."* (Khea – Grade 2). A few of the learners, however, stated that they still did not enjoy reading and that they still only read when they had to. Mpho (Grade 2) stated without hesitation: *"I don't like reading."* Some of the learners did not respond with an opinion. As was the findings with the responses of the parents as mentioned



above, the learners' responses indicated that parental involvement in reading activities leads to an improvement in their attitudes towards reading.

All of the teachers responded that the parental involvement programme had had a positive effect on the creation of a reading culture. A few of them even stated that they were able to see a change in reading ability of those learners whose parents had been actively involved in the programme. *"I can see a significant change in the learners that took part in the programme. Their reading ability has improved immensely. Those learners who participated seem to have more confidence when reading and they even visit the school's library more often."* (Mrs. L – Grade 3). As noted in the literature review (Chapter 2), Bradley (2010) and Faires, Nichols and Rickelman (2000) indicated that, together with an improvement in the love of reading, they had noticed a positive change in reading ability. The responses of the teachers clearly indicate that the learners' reading ability and reading achievement had improved together with their attitudes towards reading for enjoyment. Even though reading ability is not measured in qualitative research, it is interesting to note that learners read more fluently after the implementation of the programme.

## **Category 2: Availability of interesting reading material**

When asked about the reading resources and materials available at home, all twenty of the parents responded that they had a variety of reading materials available such as magazines, story books, history books, newspapers, etcetera. Tristan's father (Grade 2) said: *"We have many different forms of reading material. We have bookshelves that are full of books. My wife also buys different magazines each month."* *"There are loads of books in our house"*. A few of the parents also responded that they did most of their reading electronically through the use of Kindles, tablets and the Internet. Mia's mother (Grade 3) stated: *"We have many books, but I download e-books on my tablet. My child also reads books on my tablet."* What was interesting about the responses of the learners was that some of them responded that they did not have books at home, despite the fact that their parents had stated that they had a variety of reading materials available. These learners were clearly not aware of the books available at home as Michael (Grade 3) said: *"No, we don't have books."* The majority of the learners responded that they did have a variety of books at home. Some noted that there are books, but that they are not interested in them. As Mpho (Grade 2) said: *"I don't know. There are books but I don't like them."* Some of the learners responded that they visited the

library often and had many books available. *“Yes, I have all the Barbie books.”* (Michelle – Grade 3) *“I go to the library and get books.”* (Arno – Grade 3) The responses of the learners indicated that it is important that there are interesting reading materials available to them. If they do not find the materials interesting, they tend not to notice that there are materials available for them to read. Nirmala (2016) explains that it is the parents’ job to come up with interesting activities and ideas to keep children from getting bored. Children need direction and ideas from their parents. If children are bored with the reading material in their homes, they will most likely not engage with the material or not even notice that they are there. It is therefore important that parents ensure that they have interesting reading material that their children would like to engage with. According to Naicker (2010:187) there is a lack of print culture among young South African parents which leads to fewer books at home. The result is that there are fewer updated and interesting books available in the home for children to read.

### **Category 3: Responses to the reading activities**

When the parents were asked about the learners’ responses to the game, the majority of them stated that their children had enjoyed the game immensely and that they could not wait for “game-time”. *“My daughter really enjoyed the game. My eldest daughter also joined in the fun. Sometimes I would be busy making dinner and then I would suddenly hear the two of them laughing while playing the game. It is an innovative game and we have a lot of fun while playing it”* (Michy’s mother – Grade 2). *“It was a lot of fun. We will continue playing the game even after the programme is done”* (Luan’s mother – Grade 3). Only a few of the parents stated that they had not yet played the game on a regular basis as they had limited time and that they sometimes dreaded the activities as it took up too much time. *“To be honest, we did not have enough time to play regularly.”* (Mpho’s mother – Grade 2). These responses indicated that parental involvement is dependent on available time. Parents who have longer working hours and limited time to spend with their children, have less time than others to focus on the development of a reading culture at home. As indicated in section 1.6., many of the participating parents worked fulltime and thus had less time to spend on the development of a reading culture, however, the majority of the participants made time to spend on the reading activities and were able to see significant positive results.

When the learners were asked about the game, all of them stated that it had been fun and some told stories about how they had laughed together as a family while playing the game and doing the activities. *“The game is a lot of fun!”* (Michy – Grade 2). This is an indication of the positive view that children have regarding activities that they do with their parents.

All of the participating teachers stated that the overall feeling towards the programme was positive and that the learners and their parents had enjoyed it. *“The responses that I received from the parents and their children were all positive. I think they really enjoyed the activities.”* (Mrs. M – Grade 2). The positive attitude that the participants demonstrated towards the reading activities is an indication of the positive change that takes place when parents spend time with their children. Mugisha (2011) believes that parents should create exciting reading opportunities for their children. The activities during the research project created opportunities for parents and children to do exciting reading activities together, and the responses of the children indicated that it had helped in the improvement of a reading culture.

#### **Category 4: Parental involvement in reading**

When the parents were asked about the type of reading that they did with their children after school, most of them responded that their children read their homework reading pages to them on a daily basis. *“My child reads his homework pages to me every day.”* (Dan’s mother – Grade 2). Approximately half of the parents responded that they read bedtime stories to their children on a regular basis as Arno’s mother said: *“We read a bedtime story every night before the children go to sleep. We take turns reading in the two children’s bedrooms.”* Only a few of the parents, however, responded that they did not have time to read with their children and that their children read daily to the after-care teacher. *“Apart from doing homework, we do not really have a lot of time to spend reading”* (Didi’s mother – Grade 2). *“My child is in the aftercare centre at school. She reads to the teacher every day. When I pick her up at six, we go home, eat, bath and sleep”* (Mpho’s mother – Grade 2). These responses are an indication that most of the parents only focused on reading for work- and study related purposes and still lacked reading for enjoyment. According to Woolfolk (2010:27) parents have a direct influence on how their children view reading. If the parents view reading as a task that needs to be completed for study-purposes, then the children will also most likely also view reading as “work” and not as a leisure activity.

When I asked the learners whether they had enjoyed reading with their parents, all twenty of them stated that it had been fun and that they enjoyed reading together with their parents. The majority of them responded that they enjoyed it when their parents read to them and even preferred it to reading alone. *“It is fun when mom and dad reads to me”* (Arno – Grade 3). Only a few of the learners indicated that they preferred reading by themselves. *“I like reading on my own. Mommy makes me nervous”* (Michael – Grade 3). This is an indication that most learners enjoy activities where their parents are involved. When parents are involved in activities and focus on social learning activities, learners experience a greater motivation to learn than may otherwise have been the case (Patrikakou 2008:2).

When I had initially asked the teachers how they felt about involving parents in reading activities at school, some of them had stated that they were not positive about the notion of parents becoming involved in their classes. They were clearly afraid to hand over control to the parents. Mrs. T (Grade 3) said: *“I am afraid that parents will see it as an opportunity to take over. You know how our parents can be...”* A significant number of the teachers, however, felt that it would make a positive difference if parents were involved. *“I think it would help if parents were more involved. I wish some parents would make a bigger effort”* (Mrs. L – Grade 3). All of the teachers felt that the attitude of the parents and the attention that they pay to their children would naturally have an influence on their children’s attitudes towards reading. *“It will definitely make a difference if parents were involved. Some children are starving for their parents’ attention.”* (Mrs. B – Grade 2). Parents are the learners’ first teachers (Gratz 2006:2) and they have a significant influence on their children’s education. The responses of the teachers provided a clear indication that there is a need for successful collaboration between parents and the school.

#### **4.2.2. Key findings from the interviews**

I drew the following conclusions after interviewing the learners, parents and participant teachers:

#### **4.2.2.1. “Reading is fun” game**

I developed a game that included different forms of reading. It was a board game that was played with a dice and markers. Each player would get a turn to throw the dice and then move on according to the number on the dice. Categories included reading jokes, completing written sentences, interpreting images and asking questions.

During the interviews, both the parents and the learners stated that they had enjoyed playing the game immensely. Many of the participants indicated that they viewed the playing of the game as quality family-time spent together. The learners whose parents had played the game with them on a regular basis, demonstrated a visible change in their attitude towards reading and stated that they had “enjoyed the jokes and laughing together”. The parents of these children indicated that their children were more confident in their reading abilities when playing the game and that they tended to be less worried about what others thought about their reading skills than was usually the case.

#### **4.2.2.2. Reading sessions with volunteer parents**

During these reading sessions, the teachers made observations about how this had affected the attitudes of the learners in their class towards reading. In the interviews all of the participant teachers stated that they had seen a visible change in the learners’ attitudes towards reading for enjoyment. According to the volunteer parents, they had enjoyed the reading sessions and they would like to continue with the programme.

#### **4.2.2.3. Reading materials**

During the interviews, it became evident to me that most of the learners have a variety of reading materials available at home. Those learners who had many different reading resources to their disposal tended to demonstrate more positive attitudes towards reading as compared to their counterparts with less reading materials available at home. The responses of the learners, parents and teachers to the questions on reading material, made it clear that the learners enjoy reading when the material that they are reading appeals to them. When learners are forced to read material that they do not enjoy, they become negative and give up easily. Some of the learners were not aware of the amount of reading materials available in

their homes which may be due to the fact that the available material does not interest them. The parents can make a difference by purchasing material that is more suitable for young children as it is their responsibility to guide their children towards interesting activities (Nirmala 2016).

### **4.3. Key findings during case studies**

I made the following conclusions and observations during the case studies with the participants over the period of three months. My observations were recorded with the help of an observation schedule:

#### **4.3.1. “Reading is fun” game**

Through observing parents and children playing the “reading is fun” game, it became clear to me that the entire family enjoyed it and not only the children. They laughed often and expressed a lot of joy while playing the game. A notable aspect that became clear to me while observing these families playing the “reading is fun” game, was that the children were not self-conscious about reading aloud. They clearly viewed the game as a safe environment in which they could make mistakes and correct themselves. Due to the informal nature of the game the children did not seem to view the reading aspect as “work” but rather enjoyed it.

#### **4.3.2. Reading sessions with volunteer parents**

During the reading sessions with the volunteer parents I often observed other classes as well as my own. The learners’ enjoyment of these sessions was clearly visible. They asked their teachers numerous times during the day if it “was almost story time”. The reading sessions became something that the learners looked forward to during the day and they could not wait to hear what happened next in the stories. These sessions had a remarkable effect on how the learners viewed story books and reading for enjoyment. Some of the volunteers noted that it seemed like the learners were transported into a different world during these sessions. For some of the learners, this was their first experience of being read to by adults other than their teachers.

### **4.3.3. Reading materials**

When observing the learners and parents, it became clear that the types of reading materials had a significant influence on the way in which the learners viewed reading. In general, when the learners were expected to read from their prescribed books, they tended to read merely to “get the job done” and not because they enjoyed the material. However, when given reading material that matched their personal interests, the enjoyment was evident on learners’ facial expressions and even in the pace at which they completed the reading. They were visibly more motivated to read and even to share what they had read with others. In addition, they were able to answer questions about what they had read more clearly when they enjoyed the reading material, than when they read about topics in which they had no interest.

## **4.4. Finding and organising ideas and concepts**

After analysing the data from both the interview questions and answers, as well as from observing the participants over a period of three months, I was able to find recurring themes that the participants had voiced:

### **4.4.1. In general, learners have a negative attitude towards reading**

After reviewing the data, I found that most of the learner participants did not enjoy reading and only read when they absolutely had to. Many learners view reading as “boring” and would much rather partake in other activities than to read.

### **4.4.2. The learners whose parents do not read also do not read often**

Many of the learners who observed their parents’ negative attitudes towards reading tended to have the same negative attitude towards reading as their parents while those parents who enjoyed reading, had a positive influence on their children’s love of reading.

#### **4.4.3. Many parents do not have time to read to their children**

As a result of economic circumstances and extended working hours, many parents simply do not have sufficient time to read to their children on a regular basis.

#### **4.4.4. The types of reading materials that are available have a direct influence on how learners view reading for enjoyment**

If the reading material available to learners is not based on their personal interests, learners tend to have a negative attitude towards reading. The reading material has to be interesting in order for learners to enjoy it.

#### **4.4.5. Children enjoy activities in which the whole family is involved**

The “reading is fun” game is an activity in which the whole family was able to participate. All of the participants who played the game with their families viewed the reading activities as “fun” and had a positive attitude towards them.

#### **4.4.6. Parental involvement in reading brings about visible change in learner attitudes to reading**

All of the parents who were actively involved in the programme stated that they were able to see a visible change in their children’s attitudes towards reading. On the other hand, those parents who were not actively involved in the programme and who did not fully participate in the activities, were less likely to see a change in their children’s attitudes towards reading.

#### **4.4.7. If children enjoy reading, they tend to achieve greater success in reading**

It was clear from the responses of the teachers that those children who had positive attitudes towards reading, achieved positive results when reading for marks. The participant teachers stated that they could see an improvement in reading ability with an improvement in attitude towards reading for enjoyment.



## **4.5. Building overarching themes in the data**

Through analysing the data I was able to identify these various overarching themes:

### **4.5.1. Children's attitudes towards reading are influenced by a number of different factors**

There is more than one factor that may influence how a child views reading and reading for enjoyment in particular. For example:

- The parents' own attitudes towards reading: As explained in section 2.8., the parents' own personal backgrounds have an influence on how they view reading. In view of the fact that parents are the children's first teachers (Gratz 2006:2) and children tend to model their parents' behaviour, the parents' attitudes towards reading contributes to the way in which their children view reading.
- Availability and types of reading materials: If children view the reading materials that are available to them as boring and uninteresting, they tend not to read or even to notice that there is reading material available to them. This emerged from the interview responses of learners regarding reading materials.
- Physical circumstances such as economic status: Parents who work long hours have limited time to spend in reading activities with their children and, thus, they have limited time to spend on creating a reading culture. Due to financial constraints many parents are not able to afford interesting reading materials for their children to read.

### **4.5.2. Time plays a role in parental involvement**

Many parents, especially working parents and parents who have to travel long distances daily, struggle to find time to spend with their children.

#### **4.5.3. Family / parental involvement has a positive effect on learners' attitudes towards reading.**

Children whose families or parents were actively involved in the reading programme, all demonstrated a positive change in their attitude towards reading while those learners whose families were not actively involved in the programme, did not demonstrate a visible change in attitude.

#### **4.5.4. Reading attitude influences reading success**

It was visible through academic results that those learners with positive attitudes towards reading, achieved higher success in reading as compared to their more negative counterparts. The participating teachers all stated that an improvement in academic reading skills had accompanied an improvement in attitude towards reading.

#### **4.6. Reliability and validity in the data analysis and in the findings**

As indicated in Chapter 3 various measures were taken to aim for increased validity of the data. These include prolonged and persistent fieldwork through the following: Case studies (participant observation and in-depth interviews). Multi-method strategies (participant observation and interviews). Participant language (interviews were conducted in participants' home language). Mechanically recorded data (data was recorded with the help of a video camera). Member checking (participants verified results by making sure that the recorded data was a true reflection what they said in the interviews and the feelings that they expressed). Participant review (participants reviewed the transcripts) (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:330).

#### **4.7. Finding possible and plausible explanations for the findings**

This section contains a comparison of the findings of this study with those of the other studies as discussed in the literature review. This section also explores the physical and contextual circumstances of the participants that may provide plausible explanations for the findings.

#### **4.7.1. Comparison of the findings of this study to other studies as described in the literature review (Chapter 2)**

Children develop a greater appreciation for reading when adults are involved, according to Machet and Pretorius (2003:44). This study found that the children of those parents who were actively involved in the reading programme, also demonstrated a greater appreciation for reading and developed a positive attitude towards reading as compared to those children whose parents were not involved in the reading programme.

If their parents had a negative attitude towards reading, the children also developed negative attitudes towards reading and vice versa (Mngoma 1997). During the case studies and interviews I discovered that parents who were negative towards reading, influenced their children in a negative way and, as a result, their children had negative attitudes towards reading.

There was an increase of more than 80% in the love of reading with children whose parents spent time reading to them according to Akindele (2012). During the interviews the learners expressed how much they loved it when their parents read to them and that it had a positive influence on their own view of reading.

Nalusiba (2010) maintains that one of the major factors influencing a negative attitude towards reading was a lack of parental involvement. As found in this study, there was no positive change in the attitudes towards reading on the part of those children whose parents volunteered to participate in the study, but who did not actively participate.

There is a significant relationship between parental involvement activities and improvement in the reading achievement in the participants as stated by Bradley (2010). In the interviews that I conducted with the participant teachers, it became clear that learners achieved higher success in reading when they developed a positive attitude towards reading as a result of their parents actively participating in the programme.

#### **4.7.2. Physical and contextual circumstances of the participants that provide plausible explanations for the findings**

- Economic circumstances: There was a significant improvement in the reading attitude of learners whose parents were financially able to afford reading materials that the children enjoyed.
- Parents' working status: Learners whose parents had more time to read to them demonstrated a greater improvement in reading attitude as compared to those learners whose parents were only able to spend a limited amount of time doing the reading activities due to their work schedules.
- Parents' attitudes: Parents who themselves were not positive towards reading for enjoyment, influenced their children to have negative attitudes towards reading for enjoyment.

#### **4.8. Summary of the study findings**

All of the data collected and the observations made supported the fact that the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the Foundation Phase of primary schools has a positive effect on the creation of a reading culture. Children tend to have a positive attitude towards reading when their parents spend time reading to them and with them and when they are exposed to reading materials that appeal to them.

#### **4.9. Summary**

It was clear from the study findings and the explanations for the findings provided in this chapter, that the implementation of a comprehensive parental involvement model in the participating school in Gauteng, had a visible, positive effect on the creation of a reading culture within the school. Involving parents in the creation of a reading culture proved to be an effective tool in transforming the learners' negative attitudes towards reading into positive views of reading and reading for enjoyment, in particular. Chapter 5 presents the conclusions drawn, recommendations and themes for further studies.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter explored the important findings from the data collection as expressed by the participating Foundation Phase learners, their parents and the teachers at a primary school in Roodepoort, Gauteng. The study investigated the influence of comprehensive parental involvement on the creation of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase. The research aims and objectives were achieved through a literature review and through the data that was collected from case studies and interviews. This chapter presents an explanation of the conclusions of the research, describes the limitations of the study and offers recommendations for future research.

#### **5.2. Overview of the study**

The purpose of this study was to explore whether comprehensive parental involvement has an influence on the way in which Foundation Phase learners view reading for enjoyment. The data was gathered from twenty Grade 1 to 3 learners, their parents and all of the Foundation Phase teachers. At the beginning of the study, the majority of the learners viewed reading as a means of study and not as a leisure activity. The lack of a reading culture was evident in the participating school. It was decided to use the qualitative research method as the focus of the study was on the opinions of the participants regarding reading for enjoyment. The research findings showed that parental involvement has a positive influence on the creation of a reading culture. However, it was also revealed that negativity on the part of the participating parents could have a negative influence on the way in which their children viewed reading.

#### **5.3. Conclusions drawn from data**

The following conclusions were drawn from the analysis of data collected during the study. The data provided answers to the research question as stated in section 1.4. The study

investigated whether comprehensive parental involvement has an influence on how learners in the Foundation Phase view reading for enjoyment. The major findings and conclusions of the study are discussed below.

### **5.3.1. Many learners have a negative attitude towards reading as a result of their parents' negative views of reading for enjoyment**

The literature revealed that a child's home background has a significant influence on a child's attitude towards reading for enjoyment. Children tend to develop negative attitudes towards reading if their parents have negative attitudes towards reading (section 2.9). According to Gratz (2006:3), it is the parents' duty to ensure that their children are excited about reading. If the parents are not excited and positive about reading, this may have an immense negative effect on their children's views of reading.

### **5.3.2. A lack of available time has an impact on parental involvement**

The study revealed that many parents do not have enough time available to spend quality time reading to and with their children. As a result of their long working hours and the amount of time they spend commuting to and from work, parents have limited time available to spend with their children (section 4.7). However, the parent is the centre of education and has a responsibility to educate the child and expose him/her to new experiences (Pretorius 2011:39-41). If the family is absent, there is a lack of experiences that could lead to the creation of a positive reading culture.

### **5.3.3. The types of reading materials available has a direct influence on how learners view reading for enjoyment**

Section 2.3 revealed that learners must fall in love with reading material if a positive reading culture is to be created (Mulgrew 2012). If learners are not interested in what they read, they tend to view reading as a task that they have to complete rather than something that they enjoy (section 4.6). In order to create an effective and positive reading culture, it is essential that the reading material available to learners stimulates and retains their interests. According to Weinberger (1996:28), the provision of literacy resources by the parents has an effect on the learners' progress in reading.

#### **5.3.4. Children enjoy activities in which the whole family is involved**

Section 2.3 explored the role of the family in the education and socialisation practices of a child. According to Mugisha (2011), parents have the responsibility to use any opportunity that they can get, for example school holidays, to create exciting reading opportunities and to engage in reading activities with their children. As indicated in section 4.4.1, the answers of the participants to the interview questions regarding the reading activities used in the study, indicated that family participation in reading activities has a positive influence on the way in which learners view reading.

#### **5.3.5. Parental involvement in reading brings about visible change in learners' attitudes towards reading**

Section 2.7 focused on the role that parents play in encouraging their children to read. Gottfried, Fleming and Gottfried (1994) found that there is a correlation between parents who are actively involved in the education of their children and children's motivation to learn while Walker and Kuerbitz (1979) found that positive story-time experiences between parents and children had a positive influence on the way in which children viewed reading and on how much they enjoyed reading. All of the studies that were explored in section 2.9, indicated that parental involvement has a significant influence on how learners view reading. Machet and Pretorius (2003:44) found that children developed a greater appreciation for reading when their parents were involved. Section 4.4.1 indicated that seventeen of the twenty parents who actively participated in the study, were able to see a visible change in their children's attitudes towards reading. The only parents who did not see a change in their children's attitudes towards reading were those who had not actively participated in the study and the activities.

#### **5.3.6. If children enjoy reading, they tend to achieve greater success in reading**

The literature revealed that there is a strong correlation between a love of reading, parental involvement and reading success (section 2.9.3.). The findings of Bradley (2010) indicated that parental involvement has a positive impact on reading achievement with Faires, Nichols and Rickelman (2000) also highlighting that parental involvement in reading had a significant

impact on the reading achievements of learners. Some of the teachers who participated in the study made a point of indicating during interviews that they had seen an improvement in the reading achievement and success of those learners who had actively participated in the study, and that these learners had improved in confidence when they had to read out loud (section 4.4.1.).

## **5.4. Limitations of the study**

There are various factors that limited this study, for example, the fact that only one school was included in the study, the limited time available for research, the limited availability of the volunteers and the attitude of the school governing body towards parental involvement.

### **5.4.1. Participating school**

This study was limited to one school only in Gauteng. The Foundation Phase learners, teachers and parents participated in this study. Although the outcome of qualitative research is, to a marked extent, reliable and valid, this study focused only on the views and opinions of participants from one particular school.

### **5.4.2. Limited time available for research**

In the particular school in which the study was conducted, the participants, including myself as the researcher, have a programme filled with extra-curricular activities and academic responsibilities. The result is that I, myself, including the other participants, only had a limited amount of time each week to spend on conducting the research and implementing the parental involvement programme. In addition, the parent's participants also had limited available time due to their work-schedules and busy lifestyles.

### **5.4.3. Limited availability of volunteers**

In view of the fact that the majority of the parents at the participating school have busy work-schedules and extra-curricular activities, it was no easy task to find volunteers who had sufficient time available to spend on taking part in the study. As a result, fewer parents and learners participated in the research than had originally been intended.



#### **5.4.4. The attitude of the school governing body towards parental involvement in the school**

The school governing body of the participating school, had had negative experiences with parental involvement in the past. Consequently, I had to persuade them that the parental involvement in the study would not have a negative impact on school policies and procedures but, instead, that their involvement would help in improving the reading culture in school and in creating a positive attitude towards learning.

#### **5.5. Recommendations for improving the study**

For the benefit of future studies, I would make the following recommendations:

##### **5.5.1. Participating schools**

I would recommend that a wider variety of schools be included in future studies as this would ensure a variety of school circumstances, backgrounds and attitudes which may, in turn, influence how the participants view reading and reading for enjoyment in particular. In addition, involving schools from different communities could have an impact on the research results as different communities probably view parental involvement in different ways.

##### **5.5.2. Volunteers**

I would also recommend that a greater variety of volunteers be included in future studies. This would automatically be achieved through involving different schools in the study as recommended in section 5.5.1. I would also recommend that schools should allow parents to be more involved in their children's education and allow them to become official partners in the development of school policies and procedures.

### **5.5.3. The attitudes of the school governing body towards parental involvement**

Before embarking on the research I would recommend that the researchers of future studies:

Hold workshops with the school governing bodies of the school(s) in question to educate them on the benefits that parental involvement programmes may have for the school. In addition, these workshops would equip the school governing bodies with the necessary tools to implement successful parental involvement programmes through using Epstein's (2002) parental involvement model as a guide and also guide the school governing bodies in formulating school policies on parental involvement.

### **5.6. Conclusion**

This study commenced with the formulation of the research question, an explanation of the research design and methodology used and a description of the aim of the study. Existing literature that was relevant to the notion of developing a reading culture through comprehensively involving parents was reviewed. The study used qualitative research methods to enable the researcher to gain a better understanding of the way in which parental involvement influenced the learners' views on reading for enjoyment. The requisite data was collected through case studies with parents and learners being observed while carrying out reading-related activities over an extended period of time, as well as through conducting interviews with all the participants. This study focused on the experiences of Foundation Phase learners in a specific school in Roodepoort, Gauteng, and their parents regarding reading for enjoyment. The study concluded that the comprehensive involvement of parents in reading activities had a positive effect on the way in which the learners viewed reading for enjoyment. The study also revealed that, together with an improvement in positive attitudes towards reading for enjoyment, a higher level of reading proficiency was achieved. As reading is an essential part of education, it has pedagogical value in that learners are more motivated to read in learning situations. In an informal situation, when a reading culture is developed, learners use reading as a means to relaxation and new experiences. There is, thus, clear evidence from the study findings that a comprehensive parental involvement programme may lead to the creation and development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



### UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

2017/05/17

Dear Mrs Lotter,

REC Ref#: 2017/05/17/40778177/7/MC  
Name: Mrs J Lotter  
Student#: 40778177

**Decision: Ethics Approval from  
2017/05/17 to 2020/05/17**

**Researcher:** Name: Mrs J Lotter  
Telephone#: 0796420942  
E-mail address: lotterjm@gmail.com

**Supervisor:** Name: Prof MP van Niekerk  
Telephone#: 0124294095  
E-mail address: vniekmp@unisa.ac.za

**Working title of research:**

**The development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase through  
comprehensive parent involvement**

**Qualification:** M Ed in Socio-Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years.

*The medium risk application was reviewed by the College of Education Ethics Review Committee on 2017/05/17 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. The application was approved on 2017/05/17.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions 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 should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. 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. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2020/05/17. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number 2017/05/17/40778177/7/MC should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,



Signature

Chair of CEDU ERC: Dr M Claassens

**E-mail:** mcdtc@netactive.co.za

**Tel:** (012) 429 8750



Signature

Executive Dean: Prof VI McKay

**E-mail:** mckayvi@unisa.ac.za

**Tel:** (012) 429-4979

**APPENDIX B: PROOF OF EDITING**

*Alexa Barnby*  
*Language Specialist*

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Editing, copywriting, indexing, formatting, translation

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BA Hons Translation Studies; APed (SATI) Accredited Professional Text Editor, SATI  
Mobile: 071 872 1334  
Tel: 012 361 6347

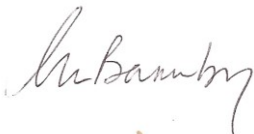
alexabarnby@gmail.com

15 July 2018

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Alexa Kirsten Barnby, an English editor accredited by the South African Translators' Institute, have edited the master's dissertation titled "The development of a reading culture in the Foundation Phase through comprehensive parent involvement" by Jeanne-Marie Lotter.

The onus is, however, on the author to make the changes and address the comments made.



## APPENDIX C: PARENT CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent

Your child is invited to participate in a study entitled THE DEVELOPMENT OF A READING CULTURE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT.

Your child has been identified by his/her class teacher as a potential participant in this study.

I am undertaking this study as part of my Master's research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to establish whether parental involvement has a positive effect on learners' attitudes towards reading, and the possible benefits of the study are the improvement of attitudes towards reading and the development of a reading culture amongst young learners. I am asking permission to include your child in this study. This study will be done over a period of approximately four months.

If you allow your child to participate, I shall request him/her to

- Take part in interviews on camera (the child's face will not be visible.)
- Complete tasks at home with parents.
- Play the "reading is fun" game with parents.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. His or her responses will not be linked to his or her name or your name in any written or verbal report based on this study. Such a report will be used for research purposes only and be kept on record on my own personal password protected computer for a period of 5 years.

There are no foreseeable risks to your child by participating in this study. Neither you nor your child will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect him/her in any way. Similarly you can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

The study will take place during activities at home involving parents.

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study. If your child does not wish to participate in the study, he or she will not be included and there will be no penalty.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and agree that you and your child may participate in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alias that you would like your child to be called

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's name in print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's name in print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **APPENDIX D: LEARNER ASSENT FORM**

### **ASSENT FORM FOR LEARNER PARTICIPANTS**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_.

You have been chosen to participate in my study called: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A READING CULTURE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether parent involvement improves a child's love of reading for enjoyment.

You will be asked to do the following activities:

- Take part in interviews on camera (your face will not be visible.)
- Complete tasks at home with your parents.
- Play the "reading is fun" game with your parents.

Your identity will be kept confidential and your real name will not be linked to the research. There are no foreseeable risks or discomfort to you participating in the study.

You will not receive any compensation for participating in the study, but you might benefit by developing a greater appreciation for reading.

You are not compelled to participate in the study and you are welcome to withdraw from the study at any time.

Before you agree to participate in the study, permission should be granted by your parents. Your parents will also receive a signed copy of this form.

If you or your parents have any questions relating to the study, you are welcome to contact me at [lotterjm@gmail.com](mailto:lotterjm@gmail.com).

Please place an X in the appropriate box:

I would like to participate in this study.

I would not like to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Learner's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
J. Lotter (Researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL AND HOD CONSENT LETTER**

Dear Mr. Schutte and Mrs. Kapp.

I hereby request permission to conduct my research entitled THE DEVELOPMENT OF A READING CULTURE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT at your school and to use learners from the Foundation Phase as well as their parents and class teachers as participants in the study.

I also request to use the school premises to conduct interviews and to perform observations. Learners will be identified by their class teachers as potential participants in the study. Written consent will be granted through the GDE, parents and teachers of the participant learners. Written assent will also be given by learners to indicate whether they are willing to participate in the study.

I am undertaking this study as part of my Master's research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to establish whether parental involvement has a positive effect on learners' attitudes towards reading, and the possible benefits of the study are the improvement of attitudes towards reading and the development of a reading culture amongst young learners.

This study will be done over a period of approximately four months.

Participating learners will be requested to:

- Take part in interviews on camera (the child's face will not be visible.)
- Complete tasks at home with parents.
- Play the "reading is fun" game with parents.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with the learners and their parents will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with their permission. A participant's responses will not be linked to his or her name in any written or verbal report based on this study. Such a report will be used for research purposes only and be kept on record on my own personal password protected computer for a period of 5 years.

There are no foreseeable risks to learners, parents and teachers by participating in this study. No participants will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect him/her in any way. The study will take place during activities at home involving parents.

By signing the Consent form, you hereby give permission that I may use the school premises and resources to conduct my research.

**PRINCIPAL AND HOD CONSENT FORM**

We hereby give permission that Mrs. J. Lotter may make use of school resources (premise, learners, parents and teachers) to conduct her research on the development of a reading culture through comprehensive parent involvement.

Mr. C. Schutte  
Principal

Mrs. L. Kapp  
HOD

**APPENDIX F: APPROVAL LETTER FROM GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION**



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**

Department: Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

**GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER**

Date:	24 April 2017
Validity of Research Approval:	06 February 2017 – 29 September 2017 2017/82
Name of Researcher:	Lotter J.
Address of Researcher:	38 Dion Street Helderkruijn Roodepoort, 1724
Telephone Number:	079 642 0942
Email address:	lotterjm@gmail.com
Research Topic:	The development of a reading culture in the foundation phase through comprehensive parent involvement
Number and type of schools:	One Primary School
District/s/HO	Johannesburg West

**Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research**

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

*Handwritten signature and date: 24/04/2017*

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted: 1

*Making education a societal priority*

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

  
.....

Ms Faith Tshabalala  
CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 24/04/2017 .....

2

*Making education a societal priority*

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

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Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za



## **APPENDIX G: LEARNER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **LEERDERONDERHOUD NOMMER 1 / LEARNER INTERVIEW NUMBER 1**

1. Wat is jou naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. In watter Graad is jy op die oomblik?

In which Grade are you at the moment?

3. Geniet jy dit om te lees?

Do you enjoy reading?

4. Lees jou mamma of pappa graag? As hulle doen, wat lees hulle graag?

Does your mom or dad enjoy reading? If they do, what types of material do they read?

5. Watter tipe boeke of stories het julle by die huis?

What types of books or stories do you have at home?

6. Lees jy graag die boeke of stories wat by die huis is?

Do you often read the books or stories that you have at home?

7. Lees mamma of pappa ooit saam met jou?

Does your mom or dad ever read to you?

8. As mamma of pappa saam met jou lees, wat lees julle?

If your mom or dad reads with you, what do you read?

9. Wat is vir jou baie interessant? As jy boeke kon kry wat daaroor handel, sal jy graag dit lees?

What do you find very interesting? If you could have books on that topic, would you read it?

10. Sien jy uit daarna om die lees-aktiwiteite saam met mamma of pappa te doen?

Are you looking forward to doing the reading activities with your mom or dad?

**LEERDERONDERHOUD NOMMER 2 /**  
**LEARNER INTERVIEW NUMBER 2**

1. Wat is jou naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. Speel julle as gesin gereeld die “Lees is pret” speletjie saam?

Do you and your family often play the “Reading is fun” game?

3. Hoe voel jy oor die speletjie?

How do you feel about the game?

4. Hoe voel dit vir jou wanneer mamma of pappa saam met jou lees?

How does it feel when you and your parents read together?

5. Wanneer en hoe gereeld lees mamma of pappa saam met jou?

How often, and when, do your parents and you read together?

6. Voel dit vir jou soos werk en ‘n straf wanneer julle die lees-aktiwiteite doen? Verduidelik bietjie meer.

Does it feel like work or a punishment when you do the reading activities? Please explain a little more.

7. Hoe voel jy nou oor lees?

How do you feel about reading now?

8. Wil jy aanhou met die lees-aktiwiteite?

Do you want to continue with the reading activities?

**LEERDERONDERHOUD NOMMER 3 /**  
**LEARNER INTERVIEW NUMBER 3**

1. Wat is jou naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. Geniet jy dit meer wanneer jou ouers saam met jou lees of wanneer jy op jou eie lees?

Do you enjoy reading more when your parents read with you or do you enjoy it more when you read by yourself?

3. Voel jy nou anders oor lees as voor die program?

Do you feel differently about reading than before the programme?

4. Wat beteken dit vir jou wanneer jy lees?

What does reading mean to you?

5. Is dit vir jou makliker om te lees nadat mamma en pappa saam met jou die lees-aktiwiteite gedoen het?

Do you find it easier to read after the reading-activities that your parents did with you?

6. Wat het jy geleer deur deel te neem aan die lees-program?

What have you learnt through participating in the reading programme?

7. Sal jy van nou af op jou eie lees sonder dat iemand jou moet dwing?

Will you read from now on without someone having to force you to read?

8. Gaan jy nou gereeld boeke by die Mediasentrum uitneem?

Are you going to get books from the Library more often?

9. Was dit vir jou lekker om aan die lees-program deel te neem?

Did you enjoy participating in the reading programme?

## APPENDIX H: PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### OUERONDERHOUD NOMMER 1 / PARENT INTERVIEW NUMBER 1

1. Wat is u naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. Watter beroep beoefen u?

Please state your occupation.

3. Wat is die geslag en ouderdom van u kind wat aan die navorsing gaan deelneem?

Please state the gender and age of your child who will be participating in the research.

4. Watter vorms van lees beoefen u op 'n daaglikse basis? Verduidelik asseblief.

What type of reading do you do on a day-to-day basis. Please elaborate.

5. Gee asseblief 'n verduideliking van die verskillende tipes lees-materiaal wat in u huis beskikbaar is.

Please give a description of the different reading materials that are available at your house.

6. Lees u kind ooit die lees-materiaal wat in die huis beskikbaar is? Verduidelik asseblief.

Does your child ever read the available material? Please elaborate.

7. Spandeer u tyd daaraan om saam met u kind te lees? Verduidelik asseblief.

Do you ever spend time reading with your child? Please elaborate.

8. Gee asseblief 'n verduideliking van u ondervinding met lees saam met u kind.

Please explain your own experience when reading with your child.

9. Wat is u eie persoonlike siening van lees en lees vir genot?

Please give an explanation of your own personal view of reading and reading for enjoyment.

10. Lees u ooit vir genot in die teenwoordigheid van u kind?

Do you ever read for enjoyment in the presence of your child?

11. In u eie opinie, dink u u kind geniet dit om te lees? Verduidelik asseblief.

In your opinion, do you think your child enjoys reading? Please elaborate.

12. Is u bereid om verskillende vorms van lees-materiaal aan te skaf vir u kind?

Are you willing to provide different types of reading material for your child to read?

13. Wat dink u sal die uitkoms van die navorsing wees?

What are the results that you expect from this research?

14. Is u bereid om soveel as moontlik tyd af te staan om te help met die navorsing?

Are you willing to spend as much time as possible in helping to conduct the research?

15. Watter tye sal u die beste pas om gekontak te word?

Please state which times you would prefer to be contacted.

## **OUERONDERHOUD NOMMER 2 / PARENT INTERVIEW NUMBER 2**

1. Wat is u naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. Ongeveer hoeveel tyd per week spandeer u aan die navosings-aktiwiteite wat aan u verskaf is?

Approximately how much time per week do you spend on the research activities that were provided to you?

3. Watter van u gesins-lede neem aan die aktiwiteite deel?

Which of your family members participate in the activities?

4. Wat is die algemene gevoel in die huis rakende die aktiwiteite?

What is the general feeling towards the activities of the participants in your family?

5. Hoe voel u oor die aktiwiteite wat aan u verskaf is om saam met u kind te doen?

How do you feel about the activities given to you to do at home with your child?

6. Dink u dat die aktiwiteite enigsens 'n uitwerking op u kind se gevoel teenoor lees het? Verduidelik asseblief.

What effect (if any) do you think these activities have on your child's attitude towards reading?

7. Speel u graag die "Lees is pret" speletjie saam met u gesin?

Do you often play the "Reading is fun" game with your family?

8. Watter van u gesinslede speel graag die speletjie saam?



Which of your family members play the game together?

9. Wat is die gevoel van u familielede teenoor die “Lees is pret” speletjie?

What are the responses of your family members towards the “Reading is fun” game?

10. Dink u dat die aktiwiteite en speletjie enigsens ‘n verskil maak aan hoe u kind oor lees voel?

Do you feel that the activities and game make a difference in how your child views reading?

11. Is u bereid om aan te gaan met die navorsing?

Are you willing to keep participating in the research?

### **OUERONDERHOUD NOMMER 3 / PARENT INTERVIEW NUMBER 3**

1. Wat is u naam en ouderdom?

Please state your name and age.

2. Het u gereeld aan die lees-aktiwiteite deelgeneem?

Did you spend regular time doing the reading activities?

3. Wat is u algemene gevoel rakende die aktiwiteite?

What is your general opinion regarding the activities?

4. Wanneer die navorsing voltooi is, sal u wil aanhou om die lees-aktiwiteite saam met u kind te beoefen?

When the research is completed, would you continue doing the activities with your child?

5. Het u intussen 'n verskeidenheid van lees-materiaal aangeskaf?  
Indien wel, verduidelik asseblief.

Have you purchased a variety of reading materials? If yes, please elaborate.

6. Kan u 'n duidelike verskil agterkom in u kind se gevoel teenoor lees?  
Verduidelik asseblief.

Is there a visible change in your child's attitude towards reading?  
Please elaborate.

7. Indien u 'n verskil kan agterkom, wat dink u is die oorsaak daarvan?

If you are able to notice a change, what do you think the reason is for the change?

8. Het u dit geniet om meer tyd saam met u kind te spandeer aan lees?

Did you enjoy spending more time reading with your child?

9. Wat dink u is die grootste faktor wat 'n invloed op u kind se gevoel teenoor lees gehad het tydens die navorsing?

What, do you think, is the most important factor that had an influence on your child's attitude towards reading during the research?

10. Dink u u kind het 'n meer positiewe gevoel teenoor lees nadat u ekstra tyd saam aan lees spandeer het?

Do you think your child has a more positive attitude towards reading after spending extra time on reading with you?

**APPENDIX I: TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**ONDERWYSERONDERHOUD NOMMER 1 /**  
**TEACHER INTERVIEW NUMBER 1**

1. Wat is u naam?

Please state your name.

2. Vir watter Graad gee u klas?

Which Grade to you teach?

3. Hoeveel leerders is in u klas?

How many learners are in your class?

4. Tot watter mate is die ouers betrokke in u klas?

To which extent are the parents involved in your class?

5. Hoe voel u daaroor om ouers meer betrokke te kry in u klas?

How do you feel about involving parents in your class?

6. Lees u graag stories saam met die leerders in u klas?

Do you often read stories with the learners in your class?

7. Hoe dink u voel die meerderheid van die leerders in u klas oor lees vir genot?

How do you think the majority of the learners in your class feel about reading for enjoyment?

8. Wat is die gemiddelde leerder in u klas se leesvermoë?  
Verduidelik asseblief.

What is the reading ability of the average child in your class?  
Please elaborate.

9. Dink u dat dit 'n verskil gaan maak aan hoe leerders voel teenoor lees as die ouers betrokke raak in die lees-proses? Verduidelik asseblief.

Do you think involving parents in the reading process will make a difference on how learners viewed reading? Please elaborate.

10. Is u bereid om u klas beskikbaar te stel vir vrywillige ouers om vir die kinders te kom lees?

Are you willing to open up your classroom to parent volunteers who would read to the learners?

**ONDERWYSERONDERHOUD NOMMER 2 /**  
**TEACHER INTERVIEW NUMBER 2**

1. Wat is jou naam?

Please state your name.

2. Wat is die algemene gevoel wat u kan opmerk rakende die vrywilligers in u klas?

What is the general feeling towards the volunteers that you observe in your class?

3. Dink u dat dit 'n positiewe verskil maak om vrywilligers betrokke te kry? Verduidelik asseblief.

Do you think involving volunteers makes a positive difference?  
Please elaborate.

4. Wat is die terugvoer van die ouers en leerders in u klas rakende die lees-aktiwiteite?

What are the responses of the parents and learners in your class regarding the reading activities?

5. Kan u 'n verskil agterkom in die leerders in u klas se gevoel teenoor lees?

Do you observe any changes in attitudes towards reading in your class?

6. Wat dink u dra die meeste by tot die leerders se gevoel teenoor lees?

What do you think has the biggest influence on learners' feelings towards reading?

**ONDERWYSERONDERHOUD NOMMER 3 /**  
**TEACHER INTERVIEW NUMBER 3**

1. Wat is jou naam?

Please state your name.

2. Het u gevoel teenoor ouerbetrokkenheid enigsens verander?  
Verduidelik asseblief.

Has your feeling towards parent involvement changed at all?  
Please elaborate.

3. Kan u 'n verskil agterkom in die leerders in u klas se leesvermoë  
nadat die ouers betrokke geraak het?

Do you notice a change in the learners in your class' reading  
abilities after involving the parents?

4. In u opinie, dink u die ouerbetrokkenheid-program het 'n positiewe  
uitwerking op die skep van 'n positiewe lees-kultuur gehad?  
Verduidelik asseblief.

In your opinion, do you think the parent involvement programme  
had a positive effect on creating a reading culture? Please  
elaborate.

5. Sal u graag wil aanhou met die lees-program? Verduidelik  
asseblief.

Do you wish to continue with the reading programme? Please  
elaborate.