

# Parental Involvement in their Children's Schooling Following the Transition from Primary to High School

by Erika Revington

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Supervisor: Lynette Collair

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## DECLARATION

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**Date:** 10 February 2015

**Name:** Erika Revington

# ABSTRACT

Parental involvement in a child's life forms a significant part of parenting, regardless of a parent and child's background or context. The complexity of the concept is evident considering the diverse nature of existing definitions, models and theories. However, it appears that the approach to the term is greatly determined by the context in which it is used or referred to.

Through a case study of a group of South African parents of Grade 9 children at a local high school, the study explores parents' experiences of their parental involvement and adaption thereof following the transition from primary to high school.

The study is qualitative and based on a social-constructivist theoretical framework which is concerned with how each person's reality is shaped by social interaction with others, as well as historical and cultural influences. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of parental involvement takes a central stance in the study.

Research findings confirmed the complex nature of parental involvement. Each parent's experience of his or her parental involvement was uniquely expressed, while the adolescent and school's invitations for involvement, or rather the lack thereof, were the main determinants of parental involvement at the beginning of high school. A general tendency to decrease involvement following the transition to high school was noted, although it appeared that parents prefer to be more involved, or at least as involved as possible. In this study, parents' expectations and experiences of their involvement and the transition from primary to high school, concurs with existing literature in the field.

**Key words:** Parent; parental involvement; transition; high school; adolescence; Grade 9; adjustment, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model

# OPSOMMING

Ouerbetrokkenheid in 'n kind se lewe is 'n belangrike aspek van ouerskap, ongeag die agtergrond of konteks van die ouer en kind. Die kompleksiteit van die term is duidelik wanneer die uiteenlopende definisies, modelle en teorieë wat daarvoor bestaan in ag geneem word. Dit wil egter voorkom asof die konteks waarin die term gebruik of na verwys word, veral grootliks die benadering daartoe bepaal.

Deur gebruik te maak van 'n gevallestudie van 'n groep Suid-Afrikaanse ouers van Graad 9 kinders by 'n plaaslike hoërskool, ondersoek die studie ouers se ervaringe oor hul ouerbetrokkenheid en aanpassing daarvan na die oorgang van laerskool na hoërskool.

Die studie is kwalitatief en gebaseer op 'n sosiaal-konstruksionistiese teoretiese raamwerk, wat bemoeid is met hoe elke persoon se realiteit beïnvloed word deur sosiale interaksie met ander, asook die historiese en kulturele invloede in daardie persoon se lewe. Die Hoover-Dempsey en Sandler (2005) model van ouerbetrokkenheid staan sentraal tot die studie.

Die navorsingsbevindings het die kompleksiteit van ouerbetrokkenheid bevestig. Elke ouer se ervaring van sy/haar betrokkenheid is uniek uitgedruk, met die adolessent en skool se aanvraag na betrokkenheid, of eerder die afwesigheid daarvan, as die hoofdeterminant van betrokkenheid tydens die begin van hoërskool. 'n Algemene geneigdheid om ouerbetrokkenheid te verlaag na die oorgang van laerskool na hoërskool is bevind, alhoewel dit voorkom asof ouers tog 'n voorkeur het om meer betrokke te wees, of ten minste so betrokke as wat hul kind dit toelaat. Ouers se ervaringe ten opsigte van hul verwagtinge en belewenis van betrokkenheid, asook die oorgang van laerskool na hoërskool, hou verband met bestaande literatuur in die veld.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Ouer, ouerbetrokkenheid; oorgang; hoërskool; adolessensie; Graad 9; aanpassing, Hoover-Dempsey en Sandler model

### **List of abbreviations**

- SEN Special Education Needs
- SES Socio Economic Status
- PI Parental Involvement
- REC Research Ethics Committee

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## CHAPTER ONE

### CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Parental support and involvement are regarded as unique and essential elements of effective education (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011) and start the moment a child is born. A vast body of research has proved its importance, discussed its effects and questioned the different degrees of PI (parental involvement), making it an unavoidable topic when considering child development.

##### 1.1.1 Background to the study

Parental involvement affects children's achievements and school grades to a great extent (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012). Ideally, PI motivates children to achieve at school, which leads to the child's engagement in learning and further achievement (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012). According to Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2007), PI is associated with improved student outcomes, but the authors noted that much less was known about the factors that motivated parents to become involved. Despite uncertainties around the topic, the known fact remains that PI is a crucial phenomenon.

Furthermore, considering the nature or degree of PI, leads to more questions of uncertainty. In an ideal world, parents would be supportive to the degree that their children benefit optimally from it. However, as stated by Hornby and Lafaele (2011), we are faced with a complex issue and concept which is not easily measured. In popular terms, parents often seem to be described as "over-involved", or "under-involved". Unfortunately it could be said that no recipe exists to guide parents in terms of an "accurate level of involvement".

Similar to other social phenomena, PI cannot be separated from contextual factors (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006). Culture, amongst others, plays a big role when considering PI and parenting styles (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012). Family dynamics and traditions differ greatly across countries and diverse socio-economic and culture groups

- especially true for a multi-cultural country such as South Africa. While a small percentage of mostly high socio-economic status groups show patterns of over-involvement, the majority of schools battle with the lack of PI in their children's education and schooling (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Other contextual factors influencing PI include, amongst others: special educational needs; parents' perspectives of their parental role; demands and opportunities from children and schools; parents' sense of efficacy; socio-economic background; available time and energy; skills and knowledge; as well as the child's age (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Green et al., 2007).

A significant factor considered in the study, is a child's age. Green et al. (2007) state that it is crucial that PI is in sync with the developmental age of a child. The age-appropriate adaptation of PI is described in more depth in chapter two. Erik Erikson's developmental model, for example, describes the psychosocial levels of human development and places emphasis on the "healthy relationships between children and their parents" (Meyer & Van Ede, 1996 in Maree, 2004, p. 393). Although this model illustrates how the individual child progresses through different levels of development, proximal relationships and involvement of parents are not disregarded. According to the child's need for support related to his or her developmental age, PI should be adapted. Didier (2014) explains that parents hold essential partnerships with their children, as they walk beside them through life's challenges across all stages of development.

A further developmental factor to consider is that of parents themselves. Papalia and Olds (1995, in Gerdes, Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 2004) refer to the family lifecycle, a model which offers guidelines in terms of the type of tasks parents need to fulfil across the different developmental stages their children go through. Furthermore, Van Ingen and Moore (2010) state that parents who have been successful in developing themselves, tend to maintain healthy levels of involvement.

In this regard, the bio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (Swart & Pettipher, 2005, in Landsberg, 2005) could be applied to further explain the importance of context and development. The model considers each individual as a holistic system together with all his or her subsystems and contexts (Swart & Pettipher, 2005). The microsystem is of utmost importance, considering the individual child with his or her unique physical,

emotional and/or psychological needs. From there, the mesosystem plays a similarly important role, considering the proximal relationships and involvement primarily between child and parent. The greater exo- and macrosystems define the context in which the individual exists, which further determines or influences PI. Finally, the chronosystem, which refers to the time dimensions of all the systems, is a strong focus of this study. It explains the dynamic nature of each system (as well as PI) as time passes. The transition from primary to high school occurs over time. It is, therefore, self-evident that change within the holistic system as well as the nature of PI, will occur following the transition from primary to high school (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006).

Ideally, it could be said that PI is a dynamic construct that develops and is adapted parallel to the development of the child, where the parent's role evolves from that of nurturer, to mentor, to friend (A. van der Vyver, personal communication, September 27, 2012). In closer focus to the study, Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) state that PI is especially important in the final year of primary school, a crucial time when children often lack interest in school. The end of primary school (Grade 7 in the South African school system) is also marked by the developmental stage of adolescence. Bru, Stornes, Munthe and Thuen (2010, p. 521) explain that "adolescence is characterized by an increasing need for self-determination and autonomy", influencing the need for a different level of support.

A significant part of adolescence is the transition that children undergo from primary to high school. In the South African school system, this occurs at the age of 13/14 years. After completion of Grade 7 in primary school, children progress to Grade 8 in high school. During this time, both the child and parent face many different expectations, uncertainties and ideas (Smith, Akos, Lim & Wiley, 2008), which will be discussed in further detail in chapter two. The transition from primary to high school can thus be seen as another factor influencing PI, and will be the main focus of the study.

## **1.2 PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

As researcher of this study, I am aware of my own personal worldview and history which I bring into the process of research. I furthermore understand that this has influenced



my research. As described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 22-26), I, the researcher, take a central position in the research process.

The impetus for this research began during 2011 while I taught at both a well-resourced, and an under-resourced primary school in Cape Town. The social context and the dynamics between children and their parents intrigued me. Within the context of the resourced school, I especially questioned the extent to which parents were aware of their seemingly destructive, *over*-involvement and the consequences thereof. It was clear that parents' roles and nature of involvement differ across (and amongst others) contexts, school level (primary vs. high school), suburbs and cultural groups.

I would like to pose the question; how aware are parents in general of their involvement, and of adapting their involvement, according to their children's developmental needs? This study offers me the opportunity to explore these issues further by answering the research questions, as stated below.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

PI in a child's schooling has a significant impact on both the child and parent(s) (Stormont, Herman, Reinke, David & Goel, 2007). Understandably then PI is an important topic within the field of Educational Psychology. A vast body of research supports this in highlighting the importance of PI, especially the positive impact it has on academic performance (Green et al., 2007). Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) state that while involvement is unique to each parent, it remains essential since it motivates children to perform. Unfortunately, the lack of PI and the negative consequences thereof seem to be a problem in the South African school context (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2004). Many schools are battling to keep parents involved in their children's schooling, both at home and at school (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Most research studies are, therefore, aimed at increasing involvement, developing PI interventions and repeatedly proving the benefits of parents' involvement and the negative effect of under-involvement.

There are, however, a few areas in the field of PI which seem to be somewhat neglected or under-researched. Some topics, significant to the study, appear to be: the consequences of parental over-involvement; how and why parents change or adapt

their involvement over time (Green et al., 2007); and the impact of child development on PI.

With consideration to attachment theory (Scott, Briskman, Woolgar, Humayun & O'Connor, 2011) and developmental theories such as Erik Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory (Didier, 2014), PI should ideally be age-appropriate and developmentally sensitive, therefore adapted to each child's unique needs and developmental age (Green et al., 2007). Many professionals in the field agree that a parent's active involvement is especially important until the end of primary school (age  $\pm 13$  years) (D. Paizee, A. Fourie, H. Kotzé, S. Stringer, J. de Villiers, A. Boshoff, S. Verster, T. Campbell, L. Venter, & E. Anderson, personal communication, November 14, 2012). From the beginning of high school, parents should become gradually less involved, supporting the child's independence and development of self. The beginning of high school thus marks an important phase, viz. adolescence, which might impact PI further (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005).

However, little is also known about how parents experience involvement during this time of transition (from primary to high school), and furthermore, how the transition possibly has an influence on PI.

### **1.3.1 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how parents experience their involvement in their children's schooling following the transition to high school.

### **1.3.2 Research questions**

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

- 1.) What are parents' experiences of their involvement in their children's schooling at the beginning of high school?
  - 1.1) Do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school?
  - 1.2) Can a pattern of change be identified in terms of their involvement?

### **1.3.3 Research goals**

In light of the problem statement and research questions, the research goals of this study are: exploring parents' experiences of their involvement in their child's schooling; identifying the possible influence the transition from primary to high school has on parental involvement; determining parents' possible tendencies to be more or less or equally involved in their high school child's schooling (in comparison to primary school); highlighting the importance of parental involvement.

Furthermore, the study offers: parent participants an opportunity to be heard and to share their experiences of involvement in their child's schooling; parent participants an opportunity to receive feedback on the study findings; findings to be used in parent guidance and intervention programs, enabling awareness of parental involvement and its consequences (findings could serve as valuable information to be considered and used by other role players, such as educators, teachers, educational psychologists etc.); findings that are useful and applicable to all parents (although the study focuses on a specific geographical sample within closed boundaries, it applies to all parents); findings which contribute to the field of parenting and more specifically, parental involvement.

## **1.4 RESEARCH PLAN**

In order to attend to these research goals and questions successfully, a research plan needs to be put in place. The following section aims to elaborate thereon.

### **1.4.1 Theoretical framework**

The study was embedded within social constructionism and further guided by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI. Similar to many studies conducted in the field of PI over the past decade, the model has provided a foundation to the study (Olmstead, 2013). Various motivational factors for parents' involvement in their children's schooling are presented by the model which made it highly applicable to the research topic. Parents' experiences were explored in terms of the model's factors and further interpreted as a "system of meanings and practices that construct reality" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, in Adams, Collair, Oswald & Perold, 2004, p. 356). The model is discussed in further detail in chapter two.

### **1.4.2 Research paradigm**

Research should not be done carelessly, without the necessary consideration of the paradigm in which the research will be approached. Without such consideration, the study may lose focus and direction.

The interpretive paradigm was chosen for this study, which argues that individuals construct multiple realities through social interaction (Merriam, 1998). As stated by Merriam (1998, p. 4), “understanding the meaning of the process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive, hypothesis or theory-generating mode of inquiry”. Further explanation of the paradigm is given in chapter three.

### **1.4.3 Research Process**

The process of conducting research stands in direct relation to the researcher’s theoretical framework and research paradigm. These two research fundamentals determine what is to be researched, how it will be researched, as well as the way the data will be analysed and interpreted (Megaw, 2011). The research process will now be discussed.

### **1.4.4 Research Methodology**

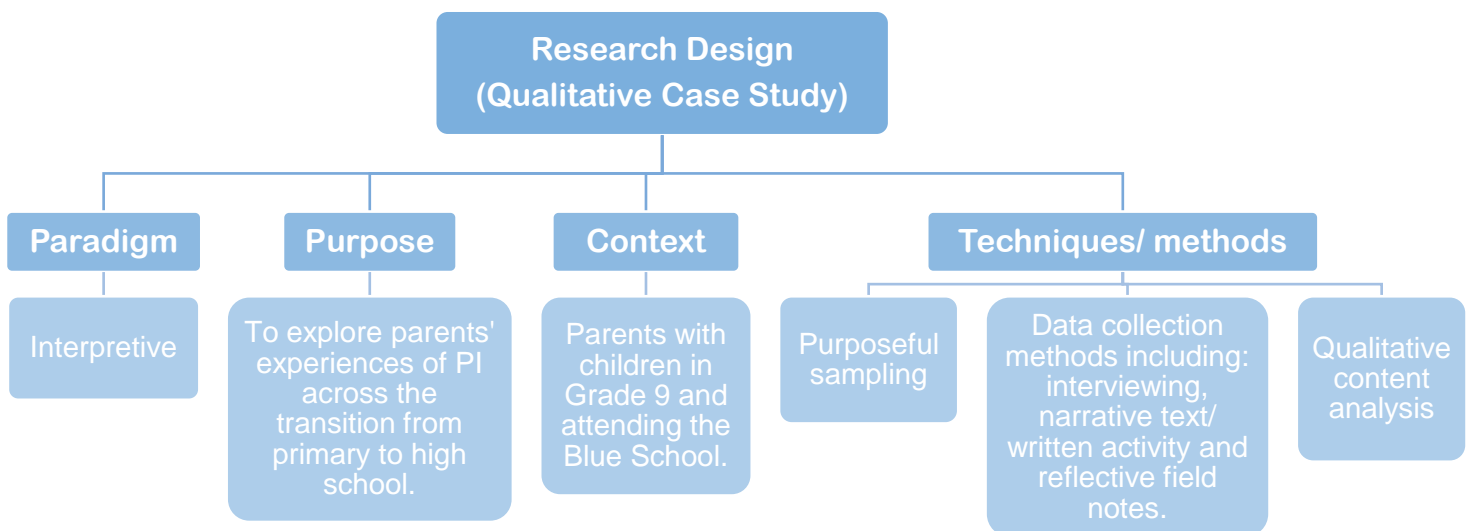
A qualitative study will be conducted from an interpretative constructivist paradigm to attempt to answer the mentioned research questions. According to Adams et al. (2004, p. 365), “qualitative methodology aims at providing a comprehensive description of a specific phenomenon rather than the testing of hypotheses common to experimental research methods. An effort is made to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions within the context under study.”

### **1.4.5 Research design**

The type of qualitative research frequently found in the field of education, and applied in this study, is a case study. The central and unique characteristic of a case study lies in its “intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system” (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Parents’ perceptions and experiences of their PI (the studied phenomenon) is explored from Grade 9 parents with children in a public high school,

based in a northern suburb in Cape Town (within a bounded system). Due to ethical considerations of anonymity, the name of the school cannot be revealed, and will hereafter be referred to as the Blue School. Within the bounded system all parent participants form part of the same Afrikaans-dominant community, within a similar socio-economic class. Furthermore, all participants are married, and one child of each parent was in Grade 9 at the Blue School (at the time the study was conducted).

While considering the mentioned qualitative case study orientation, the research design furthermore “serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution or implementation of the research” (Durrheim, 2006, p. 34). Again, we are reminded of the importance of finding coherence between the questions asked and how best to answer them, using specific methods (Mouton, 2001). Four dimensions, as suggested by Durrheim (1999), were taken into account in order to ensure design coherence, and are illustrated below. These dimensions include: the research paradigm, the aim or purpose of the research, the context in which it takes place, as well as techniques used.



**Figure 1.1: Schematic illustration of the research design (Durrheim, 1999).**

### **1.4.6 Research methods**

As illustrated in figure 1.1, the research methods used were selected due to their coherence with the research design and questions (Strydom, 2011). These methods include purposeful sampling techniques, three data collection methods (individual interviewing based on semi-structured interviews, a written activity and reflective field notes) and qualitative content analysis. A short discussion of each follows.

#### **1.4.6.1 Selection of participants**

According to Burgess (1982, p. 76, from Merriam, p. 60), “sampling involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events”. These aspects were considered and non-probabilistic, purposive sampling was applied within the study, with the use of criterion-based selection.

Regarding the sample criteria, participants, regardless of their gender, had to be a parent of a Grade 9 child in the Blue School at the time of the study. In the case study design used, all parent participants were invited and obtained from within the closed boundaries of the Blue School, through the use of the typical site sampling strategy. After obtaining the necessary permission, participants were invited through official invitation letters and interviewed by the researcher on an individual basis at the Blue School.

#### **1.4.6.2 Method of collection**

Methods identified and used in the study to gain in-depth and information-rich data were individual semi-structured interviews, a narrative written activity and reflective field notes gathered by the researcher, as an active participant in the research process. These methods are briefly explained below, discussed in more detail in chapter three and also attached in addendums D, E and F.

A semi-structured interview guide with four broad themes, based on the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of PI (2005), were developed and used by the researcher. Interviews were conducted with eight parent participants, each between 45 and 50 minutes in duration and recorded for transcription purposes.

A written activity was developed in which parents were asked firstly to familiarize themselves with the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of PI (2005), and more

specifically the motivational factors of PI. Participants were then asked to reflect on their own experiences of PI following the transition from primary to high school, based on the motivating factors of the model. The activity served as an additional source of data, based on the same themes as the interview guide.

Finally, reflective field notes were made in written format by the researcher directly after each interview session.

These methods were used to collect sufficient data which was subsequently analysed to find an answer to the research questions (Durrheim, 2006, p. 52). Through the process of data analysis, the multitude of data is meaningfully ordered, to ultimately achieve its purpose (Patton, 2002, p. 432).

#### **1.4.7 Data analysis**

Qualitative content analysis was employed in answer to the mentioned research question and sub-questions. This form of data analysis was appropriate to the research paradigm and design (Strydom, 2011). According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), qualitative content analysis involves a process of open coding through which themes are developed, and only works on one level of meaning, making it a popular method for beginner researchers. This process is discussed in further detail in chapter three.

### **1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations were seen as the lighthouse of the research study, which guided the researcher in approaching every step in a moral and proper manner, while maintaining an awareness against the possible negative impact research may have. A seven-point checklist, compiled by Patton (2002, in Merriam, 2009, p. 233), was used to ensure all considerations of ethical conduct were made, such as obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and explaining the purpose of the inquiry and methods used. These and other ethical considerations will be discussed in further detail in chapter three. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University with reference number: REC-050411-032.

## **1.6 CLARIFICATIONS OF CONCEPTS**

The meaning attached to words relies heavily on its interpretation and relevant context. To ensure the main concepts are interpreted within the specific context and purpose of the study, a brief explanation of each will now be given.

### **1.6.1 Parent**

The South African School's Act (1996) describes the term "parent" as follows.

"parent" means:

- (a) the parent or guardian of a learner;
- (b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or
- (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at school.

It is important to acknowledge that "parent" does not simply refer to a biological mother or father, but rather a family relative (uncle, aunt, brother, sister etc.) or non-related person, as defined above (Jonas, 2013). When referring to PI, this should be kept in mind. However, in the study, all participants were biological mothers/ fathers.

### **1.6.2 Parental involvement (PI)**

PI appears to be a popular, well researched, yet complex phenomenon (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Defining the term in itself seems to be a challenge, since it greatly depends on the context within which it is used (Fan & Chen, 2001). However, a clear trend in existing research seems to be the emphasis on the lack of PI and, perhaps in an attempt to increase involvement, its positive outcomes.

Perhaps it is necessary to consider both the positive, constructive and the negative, destructive nature of PI. Furthermore, a broader, inclusive context should be used. Souto-Manning and Swick (2006) invite educators to re-evaluate their definition of PI. According to the authors, diversity needs to be valued while cultural deficit models need to be refuted. They suggest a "new" definition where PI refers to "any involvement that affects the present or the future of a child", while "valuing the richness and power of every unique parent and family" (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006, p. 191).



According to Deslandes and Bertrand (2005, p. 164) PI “refers to parents’ roles in educating their children at home and in school”. It is clear that the definition needs to consider the home and school contexts separately, rather than approaching “PI in terms of global involvement”.

The researcher aims to apply the fairly neutral definition of Souto-Manning and Swick (2006), while agreeing to consider both the home and school contexts (Green et al., 2007), while exploring parents’ experiences of their PI following the transition from primary to high school.

### **1.6.3 Transition (from primary to high school)**

After successfully matriculating from the South African school system, it is likely that a child has undergone several transitions; from pre-school (Grade R) to primary school; from primary school to high school and finally from high school to a tertiary institution or into the world of work. Each of these transition phases holds its own expectations, challenges, changes and needed adaptations for both parent and child. Smith et al. (2008, p. 32) define transition as a “process in which institutional and social factors influence the movement between organizations”. The authors furthermore mention that “research examining the high school transition is in its infancy”. Within the South African school system, this transition occurs between Grade 7 and Grade 8, at the ages of 13 to 14 years.

What makes this specific transition phase crucial is the associated developmental aspect of adolescence, characterized by an increasing need for self-determination and autonomy, which in turn has an effect on PI (Bru et al., 2010).

Transition from primary to high school is often described as a “stressful event” (Qualter, Whiteley, Hutchinson & Pope, 2007) for both children and parents. However, Wildenger and McIntyre (2011, p. 389) state that “very few studies examine transition experiences from the perspective of families”. This study aims at filling the gap by exploring parents’ experiences of the transition phase.

#### **1.6.4 Grade 9**

Within the South African school system, Grade 9 refers to the second year in high school. Although the study focuses on the transition from Grade 7 (primary school) to Grade 8 (high school), participants for the study were parents of Grade 9 children. As mentioned, seeing that the research goal was to explore the experiences of parents' involvement following the transition from primary to high school, Grade 9 parents were seen as well able to reflect on their experiences of primary school, as well as a full year in high school (Grade 8).

#### **1.6.5 Adolescence**

The developmental phase of adolescence, occurring between the ages of 11 to 18 years, plays a significant role when referring to Grade 7, 8 and 9 learners. Although unique to each child, it is during these years that the child moves from late middle childhood into adolescence. During this phase the adolescent “seeks independence, yet still depends on his caregivers for support” (Finestone, 2004 in Eloff & Ebersöhn, p. 68). However, Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010, p. 63) further state that “with physical maturation, adolescents try to gain independence from family constraints and to associate strongly with peers”. It is clear that adolescence is an unavoidable factor to consider, regarding PI as well as the transition from primary to high school.

### **1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION**

This research study has been structured as follows:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Chapter One   | An introduction and contextualization of the study, as well as an explanation of the research process implemented.                  |
| Chapter Two   | An in-depth review of existing literature focusing on parental involvement and related concepts.                                    |
| Chapter Three | A detailed discussion on the research process, including research methodology, design, paradigm, as well as ethical considerations. |
| Chapter Four  | A presentation of research findings, discussion and interpretation thereof.   |
| Chapter Five  | A discussion on recommendations, possible limitations of the study, as well as concluding remarks.                                  |

## **1.8 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

Chapter one serves as a general introduction to the study conducted. The chapter explained the motivation that lead to the problem statement and aims of the research. It furthermore explained the research paradigm and methodology implemented to answer the research questions. Finally, it also provided clarity around the context and meaning of the main concepts, which will be discussed in more depth in chapter two.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of a literature review can be described as threefold: placing the study into context; providing the researcher with the opportunity to explore existing literature around similar focus points and concepts; and allowing the researcher to pinpoint possible gaps in the field. Together, this enables the researcher to better understand and plan his or her approach to add to the existing body of knowledge (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 49; Henning et al., 2004, p. 27). The literature review is especially valuable when research is conducted on sophisticated matters, as within the field of education. A broad, yet comprehensive framework of the research focus needs to be sketched first to comprehend, question and add to relevant aspects thereof.

The following literature review will expand the argument briefly discussed in chapter one, whilst positioning itself within the broad existing body of literature. This will furthermore assist and guide the interpretation and meaning-making of the data collected to finally add fresh knowledge to the topic (Strydom, 2011).

The section starts by unpacking PI as a complex and multi-dimensional concept, followed by a discussion of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of parental involvement, which played a central role in the study. The significance of developmental factors (of both children and parents) is then discussed, followed by a discussion on the transitioning from primary to high school. This study illustrates how the above-mentioned themes relate to each other and build the research topic. Existing literature has shown its support for the topic and is referred to in a separate section in chapter five.

#### **2.2 UNPACKING PI (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT)**

When commencing a study on PI, the first step is to define and determine what the term entails. However, research shows that this is no simple task since no universal definition

exists (Chen & Gregory, 2009; Bracke & Corts, 2011). Instead of defining the term, these studies indicate its many different approaches, uses and definitions. Similar to other terms used within the field of education, the term “parental involvement” is open to interpretation. For this reason various definitions have been developed (Lemmer, 2007). According to Bracke and Corts (2011, p. 191), PI can’t be explained in simple terms, “since there is little consensus about what constitutes ‘being involved’”. It could be said that PI has a definition that is lacking clarity, since its meaning differs for different people, across different contexts (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Depending on why and by whom the term is used, the meaning of PI could differ significantly (Young, Austin & Growe, 2011). The disparities in perception of PI between schools and policy makers (Trotman, 2001, in Watson, Sanders-Lawson & McNeal, 2012), as well as parents and schools (Lemmer, 2007), appear to be so broad that, to some it is seen as a barrier to effective PI (Trotman, 2001, in Watson et al., 2012). Many studies highlight the notion that the discourse around PI often leads to disagreement on the definition of PI (Baker & Soden, 1997; Lewis & Forman, 2002; Jaynes, 2005; Lopez & Stoelting, 2010; Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Despite the disagreement, it has become clear that PI has already been widely researched (Green et al., 2007), yet still appears to be a complex phenomenon (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011) with plenty of scope for further exploration. There is, however, a general tendency to refer to its acronym, “*PI*”, regardless of the context.

For the purpose of this study, the focus has been narrowed down to the exploration of PI in their children’s schooling, following the transition from primary to high school. More specifically, PI in this study refers to home and school involvement as a multidimensional construct (Green et al., 2007) that may impact on a child’s present or future existence. Within this definition, the “richness and power of every unique parent and family” are valued (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006, p. 191). The definition, mainly derived from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI, was used to explore parents’ experiences and motivation for involvement in their children’s schooling following the transition from primary to high school.

With the research topic in mind, PI will now be discussed systematically: firstly, on the considerations to be made when conducting research on PI; followed by its history; a discussion of some existing definitions and approaches; the related concepts of under and over-involvement; considerations such as cultural issues; as well as a discussion on the positive and negative outcomes of PI.

### **2.2.1 Prior considerations when planning to study PI**

It is clear at this stage that PI in schooling is a complex matter (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Literature highlights a few aspects around PI that the researcher needs to consider when attempting to fully grasp the term and tackle it as a research topic.

Firstly, the researcher needs to be aware that what is known about PI may be different to actual reality. The majority of research findings are based on the self-reported perceptions of parents (Hayes, 2012) and teachers, and not on direct, observed behaviour. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) state that what happens in practice is often very different from what is discussed in the literature.

Secondly, it is important to note that PI is not easily measured. Anderson and Minke (2007) state that no measuring tool (of PI) is psychometrically robust. Therefore, this multidimensional construct should be measured by multiple sources, including parents, teachers and students (Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap & Hevey, 2000). However, in a qualitative study, such as this, the measurability of PI is not of importance, since parents' experiences of their involvement are explored and in no manner measured.

Thirdly, Wong and Hughes (2006) inform the researcher that in general, studies on PI rely on single-reported parent feedback, in which parents themselves often inflate the reports or respond in a socially desirable manner.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, studies on the findings of PI should be interpreted with the necessary cultural considerations, since different groups refer to different levels of PI and define PI differently (Wong & Hughes, 2006).

An awareness of these considerations is essential as a wide array of research is considered for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, these considerations will be revisited after the study has been conducted, as an evaluation of possible limitations.

### **2.2.2 History of PI**

Before discussing the various definitions and approaches to PI that have been developed over time, a glance back at the history of PI is taken (Hiatt, 1994, in Watson et al., 2012).

During the seventeenth century, education was primarily the responsibility of parents. During the industrial revolution, both parents and children were used for labour and education had to take a backseat. Children became uneducated and unions soon protested. Education was once again prioritized. Parents were, however, not capable of solely educating their children themselves while still working, and so the need for formalized schools arose. As a result, parents became increasingly detached from their children's education and schooling. However, according to Watson et al. (2012), minority groups of parents later resisted the notion and fought for their right to play a more significant role. Increased PI, mostly from mothers, took the form of parent conferences, fundraising events etc. and soon the value of PI in schooling was acknowledged. The role of fathers and the value of their involvement later became evident too. Today, parents (both mothers and fathers) are regarded as critical partners in their children's schooling (Dhingra, Manhas & Sethi, 2007), while the focus is set on effective home-school partnerships.

In summary, the broad pattern that history sketches across different countries shows education originally to have been the sole responsibility of the family, to families being completely hands-off when schools overtook the responsibility, to families' involvement being expected and valued once again (Watson et al., 2012). Similarly in South Africa, history shows how PI in schooling was limited to parents' payment of school fees. After 1994, the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) introduced governing school bodies, consisting of mostly parents to ensure parents' active involvement in their children's schools (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2004). Although these reforms created a parent-friendly space in schools and increased the focus on the parents' role, actual PI in South African schools remains weak today (Heystek & Louw 1999, p. 21, in Lemmer & van Wyk, 2004; Jonas, 2013).

History shows that PI has for long been a controversial topic. The term's complexity increases when attempting to apply or define it. The following section looks into the various definitions and approaches offered by current literature.

### **2.2.3 Definitions and approaches**

In a recent study by Tezel-Sahin, Inal and Ozbey (2011 p. 421) PI was in a fairly simple sense referred to as “the investment that parents make in their children”. For Gürbütürk and Şad (2013, p. 1009), PI refers to “various parental behaviour directly or indirectly affecting a child’s cognitive development and school achievement”. Young et al. (2011, p. 292) furthermore state that PI refers to “any parental attitudes, behaviour, style, or activities within or outside school to support success in school.” Although these definitions all refer to parental behaviour in a broad sense, similar to most studies, they are based on the positive nature and consequences of PI - such as increasing student achievement (Bracke & Corts, 2011; Watson et al., 2012), and decreasing high school dropout (Terhoeven, 2009). On the contrary, other studies (Van Ingen & Moore, 2010; McNeal, 2012; Hayes, 2012; Dumont, Trautwein, Nagy & Nagengast, 2013) consider the possible destructive effects PI might hold, especially as parents show patterns of over-involvement. The positive and negative outcomes of PI are discussed in more detail in a following section.

Young et al. (2011) argue that the vast number of definitions have been assigned to the term due to the lack of agreement thereon. However, the authors suggest that researchers find one shared definition of PI to be used by parents, teachers, schools and policy makers. This shared definition is urgently needed in order to minimize confusion, as often seen in parents with multiple children (Young et al., 2011).

With the focus more on the practical nature of PI in schools, Bæck (2010) refers to PI as attendance of parent meetings and conferences, assistance with homework, ensuring children have good workspace at home, parents showing interest in school, and emphasizing the importance of education. The important role of the school is further highlighted by Bower and Griffin (2011, p. 78), who agree that PI refers to the practical demands made by the school, but furthermore argue that the reciprocal demands of the school to ensure success in families should not be overlooked. The dual responsibility



of, and relationship between, the school and the parent are essential when defining and understanding PI (Jonas, 2013).

Considering both parents and schools, Olmstead (2013) suggests a distinction be made between home-based and school-based involvement. "PI includes not only direct involvement in schools, but also indirect or hidden behaviour at home or school, which makes it a multidimensional construct" (Hayes, 2012, p. 567). However, the authors state that researchers tend to look at PI in terms of a global concept or only examine one type of involvement, instead of acknowledging the multiple forms and contexts in which it occurs. In support, ecological systems theory illustrates how an individual's development is determined by multiple levels of influence, including unique forces from school and home, which together relate to the individual's growth (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 2005 in Chen & Gregory, 2009). The authors agree that PI is multifaceted and should therefore be treated as such.

Alternatively, PI is approached by studies in terms of the method and motivation for parents to be involved in their children's schooling. For instance, according to Dumont et al. (2013, p. 3), three types of pressures control parents' tendency to become involved, including: economic stress ("pressure from above"), psychological processes of parenting ("pressure from within"), and a child's behaviour and characteristics ("pressure from below"). The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI also looks at what motivates parents to become involved in their children's schooling. As an important building block of this study, the model is discussed in further detail under a following sub-heading.

Before attempting to define PI, it should be noted that cultural sensitivity has been the cornerstone for various other studies. This seems to be a growing trend, due to the sharing of ideas and theories through globalization - a trend not always easily applied. Souto-Manning and Swick (2006, p. 190) argue that "educators need to start envisioning paradigms of PI that value diversity and refute cultural deficit models." Similarly, according to Bower and Griffin (2011, p. 78), "new research and discourse on PI state that schools may need to redefine PI and develop broader frameworks that can make involvement more inclusive (Mattingly, Prislun, McKenzie, Rodrigues, & Kayzar,

2002; Jackson & Remillard, 2005; Abdul-Adil & Farmer, 2006; Griffin, 2011).” Cultural consideration in this regard is explained further under a following section.

#### **2.2.4 Different dimensions of PI**

Instead of assigning a definition to the term *Parental Involvement*, some have described their meaning of it in terms of different types or dimensions of involvement (Grolnick et al., 2000). Again, however, views differ according to the context in which the term is used or referred to.

Perhaps the most widely used framework, the Epstein model (2009) stipulates six concrete types of family involvement behaviours. Although the model’s definition declares its limitations and the author admits that organizing PI is a challenge, he argues that it does remain a possibility (Bower & Griffin, 2011). PI is described in terms of positive home conditions, communication, involvement at school, home learning activities, shared decision making within the school, and community partnerships (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Epstein et al., 2009). These six types of PI were found to be “practically operationalized, each with its own challenges, yet holding a different important part of PI” (Epstein, 1993, p. 711).

In their study on PI as a protective factor during the transition to high school, Chen and Gregory (2009) distinguish between three types of PI, namely: direct participation (such as volunteering or helping with homework); academic encouragement (through reinforcement); and expectations for grade achievement and educational attainment (through socializing of values). The study found that certain types of PI tend to be more effective than others. More specifically, parents’ expectations for grades and attainment were found to have the most positive impact on performance of adolescents (Chen & Gregory, 2009).

McNeal (2012) adds involvement at school and refers to PI in terms of three latent dimensions. According to this author PI entails: parent-child discussion (i.e. through an authoritative parenting style); monitoring a child’s behaviour (such as supervising homework tasks, regulating parent-child communication and parent-teacher involvement); and educational support practices (such as volunteering at school, visiting classrooms, and maintaining parent-teacher communication).

After studying PI practices in formalized home-school co-operation, Bæck (2010) offers yet another explanation of PI in terms of three types, specifically based on the involvement between home and school. To this author the three types of PI are: “representative co-operation (where a single parent represents both parents); direct co-operation (where direct meetings are held between teachers and parents); and co-operation without contact (where PI is based on conversations, encouragement and other forms of support)” (Bæck, 2010, p. 550). The author argues that PI includes both an administrative and an educational role.

Dhingra et al. (2007) conducted a study on PI and the transition to (junior) high school, and explained the three types of involvement as: school involvement (referring to parents’ physical participation in school activities and gatherings); cognitive involvement (referring to parents’ use of cognitive resources such as books, to stimulate their children); and personal involvement (referring to parents’ awareness and concern about their children’s school life). The authors hypothesized that these three types of involvement are essential for the positive transitioning to high school.

As seen from the above discussion, no single definition or type of PI exists. In support, Stormont et al., (2007, p. 196) argue that PI is and should commonly be approached as a multidimensional construct. Bringing this notion to life, “the pioneering work in the field of PI by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) underscored multiple variables (also referred to as sources of motivation (Green, et al., 2007)) that contribute to parents’ decisions to become involved.” Stormont et al. (2007) argues that the model explains the multidimensional nature of PI. In a practical sense, for example, PI differs for parents with low school contact, who yet maintain a comfortable, constructive relationship with their child, to that of parents with frequent teacher or school contact, but are not perceived as helpful by their child.

### **2.2.5 Under-involvement vs over-involvement**

A general trend seems to exist to refer to varying levels of PI in popular terms as over-involved and under-involved. Generally, under-involvement appears to be a greater concern (Dhingra et al., 2007; Olmstead, 2013), both locally (Jonas, 2013) and internationally (Lemmer, 2007). A vast body of research reports on the positive impact

of PI and suggests strategies to increase parents' involvement in schooling, while few highlight possible destructive influences or negative outcomes of over-involvement. This might be part of an attempt to increase PI. According to Olmstead (2013) and Dhingra et al. (2007) the serious lack of involvement, from fathers especially, can be seen as a barrier to student achievement at school.

Kimu and Steyn (2013) argue that parental under-involvement in African countries, such as Kenya, is problematic and that strategies need to be put in place to drastically increase PI. An increase in PI is expected to lead to an improvement in student performance. Although parents in these countries are seemingly under-involved, the authors remind us of the notion that parents' nature of involvement is highly dependent on the model of PI culturally used, as well as the unique needs of families and schools (Kimu & Steyn, 2013). Thus, contextual considerations come into play. In many South African schools, the dilemma of under-involvement appears to be a reality too (Lemmer, 2007). Bowditch (1993) goes as far as to suggest that educators should face the harsh reality of parental under-involvement and hold no expectations in this regard. Furthermore, the author suggests that educators should rather focus on classroom instruction as the primary source of learning, while still continually attempting to include parents by giving homework which requires parental input.

On the contrary, parental *over*-involvement seems to be a somewhat under-researched phenomenon. Although difficult to determine the exact measure of over-involvement (Wong & Hughes, 2006), more research on this should be valuable. Van Ingen and Moore (2010) describe over-involved parents as holding a limited outlook on their involvement and parenting style, using their personal preferences as guidance to making parenting decisions, and disregarding advice from other helpful parenting resources. However, Dumont (2013) explain that contrary to the beliefs of over-involved parents, the more-is-better approach is not always most advantageous to children. Rather, according to the authors, parental effectiveness lies in the specific manner in which parents are involved.

A determining factor for over-involvement seems to be linked to socio-economic status. According to Dumont et al. (2013, p. 4) "parents with a high occupational status have

more demanding jobs, which increase internal stress and consequently lead to more parental control and less structure". This is significant to the study since a tendency for parents to become more or less involved may occur following the transition from primary to high school. In this study, all parent participants belonged to a similar, high socio-economic group where families have double sources of income.

### **2.2.6 Cultural considerations**

As briefly mentioned, research has reported on the importance of considering culture and related contextual factors when studying PI (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006; Bower & Griffin, 2011). This especially applies to a multi-cultural country such as South Africa.

According to Cheung and Pomerantz (2011) PI in children's learning depends on the country or ideologies of the culture on learning and parents' roles. Through studies such as the one by Cheung and Pomerantz (2011), it is clear that American children from a variety of cultural backgrounds benefit from PI in terms of their school achievement and engagement. An awareness is needed to guard against assuming the same for all children across the globe, since PI is by no means universal in nature (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012), yet crucial across all populations and status levels (Wong & Hughes, 2006; Watson et al., 2012). Hill and Craft (2003) support the notion by stating that apart from the nature of PI, the effects thereof (such as improved school achievement) may also vary greatly across ethnicity.

Considering the above, it becomes clear why Souto-Manning and Swick (2006, p. 190) argues for an evaluated definition of PI to be applied to various socio-cultural backgrounds. As mentioned earlier, a definite need exists to "foster an inclusive approach that values the richness and power of every parent and family". The authors (2006) explain that an alternative proposed approach to PI would be to encourage parents from all contextual backgrounds to assist their children in fostering and connecting what is learnt at home with what is taught at school.

According to Bower and Griffin (2011, p. 84) the cultural differences between various groups are not the only factor to be considered. Individual cultural differences between educators and parents, as well as differences between parents themselves (such as culturally mixed families in terms of culture, practices and individual differences) can

influence PI practices to a great extent. Bearing this in mind, Lemmer (2007) identified a strong need in South African schools to improve the culture of teaching and learning, which can be attained through a cost-effective and feasible approach to PI, despite the many cultural differences.

### **2.2.7 General considerations**

Apart from cultural influences, various other factors have been found to influence PI. Studies have referred to these factors as barriers to PI (Stormont et al., 2007; Bracke & Corts, 2011) since they often hamper parents' ability to be involved. On the contrary, these factors may also support PI.

Parent education was identified as a factor influencing PI. Studies found that parents with less formal education are not as involved in their children's schooling, compared to parents with formal education and qualifications (Stormont et al., 2007; Bæck, 2010). As discussed earlier, this notion is supported by Dumont et al. (2013) in terms of the tendency of highly qualified parents to become over-involved in their children's schooling.

Parents' socio-economic status (SES) and occupational status were identified as another factor (Stormont et al., 2007; Pomerantz, Moorman & Litwack, 2007; Dumont et al., 2013). According to Pomerantz et al. (2007) SES can be described as a potential moderator, since it determines the beneficial nature of PI to some degree. On the contrary, Hayes (2012) argues that regardless of parents' demographic backgrounds, they can positively impact their child's achievement at school.

Hornby and Lafaele (2011) refer to various parent and family factors, child factors, parent-teacher factors, as well as societal factors which may influence PI. Parent factors include their beliefs about PI, their current life contexts and their perceptions of invitations for involvement, as well as ethnicity, class and gender. Child factors include child's developmental age, behaviour problems, needs in terms of disabilities and/or learning difficulties, gifts and talents. Parent-teacher factors include the differences in attitudes, language and differing agendas. Finally, broader societal factors include

economic, political, historical and demographic issues. Not only do these authors agree with the influence of cultural factors, but add a range of other factors to consider.

Furthermore, various additional influencing factors were identified (Yap & Enoki, 1995, p. 190 – 191; Bracke & Corts, 2011) and include “an unwelcome school atmosphere; lack of teacher preparation in the arena of family-school relationships; parents’ own negative school experiences; occupational limitations; scheduling conflicts, and financial restrictions; as well as parents’ misunderstanding of their role in their children's education.”

From their study on *primary school students’ parents’ level of involvement into their children’s education*, Gürbüzürk and Şad (2013, p. 1007) attribute the following five broad factors as having a possible influence on PI: “parents’ gender, educational background, child’s grade, type of school and family income”.

Finally, and in support of the above, Stormont et al. (2007, p. 195) list “low socio-economic status, ethnic minority status, lower education levels, work demands, lack of child care and transportation, family member resistance, school environment (such as biases and negative perceptions of school staff) and the teacher-parent relationship” as factors influencing PI.

In the case study design used in this study, many of the above influencing factors were ruled out, since all the participants were selected from a bounded system, which is described further in a following chapter.

Many researchers have highlighted the difference in involvement between mothers and fathers (Watson, Sanders-Lawson & McNeal, 2012; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Hanewald, 2013; Gürbüzürk & Şad, 2013). Depending on a family’s role definitions, mothers and fathers may be responsible for different aspects of parenting, which can be seen as a further influencing factor of PI (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). Mothers are often referred to as the “first and natural teachers of their children” (Gürbüzürk & Şad, 2013, p. 1006). History of PI shows how these roles generally changed over time. While PI in general greatly referred to mothers’ involvement, today involvement from both

mothers and fathers is expected and valued (Watson et al., 2012). In their study on *The transition between primary and secondary school: why it is important and how it can be supported*, Hanewald (2013) refers to more secure and smooth transitioning to high school, where adolescents were living with and were supported by both their mothers and fathers. Therefore, it is clear that although mothers' involvement still seems more prominent, ideally involvement from both mothers and fathers is desired.

### **2.2.8 Positive outcomes of PI**

A large focus in existing literature seems to be on the numerous benefits and positive influences PI has on children and parents (Stormont et al., 2007; Young et al., 2011; Bracke & Corts, 2011), as well as teachers and schools in the bigger scheme of things (Stalkera, Brunnera, Maguireb & Mitchell, 2011). It could be argued that the strong focus on positive outcomes of PI is due to the fact that most schools struggle to keep parents involved, despite parents being invited and motivated by educators to become involved in their children's schooling (Lemmer, 2007). In an attempt to increase involvement, research studies are used to raise awareness of the positive effects and beneficial nature of PI (Pomerantz et al., 2007).

Watson et al. (2012) state that amongst social factors such as family dynamics and socio-economic status, PI interventions have the greatest impact on school success. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) add that the realization of the importance of PI in the education of their children has been made in the last 40 years, and since then, research has continually been illustrating the advantageous nature of home and school based PI for all aged children.

Furthermore, PI has been found to have a significantly positive effect on the numeracy and literacy skills of children of all ages, as well as their cognitive development. Stalkera, et al. (2011) added that for children between 7 and 16 years, PI is especially critical in terms of academic achievement. Parental education levels, family background and family size were found to have a lesser effect on this age group's academic achievement, than PI.

Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) explain the relation between PI and school achievement. According to them, PI is unique and essential, since it motivates children



and thereby affects their achievement and grades. The authors found that children were more engaged in school throughout the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade if they were motivated for parent-oriented reasons. Their engagement with school consequently resulted in enhanced grades. Thus, it appears as if parent-oriented motivation has a positive effect on school achievement. Fan and Williams (2010) reported on the same notion and added that not only does PI lead to student achievement motivation, but it also enhances the development of children's intrinsic motivation and sense of self-efficacy. Cheung and Pomerantz (2012; p. 820) summarize that "the more involved parents were in children's learning, the more motivated children were to do well in school for parent-oriented reasons, which contributed to children's enhanced self-regulated learning and thereby grades".

In addition to school achievement, many other positive outcomes of PI were identified. Through a study conducted by Wong and Hughes (2006, p. 646), PI is again associated with increased student achievement, but also with "better school attendance, increased achievement motivation, reduced dropout rate, better emotional adjustment and improved social behaviour and interactions with peers". In support, Bracke and Corts (2011, p. 188) state "the literature related to parents and schools is rife with articles that convey a convincing and positive connection between PI and academic achievement, school attendance, graduation rates, educational aspirations, and positive classroom behaviour". Haine-Schlagel, Brookman-Frazer, Fettes, Baker-Ericze and Garland (2012) add by explaining that PI has proved to be directly linked to improved child treatment outcomes during therapy with children.

Several positive outcomes of PI have been identified over time, with most support received for student achievement. Bower and Griffin (2011) state that so much attention on these above-mentioned positive outcomes of PI has led to the tendency to blame the lack of PI for low student engagement and low achievement. For this reason, educators are requested to encourage parents to motivate their children and remain involved in their children's schooling. Hayes (2012) shifts the argument by stating that although PI promotes student achievement outcomes, negative influences or outcomes of PI should be considered too.

### **2.2.9 Negative outcomes of PI**

In an attempt to explore and understand PI, its importance and possible consequences, a thorough investigation on all possible outcomes thereof is needed. Although, at this stage, it appears as if PI only results in positive desired outcomes, the warning comes that this is not necessarily the case and that increased PI may at times be detrimental to children (Pomerantz et al., 2007).

Chen and Gregory (2009) acknowledge that although various studies have found PI to have positive effects on adolescent schooling (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992; Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993; Desimone, 1999), many others have reported on no positive effects (Keith, Reimers, Fehrmann, Pottebaum, & Aubey, 1986; Natriello, & McDill, 1986).

According to McNeal (2012), PI should not be operationalized and used as a tool to manipulate achievement outcomes, but rather appropriately implemented to affect behavioural outcomes. The authors question whether PI is truly positive or negative, since some forms of PI were found to decrease levels of achievement. He explains that “what is an appropriate and effective form of PI for younger children may not be effective for children in later adolescence, where there’s a desire for lessened PI” (2012, p. 88). In support, Hayes (2012) states that researchers have illustrated that possible positive outcomes of PI do not occur automatically and that different forms of PI lead to different outcomes for students across grade levels. It is becoming clear that developmental aspects such as changing needs across grades and developmental stages are seen as a particularly crucial consideration in terms of PI.

In their study on parents’ involvement in homework, Cooper, Lindsay and Nye (2000) found that the majority of parents illustrated some form of inappropriate or destructive involvement. The authors argue that involvement (in homework) may lead to the interference with learning if parents are ill-equipped; excessive pressure is put on children to perform; and overly involved parents do homework on behalf of their children. PI may thus hold certain destructive consequences that should not be disregarded. The authors concluded that direct forms of PI (such as homework assistance) was found less constructive than parental support for autonomy. Similarly,

according to Dumont et al. (2013, p. 2) PI in homework “was the only type of involvement that was not consistently related to academic achievement”. “Parental homework involvement has at best a slightly positive overall impact on achievement.”

A form of PI that often receives attention in literature and popular media is the so called helicopter parenting (hovering too closely) or “over parenting” (Hayden, 2012). Helicopter parenting is often used to refer to parents’ over-involvement in their college student children’s lives (Vianden & Ruder, 2012). The transition from school to a tertiary institution or into the world of work requires time for adaptation for both parent and child, while parents seem to be overly concerned about their children’s emotional and social welfare. According to Hayden (2012, p. 32), “this claustrophobic style of raising children has serious consequences for their development, as children are denied the opportunity to learn some important life lessons”, such as exploring their surroundings, taking chances, making decisions and coping with frustration and fear. Being over-involved dampers an adolescent’s opportunity to grow and may negatively influence further emotional, social and psychological development. The author states that PI in their child’s schooling is important, but being too closely involved dampers independency and further learning (Hayden, 2012).

Cooper et al. (2000) suggest that parents consciously need to implement the most effective type of involvement in their children’s lives and their schooling, according to their child’s age and specific needs.

### **2.3 HOOVER-DEMPSEY AND SANDLER MODEL OF PI**

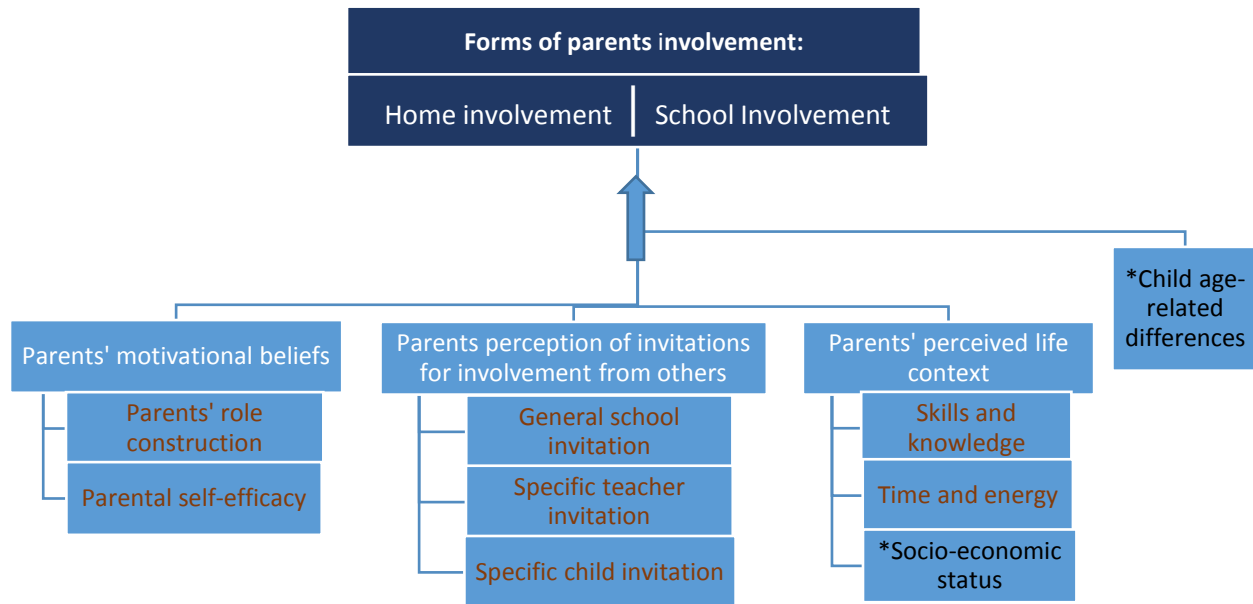
Amongst the many approaches to PI, the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) Model of PI was used and applied as the leading approach to PI in the study. The model has been well researched, applied and referred to in numerous studies. The authors, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, are referred to as pioneers in the field of PI (Stormont et al., 2007), “providing a foundation for much of the research conducted in the area of PI over the past decade” (Olmstead, 2013, p. 29). Central to this model are the various motivational factors for parents’ involvement in their children’s schooling.

Based on the social learning theory of Bandura (1986), the model is often applied when parents' perceptions of, amongst others, their role and ability are examined (Watson et al., 2012). In other words, the model asks "why parents may or may not choose to become involved" (Watson et al., p. 48). In support of the model, several studies indicate that "although PI is an important contributor to children's positive school outcomes, much less is known about the factors that motivate PI practices" (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Green et al., 2007; Anderson & Minke, 2007).

The model was first developed in 1995, revised in 1997 and once more in 2005. Identified as an advantage of the model's original and revised forms, is its "comprehensive and relatively parsimonious" nature, "which lends itself readily to hypothesis testing". Furthermore, "the model captures several important processes that have been at least partially supported in the qualitative and quantitative literature" (Anderson & Minke, 2007, p. 312).

Three central issues of PI are addressed by the model. Firstly, *why* parents become involved in children's schooling. Secondly, when involved, *what* parents do or what mechanisms they engage when involved. And thirdly, once engaged, *how* parents' involvement influences student outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Both the original model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995) and revised model (2005), refer to five levels.

The first level consists of three sources of motivation for PI, placing the focus on *why* parents become involved. This includes: parents' motivational *beliefs about involvement* (with role construction and parental self-efficacy as motivational sub-factors); parents' perceptions of *invitations to involvement* from others (with general school invitations, specific teacher invitations and specific child invitations as motivational sub-factors); and parents' perceived *life context* variables (with skills and knowledge, time and energy, and socio-economic status as motivational sub-factors); while *age or age-related differences* is added as an additional factor (Green et al., 2007, p. 532). PI according to the model (2005), determines the form(s) of PI – home involvement and/or school involvement. A schematic illustration of the model (2005), as it is explained above and used in the current study is given in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: The first level of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) revised theoretical model of the parental involvement process (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler and Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). \*With two added factors (Green et al., 2007).**

As mentioned, the first level's motivational factors consequently determine the forms or activities of a parent's choice of involvement. These include child-specific involvement (such as physically assisting with schoolwork etc.) and school-general involvement (such as attending school functions etc.). In other words, it explains PI in terms of *home involvement* and/or *school involvement* (as seen in Figure 2.1).

Level two refers to four parent mechanisms of involvement, in other words, *how* a parent is involved. These include: *encouragement* (e.g. parents encourage their child in his school work), *modelling* (e.g. parents model problem solving, learning and self-regulating behaviour), *reinforcement* (e.g. parents reinforce problem solving, learning and self-regulating behaviour) and *instruction* (e.g. parents provide instructions when assisting with schoolwork) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

The third level of the model (2005) refers to the four parent mechanisms of level two, but considers children's perception of their parent's involvement activities and behaviour. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005), theoretical and empirical

literature has suggested that how children perceive and understand their parents' activities (encouragement, modelling, reinforcement and instruction), will influence the impact of parents' involvement behaviours on student outcomes

Level four shifts the focus away from why and how parents become involved, to how parents' involvement influences student outcomes by considering student attributes conducive to achievement. According to the model (2005), together with the first three levels, children's self-perceived ideas around their *academic self-efficacy*, *intrinsic motivation to learn*, *self-regulatory strategy use*, and *social self-efficacy for relating to teachers*, determine student achievement.

Lastly, student achievement forms the fifth and final level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI. This level is also referred to as the distal outcomes of the parental involvement process. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005, p. 36) argue that "student achievement is an important variable that must be considered in research on parental involvement in student education, and that standardized achievement test scores should be used as one measure of these distal outcomes of parental involvement".

Considering the various motivational factors (level one), forms, parent mechanisms (level two), children's perceptions (level three), student attributes (level four) and finally student achievement (level five), the model defines PI as a multidimensional construct (Stormont et al., 2007).

## **2.4 DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATION**

Through the above discussion it became clear that in the focus of this research study, developmental matters such as adolescence need to be considered. The following section explores child and family development, age-appropriate PI, and thereby illustrates how the transitioning from primary to high school is relevant to the study.

When an individual is viewed in terms of a complete system according to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model, the chronosystem emphasizes change that occurs through time and affects all other related systems. The chronosystem also plays an important role when considering constructs such as PI (Donald et al., 2010). Since

both parents *and* children play crucial roles in PI (Krause & Haverkamp, 1996), developmental considerations of both are regarded unavoidable factors.

#### **2.4.1 Child development: Adolescence**

Adolescence in a simple, straight forward sense, can be defined as “the developmental stage occurring from puberty until adulthood, approximately between the ages of 12 to 18 years for females and 13 to 21 years for males” (Plug, Louw, Gouws & Meyer, 1997, p. 7). Change can be described as the typical characteristic of this developmental stage (Moretti & Peled, 2004), not only in terms of physical changes, but also emotional, cognitive and social (Andrews & Bishop, 2012).

Erik Erikson’s theory of psycho-social development has been valued and applied widely for many years (Didier, 2014). The theory refers to eight stages of development, namely; infancy, toddler, early childhood, middle to late childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood and late adulthood, each with its own challenges which an individual deals with through positive and negative experiences (Donald et al., 2010). During the fifth developmental stage, adolescence, the individual’s main challenge is to come to terms with who he or she is. During this time of maturation, adolescents strive to become independent from family or parental constraints. The child’s social identity becomes increasingly important, while a bigger distance is created between themselves and their parents (Brewin & Statham, 2011). Didier (2014) explains that adolescents tend to push back against parental control during this stage.

According to Thom, Louw, Van Ede and Ferns (2004), changes in adolescents’ cognitive ability and thinking style also occur, such as an increased desire towards autonomy and independent decision-making, accompanied by abstract thinking, questioning and challenging argumentation. This, together with all other changes, could impact on the child-parent relationship (Thom et al., 2004), which in turn has an effect on PI (Bru et al., 2010). “Researchers and theorists commonly view adolescence as an especially sensitive developmental period because of the dramatic biological and cognitive shifts, changes in self-understanding, and shifts in social relationships with peers and parents” (McGill, Hughes, Alicea and Way, 2012, p. 1003).

#### **2.4.2 Parent/ family development**

While the many developmental changes the adolescent undergoes are important in terms of how they affect the parent-child relationship and PI, the changes and development parents undergo should not be overlooked. Van Ingen and Moore (2010) explain that parents seem to be able to maintain healthy involvement in their adult child's life if he or she was able to develop successfully together with their child.

As mentioned in chapter one, Papalia and Olds (1995, in Gerdes et al., 2004) refer to the family lifecycle – a model which offers guidelines in terms of the type of tasks parents need to fulfil across the different developmental stages their children undergo. This model places its emphasis on the changing role of the parent during the development of their child. The model refers to seven developmental stages namely; the childless stage, nurturing stage, authoritative stage, interpretative stage, interdependent stage, launching stage, and the empty nest stage; each stage requiring certain tasks of parents or caregivers. The fourth, interdependent stage refers to adolescence, and according to the model, during this phase parents encourage the adolescent's independence; encourage the adolescent's establishment of identity; re-evaluate their own values and attitudes; and also bring their own needs back into consideration (Papalia & Olds, 1995, in Gerdes et al., 2004, p. 576). Changes and adaptations take place from the parents' side in terms of their adolescent's changing developmental needs. As stated by Krause and Haverkamp (1996, p. 84) "it is almost inevitable that there will be a lack of fit between the developmental needs of a grown child and those of an aging parent, and this mismatch is likely to produce pressures and conflicts in the parent-child relationship".

It could be said that PI is a reciprocal phenomenon, where the nature of PI is greatly determined by both the child and parent, in an ongoing journey of development and change throughout life (Krause & Haverkamp, 1996). Moretti and Peled (2004, p. 552) refer to the "nature of the adolescent-parent attachment bond" which is "paramount to how both parties negotiate" during the developmental stage of adolescence.



### 2.4.3 Age-appropriate PI

During this critical period of adolescence, effective support needs to be given in developmental appropriate forms of PI (Chen & Gregory, 2009). In their study on *parent-school involvement of African American and Euro-American families*, Hill and Craft (2003) found that parents tend to be more involved during their children's early school-aged years, than when their children are older. They furthermore report on the notion that a major motivating factor for parents to become involved is poor school performance. The moment children's grades drop, the need for involvement becomes evident. From the study, it seems as if parents were adapting their involvement based on their child's age-related and individual scholastic needs.

In a study on the transition from primary to high school for students with special education needs', Maras and Aveling (2006, p. 196) referred to a collaborative approach where "effective communication between support services (e.g. the school), the child and parents can facilitate successful transitions by allowing support to be tailored to individual students' needs". In other words, a constant awareness of a child's unique and age-related needs should guide parents to adapt their PI accordingly.

Similarly, in their study on student's perceptions of teacher support across transition, Bru et al. (2010) found that characteristics of the school environment often become less facilitative in fitting the needs between students and the learning environment. The school environment (including support from teachers) adapts according to the age-appropriate needs of learners, just as parents are expected to do in terms of PI.

Chen and Gregory (2009, p. 61) were able to pinpoint what type of PI is most effective for adolescence. They found that "less recognized psychosocial forms of PI may be more developmentally appropriate and effective in helping teens achieve educational success than are practice-based involvement in school activities".

Apart from an adolescent's age, his or her needs should also be taken into account. Pomerantz et al. (2007) explain that parents should especially be sensitive in their involvement with children who are in greater need of scholastic assistance and who have had negative competence experience or academic failures. Cooper et al. (2000)

noted that PI may be most beneficial when parents adjust their involvement to children's competence, experiences and current age.

Consequently, it has become clear that change is a major aspect of adolescence. Another significant feature of this developmental stage is the transition from primary to high school. The next section will explore this further, as a final theme of the study.

## **2.5 TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL**

Although all children across the globe undergo transitions from one school stage to another, not all school systems are similarly structured, and transitions occur at different intervals. In the United States of America, transition to high school occurs after completion of the eighth year of (primary) school (Smith et al., 2008), while in the United Kingdom, after completion of the sixth (primary) school year (Ashton, 2008). In South Africa, children progress from primary to high school at the end of their seventh primary school year (Grade 7), at the age of 13 years, into their first year in high school (Grade 8), in which they will turn 14 years old. However, a child's age might differ according to his or her unique context where factors such as school readiness, curriculum adaption and home schooling programs may play a role.

As discussed in chapter one, Smith et al. (2008, p. 32) define transition as a "process during which institutional and social factors influence the movement between organizations". According to these authors, research in the area of high school transition seems to be in its infancy.

The transition from primary to high school is referred to as a challenging, yet exciting period of change (Hanewald, 2013). This period is furthermore characterized by an adjustment of roles, expectations, identities, new relationships and new interactions for both children and families. Hanewald (2013, p. 62) summarizes this by stating that the transition to high school is "a social and academic turning point for adolescents".

Therefore, the transition to high school can be described as a critical stage (Terhoeven, 2009), often experienced as the most challenging period in children's educational careers. Brewin and Statham (2011) add that the transition can effect children's academic performance and their general sense of well-being.

Furthermore, since the transition to high school occurs together with the developmental transition into adolescence, it can affect children's cognitive and emotional development to a great extent (Soares, Lemos & Almeida, 2005). Eccles (1993, in Chen & Gregory, 2009, p. 53) states that "the transition to high school, coinciding with adolescence, can be a particularly difficult time for many students".

It becomes evident that the developmental stage and the transition to high school play crucial roles during a young adolescent's life, and consequently on their parents' involvement in schooling.

### **2.5.1 Change during transition**

Since the transition period holds several individual and environmental changes (Gniewosz, Eccles & Noack, 2012), it is often described as a stressful time (Qualter et al., 2007) for both children and parents, especially when children have special education needs (SEN) (Maras & Aveling, 2006).

Possible changes children and parents may be confronted with include: structural changes of teaching to groups instead of individually; different patterns of discipline, authority, classroom management and teaching styles being implemented; increased complexity of the high school building layout or size of the school; and the prospect of bullying or losing friends (Maras & Aveling, 2006). In a study by Andrews and Bishop (2012, p. 8), the importance of monitoring these changes is highlighted, since children may struggle with it to such an extent that they unlearn certain academic skills and content, or even start a downward spiral leading to school dropout.

Qualter et al. (2007) and Ashton (2008) report on the many possible negative effects that have widely been documented which add to the anxiety associated with the transitioning to high school. Amongst others these include: negative effects on the child's self-concept; children experiencing anxiety and depression; negative effects on school performance; and the increased likelihood of bullying and aggression linked to social changes.

In turn, such changes may influence parents' perspectives too. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of parental involvement refers to parents' perceptions of the school and the child's invitation for involvement. While adolescents face changes, as

mentioned above, parents may change their perception of the demand for involvement from both the child and high school.

## **2.5.2 Concerns and expectations of the transition to high school**

While it is evident that various changes are likely to occur during the transition to high school, children, parents and teachers seem to hold certain concerns and expectations about what life in high school entails. Children, parents and teachers each play an important, yet different role in the transition period. These differing expectations, perceptions and roles ultimately influence their experience of transition, as well as other related aspects such as PI.

### **2.5.2.1 Transition as seen from children's perspectives**

The idea of entering high school is experienced with a mixture of apprehension and eagerness by most adolescents (Andrews & Bishop, 2012). While enjoying the excitement of progressing in their school careers, children's concerns around entering high school were found to be mostly around getting to know new teachers, being bullied or teased, belonging to school clubs, the nature and amount of homework, the difficulty of school work (Smith et al., 2008), leaving their old friends, trouble making new friends (Qualter et al., 2007), getting lost in the school building, feelings of being unfamiliar to others, peer pressure, and coping with a constant change of subjects (Andrews & Bishop, 2012).

However, each adolescent's experience of the transition differs significantly (Brewin & Statham, 2011). While some experience it as challenging, for others this might not be the case (Benner, 2011). In a study by Rice, Frederickson and Seymour (2011), it was noted that girls seem to have more worries related to the transition to high school. Yet, how effectively each individual adolescent manages the transition is important, as it could have lasting effects. Rice et al. (2011) adds by stating that most adolescents' worries tend to disappear shortly after the first term of high school. Therefore, worrying behaviour is expected, but should not become a long-term issue. Martinez, Aricak, Graves, Peters-Myszak and Nellis (2011) explain that social support to adolescents during this period is of utmost importance, since it is characterized by rapid changes, expectations, and a possible emotional rollercoaster ride.

Assisting adolescents to develop appropriate coping strategies (Qualter et al., 2007), and realistic expectations (Ashton, 2008) of high school, may equip them to better cope and have a positive long-term effect. Brewin and Statham (2011) emphasize the notion that a single transition intervention or program cannot be prescribed since each individual adolescent and his/her unique context as a whole need to be considered.

### **2.5.2.2 Transition as seen from parents' perspectives**

According to Wildenger and McIntyre (2011), experiences of the transition to high school have rarely been studied or examined from families' or parents' perspectives. This study aims at filling this exact gap, by giving parents a voice to describe their experiences of the transition phase.

Existing literature that has reported on parents' concerns and expectations of their child's transition to high school, indicate that parents' concerns mostly revolve around social concerns of being bullied, not feeling safe, peer pressure, not feeling accepted by others, and being around older students. Academic concerns were found around the amount of homework and pressure on children to do well, dealing with difficult teachers and classes etc. Lastly, organizational concerns were found around difficulty for their children to find their way around school, getting lost and understanding new rules (Smith et al., 2008).

Smith, Feldwisch and Abell (2006) reported on the major difference between children and parents' concerns and noted that while children were mostly worried about too much homework and organizational issues such as getting lost, parents were mostly concerned about social and safety issues of their child during transition to high school.

### **2.5.2.3 Parents' contribution to the transition**

Although little appears to have been documented on parents' expectations of their children's transition to high school, several studies highlight the crucial role parents play and the contribution they offer in the transition process (Smith et al., 2008). For this reason, it is argued that parents should be supported especially during the transition period, since this will increase their efforts and positive involvement in their children, which in turn may positively affect their children's motivation to perform (Maras &

Aveling, 2006). Similarly stated by Andrews and Bishop (2012, p. 10), “parents who are involved in a student’s transition to high school are more likely to remain involved in the child’s school experiences, and such involvement is linked to heightened student achievement”.

The Education Partnership Inc. compiled a brochure in which several guidelines for successful transitioning to high school are discussed. Amongst others, it is suggested that parents should be supported by offering them opportunities to become increasingly involved, and by implementing transition programs which address needs of both parents and their children (EPI, n.d.). This would not support parents alone, but also strengthen peer and family relationships, which decreases the likelihood of early school dropout in high school (Terhoeven, 2009).

According to Attanucci (1993) a general tendency exists to exclude and undervalue parents when referring to matters of adolescence, such as the transition to high school. Wasley (1993) responds by arguing that parents should be given a voice in this regard since their thoughts and suggestions on children’s, parents’ and the community’s needs could be of much value. Furthermore, Benner (2011) found that parents were children’s most helpful support structures during the transition to high school.

Parents’ roles and their involvement are considered as crucial throughout life (Krause & Haverkamp, 1996), and should clearly be highly regarded during this important developmental phase of transition to adolescence, and from primary to high school.

The essence of the matter is rhetorically expressed by Wormeli (2011, p. 8, in Andrews & Bishop, 2012) as follows: “if high school success, navigating the larger world, and discovering the direction we want to take in our lives, all have roots in young adolescence, why would anyone leave the transition into this impressionable phase to chance?”

#### **2.5.2.4 Transition as seen from teachers’ perspectives**

When dealing with a concept such as the transition to high school, immediate thought is given to children and parents. However, during this crucial period, Lemmer (2000) argues that the role of teachers should not be overlooked.

Smith et al. (2008) found that teachers' concerns of the transition to high school are mostly around social issues children may face, such as fitting in and making friends. Although teachers are usually not as close to children as parents, Bru et al. (2010) reports that children regard teachers' support as equally motivational as the support from their parents. As a child's age increases, their perception, however, changes and the value they find from teacher support decreases. According to Bru et al. (2010) this notion is directly related to the developmental changes children experience.

Since teachers play an important role in the transition to high school, clear communication and an awareness of possible differences between teachers and parents (in practices, individual differences and misunderstandings), should be ensured (Bower & Griffin, 2011), since this could possibly influence PI (Young et al., 2011) during this crucial period. What is desired in terms of PI during the transition may vary from teacher to teacher, which could lead to confusion for parents, especially those with multiple children (Young et al., 2011).

In studies done on PI in South Africa, Lemmer (2000; 2004; 2007) emphasizes the importance of teachers and teacher training concerning PI. Lemmer (2000) argues that teachers can assist in transforming the stigma around PI that parents are involved only when they assist with fund raisers and participate in school governance. Teachers' input and valuable contribution to comprehensive PI during the transition to high school, should be seen as "a prerequisite for improving the culture of teaching and learning in schools" (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004, p. 259).

The significance of the transition from primary to high school, the numerous and varied concerns and approaches thereof by children, parents and teachers, as well as its relation to PI, support the value of conducting a study on PI in their children's schooling following the transition from primary to high school. Various other studies have considered these issues (Epstein, 1993; Fine, 1993; Hill & Craft, 2003; Maras & Aveling, 2006; Lemmer, 2007; Smith et al., 2008; Chen & Gregory, 2009; Van Ingen & Moore, 2010; Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Benner, 2011; Wildenger & McIntyre, 2011; McNeal, 2012; Dumont et al., 2013; Hanewald, 2013). While some of these studies explored how the nature of PI changes during adolescence (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011) or across

the transitioning to high school (Hill & Craft, 2003; Chen & Gregory, 2009; Van Ingen & Moore, 2010), others attempt to illustrate how to practice effective involvement (Dumont et al., 2013). Furthermore, some studies highlight the need for parents to be given a voice in terms of their involvement in schools etc. (Epstein, 1993; Fine, 1993; Benner, 2011; Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Hanewald, 2013), as well as the need for further studies in the field of PI during transitioning (Smith et al., 2008; Chen & Gregory, 2009). Finally, studies (Hill & Craft, 2003; Lemmer, 2007) indicate the need for parental guidance on PI following the transition from primary to high school. Amongst others, these studies were incorporated in the above literature review in support of the research topic.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

Based on existing literature, this chapter provided a foundation for the research study. Parental involvement was unpacked in terms of a brief history, various definitions and approaches, influencing factors, possible outcomes, as well as a summarized explanation of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI. Developmental areas of children and parents were discussed, since both play unavoidable roles in the nature of PI. Changes occurring over time, in children, parents and consequently PI, were discussed, while the importance of age-appropriate adaptation of parenting was highlighted. Children's transition to adolescence as well as high school, forms part of their development and was explored as an essential part of the research focus. The chapter was concluded with reference to a few studies which highlight the possible value of research in the field of PI and transition to high school.

It is clear that plenty of scope for further exploration in this field exists. As stated by Green et al. (2007, p. 532), "although PI is an important contributor to children's positive school outcomes, much less is known about the factors that motivate parents' involvement practices". In this study, methods of data collection based on this model were used to explore parents' perceptions around the mentioned gap. In the following chapter, a thorough description of the complete research process is given.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The experiences of parents' involvement in their children's schooling, following the transition from primary to high school, as the focus and aim of investigation has been discussed in chapter one. The research process, as also presented previously, will be discussed thoroughly in this chapter. The research design will be described in terms of its structure in consideration to the research question, followed by a discussion around ethical considerations and data verification.

The research design was customized to answer the following research questions:

- 1.) What are parents' experiences of their involvement in their children's schooling at the beginning of high school?
  - 1.1) Do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school?
  - 1.2) Can a pattern of change be identified in terms of their involvement?

#### 3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is "a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research" (Bogdan & Knopp-Bilken, 2007, p. 274). Paradigms steer the researcher in the chosen direction, and furthermore act as perspectives which form the basis of the research. In a practical sense, the research paradigm helps in determining which particular methods of data collection, interpretation and collection to use by the researcher (Durrheim, 1999).

The responsibility still lies with the researcher to ensure that the study as a whole, including the research question and methods used, relate to the chosen paradigm.

As mentioned in chapter one, the interpretive paradigm was chosen for this study. Generally, within this paradigm it is argued that individuals construct multiple realities through social interaction (Merriam, 1998). The philosophical positioning of this

paradigm needs to be considered further with regards to epistemology, ontology and methodology. Within human science, a paradigm can be defined as the theoretical orientation of the researcher (Merriam, 1998) which informs the researcher about the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of scientific knowledge (epistemology), as well as the process or way in which knowledge is produced (methodology) (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

Table 3.1 below illustrates the interpretive paradigm used in this study (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
Internally formed subjective realities. Multiple experiences of events.	Observer inter-subjectivity	Qualitative, Interactional, Interpretive

**Table 3.1: Interpretive paradigm in terms of Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology**

In terms of the interpretive paradigm, the nature of reality (ontology) is seen as being socially constructed by each individual, while no single observable or objective reality exists, but rather multiple interpretations and realities of single events (Merriam, 2009).

In terms of the nature of scientific knowledge (epistemology), the interpretive paradigm requires multiple realities in order to produce knowledge. Maree (2007) refers to the subjective nature of reality which only exists in questioning reality and in the different meanings or interpretations people make around happenings in their lives. In creating knowledge through research within the interpretive paradigm, the value is thus placed in the interaction between research participants and the researcher. The contexts in which the participants exist and wherein they create their realities are of similar importance, as they help determine how their realities are shaped (Henning et al., 2004, p. 20; Maree, 2007, p. 55). In the study, all data were collected during interaction with participants, within their natural setting at the Blue School. Consideration to their unique context at the school, as well as each participant's unique family context or background, was kept

in mind. Meaning was socially constructed while parents' experiences of their PI were explored. Therefore, the interpretive paradigm provides the perfect fit for this study.

Considering the subjective nature of reality, as well as the interactional space needed to form differing realities, it could be said that the interpretive paradigm relies on specific methods which facilitate knowledge production accordingly (Strydom, 2011). According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 6), methodology within the interpretive paradigm can be described as being "interactional, interpretive and qualitative" in nature. Appropriate methods used within the interpretive paradigm in the study include interviewing, observation (recorded in the form of reflective field notes) and narrative text.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Within the interpretive framework applied as research paradigm in the study, the research methodology is qualitative in nature. As stated by Merriam (1998, p. 5), "qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering several forms of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible". Qualitative designs have been valued by many methodologists and referred to as "a highly successful means for exploratory phases of examination" (Patton 1990; Van Ingen & Moore, 2010, p. 535 in Hoshmand 1989).

Merriam (1998) highlights four key features of qualitative research which apply to the study and are discussed below.

Firstly, in connection to the interpretive paradigm, the qualitative researcher is interested in exploring and forming an understanding of the constructed meanings of others. Through interaction, the researcher aims to understand how parents experience their involvement; more specifically, how they experience and make sense of their PI in their children's schooling following the transition to high school. The meaning parents attach is embedded in their experiences within a specific setting, and this meaning is mediated through the researcher's own perceptions (Patton, 1985, in Merriam, 1998). As mentioned in the previous section, this confirmed that the interpretive paradigm was perfectly suitable for the study.

Secondly, the primary research instrument for data collection and analysis is the researcher herself. The researcher, and no other inanimate collection tool, mediates all data gathered to bring it to a final point of analysis and report (Merriam, 1998). Although inanimate collection tools such as narrative text pieces and interview questions are used to gather information, the researcher is responsive to parents' contexts, flexible to circumstances, sensitive to situations, clarifying and summarizing as the study proceeds, and is actively exploring unclear responses (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, in Merriam, 1998).

Thirdly, qualitative research, as with the study, involves fieldwork. Parents' behaviour and experiences are explored within their natural setting, at their children's high school. The researcher enters their setting while consciously considering the characteristics of the specific context. A further discussion on the contextualization of the study follows in chapter four.

Fourthly, qualitative research employs an inductive mode of inquiry. In other words, instead of testing existing theory, the researcher aims to build hypotheses or concepts throughout the research process. Therefore, in terms of its findings, the investigation is not guided by any prior studies, findings or theories. The researcher takes an open approach to exploring and welcoming any knowledge shared by parents, and thereby building toward theory which explains the research data (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984, in Merriam, 1998).

Finally, research data is recorded and findings reported in a richly descriptive manner (Merriam, 1998). As discussed in chapter four, findings are narratively reported on with reference to parents' direct descriptions, citations from narrative text pieces, noted themes etc. In this regard, Merriam (2009) highlights the importance of language used to facilitate and mediate the research process, as it plays an important role in how meaning is described and formed.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) further refer to the strategy of inquiry of a qualitative, interpretive study. Hereby, the authors highlight the notion that qualitative studies may

vary according to their design, data-analysis techniques, disciplinary orientations etc. In this sense, the current study can be described as a case study.

As mentioned in chapter one, the central and unique characteristic of a case study lies in its “intensive descriptions and analysis of a single unit or bounded system” (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). The nature of PI (the studied phenomenon) is explored from the experiences and perceptions of Grade 9 parents with children in a public high school, based in a northern suburb in Cape Town. As explained further in chapter four, within the bounded system, all parent participants form part of the same Afrikaans-dominant community, within a similar socio-economic class. Furthermore, all participants are married, and one child of each parent was in Grade 9 at the Blue School (at the time the study was conducted).

The qualitative design could further be described as a *psychological* case study, since the focus is on the few individual parents, with the aim of investigating an educational phenomenon or aspect of human behaviour (Merriam, 1998), namely PI in their children’s schooling. Eight parents participated in the study. Similar to a phenomenological design, the aim is to identify and explore the essence of the experience of parents’ involvement across the transition from primary to high school. However, using a case study design allowed the researcher to rule out certain contextual factors which influence PI (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006). Such factors include the socio-economic status of families, the nature of parents’ occupations, income, as well as the availability of resources. The case study design allowed the researcher to conduct the study in a bounded system in which all participants are in similar relation to these factors.

Through the study, prior research on PI was used to describe and develop conceptual categories and theoretical assumptions (chapter two), which were challenged, supported or illustrated by the findings (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). Therefore, the study can be described as an interpretive case study. Existing research and theories report on various aspects regarding the nature of PI. Despite this, the researcher aims at exploring and identifying possible patterns of PI - where involvement increased (or

became over-involved), decreased (or became under-involved) or remained unchanged following the transition from primary to high school. The (case study) researcher “gathers as much information about the problem as possible with the intention of analysing, interpreting or theorizing about the phenomenon”, rather than simply “describing what was observed or reported in interviews”. This offers support in answering the two research sub-questions “How do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school?”, and “Can a pattern of change be identified in terms of their involvement?”

### **3.5 RESEARCH METHODS**

Figure 1.1 in chapter one illustrated the research methods used due to their coherence with the research design and questions. These methods include purposeful sampling techniques, three data collection methods (individual interviewing based on semi-structured interviews, field notes, and narrative text) and qualitative content analysis.

#### **3.5.1 Selection of participants**

According to Burgess (1982, p. 76, from Merriam, p. 60), “sampling involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events”. These aspects, therefore, need to be considered and framed as the focus of the study. Non-probabilistic, purposive sampling was applied within the study, with the use of criterion-based selection.

Since generalizability is not a goal of a qualitative study such as this, sampling was non-probabilistic in nature (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). Furthermore, sampling was purposeful in the sense that it aimed to explore the experiences of parents’ involvement, thereby understanding and gaining insight into this phenomenon. The researcher therefore chose a sample within the bounded system (of Grade 9 parents from the Blue School), from which rich information could be gathered (Merriam, 1998).

Regarding the sample criteria, participants, regardless of their gender, had to be parents of a Grade 9 child in the Blue School at the time of the study. (This formed the bounded system, as stated earlier.) Seeing that the research goal was to explore the experiences of parents’ involvement following the transition from primary to high school, Grade 9 parents were seen as well able to reflect on their experiences of primary

school, as well as a full year in high school (Grade 8). In this sense, criterion-based selection was used, since the above criteria were first determined and identified as “essential in choosing the people or sites to be studied” (Merriam, 1998, p. 61).

In the case study design used, all parent participants were invited and obtained from within the closed boundaries of the Blue School, through the use of the typical site sampling strategy. The Blue School can be described as a well-resourced WCED public school, based in the northern suburbs in the Western Cape. Patton (1990, p. 173, in Merriam, p. 62) explains that through a typical sample, “the site is specifically selected because it is not in any major way atypical, extreme, deviant, or intensely unusual”.

After obtaining the necessary permission, participants were invited through official invitation letters and interviewed by the researcher on an individual basis at the Blue School.

Participant	Self				Family	
	Gender	Age	Marital status	Occupation field	Spouse occupation field	Children
Anne	Female	40	Married	Medical	Medical	2
Sophie	Female	46	Married	Education	Arts and Design	2
Jane	Female	49	Married	Administration	Medical	2
Rita	Female	35	Married	Retail	Logistics	2
Peter	Male	45	Married	Business Management	Tourism	2
Lora	Female	38	Married	Finance	Education	2
Mandy	Female	48	Married	Finance	Motor Industry	1
Sam	Female	44	Married	Finance	Engineering	2

**Table 3.2: Biographical data of research participants**

As shown by the above table, the participants of the study are mostly females in their late thirties to late forties. All participants are parents of a Grade 9 child, while the majority of participants have another child. All participants are married and run a double income household, with the exception of one participant who is retired and currently unemployed. As mentioned before, all participants reside in a northern suburb in Cape Town.

### 3.5.2 Methods of collection

Qualitative research generally uses a number of data collection methods. These typically include interviewing, observation and the review of documents or artefacts

(Merriam, 1998, p. 11; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 25). The purpose of using such methods is mainly to elicit detailed, rich and in-depth information or data. The specific study's theoretical framework and research design will, from there, determine how information or data is processed - in other words; interpreted and analysed.

Methods identified and used in the study to gain in-depth and information-rich data, were individual semi-structured interviews, a narrative activity and field notes gathered by the researcher, as an active participant in the research process.

### **3.5.3 Procedures**

Permission was granted by The Western Cape Education Department on request to conduct research in the Blue School. The written permission letter was received from the Director of Research Services. During this time, the researcher made contact with the school and discussed the planned research study with the school principal and appropriate grade head. The principal gave written consent for the study to be conducted at the school (see Addendum B). An application was made to the Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University and permission was granted to conduct the study (National Health Research Ethics Committee registration number: REC-050411-032).

As soon as the above approval was received, the school was approached again, and identified participants (parents of all Grade 9 learners) were invited through invitation letters, signed by the school principal and grade head. A total of 20 participants agreed to take part by returning a signed reply slip. All 20 participants were contacted via e-mail by the researcher to schedule individualized meetings. From there, the researcher only interviewed the first 8 participants who could commit to an appointment. Appointments were made individually with each parent so that the semi-structured interview and narrative exercise could be conducted. Written consent forms were completed prior to the interview (see Addendum C) and all participants were informed that they would be invited to an optional feedback session on the research findings, in the near future.

### **3.5.4 Data collection**

As briefly described in chapter one, individual semi-structured interviews, narrative text, as well as field notes based on observations made by the researcher were used to collect the research data. Furthermore, within the interpretive research paradigm, the



researcher as an integral research tool, as well as the interactional co-constructive nature of knowledge, should not be forgotten (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6). The data collection techniques could not be applied in isolation or short of the interaction between the researcher and participants.

#### **3.5.4.1 Semi-structured individual interviews**

An individual semi-structured interview can be described as a purposeful conversation with a person (Dexter, 1970, from Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, Patton (1990, p. 278) explains that a standard set of questions and themes is discussed with all individuals on a separate occasion, with the purpose of gaining a special kind of information about what is “in and on someone else’s mind”. The semi-structured interview offers guidelines whereby the researcher systematically explores specific and relevant pre-set themes with each research participant. As mentioned in chapter one, a semi-structured interview guide with four broad themes, based on the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI, was developed and used by the researcher. The themes, aimed at answering the research questions, initially included: 1) background information; 2) current experiences of personal parental involvement (in high school); 3) past experiences of personal parental involvement (in primary school); and 4) experience of the transition from primary to high school regarding PI. Through these themes the researcher aimed to identify factors of PI linked to the parent’s involvement in primary school (theme 3) and factors of PI linked to the parent’s involvement in high school (theme 2). The researcher trusted gathering enough information from those two themes to form a deeper understanding of how the transition from primary to high school perhaps influenced the experiences and the nature of their PI (theme 4).

The broad contributing factors, as given by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI, and used within themes 2 and 3 to explore in the semi-structured interviews include: parents’ motivational beliefs; parents’ perception of invitations for involvement from others; parents’ perceived life context; and the age of the child. These factors were defined in chapter two and will be discussed further during the research findings section of chapter four. During the interviews, the researcher was open for additional factors to emerge.

Interviews were conducted with eight parent participants, each between 45 and 50 minutes in duration and recorded for transcription purposes. (An example of the interview guide is shown in Addendum D.)

#### **3.5.4.2 Narrative text pieces (as written activity)**

Narrative text pieces are an example of researcher-generated documents. These documents are “prepared by the researcher and/or for the researcher by participants after the study has begun, with the aim of offering more about a specific situation, person or phenomenon being investigated” (Merriam, 2009, p. 119). Although such pieces of data or information are purely subjective in the same sense as personal documents, it still offers valuable data about a person’s experience, perspectives and attached meaning, which qualitative research inquires. Similar to photographs, researcher-generated documents can almost be seen as a representation of a specific phenomenon which cannot be observed or recorded directly. As mentioned in chapter one, a written activity was developed in which parents were asked to firstly familiarize themselves with the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI and more specifically, the motivational factors of PI. Participants were then asked to reflect on their own experiences of PI following the transition from primary to high school, based on the motivating factors of the model. The activity served as an additional source of data, based on the same themes as applied in the interview guide. However, in the written activity, parents were exposed to the complete model of PI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005), as used in this study. The following factors and sub-factors were presented: Parents’ motivational beliefs (including parental role construction and self-efficacy); Parents’ perception of invitations for involvement from others (including general school invitations, specific teacher invitations and specific child invitations); Parents’ perceived life context (including their skills and knowledge, time and energy, and socio-economic status); and the age of the child.

The researcher invited participants to add additional factors not given by the model, which they feel play a role in their experience of PI. (An example of the written activity is shown in Addendum E.)

#### **3.5.4.3 Reflective field notes based on researcher observation**

Field notes broadly refer to observations captured in written format or recorded mechanically and used as a source of raw data (Merriam, 2009, p. 104). Field notes were made in written format by the researcher directly after each interview session. These included: observational notes, documenting the researcher's thoughts about the meaning of observations during the interview and activity; methodological notes, documenting the reflections on strategies and methods used during the interview and activity; and personal notes, referring to notes about the researcher's own feelings and perceptions while in the field (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2011). These notes were approached parallel to the researcher's interpretivist worldview, as explained by the research paradigm. Therefore, it ties in with the researcher's belief that meaning is constructed through social interaction, and that her own meaning making forms part of this research study. (An example of the reflective field notes is shown in Addendum F.)

#### **3.5.5 Method of data analysis**

Qualitative thematic content analysis was employed in answer to the mentioned research questions. This form of data analysis was appropriate to the research paradigm and design (Strydom, 2011). According to Henning et al. (2004), qualitative content analysis involves a process of open coding through which themes are developed, and only works on one level of meaning, making it a popular method for beginner researchers. After interviews were transcribed and repeatedly read by the researcher herself, all the gathered data sources (transcriptions, written activities and field notes) were colour coded according to the categories and sub-categories which emerged as well as those borrowed from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI (Addendum G). Categories and sub-categories were borrowed from the model (2005) in support of the research questions. The interview guide and the narrative activity were similarly based on the model (2005). All coded responses were then clustered together according to the categories and sub-categories (Addendum H). Finally, axial coding was carried out by clustering patterns of data categories into a separate table (Addendum I). Each step enabled the researcher to sketch a clearer overall picture of the findings.

As mentioned, the content of interviews, field notes and narrative exercises (data sources) were analysed for recurring patterns of meaning and themes. Although content analysis was applied qualitatively, it is important to note that this approach was originally very quantitatively-oriented, where standardized measurements were used to identify units and subsequently compare them (Merriam, 1998). The technique has however been adopted for use in qualitative studies so that the focus is mainly on communicating meaning. Therefore, although content analysis was successfully applied, the researcher had to guard against settling for thin or simple descriptions. The method of data analysis was approached as a process of “interrogation” through which rich descriptions were drawn (Strydom, 2011), since qualitative research greatly focuses on thick or rich descriptions of meaning.

The content data analysis technique can furthermore be described as inductive, since the data gathering methods were guided by certain categories, based on the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI. Yet, other categories were expected and allowed to emerge throughout the study (Altheide, 1987, in Merriam, 1998). As explained by Merriam (1998, p. 160), “the process involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document’s content”. Merriam (1998, p. 183) further explains how schemes can be “borrowed from sources outside the study at hand”. The author explains that a requirement for this is that “the categories be compatible with the purpose and theoretical framework of the study.” As mentioned in previous chapters of the study, the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI fits the purpose of the study in assisting the researcher to answer the research questions. The model was furthermore used to structure the semi-structured interview guide and written activity. Using the structure of the model as themes, while allowing for additional categories to surface, ensured that the researcher received enough data to answer the research questions. The possible danger of using the so called “borrowed schemes” is discussed in chapter five. The research findings are presented in chapter four according to the identified and coded themes, categories and sub-categories. Where direct quotations are given,

reference is given to the relevant participant's name (pseudonym), the data source, and line number(s) of the transcribed interview.

### **3.6 QUALITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA**

Due to the subjective nature of qualitative research, a study's rigor and trustworthiness is considered through reference to its credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002, p. 2; Golafshani, 2003, p. 601; Merriam, 2009, p. 211).

*Credibility* refers to data which is believable to the participants themselves, since data was produced by them and a representation thereof could only fully be judged and approved by them (Trochim, 2006). The researcher made use of active listening and reflective speech during the interviews to validate accurate interpretation of participant's information. Furthermore, the written activity gave participants the opportunity to express their thoughts on the same issues, but through a different medium. This ensured that a clear explanation of their experiences were grasped by the researcher.

*Transferability* involves the degree to which findings of a study can be generalized or results transferred to other contexts (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The study is not concerned with generalizing its findings to a broader or different context, or to report on similar findings in a repeated study. Rather, the study aims to deeply explore and form a rich understanding of parents' experiences of their PI within a bounded system of the case study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Merriam, 2009). Findings could therefore responsibly be transferred within the closed boundaries of the case study, and not further to any other context.

*Dependability* links with the *credibility* of the study, since it refers to the degree to which it could be said that the same study, with the same participants, will lead to the same findings, should it be repeated (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). With strong *credibility* of participants, results should remain similar when the study is replicated. However, Trochim (2006) states that no qualitative study could be completely replicated, as a separate study would in fact measure a different thing. This alerts the researcher to the

dynamic context within which research occurs and the responsibility of the researcher to acknowledge and take note of this (Trochim, 2006).

*Confirmability* refers to the degree to which findings are a true representation of the focus of the study, and not biased by the researcher, as an active role player (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The researcher should, therefore, be able to provide proof or leave a trail as to how interpretations, conclusions and recommendations were made.

### **3.6.1 Data verification strategies**

Several strategies can be used to verify data and determine how much the data analysis can be trusted (Patton, 1994). Strategies include triangulation, an audit trail (or use of process notes), peer examination, the researcher engaging with data, the use of thick descriptions and reflexivity (Merriam, 2009, p. 229), as well as persistent observation, member checks, purposive sampling, and the use of raw data, data analysis and synthesis products, material relating to intentions, and instrument development information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Those relevant to the study will now shortly be discussed.

*Triangulation* refers to collecting and confirming data on the different realities of the research focus, through “different events, asking different questions, seeking different sources and using different methods” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). The experiences of parent’s involvement in their children’s schooling following the transition from primary to high school were explored through interviews, written activities as well as field notes made by the researcher based on *persistent observation* and *prolonged engagement with data*.

It is important to note that these divergent types of data will not and did not always paint a consistent picture. The researcher can expect two or more sources to indicate dissimilar information and that this does not indicate that it is invalid. “The point is to study and understand when and why there are differences” (Patton, 1994, p. 161), since different sources may gather different aspects. Coding, and more specifically, axial coding assisted the researcher in plotting data from all three sources, and identifying possible contradictory data.

An *audit trail* through process notes refers to methodological notes made by the researcher throughout the data collection and analysis procedures, which helps to identify potential bias or distortion of judgment, and serves as proof of data used to form interpretations, conclusions and recommendations (Trochim, 2006). In this study, apart from process notes, various other methods were used, including:

- *raw data* in the form of audio recorded interviews transcribed by the researcher herself;
- *data analysis products* such as theoretical notes, summaries and working hypotheses as gathered during the literature review, and the researcher's hunches on aspects of theory, which were all recorded in written format on reflective notes during interaction with each participant;
- *data synthesis products* such as the developed themes, findings and conclusions which were conceptualized after interaction with each participant and given in the following sections of the study;
- *material relating to intentions and dispositions* such as personal reflective notes on the experiences and thoughts of the researcher herself;
- and *instrument development information* such as two separate pilots which were undertaken with parents, and the researcher's related observations and notes which lead to refinement of the interview guide, and use of themes.

*Peer examination* was incorporated by the involvement of the researcher's thesis supervisor and colleague, commenting on findings outside the research context, as they were constructed (Merriam, 1998; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). *Member checks* refer to the researcher confirming the interpretation and representation of data with the research participants, as primary sources of information. The researcher continuously reflected on participant's input (verbally or written) and in this manner created an opportunity for participants to add additional information and/or rectify incorrect representations or interpretations of their realities (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

At the onset of the study, *reflexivity* or *researcher's biases* were taken into account, through the researcher's clarification of her worldview, theoretical approach, beliefs and

assumptions (Merriam, 1998). According to Merriam (2009, p. 219), “such a clarification allows the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretation of the data”. An additional strategy applied and worth mentioning here, is *crystallization*, which refers to the consideration of multiple realities, as seen by the participants and researcher, which in effect determine how the study is conducted (Richardson, 2000, in Merriam 2009 and Ellingson, 2009). “Just as a crystal consists of many angles, so should a qualitative researcher view the world from various angles to ensure the trustworthiness of the data” (Richardson, 2000, in Ellingson, 2009, p. 3). In this qualitative study, the researcher played an active part in conducting the research, and analysing the data gathered. However, through the process of crystallization, she also “temporarily suspended the process of examining or reading data in order to reflect on the analysis experience, and attempted to identify and articulate patterns or themes noticed during the immersion process” as suggested by Cohen and Crabtree (2006).

While prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer examination and member checks ensured the study’s *credibility*, the use of thick descriptions and purposive sampling supported the study’s *transferability*. *Confirmability* was supported by the use of raw data, data analysis and synthesis products, process notes, material relating to intentions and dispositions and instrument development information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

### **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Guided by a lighthouse of high ethical standards and considerations, the researcher was able to approach every step of the research process in an ethically appropriate manner, while maintaining an awareness of the possible negative impact research may have. Furthermore, the ethical considerations reminded the researcher of her moral and professional responsibility towards her research participants. Parents’ human rights and wellbeing were respected and protected by putting certain measures in place (O’Leary, 2010). A seven-point checklist, compiled by Patton (2002, in Merriam, 2009, p. 233) was used to ensure all considerations of ethical conduct were made. These ethical considerations are discussed below.



Prior to conducting the study, an application for ethical clearance was made to the Research Ethics Committee (REC), Stellenbosch University. Clearance was granted with registration number: REC-050411-032.

Subsequent to obtaining ethical clearance, the checklist of Patton (2002, in Merriam, 2009, p. 233) guided the researcher on the following seven points of ethical consideration:

Firstly, to explain the purpose of the inquiry and the methods to be used. In the first contact with parent participants, through the invitation letter from the principal and grade head, parents were informed briefly about the purpose of the study, as well as the participation process involved. Further explanation was given in the researcher's first contact with interested parents (via e-mail). A final, thorough explanation was given and discussed verbally with each participant in their mother tongue during the joint completion of the consent form. This ensured that the parent participants were well aware of what to expect.

Secondly, to abide by promises and reciprocity, by doing what the researcher promises to do and giving feedback about the research. The consent form was used as a contract between the researcher and parents. It clearly explained both parties' roles, expectations, rights, as well as the opportunity which will be given to those interested to discuss the research findings, upon completion of the study.

Thirdly, to carefully conduct a risk assessment, which determines and explains the level of risk the research poses to the participants. This was done through the application for ethical clearance of the research proposal. No expected risks were identified, and this again was shared with participants on the consent form.

Fourthly, to ensure confidentiality at all times. This is done to protect participants' identity and to ensure that no other identifying information is present in the published research. Although participants' information was used to complete the written consent forms and written activities, pseudonyms were used in the following thesis chapters when referring to any participant, their children, relatives, as well as the school's name. Furthermore, data was only accessible and used by the researcher and her supervisor

for the purpose of writing up the thesis. The protection of data captured on an audio recorder, as well as all electronic correspondence between the researcher and participants, was ensured by storing it on a password protected laptop. Again, participants were made aware of the above.

Fifthly, to obtain informed consent (Merriam, 2009, p. 233) through being clear about the purpose and goal of the study, as well as ensuring voluntary participation. As mentioned, written and verbal consent was attained from each parent participant. The consent form explained the purpose of the study, expected procedures (including participation of the semi-structured interview and narrative exercise), the absence of risks identified, possible benefits of participation for participants and greater society, no compensation given to participants, confidentiality and ways of ensuring confidentiality, participant's voluntary participation and right to withdraw participation at any stage, as well as contact details of the researcher and her supervisor as the only bodies with access to research data. Each participant had these points explained to them in their mother tongue (Afrikaans), were given an opportunity to ask questions, and were given a copy of the consent form.

Sixthly, to take ownership of data access. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that all research data is safely protected, and access is available only to the researcher herself and her supervisor. As explained, participants were made aware of this through the consent form. Full identifying and contact details of the researcher and her supervisor were given in the consent form.

Finally, to seek advice and ensure advice is given throughout the research process. This was done by regular supervision sessions with the researchers' supervisor. Mrs. Collair from the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch, an experienced researcher and lecturer in the field, was available to the researcher for regular supervision sessions, discussions and guidance.

The above listed ethical considerations were taken seriously by both the researcher and her supervisor throughout the study. Although many rules and guidelines can be presented to the researcher like a lighthouse in a storm, the ultimate responsibility still lies with the individual researcher, as the most important research tool, to conduct a

truly ethical study (Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998, p. 219) further states that “the best a researcher can do is to be conscious of the ethical issues that pervade the research process and to examine her own philosophical orientation about these issues”.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter a thorough discussion was given about the research paradigm and methodology, followed by a discussion on the research design and how the research questions are approached accordingly. Furthermore, issues of data verification and the ethical considerations made were explored. In the following chapter four, the findings of the study will be presented and discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the research process and methodology guiding the study was discussed. The course of data processing, as suggested by Henning et al. (2004) was followed, to arrive at the point of presenting and discussing the findings.

The process thus far involved ensuring that the methodology was in agreement with the study methods; the selection of participants and the use of methods were guided by the research questions and design logic; “participants were selected according to the purpose of the data that was going to be forthcoming from them”; data was collected from various sources, using a variety of three methods; “the researcher identified patterns that arose from the categories of various sets of data”; and finally, the researcher can “report on the final data patterns – the findings” (Henning et al., 2004, p. 108). The author emphasizes that this is never a linear process, but rather a two-way stream of “tracking the rationalizing of the data”.

In this chapter a brief discussion of the context in which the study was conducted is given, followed by a short description of the data analysis process, as discussed in chapter three. The data is then presented and discussed according to the categories and themes identified during the process of qualitative content analysis, as well as its reference back to existing literature.

#### 4.2 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

Consideration should be given to the contextual reality in this case study design before meaning is created from the data and the findings are interpreted. The following excerpt by Merriam (1998, p. 193) guides the researcher in terms of approaching the findings: “A case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit. Conveying an understanding of the case is the paramount consideration in analysing the data”.

As mentioned in chapter one, the research was conducted and data gathered at the Blue School, a public high school based in a northern suburb in Cape Town. As illustrated by Table 4.1, within a bounded system, all parent participants form part of the same Afrikaans-dominant community, within a similar socio-economic class. Furthermore, all participants are married, and one child of each parent was in Grade 9 at the Blue School (at the time the study was conducted). Note that pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities.

Participant	Home language	Monthly family income source	Married	Children
Anne	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2
Sophie	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2
Jane	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2
Rita	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	3
Peter	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2
Lora	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2
Mandy	Afrikaans	Single	Yes	1
Sam	Afrikaans	Double	Yes	2

**Table 4.1: Contextual data presented**

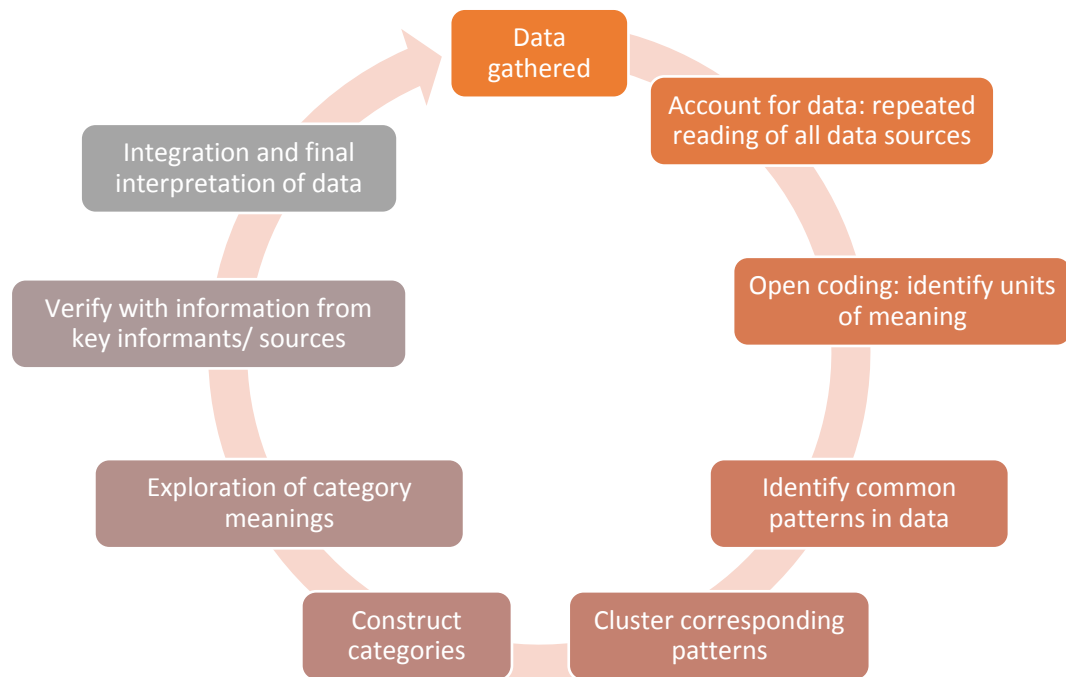
As mentioned in chapter three, all Grade 9 parents from the Blue School were invited to participate in the study. Eight of the twenty parents who volunteered to take part were used as participants on a first-come first-serve basis. These eight participants, therefore, define the bounded system of the case study.

Consideration is given to the possible implications the homogeneity of participants within the bounded unit might have on PI. All participants come from the same cultural group. It could be said that their experiences of involvement are partly shaped by their Afrikaner culture, which typically values a strong supportive bond with their children. Since the majority of participants live in double income households, the needed resources for parents in the case study to be as involved as they wish, are available and easily accessible. These include resources such as transport and technology which could play a crucial role in the nature and their experiences of their involvement. Furthermore, all participants are employed and have no more than two children. Such factors influence the availability of time and resources to a further degree, which could potentially influence PI within the bounded unit of the case study. These considerations made it necessary to highlight the context of the study, before the findings are interpreted.

### 4.3 THE PROCESS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The process of data analysis implemented in the study was discussed in chapter three, and can be illustrated by Figure 4.1, as presented by Creswell (2003). As stated by Merriam (1998) the process of data analysis is not done in isolation, but rather alongside data collection and data organization. Thus, it can be said that the starting point of the process of data analysis lies at the beginning of data collection.

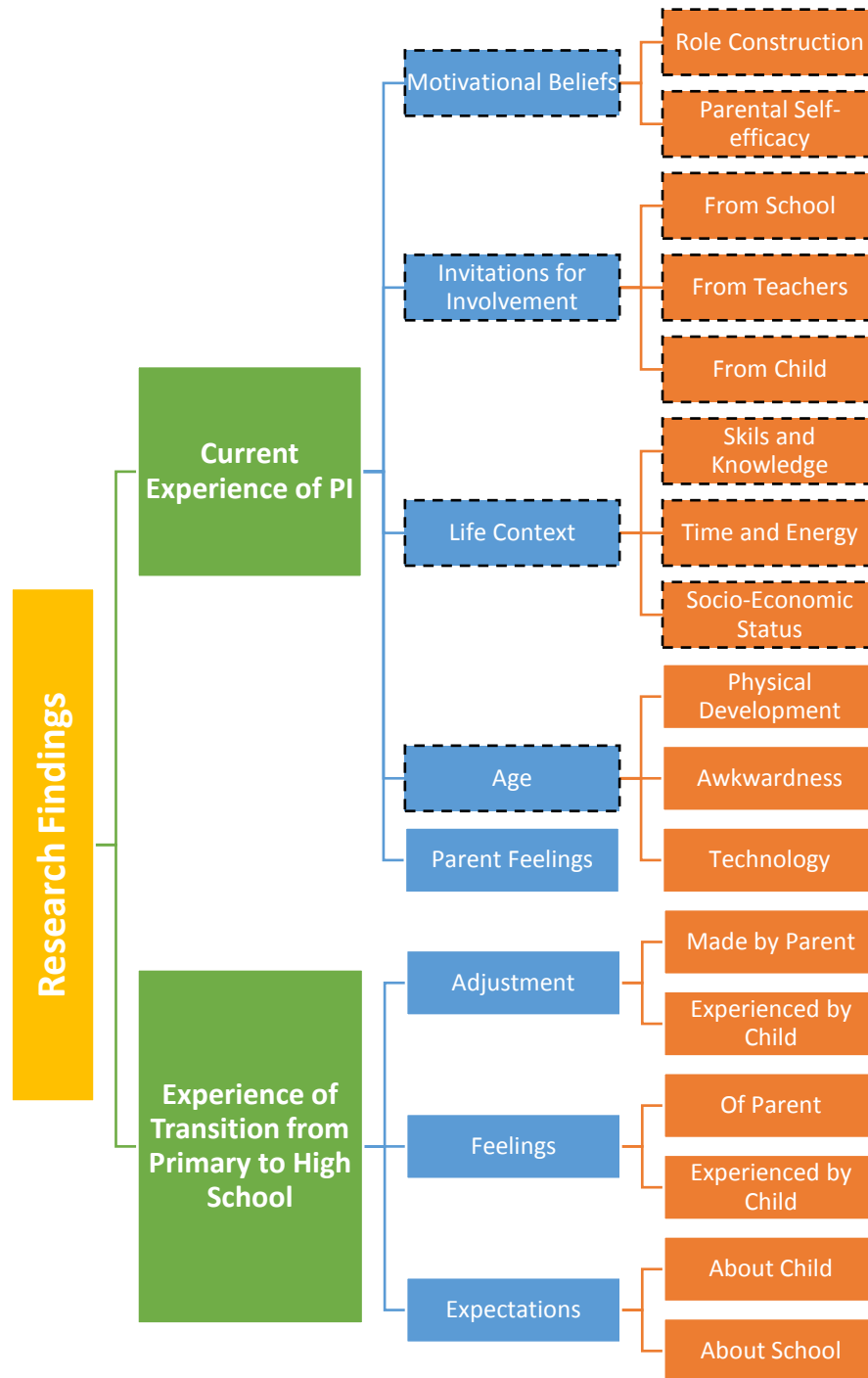
After all steps of data analysis were followed, an integration and discussion of findings were done, and presented in the following section of this chapter. In the final section of the chapter, the researcher reports on personal reflections made during the process of data analysis.



**Figure 4.1: The steps implemented during data analysis (Compiled from Creswell, 2003).**

### 4.4 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Figure 4.1 serves as a broad overview of the findings and illustrates the themes and categories. Categories borrowed from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI are indicated by dotted borders.



**Figure 4.2: Diagram of thematic content of research findings.**

The diagram clearly illustrates the study’s two themes, *Parents’ current experience of their PI (in high school)*, and *Parents’ experience of the transition from Primary to High School*. It could perhaps be noted that a third theme, *Parents’ past experience of their PI (in primary school)* formed part of the interviews. However, since the study does not

aim to explore parents' experience of their PI in primary school, the theme was excluded from the discussion of findings as a separate theme. Relevant information from the theme was included when the researcher felt that it supported her in answering the research questions.

The next section depicts the two categories of findings that emerged from the research, along with its various corresponding themes and categories. Interpretation and discussion, with reference to existing literature, is done simultaneously.

#### **4.4.1 THEME ONE: PARENTS' CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF THEIR PI IN HIGH SCHOOL**

As illustrated by Figure 4.1, theme one and its categories were structured by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI to explore parent's experience of their current PI in high school. The requirement to borrow the model as a theme was reached as the model's categories "were compatible with the purpose and theoretical framework of the study" (Merriam, 1998, p. 183). Categories of the theme include *Motivational Beliefs*, *Invitations for involvement*, *Life Context*, and *Age*. Furthermore, the researcher allowed for additional categories and sub-categories to emerge through data collection. Apart from various sub-categories, *Feelings* were added as a category of the first theme. Through this theme, the main research question to be answered was: *what are parents' experiences of their involvement at the beginning of high school?*

##### **4.4.1.1 Motivational Beliefs**

According to the applied model (2005), motivational beliefs about PI were divided into two sub-categories, namely *parental role construction* and *parental self-efficacy* (Green et al., 2007). These two constructs form the way parents view themselves and consequently motivate their involvement in their children's schooling.

##### ***Parental role construction***

*Parental role construction* refers to parents' personal beliefs about what they should do regarding their child's schooling. In other words how parents best define what they feel is expected of them and how they are practicing their role in terms of the nature of their involvement.



All participants shared their views on their parental role effortlessly. The roles identified by the participants range from limiting their involvement as far as possible, to being involved “behind the scenes”, to being involved at home and on an academic level only, to being overly involved in all aspects of their child.

*“I’m involved with the rugby teams and those things... but almost behind the scenes. You’re always involved, but not always there.” (Anne, interview, 91)*

*[Ek is baie betrokke met die rugby groepe en daai tipe... maar amper agter die skerms. Jy’s heelyd betrokke, maar nie heelyd daar nie.]*

*“At times it feels like I should rather stand back a bit, like I’m perhaps too involved.” (Peter, interview, 38)*

*[Ek voel partykeer asof ek dalk eerder moet wegstaan, asof ek dalk te betrokke is.]*

Most parents, regardless of their approach to their role as parent, mentioned that it is still important to respect their child’s space and privacy. This is often related to the child’s age and wishes to become more independent.

*“So, as far as I can and as far as he wants me to be, I am very involved.” (Mandy, interview, 28)*

*[So, sover ek kan en sover hy wil hê is ek baie betrokke.]*

*“You can’t support your child all the time. To be able to send him into the world, you need to give him wings!” (Jane, narrative exercise)*

*[’n Mens kan nie heelyd agter jou kind staan nie. Om hom die wêreld in te stuur, moet jy hom vlerke gee!]*

One parent indicated that she feels the need to be highly involved on an emotional level, since her child requires that of her. She furthermore explained that she believes her role as parent is to give guidance and demonstrate unconditional love.

*“We believe our role as parents is to offer guidance and confirm to our children at all times that we love them unconditionally.” (Sam, narrative exercise)*

*[Ons glo ons rol as ouer is om leiding te gee en altyd aan ons kinders te bevestig dat ons onvoorwaardelik lief is vir hulle.]*

It was interesting that the majority of participants referred to their spouses, as a major factor determining their parental role - something that the model does not account for. It appears as if parents feel that their role as parent can't be separated from the role and involvement of their spouse. For example, one parent explained that he regards PI as a team effort by both him and his spouse. Since his spouse was more involved in primary school, she stepped back in high school, and now it's his turn to be involved.

This lead to the consideration that perhaps should be given to both parents' involvement adjustment following the transition to high school. Furthermore, it raises the issue of gender roles in a family. As mentioned, it was noticed that only one male participated in the study. Does this give an indication of mothers being predominantly more involved, as expected of them as mothers? As mentioned in the literature review, parents' gender roles have been identified as a primary factor of involvement (Gürbüzürk & Şad, 2013). The researcher reflects on this matter in a following section of this chapter.

### ***Parental self-efficacy***

*Parental self-efficacy* as the second sub-category of parents' motivational beliefs, refers to their beliefs about the ability/inability to contribute to their child's schooling in order to reach desired outcomes. Although this factor forms part of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model, none of the participants reported on it during the interviews. Only once they were directly exposed to the model (in the narrative exercise), a few parents reported on their feelings of adequacy to optimally support their child, while others admitted that they are unable to assist their child with certain Grade 9 subject fields.

One parent shared that her beliefs around her role and efficacy to be a good parent, stem from her own childhood, the role of her parents and her reaction to it as an adolescent. She explained that the result of her parents' under-involvement, was that she "rebelled" in high school. She believes that she can be a better, more involved parent to her child(ren).

Overall, it was clear that each parent's beliefs about their role as parent are primarily guided by personal factors, and the need(s) or invitation for involvement from their (unique) child.

*"You try your best with what you have. The knowledge... your child doesn't come with a manual." (Lora, interview, 54)*

*[Jy probeer die beste doen met dit wat jy het. Die kennis... daar kom nie 'n handboek saam nie.]*

#### **4.4.1.2 Invitations for involvement**

During all three data collection methods, the invitation for involvement was the most referred to category. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI divides the category into three sub-categories, namely *general school invitations*, *specific teacher invitations* and *specific child invitations*. The latter received most consideration with regards to a number of factors (which were clustered into seven different codes).

##### ***General school invitations***

*General school invitations* refer to the school atmosphere, and school practices that ensure that parents are well informed about their child's progress, school requirements, and school events.

The main theme that emerged from discussions around general school invitations was the uncertainty parents experienced currently in high school. They reported feeling uninformed about what was happening at the Blue school, what their children were involved with at high school, and who the educators were. Generally parents highlighted the lack of information they receive from the school. While some parents felt the need to be more informed and have more contact with the school, others expressed feelings of agreement and relief to be able to step back and become less involved at school.

*"The communication (from the school) was somewhat confusing, but if I think about it now, it was probably the best thing that they could have done. Because it matured me in a way." (Anne, interview, 292)*

*[Die kommunikasie (van die skool) was vir my bietjie verwarrend, maar as ek nou daaraan dink is dit seker die beste ding wat hulle kon doen. Want dit het my grootgemaak amper...]*

Parents also reported that although the invitation for involvement from the school is limited, they still feel that they can be involved if they wanted to.

*“Uhm... they (the high school) will ask, but not as I experienced it in primary school. I think here, you come to school and get involved and you do it. Uhm... if you want to be part, then you make yourself part of it.” (Lora, interview, 64)*  
*[Uhm... hulle (die hoërskool) sal vra, maar nie soos in die sin wat ek dit ervaar het by die laerskool nie. Ek dink hierso kom jy skool toe en jy raak betrokke en jy doen dit. Uhm... as jy wil deel wees, dan maak jy jou deel daarvan.]*

On the contrary, another parent feels that the onus lies with the school to create more opportunities for parents. He suggested that the school creates a vehicle for parents to become more involved at the school.

*“I think they (the high school) feel that parents don’t want to be involved, but I think parents actually want to be involved. But I don’t think they have a vehicle through which they can become involved... I think they should create more opportunities for parents to become involved.” (Peter, interview, 78)*  
*[Ek dink hulle (die hoërskool) voel ouers wil nie betrokke wees nie, maar ek dink ouers wil tog graag betrokke wees. Maar ek dink nie hulle het ‘n voertuig om mee betrokke te raak by nie...ek dink hulle moet meer geleentheid skep om ouers betrokke te kry.]*

The lack of invitations from the school is not necessarily seen by parents as something unique to the Blue school, but rather to high school in general. Parents explained that through their contact with other high schools, it seems to be how high schools operate. The fact that the Blue school’s motto symbolizes shaping children into independent adults, and the fact that the Blue school is bigger than most primary schools, were also

considered factors of the lack of communication and PI invitation. However, parents experience the issue more as a typical high school characteristic.

### ***Specific teacher invitations***

Specific teacher invitations refer to requests from teachers for PI in specific activities. Similar to the lack of invitation parents experience from the school in general, parents seem to experience the same from teachers. Only a few parents commented on teachers' influence, and mentioned that they haven't personally met their Grade 9 child's teachers. Parents seem to get an opportunity to meet teachers at parent meetings, but often feel that if they are not urgently required to attend the parent meeting, they don't and subsequently never meet the teachers.

*"I don't want to know to what extent a child needs to cause problems in high school, before the teacher actually contacts the parent. (laughs)" (Sam, interview, 54)*

*[Ek wil nie weet tot watter graad 'n kind moet droogmaak op hoërskool voordat die onderwyser 'actualy' die ouer kontak nie. (lag)]*

Not knowing their child's teachers was described as a novel experience, since parents indicated that they were much more involved in primary school, and had regular contact with all their child's teachers and school staff.

### ***Specific child invitations***

*Specific child invitations* refers to a Grade 9 child's physical, emotional and psychological needs and requests for their parents' involvement. In other words, not necessarily children's direct verbal invitation for their parents' physical involvement, but also indirect invitations which parents are aware of and interpret as a reason to increase or decrease their involvement. Parents reported on this category as the main determinant of their involvement in their Grade 9 child's schooling. A number of factors emerged and were clustered into seven different codes, namely their child's *interests*, *gender*, *emotional wellness*, *learning problems*, *older siblings*, the *parent-child relationship*, and the possibility of the child residing in *boarding school*.

- Their child's interests

Parents' involvement at school seems to be partly determined by the activities their children are involved with. Parents who wish to be more involved at school, explain that they are aware of the fact that their children are not taking part in activities which require their support and this creates an opportunity for their increased PI. School sport was indicated as a major factor, which offers parents opportunities to become involved (such as supporting their child during sport games, working at food/ beverage stands etc.), while fewer opportunities are offered to parents whose children are not playing sports or are involved with activities such as singing in the school choir.

*"But uhm... probably because he (son) isn't very involved with things, they (the school) don't include me or ask me to be involved." (Mandy, interview, 44)*

*[Maar uhm... seker omdat hy (seun) nie self vreeslik betrokke is by goed dat hulle my nie betrek by goed of vra nie.]*

There was, however, no indication of parents' involvement at home being influenced by the child's interests or involvement in activities. The child's interests, therefore, seem to be related to the invitation for involvement from the school, as discussed previously.

- Their child's gender

Although parents' comments on their child's gender were coded as a factor influencing PI, parents of both boys and girls felt that their child's gender increased their PI. While it appeared that boys require more PI during the adolescent phase, similarly parents of Grade 9 girls commented on how girls tend to have more difficulty with social adjustment and therefore require more parental guidance or involvement.

- Their child's emotional wellness

Most parents commented on their child's emotional wellness as an indirect invitation or trigger for their involvement. While some proudly stated that their child's independence and self-efficacy gave them calmness and reassurance to become less involved with schoolwork and physical activities, other parents are experiencing an increased need

for their involvement due to their child's emotional instability. The majority of parents, who described their children as "happy" and "satisfied" (with school and life in general), acknowledged that it directly affected their children's limited invitation for PI. These parents further attribute factors such as their child's personality, positivity, self-confidence, physical appearance and social boldness to their emotional wellness.

*"Tony (pseudonym) is happy, he's extremely happy. And I think the moment your child is happy and he's at least not failing... yes, there is not a great need (for involvement)." (Jane, interview, 36)*

*[Tony is gelukkig, hy's ontsettend gelukkig. En ek dink sodra mens se kind gelukkig is en hy darem nie drui nie, dink ek sal mens moeilik... ja, daar is nie 'n groot aanvraag nie.]*

- Learning problems

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) was the only learning problem identified by parent participants. Their concern about it was small, as they explained that it played a bigger role in increasing their involvement in school/ homework during primary school.

- Older siblings

As illustrated in Table 4.1, most parents have more than one child. Parents whose Grade 9 child is their eldest, stated that the unfamiliarity of high school in general and the uncertainty that goes with it, increased their PI. Furthermore, it seems as if parents who experience high school for the first time, find it difficult to let go of their child.

*"But I think it's because he is my oldest child. I realize that he is growing up, but I don't want to let go of him yet." (Rita, interview, 28)*

*[Maar ek dink dit is omdat hy my oudste kind is. Ek besef hy raak nou groot, maar ek wil hom nog nie laat gaan nie]*

Parents who have taken an older child through high school, explained that it decreased their involvement with their current Grade 9 child, since they are familiar with what to expect in high school.

*“Tanya (pseudonym) passed through (high school) and now Tony is busy, so it’s a familiar environment for me.” (Jane, interview, 70)*

*[Tanya was hier deur en nou kom Tony deur, so dit is vir my ‘n bekende omgewing.]*

Therefore, it seems that the rank in which parents’ Grade 9 child is in relation to their older or younger siblings, influences parents’ experience of their involvement.

- The parent-child relationship

The quality of their relationship with their child was indicated by parents as an important aspect. All parents who commented on their relationship as a factor, stated that they have a good relationship with their Grade 9 child. However, the implications thereof were two-fold. Some parents explained that the close friendship-like relationships with their children allow them to be more involved in their personal lives, school work, and activities. Other parents explained that they feel comfortable with being less involved with their child’s schooling in general, since they trust their child to communicate the need for their involvement when needed.

In general, parents seem to maintain a similar relationship with their children from primary school to high school. Although they indicated that the teenage phase often negatively influences their relationship with their child, parents generally have good healthy relationships with their Grade 9 children, which allowed them to be as involved as the child requires them to be.

Erik Erikson addresses PI in his seventh stage of psychosocial development, middle adulthood (Didier, 2014). According to this widely respected theorist, parents in middle adulthood tend to maintain healthy involved relationships with their children, if they were successfully able to undergo a process of transitioning *with* their children. This highlights the notion that adolescents are not experiencing a process of development



and adaptation at the beginning of high school in isolation, but rather simultaneously with their parents. Krause and Haverkamp (1996, p. 84) add that “unlike other relationships, the parent-child relationship is one that denotes a high degree of bonding across the entire life cycle.”

- Boarding school

A final factor added by a parent, was the possibility of a child residing in a boarding school, and the direct influence it might have on PI. No parents in this study reported that their child was in boarding school, yet it was mentioned that parents might be forced to decrease their involvement when a child goes to boarding school for the first time in high school.

Considering all the factors raised through this category, it is clear that PI is a personal construct, formed by each child’s unique needs and context. The parent participants all indicated how they adapt their PI according to the mentioned factors. Therefore, it could be said that the child seems to be the major determinant of PI. Although no pattern was identified as to which child-specific factor plays the most significant role, it highlights the notion that parents seem to be adapting their involvement according to their child’s specific needs. This confirms the argument made by Maras and Aveling (2006, p. 196) in the literature review that “effective communication between support services (e.g. the school), the child and parents can facilitate successful transitions by allowing support to be tailored to individual students’ needs”. In this study, invitations from the school or rather the lack thereof, was found to be another major factor which generally seems to decrease PI.

It was noted that these factors were not necessarily factors of invitation for involvement requested directly from children, but rather determining factors identified by parents themselves. The lack of direct invitation for involvement from the majority of children, which is mostly due to age-related factors, seems to force a decrease in their parents’ involvement. This is discussed further in a following section.

#### 4.4.1.3 Life Context

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI includes parents' life context as a possible determinant of parental home and school involvement. Further, the model (2005) divides the category into three subcategories namely *skills and knowledge*; *time and energy*; and *socio-economic status (SES)*. These three sub-categories will now be discussed in terms of parent participants' experiences thereof.

##### ***Skills and knowledge***

This sub-category refers to parents' perception of their own personal skills and knowledge which shape their concept of the kinds of involvement activities they are able or unable to undertake.

It appears that parents do not regard their skills and knowledge as a significant determining factor of their PI, since none reported on it during the interviews. Only after the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI was presented to parents (through the narrative exercise), did a few report on their lack of skills and knowledge to assist their child with academic Grade 9 school work (e.g. Grade 9 Mathematics).

##### ***Time and energy***

Demands on parents' time and energy, particularly in relation to other family responsibilities and varied work responsibilities, or constraints that influence parents' involvement in their child's schooling, were identified as the most relevant sub-category influencing parents' life contexts, and subsequently their involvement. More specifically, two clusters of codes were drawn up: *occupation* and *family size*.

- Occupation

All parents' working lives significantly determine their PI in two ways. While some parents adjust their involvement in their child's schooling according to their professional working lives or career trends, other parents approach it the other way around. These parents' careers and working hours are tailored according to their desired level of PI.

Parents in full-time working positions mostly reported being less involved than they wish to be. Their professional lives restrict them from attending weekend sport games, parent meetings etc.

*“My job requires a lot and I work very hard. I think my lifestyle too, it’s tough. So I work at a very high tempo, uhm... and I think it does influence my involvement.”  
(Jane, interview, 50)*

*[My werk vereis baie en ek werk baie hard. Ek dink my lewenstyl ook, dit gaan rof. So ek werk teen ‘n baie hoë spoed, uhm... en ek dink dit beïnvloed ook wel my betrokkenheid.]*

Parents who chose specific occupations to allow them to be involved in their child’s schooling, appeared satisfied and comfortable with their life contexts, despite other possible constraints their work style leads to.

*“But I’m very, very involved. That’s why I have this job, so that I have my own time. Money isn’t available when you don’t work, but I mean, at least I’m available to them (children) when they want to let me know “mom, I forgot something, can you bring it to school.” (Rita, interview, 30)*

*[Maar eks baie baie betrokke. Dis juis waarom ek hierdie werk het, sodat ek my eie tyd het. Die geld is nou nie daar as jy nie werk nie, maar ek bedoel ten minste het hulle (kinders) vir my tot hulle beskikking as hulle wil laat weet “mamma, ek het iets vergeet, kan mamma dit vir my bring by die skool.]*

- Family size

The number of children parents have and parents’ equal availability of time and energy for their children, seems to be another influence on parents’ experience of their involvement. Many parents mentioned that they feel restricted in their involvement with their Grade 9 child, since their other child(ren) require(s) involvement too. As mentioned before (section 4.4.1.2), the rank of the Grade 9 child in terms of his siblings also plays a role in PI.

*“Yes, it isn’t always easy. Different personalities and different grades they (her 3 children) are in at school... so it (being involved) is quite a challenge.” (Rita, interview, 12)*

*[Ja, dis nie altyd maklik nie. Verskillende persoonlikhede en verskillende Grade waarin hulle (3 kinders) is in die skool... so dit (betrokkenheid) is nogal ‘n “challenge”. (lag)]*

### **Socio-Economic Status (SES)**

As illustrated by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI, SES forms the third sub-category of the Life Context of a parent and therefore seen as a determining factor of PI in their children’s schooling. More specifically, SES refers to a parent’s position in society as determined by their financial income, occupation and social class.

Interestingly, very few parents’ commented on SES and their involvement. Closely linked to the prior factor (family size), one participant mentioned during her interview that she would not have been able to adjust her working hours to be more available to her child, had she had more than one child. The parent illustrated how her SES, linked to her financial income, relates to her desired level of PI and general lifestyle.

*“I stopped working when he started school, so I wouldn’t have done it if there were another... or wouldn’t have been able to do it financially, if there was more than one child.” (Mandy, interview, 66)*

*[Ek het ophou werk toe hy skool toe begin gaan het, so ek sou dit nie gedoen het as daar nog... of sou kon doen sê nou maar finansieël, as daar natuurlik meer as een (kind) was nie.]*

Another parent, after being exposed to the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model, commented on SES as a given factor, but disregarded it as something she and her husband experience as an influence on their PI.

*“Honesty, perseverance and commitment in my opinion speak louder than financial status. We both (mother and father) come from difficult financial*

*backgrounds, but always knew our parents could stand up to anyone. ” (Sam, narrative exercise)*

*[Eerlikheid, volharding en “commitment” in my opinie spreek harder as finansiële stand. Ons het beide (deelneemer en haar man) uit swaar finansiële agtergrond gekom, maar altyd geweet ons ouers staan vir niemand terug nie.]*

The context and homogeneity of participants, as discussed earlier (section 4.2) should be considered here. The socio-economic status of participants as a bounded unit, perhaps allowed them to have access to the necessary resources to become less (or more) involved in their children’s schooling. As an example, parents reported on the availability of private transport to take their children to school, and technology to effectively communicate with their children. Perhaps the research findings would sketch a different picture, were the study conducted in a different or lower SES-setting. As mentioned in chapter two, a determining factor for over-involvement seems to be linked to socio-economic status (Dumont et al., 2013). Although parents in this study reported on a general decrease in PI following the transition to high school, it could be said that they are still equipped financially to be involved to an extended degree.

#### **4.4.1.4 Age**

The developmental age of a child was the final factor included by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI. In this study, it specifically refers to parents’ Grade 9 child’s age-related features which motivate or discourage parents to be involved in their child’s schooling. It became clear that parents are experiencing their child’s age as a major influence on their involvement to various degrees. Consequently, three sub-categories emerged, namely *physical development* (including hormonal development and maturity), *awkwardness* and *technology*.

#### ***Physical development***

As explained in the research literature in chapter two, the physical changes adolescents undergo are quite indicative of the life stage. Parents seem to agree fully that their Grade 9 child’s development influences their involvement regarding their hormonal

development and maturity. These two factors were identified and used as clusters of codes.

Several parents reported on the pubertal stage their child is undergoing, which typically includes mood swings, their child's first interest in the opposite sex etc. Overall, parents seemed to acknowledge the characteristics of their child's development, and agreed to adapt their PI accordingly and respect their child's privacy, although it mostly forced them to become less involved. It was noticed that parents seemed to feel that, contrary to their wishes, the communication and interaction with their Grade 9 child was being limited.

*"When I argue with him, he'll quickly tell me he's not a child, or ask why am I being rude to him. Sensitive! Yes, you never know what you may or may not talk about. About girls and things like that."(Peter, interview, 46)*

*[As ek met hom raas, dan sal hy baie vining vir my sê hy's nie 'n kind nie, of hoekom is ek nou lelik met hom. Sensitief! Ja, jy kan nie weet waarom jy kan praat en weet waarom jy nie kan praat nie. Oor meisies en sulke goed.]*

Furthermore, it appears as if parents experience some feelings of uncertainty or inability to understand their child, especially if they are first time teenage parents.

*"It makes it very difficult, because I know she's going through the whole emotion... And now it's boys-girls, now it's girlfriends with boyfriends... uhm... because she will lie in bed the whole day on her phone... and just read a book or something, and then I'll think "is she OK?" Where do you start worrying whether perhaps she isn't depressed?" (Lora, interview, 52)*

*[...dit maak dit baie moeilik, want ek weet sy gaan deur die hele emosie... en nou is dit seuns-meisies, nou is dit vriendinne wat kêrels het...Uhm...want sy sal sommer die hele dag in haar bed kan lê en net op haar selfoon... en net 'n boek lees of so en dan dink ek "is sy OK?". Waar begin jy bekommerd raak, het sy nie dalk depressie nie?]*

Related to the child's invitation for involvement and emotional wellness, one parent mentioned that she believed her child's emotional dependence was linked to her child's delayed hormonal development. The parent explained that her Grade 9 daughter was developing slower physically than her peers, which was causing a lot of stress. Consequently, her daughter required increased support and involvement from her parent(s).

Similar to the influence of hormonal development on PI, parents seem to experience their Grade 9 child's level of maturity at this specific developmental stage as a factor which decreases their involvement. Parents expressed feelings of surprise and pride about their children's sudden independence. Parents reported on incidences where their children would reject assistance offered by them.

*"She's like... I'd ask "what task do you have, let's do it like this", and then she would say "mom, leave me, I can do it myself". (Lora, interview, 38)*

*[Sy is van... ek vra "watse taak het jy, kom ons doen dit so", dan sê sy "mamma, los my, ek kan dit self doen".]*

Again, contrary to the majority, one parent explained that she felt her child was still emotionally dependent, less mature and therefore she felt obliged to increase her involvement.

### **Awkwardness**

Perhaps the most frequently mentioned sub-category of "age" as an influencing factor on PI, was awkwardness experienced by Grade 9 children in terms of their parents' involvement or attempts to become involved. Parents mainly reported feeling restricted in their actions, communication (as also mentioned before) and with regards to information about their children's personal lives. Parents effortlessly gave examples of how, since the beginning of high school, they were not allowed to support their child next to the sports field as they used to in primary school, they were not allowed to call them certain

pet names, they were not allowed to come to school (or too close to the school gate), and they were not allowed to ask too many questions anymore.

*“... when he was in primary school, I was very involved. And when he got to high school, he suddenly decided “don’t come to school mom, it won’t be cool... it’s uncool for mom to be here, so don’t”. I’m allowed to do things, but then it has to... uhm... be through a letter or a donation, but I’m not allowed to come here and organize something.” (Anne, interview, 38)*

*[...toe hy op laerskool was, was ek baie betrokke. En toe hy op hoërskool kom het hy ewe skielik besluit “moenie skool toe kom nie, mamma, dit gaan nie cool... dis uncool vir mamma om hier te wees, so moenie”. Ek mag goed doen, maar dan moet dit.. uhm... wees deur ‘n briefie of ‘n skenking of ‘n donasie, maar ek moet nie hiernatoe kom en iets reël nie.]*

Parents reported feeling forced to become less involved and rather be available for when their child requested their involvement, or adapting their involvement to be more involved indirectly (for example, by supporting the school financially.).

*“Lee (pseudonym) is 14 years old, with teenage moods... doesn’t really want me to be involved, unless he or the school asks.” (Mandy, narrative exercise)*

*[Lee is 14 jaar, op tiener “moods”... wil nie regtig hê ek moet betrokke raak, teensy so gevra deur hom of die skool.]*

### **Technology**

Technology, or more specifically children’s use of cell phones and social networks, was identified by a small part of the participant group as an age-related influencing factor of their involvement in their child’s schooling. Some parents felt that cell phones decrease involvement, since adolescents seem to prefer rather spending time on their phones and social networks, than engaging with their parents.

*“The cell phone or social networks have an influence, as it complicates involvement.” (Anne, narrative exercise)*

*[Die selfoon of sosiale netwerke het ‘n invloed in dat dit betrokkenheid bemoeilik.]*



On the contrary, it was reported that the use of cell phones created an alternative communication channel through which parents could become more involved, especially regarding practical arrangements and support.

Considering the nature of the research topic, age is a central and unavoidable factor of change (Green et al., 2007). The child's age is furthermore especially relevant, since the beginning of high school marks the onset of a major developmental stage, adolescence, which in turn influences PI. As mentioned in the literature review, Hanewald (2013) explains that adolescence is characterized by an adjustment of roles, expectations, identities, new relationships and new interactions for both children and their families. Again, families experience this in unique ways. While the majority of parents indicated a decrease in their involvement partly due to their high school child's feelings of awkwardness and their own experience of behaviour being restricted, other parents felt that their children demanded an increase in their PI due to their emotional dependence during the early stages of "a challenging developmental phase". Therefore, it seems that children's age forces parents to adapt, and mostly decreases their involvement, according to the child's experience of adolescence.

#### **4.4.1.5 Feelings**

Feelings is an added category, which emerged spontaneously during data collection, especially during the interviews. Parents generally reported on their current experience of their PI in high school with reference to feelings of comfort (*Content*), devotion (*Dedication*) and/or stress (*Challenge*), which formed the three sub-categories.

As with most other categories and sub-categories, parents reported on various ways, mainly dependent on their child, and their unique circumstances. Overall, parents appeared comfortable and generally satisfied (*Content*) with their current involvement in their child's schooling. Similarly, parents reported on feeling dedicated (*Dedication*) to their children, not because they felt obligated to, but because it brought them joy. Some parents mentioned that they would put themselves second to be involved with their children, because of how they experienced their own parents' involvement (or the lack

thereof). Several other parents seemed to feel challenged (*Challenge*) in their efforts to adjust to the changes related to the school and their child. These parents admitted that they experienced their current involvement as challenging in relation to how they experienced it in primary school.

Van Ingen and Moore (2010) explain that effectiveness of PI depends on three factors, namely: the continuum between acceptance and rejection; different authority prototypes; and the degree of consistency of involvement. According to these authors, “parents who have high levels of nurturance and warmth, a high level of acceptance, parent with a high degree of consistency, and demonstrate an authoritative prototype, have a greater likelihood to let go and allow adult children to become independent and lead useful lives.” Parents in this study indicated a strong sense of dedication to be as consistently involved as possible, to the benefit of their children. As reflected by the researcher in her research notes, parents seemed prepared to do what they have to, to be “good” or effective parents, and could perhaps still be in the process of “letting go”, as explained by Van Ingen and Moore (2010).

The above discussion of the first theme explored parents’ current experiences of their PI in high school. Although not discussed as a separate theme, parents greatly reported on their different experiences of involvement in primary school in relation to how they were currently experiencing it in high school. In response to the research sub-question; *do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school*, it became evident that parents indeed adapt their involvement in their children’s schooling.

#### **4.4.2 THEME TWO: PARENTS’ EXPERIENCE OF THE TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO HIGH SCHOOL**

Theme two, its categories and sub-categories emerged during the data collection process and were constructed and coded accordingly. The theme focused on parents’ experience of the transition from primary to high school. In other words, parents’ experience of the emotional and physical move from one (primary) school to another (high school). Emerged categories include *Adjustment* (by parents; and by children, as

perceived by parents), *Feelings* (of parents; and of children, as perceived by parents), as well as *Expectations* parents experienced (of their child and of the school).

#### **4.4.2.1 Adjustment**

Throughout the data collection process, it became clear that parents often compared their current experiences to past experiences of their involvement in primary school. When questions were posed to explore their experience of the transition, parents were able to summarize certain patterns of adjustment. Interestingly, parents did not only report on their own adjustment during the transition, but also their perception of their child's adaption to high school. Consequently, this category greatly supported the researcher in answering the research sub-questions: *Do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school? and Can a pattern of change be identified in terms of their involvement?*

#### ***Adjustment by parents***

All parents reported on experiencing their current involvement in a different way to how it was in primary school. Terms such as "transformation" and "metamorphosis" were used to express their experience of drastic change following the transition to high school.

*"You can't compare primary school to high school. It's light years apart. So yes, our involvement definitely decreased." (Peter, interview, 26)*

*[Jy kan nie laerskool en hoërskool betrokkenheid vergelyk nie. Dis ligjare van mekaar. So ja, ons betrokkenheid het definitief minder geraak.]*

However, parents seemed to feel similarly willing to be involved, where and when their child showed an indication or presents an invitation for involvement. Parents came across as very involved, and through their devotion, they indicated a preference to stay as involved as they were in primary school. It appears that the major factors which forced their involvement to decrease (as mentioned in theme one), were more specifically related to their child and the high school.

*“...but in high school, you know, it is different. I don’t think how I see myself as a parent changed. No, I think I see myself as Tony’s (pseudonym) mom who needs to act in his interest. And when it’s expected of me to jump in, then I’ll do it.”(Jane, interview, 56)*

*[...maar in hoërskool, weet jy, dit is anders. Ek dink nie hoe ek myself sien as ouer het verander nie. Nee, ek dink ek sien myself as Tony se mamma wat in sy belang moet optree. En as daar van my verwag word om in te gryp, dan doen ek dit.]*

Overall, parents agreed that, irrespective of the various reasons therefore, their PI decreased following the transition from primary to high school. Furthermore, the decrease seems to be more clearly related to physical and school involvement (such as supporting sport games, going to the school and assisting with homework), than emotional involvement and support.

### ***Adjustment by children, as experienced by parents***

Apart from their own adjustments made in terms of PI, parents reported on their perceptions of adjustment made by their children, which indirectly also influenced their involvement. These include adjustments around academic school work, friends, independence, and the Blue School.

While parents reported on their initial need to increase their involvement when they became aware of their children’s sudden drop in grades and/or social challenges of making new friends in high school, they also explained how surprised and proud they were to realize that their children were becoming independent and adjusted well without their direct support.

*“I had appreciation for it, because all of a sudden, Jack (pseudonym) went from a ...uhm... needy child, to a “I’m perfectly fine, I’m studying by myself.” I don’t even know when he’s writing what, he does his own thing. He’d tell me “listen, I have to be at school, just drop me and pick me up at this time”.” (Anne, interview, 316)*

*[Ek het dit baie waardeer, want ewe skielik het Jack van 'n ...uhm... wat 'n needy kind gegaan, na 'n "ek is doodreg, ek leer self my werk". Ek weet nie eens wanneer hy wat skryf nie, hy doen self sy ding. Hy sê vir my "hoor hier, ek moet by die skool wees, gaan laai my net af en kom tel my weer so laat op."]*

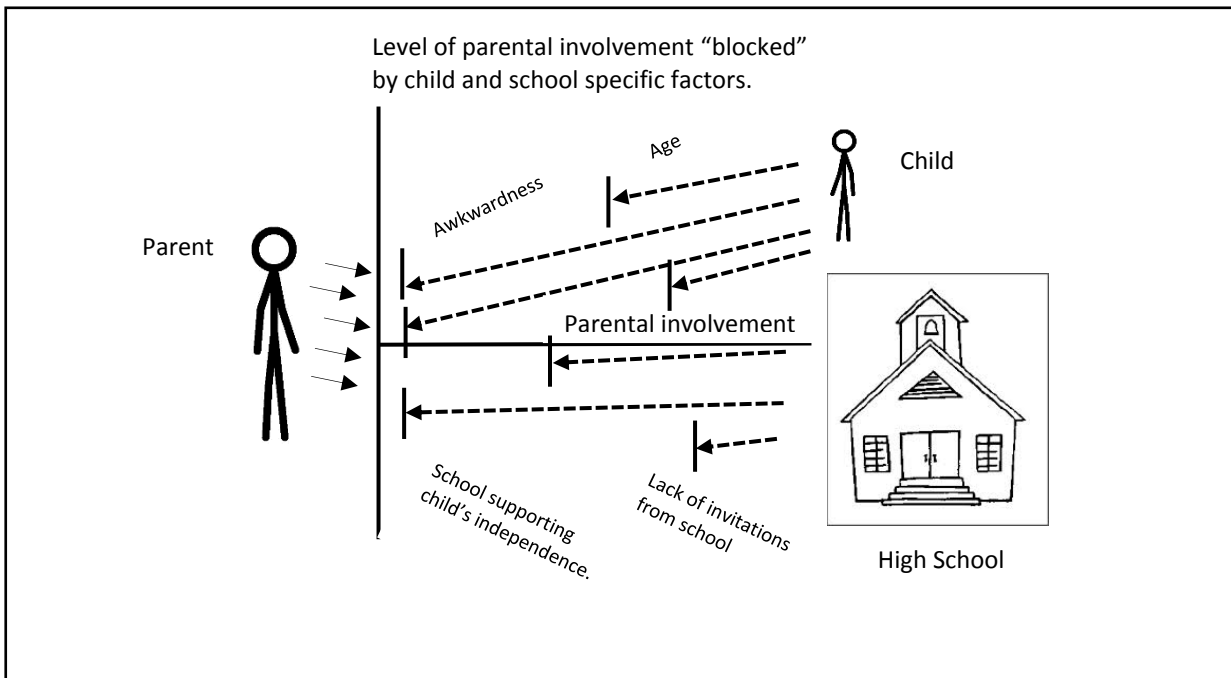
They especially praised the Blue School's contribution to their children's overall positive adjustment, and appeared grateful for the gentle, thoughtful manner in which the school welcomed and accommodated their children since their first high school day. Again, parents made it clear that they struggled to adjust to the lack of communication from the Blue School, but felt comfortable with how their children seemed to adjust better to it than themselves.

This section of Theme Two provides rich information describing how parents adapt their involvement following the transition from primary to high school. While parents indicated a definite trend of decreasing their PI in high school, it appears as if they still preferred to remain (highly) involved, as they were in primary school, but that certain factors restricted their involvement. Although factors are unique to each parent and child, the two most significant factors that seem to be restricting parents' involvement are identified as the child's age (feelings of awkwardness, maturity and lack of invitation for involvement) and the high school (the lack of information shared and invitations given by the school).

The researcher used an analogy (illustrated by figure 4.3) of magnets to illustrate the interpretation of the findings. The parent, child and school are seen as magnets, each with their own magnetic field. The parent seems to be strongly attracted to his/her child in the form of involvement. However, an opposing field from the child and the school is pushing the parent away, blocking PI and almost forcing the parent to become less involved. More specifically it seems to occur due to factors such as, and amongst others, the lack of invitations for involvement from the school, their child's age and related feelings of awkwardness. This seems to leave the parent with feelings of anxiety and worry, while the child appears generally calm and positive. Whenever needed, the

parent seems happy to be involved to the furthest extent the child and school allows or invites him/her to be.

Thus, it appeared that parents adapted their involvement in their children's schooling from highly involved and invited to be involved by the child and primary school, to less involved due to factors such as the decrease in invitation to become involved from the child and high school.



**Figure 4.3: Analogy of parents' experience of their involvement in their high school child's schooling.**

Considering the notion of age-appropriate PI (as discussed in chapter two), the expected outcome when exploring parents' perceptions of PI in their children's schooling following the transition from primary to high school, seems to be a pattern of PI decreasing as children move through school (Hill & Craft, 2003; Chen & Gregory, 2009). This might be linked to adolescents' lowered need for direct support and increased need for independence and autonomy (Gürbütürk & Şad, 2013). In general, Lemmer (2000) states that in South African schools few parents appear actively involved, and further decrease their involvement after the first few years of school.

However, this perception greatly depends on the definition of, or approach to PI being used. The continuity of support from parents throughout the transition to high school is proven to be beneficial (Maras & Aveling, 2006). The nature of parental support is what should adapt according to the child's needs from primary to high school. The role of the 'parent' therefore changes during adolescence to that of a 'mentor', and finally, during adulthood, to that of a 'friend' (A. van der Vyver, personal communication, September 27, 2012).

Exploring across-time effects of PI, Grolnick, et al. (2000) reported that after the transition to high school, a drop in mothers' involvement was found in their school involvement, while their cognitive and personal involvement remained unchanged. According to Grolnick et al. (2000), and corresponding with the research findings, this might be linked to the school's decreased invitation for PI.

Finally, in their study on PI in children's learning in the United States and China, Cheung and Pomerantz (2011) explain that decreased PI during early adolescence may hold negative consequences, since children are particularly vulnerable to losing interest in school during this phase of development. Again, it is clear that no specific guidelines exist around PI during this phase, since it depends greatly on the individual child's needs. This makes it a complex matter involving ongoing re-evaluation and changes (Van Ingen & Moore, 2010) unique to each parent and child. Again, it is clear that the findings of this study correspond with existing literature.

#### **4.4.2.2 Feelings**

Feelings, as a second category, refer to parents' overall feelings about their experience of the transition from primary to high school, as well as their perceptions of children's feelings.

##### ***Parent feelings***

Parents' feelings about their experience of the transition to high school seem personal and unique to each parent. Yet, the majority of parents expressed their feelings of stress and concern. They indicated that the adjustment to become less involved was difficult, since they were unsure of how to let go of their child.

*“Yes, I had difficulty adapting myself. It was very difficult, since I’m extremely protective towards both my children. I wasn’t calm at all last year. I was completely beside myself. I considered taking medication at some stage... (laughs) because it was very bad for me... to almost let go of your child, and to say I don’t have to help with work anymore, I don’t have to anymore, he does it himself. Uhm... so for myself, it was very difficult.” (Anne, interview, 106)*

*[Ja, ek het self aangepas baie moeilik. Dit was vir my baie moeilik want ek is ongelooflik beskermd oor altwee my kinders. Ek was verlede jaar glad nie kalm nie. Ek was heeltemal buite myself. Ek het op ‘n stadium gedink ek moet dalk begin medikasie gebruik... (lag) want dit was vir my baie erg... om amper jou kind te laat gaan, en te sê ek hoef nie meer te help met die werk nie, ek hoef nie meer nie, hy doen dit self. Uhm... so dit was vir my in myself, dit was baie moeilik.]*

However, it should be noted that some parents reported experiencing the transition as pleasant and positive. It was evident that these parents’ positive experience was greatly linked to their children’s positive experience of the transition and adjustment in high school.

### ***Child’s feelings, as perceived by parents***

How parents perceived their children’s feelings about the transition to high school seem to play a definite role in how parents perceived it. Consequently, parents seldom referred to their own feelings in isolation.

*“The transition... increased the anxiety in him, and that increased my involvement.” (Anne, interview, 281)*

*[Die oorgang... het die angstigheid in hom verhoog, en dit het ook my betrokkenheid verhoog.]*

According to parents, their children mostly experienced the transition in a positive light, and overall less stressful than they, as parents, experienced it themselves.



*“No, it was my concern. So he was totally calm. But I stressed.” (Mandy, interview, 72)*

*[Nee, dit was my bekommernis. So hy was heel gerus. Maar ek het gestres.]*

*“To me he was so cute and I think that made me even more emotional. He said the school is so beautiful. He’s very positive! He is so proud of the school and enjoys it terribly.” (Rita, interview, 68)*

*[Hy was vir my so oulik en ek dink dit het my nog meer emosioneel gemaak. Hy’t gesê die skool is so mooi. Hy’s baie positief! Hy is so trots op die skool en geniet dit vreeslik.]*

The various feelings parents reported on in their discussion of their experience of their current involvement in high school were closely related to their feelings about the transition from primary to high school. While parents admitted that they felt uncomfortable and concerned during the transition to high school, with time they adjusted and were currently experiencing fewer feelings of concern. Parents’ feelings were further influenced to a great extent by their perceptions of their children’s feelings. Their perception of their child to be well-adjusted and settled offered them a sense of relief and adjustment too. In general, when parents’ feelings were compared to those of their children, parents seemed more anxious and worried during the transition to high school.

This supports the explanation given regarding parents’ adjustment. Parents’ feelings of confusion and anxiety seem to have stemmed from their discomfort about decreasing their involvement against their inherent wishes.

#### **4.4.2.3 Expectations**

The various expectations parents had about the transition to high school, and more specifically about their children and about high school, emerged as a final theme.

It appears as if parents’ main expectations about their child when entering high school were that there would be a decrease in academic achievement, and a general decrease

in their need for PI. Furthermore, another parent mentioned that she expected her daughter to take on a new identity in high school, since she entered a new, unbiased environment, with new friends.

Parents' expectations about the school itself ranged from the fear they experienced with their child about seniors (Grade 12 pupils) who would treat their child disrespectfully especially during initiation; getting lost in a strange, big school building; and not being able to adjust socially or meet new friends.

Mentioning their expectations could perhaps have been another way for parents to express the feelings of concern they experienced. Parents who mentioned the expectations they had in terms of their child and the school generally also reported on experiencing the transition to be challenging and difficult. Their expectations were consistent with existing literature indicating that parents' concerns mostly revolve around social, academic and organizational concerns (Smith et al., 2008), as mentioned in chapter two.

### ***In summary***

The above discussion of the second theme lead to the answering of the second sub-question. The researcher feels confident in reporting that a pattern of change was identified in terms of parents' involvement. The pattern showed greatly that parents decreased their involvement in their children's schooling, following the transition from primary school to high school.

Furthermore, it became evident that PI is in fact no simple phenomenon (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). In accordance with the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI, multiple variables (also referred to as sources of motivation (Green, et al., 2007)) contribute to how parents experience their involvement. The factors given by the model, as well as those that emerged through the data collection process, are uniquely experienced by each parent and related to each parent. Therefore, PI could be seen as a dynamic, personal and somewhat exclusive experience or construct. This assisted the researcher in reporting on the broad patterns identified, with the realization that the

identified patterns are merely an indication of how parents in this specific case study context expressed their experiences.

When attempting to answer the main research question, the researcher was reminded that the answer cannot be separated from the sub-questions. Parents' current experiences of their involvement in the case study is greatly determined by the adaption of their PI following the transition from primary to high school.

Figure 4.3 can be used again to illustrate the experiences of PI at the beginning of high school, and, therefore, to answer the main research question. While no two parents described their involvement in their child's schooling in precisely the same manner, all parents in the study explained that they were involved at the beginning of high school, although not to their desired degree, but rather guided by their child and the school's limited invitation for involvement. It could be said that their efforts to be involved were blocked by their child (in terms of factors such as their age and developing independence) and the school (in terms of the school's lack of invitation for PI). Thus, a pattern of becoming less involved in their child's schooling during early high school years was indicated. However, parents seem to experience strong feelings of dedication which motivated them to stay consistent in their support and be as involved as possible, to the benefit of their child.

#### **4.5 PERSONAL REFLECTIONS**

Throughout the process of data analysis, and as an active agent of the research study, the researcher engaged in a reflective process. Merriam (2009) encourages researchers to do so, as it offers an opportunity to untangle possible assumptions or biases regarding the study. By articulating and clarifying the researcher's own experiences, worldview and assumptions, the researcher creates a better understanding of how data was interpreted and conclusions reached, to the researcher herself, as well as the reader (Merriam, 2009).

From the onset of the first data collection instrument, the theoretical Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI came alive to the researcher. Prior to exposing parents

to the model, the researcher noted how parents discussed the factors of the model through conversation (during the interviews). This gave the researcher the assurance that the model was suitable to explore the research questions. From the researcher's field notes, it is clear that this was a recurring realization.

Relating to the model, the researcher quickly came to realize that the factors of the model, together with the emerged factors, overlap greatly. No factor can be reported on in isolation, without considering parents' overall experience of their PI and their interpretation and feelings about other factors. The overlap between factors such as the child's age, and the child's invitations for involvement, the parent's life context and the parent's adjustment of involvement, reminded the researcher that the model as a whole equals more than the sum of its parts. It also reassured the researcher that all factors are applicable and together form PI, as a complex phenomenon.

Although not experienced from all parent participants, at times during data collection some appeared to share their experiences in a favourable or perhaps socially desirable manner. It made the researcher aware of participants' tendency to impress the researcher. This again highlighted the ethical responsibilities of the researcher and the effort that needs to be put into the researcher's approach in conducting the research in a non-judgmental manner which portrays unconditional acceptance, free from expectations. The researcher noted that some parents appeared somewhat anxious, self-aware, or in need of impressing the researcher. To illustrate, one participant stated the following:

*"Perhaps I wouldn't have participated in the study if he (child) was a difficult child." (Sophie, interview, 46)*

*[Ek sou dalk nie wou deelneem aan die studie, as hy (kind) 'n moeilike kind was nie.]*

The researcher came to realize that parents' participation in the study alone raised awareness of PI, as a goal of the research study. During a discussion about the narrative activity, one participant mentioned that he had been thinking about his involvement in his child's schooling ever since he received the first correspondence

about the study and the research topic. The researcher also experienced various incidents where, during discussions, parents' spontaneously brought themselves to certain realizations about their involvement. Although it was not the aim of the study to engage with participants in a therapeutic manner, indirectly it seemed that it still provided an opportunity to parents for self-exploration and reflection.

The final observation and reflection made by the researcher was around the composition of the participant pool. It was marked that only one father (male) showed interest in taking part in the research study, and became a participant. This made the researcher aware of the importance of the role of mother vs. father with regards to involvement. During the interview, the father-participant referred to how other fathers might possibly respond to certain research questions, which indicated his assumption that other fathers would also have participated in the study, and might feel similarly involved in their children's schooling. Could it be said that, in this case study, fathers seem less involved in their children's schooling? Although not the aim of the study, it created an opportunity for the researcher to think, reflect and possibly explore this separate issue as another project.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The research findings indicated that the transition from primary to high school plays a significant role in how parents experience their involvement in their adolescent child's schooling. Although a general pattern of decreased involvement in high school was indicated, it was clear that parents, together with their spouses, experience their PI in a unique way as determined by many relevant contextual factors. In general, it appears as if the transition from primary to high school is a stage of adjustment for both children and their parents.

Parents' experiences resonated with existing literature on, amongst others, the complexity of PI as a construct, its many determining factors (as shown by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of Parental Involvement), and age-relevance. Moreover, the research data indicated original findings and interpretations.

The final chapter serves as an overall conclusion to the research study, by discussing its strengths and limitations, and providing recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter, the research process as a whole is concluded by a discussion of concluding remarks, as well as strengths and possible limitations of the study. A discussion of recommendations for future research will also be given.

As the researcher takes a final step in rounding off the study, the research questions are posed once more:

- 1.) What are parents' experiences of their involvement at the beginning of high school?
  - 1.1) Do parents adapt their involvement over the transition from primary to high school?
  - 1.2) Can a pattern of change be identified in terms of their involvement?

As discussed in the previous chapter and based on the research case study design, the research question and its sub-questions can be answered together as follows: The nature of PI at the beginning of high school appears to be adapted from a relatively high degree of involvement in primary school, to a decreased degree of involvement in high school, as determined by specific invitations for involvement and the lack thereof, from their adolescent child and from the high school.

#### 5.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Throughout the research process, the complex nature of PI as a multidimensional construct was repeatedly proven. To define the term was perhaps the first and most daunting challenge. It required deep and thorough exploration of the term and related topics. To the researcher's dismay, it was found that most studies define PI differently. However, the researcher gained true understanding of these differences through engaging in her own research participants' varied views and approaches to PI. The study, therefore, gave the researcher first-hand experience of the genuine complexity of

the term, and for that reason the broader outlines of her study too. Consequently, PI in this study referred to home and school involvement as a multidimensional construct (Green et al., 2007) that may impact on a child's present or future existence. Within this definition, the "richness and power of every unique parent and family" is valued (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006, p. 191).

However challenging for the researcher, defining and mapping the definition of PI for the purpose of the study sketched a clearer picture of what PI entails, who it involves and so forth. Similarly, schools might benefit from collaboratively defining PI in their unique context to form their own clear ideas around what is expected from parents, from the school and children. With consideration of the various factors that contribute to or inhibit PI in a specific school, such as those presented in this study and by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model, collaboration between parents, schools and children could be strengthened and possible uncertainties or misconceptions prevented. Perhaps schools are not aware of how great their parents' need is for an opportunity to become more involved at school, or perhaps high school parents simply long for an explanation why they are not being included in as many activities as before. Perhaps through studies such as this, guidelines can be presented to schools to help define PI in their specific contexts.

The bio-ecological systems theory highlights the importance of context, and explains how an individual's development is determined by multiple levels of influence, including the individual child with his or her unique physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, as well as unique forces from school and home, which together relate to the individual's growth (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 2005 in Chen & Gregory, 2009). With consideration to all the systems and factors, parents in this study emphasized the significant roles of their unique and individual children as well as the high school, as determinants of their involvement in their child's schooling.

Another aspect that stood out to the researcher, was that although parents indicated a tendency to impress and be somewhat anxious when sharing experiences of their parenthood, they generally tackle parenting to the best of their ability or knowledge. One participant mentioned that although no parenting manual exists, a parent takes a "trial



and error” approach and views parenting as a learning process of how to be the best parent possible. Perhaps the study offered participants an opportunity to become aware of inherent goodness. All parents may not be equally equipped with the best resources and skills, or be aware of how to utilize them; however, parents deserve the credit for doing what they feel is best.

It became evident to the researcher through her interaction with parents that they generally have a need to be heard and praised for being full-time mothers and fathers. Perhaps South African schools can aim at creating such a supportive space for parents through which a good understanding of their needs within the specific school and community context can be formed, before parents are reprimanded or criticized for what they lack.

To conclude, the study brought to light the realization that parental involvement is a real and significant part of parenting across borders, and is based on parents’ unique experiences, their unique children and their own interpretations thereof.

### **5.3 STRENGTHS OF THE RESEARCH**

To demonstrate the strengths of this study, the achieved research goals are revisited and further supported by existing research.

Through the study the researcher was successfully able to: answer the research questions; explore the experiences of parents’ involvement in their child’s schooling; explore parents’ experiences of the transition from primary to high school; determine parents’ tendency to become less involved in their high school child’s schooling (in comparison to primary school); and highlight the importance of parental involvement. Furthermore, the study offered: parent participants an opportunity to be heard and to share their experiences of involvement in their child’s schooling; findings to be used in parent guidance and intervention programs; the enabling of awareness of parental involvement; findings which contribute to the field of parenting and more specifically, parental involvement.

Three of these research goals are discussed in more detail below, based on the need thereof identified by existing literature.

### **5.3.1 Offering parents a voice**

In their study on why PI enhances children's achievement, Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) found that child, parent and teacher reports of PI don't coincide. According to these authors, studies such as this thesis, which obtain additional parent or teacher perspectives on PI, should be valuable. Similarly, Hanewald (2013) and Benner (2011) support literature on the transition to high school. "Although it is known that transition can profoundly alter the social experience, less is known about how children, young people, their families and teachers experience or perceive transition" (Hanewald, 2013, p. 62). Rice et al. (2011) add to this notion by arguing that findings on these stakeholders' transition-related concerns are limited.

Epstein (1993) studied politics and power relations in the field of education and argued that power often lies solely with schools, not with parents. The authors explain that "parents' voices surface in the shape of needs, outrage or silence", and this should be changed. They invite educators, researchers, activists and parents to acknowledge and value the work parents do around schools. Wasley (1993) agrees with the notion of empowering parents by giving them a voice to articulate what they need and want in schools for the greater communities' children.

### **5.3.2 Adding to the field**

As stated by Smith et al. (2008, p. 33), "research examining the high school transition for the general population is in its infancy". Furthermore, "educational transitions are complex, and research on the topic is limited, especially student perceptions of transition". The study hopes to help fill the gap, despite parents' perceptions being explored.

Chen and Gregory (2009, p. 53) identified and explained that although "a decade of research has established a positive association between PI and students' educational outcomes, far less is known about the effects PI has on adolescent behaviour". Pomerantz et al. (2007, p. 401) add to this by stating: "Although the research to date on the effects of the extent of parents' involvement in children's schooling has proved fruitful, it is time to move on to a second stage of research considering the how, whom, and why of parents' involvement".

### 5.3.3 Offering guidance and support to parents

The need of parents to assist in their children's learning and development is summarized by Epstein, (Hill & Craft, 2003, p. 74) as follows; "although the vast majority of parents want their children to be successful in school, they don't know how to assist their children." The researcher acknowledges the need and aims to contribute to the study in this regard. It appears as if fresh knowledge on the topic has the potential to add much value to the field of parenting, PI, and parental guidance during adolescents' transition to high school. Guidance in this sense should not only look at cost-effective and feasible interventions to increase involvement (Lemmer, 2007), but also to assist parents in determining the appropriate degree or level of PI, according to their children's age-related and unique needs.

Through enabling parental awareness (as another research goal which was reached), and providing feedback to participants on the research findings, support and guidance were already provided to parent participants. The findings can further be utilized in programs and workshops to schools, teachers, parents and children.

It could be said that the study is supported by other research studies, such as the ones referred to above. Furthermore, McNeal (2012, p. 88), recommended that research on PI should consider two aspects. Firstly, research should "pay closer attention to life-course and developmental differences that affect adolescents over time". In this study, consideration was given to the developmental age and phase adolescents are undergoing, in terms of various issues such as physical development and the parent-child relationship. This was discussed in the literature review and as a category of discussion during data collection. Secondly, McNeal (2012) recommends that research should consider people's differences in terms of ethnicity, race and socio-economic status. Within the case study design of this study, consideration was given to the context.

## **5.4 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS**

Certain considerations to be made by the researcher when exploring PI were discussed in chapter two. Upon completion of the study they guided the researcher in identifying possible limitations of the study.

As stated by Hayes (2012), existing knowledge about PI is predominantly based on perceptions of parents and teacher, and not observed behaviour. When meaning is made by the reader from the research findings, it should not be done without considering that what happens in practice is often very different from what is discussed in studies such as this, in which actual observation of parental behaviour was not utilized as a tool of data collection (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

In addition, parents' tendency to impress or respond in a socially desirable manner, as noted by the researcher, could be seen as a possible limitation of the study, since it could hide possible feelings and thoughts parents might be experiencing of their involvement in their child's schooling. According to Dumont et al. (2013), research has shown that the most accurate reporting on PI is provided by children and through observation. Such reporting are more valid than parents' reports, as used in this study.

Finally, a consideration which emerged through the data collection process which might be seen as limitation of the study revolves around the topic of the study. It should be considered that the topic alone influenced the eight parent participants, as involved parents, to take part in the study. Partaking in the study at the Blue School, is an active form of PI in itself. Parents could have felt obliged towards the Blue School, their child or themselves, to be involved in the study. The study, therefore, could perhaps have appeared less attractive to parents who are generally less involved, or who felt no expectation of them to be involved. This limitation is purely based on speculation and could not be validated by any data.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Seeing that research on PI holds the potential to benefit parents and children, further research is recommended. More specific areas which appear to have room for further exploration include:

A comparative study on children's, teachers' *and* parents' experiences of PI. Such a study could offer rich information about the agreements, disagreements and needs of the main stakeholders of PI.

Similarly, a comparative study could be done on the transition to high school, since it has been indicated that research on this topic for the general population is in its infancy, especially regarding children's experiences (Smith et al., 2008).

The transition to further tertiary educational institutions could be explored comparatively too. This could perhaps offer an opportunity for young adults to voice their experiences of helicopter parenting, a term currently receiving growing attention (as explained in chapter two).

With the focus on contextual factors influencing PI, it may be important to explore PI in low-income contexts too. This study shows empirically that PI is moderated and influenced by the school and the unique child in their relationship with parents. However, the study is located in a well-resourced middle class context. Exploring PI in a low-income context could reveal a reversal of the school's stance in that PI is welcomed and encouraged as opposed to restricted.

After this study indicated the adjusted decrease in PI at the beginning of high school by parent participants of the study, a further question to raise could be around the possible effects this adjustment has on children (achievement, experience of PI etc.). Furthermore, it could be asked what the possible effects of no adjustment of PI across the transition to high school might have on children. Investigation of parental over-involvement and its consequences seems to be under-researched. The researcher found that a great body of research exists around parental under-involvement as a bigger problem on the local and international front. Research on over-involvement seems to have been neglected and gone almost unnoticed.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

The researcher experienced the study as a journey in which the so-called complex phenomenon, parental involvement, was deconstructed, questioned and explored. Through exploring the many international and local avenues of PI, together with the

opportunity to delve into a small part of parent participants' worlds, the researcher was reminded again of the importance of parents, and the importance of supporting them. It is hoped that through this study, some degree of development for parent support, in any context and background, would occur as a result.

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## **ADDENDUM A**

Letter of Ethical Clearance by the Research Ethics Committee and  
WCED Research Approval Letter



UNIVERSITEIT-STEPLENBOSCH-UNIVERSITY  
JOB KENNISVERHOOP • YOUR KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

## Approval Notice New Application

23-Apr-2014  
Revington, Erika E

Proposal #: DESC-Revington/2014

Title: Parental involvement in their children's schooling following the transition from primary to high school.

Dear Ms Erika Revington,

Your New Application received on 06-Mar-2014, was reviewed by staff members of the REC office on 27-Mar-2014 and was approved. Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: 27-Mar-2014 -26-Mar-2015

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your proposal number (DESC-Revington/2014) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089183.

**Included Documents:**

Research proposal\_Revington  
consent form  
DESC application  
Permission letters  
DESC support document  
Reflective field notes and Interview guide  
REC application form

Sincerely,

Clarissa GRAHAM



Directorate: Research

[Audrey.wyngaard2@pawc.gov.za](mailto:Audrey.wyngaard2@pawc.gov.za)

tel: +27 021 467 9272

Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

[wced.wcape.gov.za](http://wced.wcape.gov.za)

**REFERENCE:** 20140227-25585

**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Erika Revington  
11 StellenVillas  
Kronendal Crescent  
Stellenberg  
7550

**Dear Mrs Erika Revington**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING FOLLOWING THE TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO HIGH SCHOOL**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **01 March 2014 till 31 July 2014**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services  
Western Cape Education Department  
Private Bag X9114  
CAPE TOWN  
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

Directorate: Research

**DATE: 28 February 2014**

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Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001  
tel: +27 21 467 9272 fax: 0865902282  
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000  
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33 22  
[www.westerncape.gov.za](http://www.westerncape.gov.za)



## **ADDENDUM B**

Letter to Principal

Me Erika Revington

31 Januarie 2014

Die Skoolhoof

Geagte Mevrou,

#### INSAKE: TOESTEMMING VIR NAVORSING BY U SKOOL

As deel van 'n meestersgraad in Opvoedkundige Sielkunde aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch, is ek tans besig om my tesis te voltooi. Die titel van my studie: Die aard van ouerbetrokkenheid gedurende die oorgangsfase van laer- na hoërskool.

Met graagte doen ek aansoek om navorsing by u skool af te lê vanaf 1 Maart 2014 tot 31 Julie 2014. Die algemene doel van die navorsing is om Graad 9 ouers se belewing en persepsie van hul betrokkenheid by hul kind se opvoeding gedurende die oorgangsfase van laerskool na hoërskool te ondersoek. Terwyl die belangrikheid van ouerbetrokkenheid wel bekend is, poog ek om 'n dieper begrip te vorm van hoe ouers hul betrokkenheid tydens vroeë hoërskooljare ondervind, asook hoe hul betrokkenheid moontlik verander a.g.v. die oorgangsfase van laerskool na hoërskool.

Ek beoog om onderhoude te voer en 'n kort geskrewe oefening te doen met agt ouers van graad 9 leerlinge. Geen kontak sal gemaak word met die leerlinge self nie en alle onderhoude sal geskied tydens gepaste tye vir deelnemers.

My studie sal van elke deelnemer die volgende vereis:

- 'n Individuele semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud van 45 – 60 min met my, die navorser, waartydens opnames gemaak sal word;
- Sy/haar geskrewe mening oor konsepte met betrekking tot my studie;
- Moontlike opvolgvrae wat telefonies of via e-pos gedoen kan word.

Ek wil u ook graag oor die volgende inlig:

- Ingeligte geskrewe toestemming word van die WKOD, asook deelnemers verlang.
- Geen vergoeding is betrokke by die deelname aan die navorsing nie.
- 'n Skuilnaam sal ten alle tye gebruik word wanneer daar na die skool verwys word.
- Enige inligting wat deur die navorsing ingesamel word sal vertroulik bly en slegs met die deelnemer se toestemming bekend gemaak word of soos deur die wet vereis.
- Die deelnemer het die reg om hom-/haarself van die studie te onttrek sonder enige nadelige gevolge.
- Die deelnemer kan weier om van my vrae te beantwoord.
- Ek kan 'n deelnemer van die studie onttrek indien omstandighede dit noodsaaklik maak.
- Die bevindinge sal na afloop van die studie deur 'n informele gesprek aan die deelnemers deurgegee word.
- Die bevindinge sal beskikbaar wees vir navorsingsdoeleindes aan u en die WKOD.

Indien u bereid is om toestemming vir die studie te verleen, vra ek graag dat u die onderstaande vorm voltooi, teken en aan my terugstuur.

By voorbaat dank,

Me. Erika Revington

M. Opvoedkundige Sielkunde student

Kontaknommer: .....

\_\_\_\_\_

.....

Hiermee gee ek, \_\_\_\_\_, toestemming dat Erika Revington 'n navorsingstudie rakende graad 9 ouers se belewenis en persepsies van hul ouerbetrokkenheid, vanaf 1 Maart 2014 tot 31 Julie 2014 in die skool kan aflê. Ek is bewus daarvan dat deelname vrywillig is. Inligting rakende vertroulikheid en die regte van die deelnemers is ook aan my deurgegee.

Handtekening: \_\_\_\_\_

Datum: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ADDENDUM C**

### Consent to Participate in Research



UNIVERSITEIT•STELLENBOSCH•UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

**UNIVERSITEIT STELLENBOSCH  
INWILLIGING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSING**

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**OUERBETROKKENHEID IN HUL KINDERS SE SKOOLOPVOEDING NA DIE OORGANG VAN  
LAER- NA HOËRSKOOLO.**

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie wat uitgevoer word deur Erika Revington (B.Soc.Sci. Sielkunde; B.Soc.Sci. Hons.; NOS Primêr), van die Departement Opvoedkundige Sielkunde aan Stellenbosch Universiteit. Die resultate sal deel word van 'n navorsingstesis. As ouer van 'n graad 9-leering, is u as moontlike deelnemer aan die studie gekies aangesien u belewenis en persepsie van u unieke ouerbetrokkenheid tydens die oorgangsfase van laer- na hoërskool, van belang/waarde is om die studie betekenisvol te maak en sodoende die navorsingsdoelwitte te haal.

**1. DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE**

Terwyl die belangrikheid van ouerbetrokkenheid wel bekend is, poog die ondersoeker om deur hierdie studie 'n dieper begrip te vorm van hoe ouers hul betrokkenheid tydens vroeë hoërskooljare ondervind, asook hoe hul betrokkenheid moontlik aanpas of verander a.g.v. die oorgangsfase van laerskool na hoërskool.

**2. PROSEDURES**

Indien u inwillig om aan die studie deel te neem, sal die volgende van u vereis word:

- U deelname aan 'n individuele semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud van 45 – 60 min met my, die ondersoeker, waartydens opnames gemaak sal word;
- Die voltooiing van 'n geskrewe oefening waarin u u mening oor konsepte met betrekking tot my studie deel;
- Moontlike opvolgvrae wat telefonies of via e-pos gedoen kan word.

**3. MOONTLIKE RISIKO'S EN ONGEMAKLIKHEID**

Geen verwagte risiko's is identifiseer vir deelname aan hierdie studie nie. As deelnemer, sal u en alle inligting wat u deel ten alle tye met groot respek en konfidensialiteit behandel word.

**4. MOONTLIKE VOORDELE VIR DEELNEMERS EN/OF VIR DIE SAMELEWING**

U deelname aan hierdie studie gee u die geleentheid om u mening te lug en u persepsies oor ouerbetrokkenheid te deel. Sodoende sal u moontlik 'n waardevolle bydrae kan lewer tot die veld van ouerbetrokkenheid en die ontwikkeling van ouerleidingsprogramme.

## 5. VERGOEDING VIR DEELNAME

Deelnemers sal geen vergoeding ontvang vir deelname aan hierdie studie nie. 'n Geleentheid sal wel geskep word om die bevindinge met die deelnemers te deel, sodra die studie voltooi is.

## 6. VERTROULIKHEID

Enige inligting wat deur middel van die navorsing verkry word en wat met u in verband gebring kan word, sal vertroulik bly en slegs met u toestemming bekend gemaak word of soos deur die wet vereis. Vertroulikheid sal gehandhaaf word deur middel van die toekenning van skuilname aan u, ander deelnemers, asook die skool. Waar u moontlik sal verwys na u kind(ers) of familielede, sal skuilnaam(e) ook gebruik word. Alle data sal bewaar word en die ondersoeker en haar studieleier alleen sal toegang daartoe hê.

Die studieleier, Mev. Lynette Collair, sal slegs toegang tot data hê wanneer leiding deur die ondersoeker gevra word tov. transkribering, kodering en ander soortgelyke navorsingstappe. Onderhoude sal op audio-band opgeneem word, maar sal skoongevee word sodra die studie voltooi is.

Indien die navorser die resultate moontlik wil publiseer, sal vertroulikehid by publikasie ook gehandaaf word.

## 7. DEELNAME EN ONTTREKING

U kan self besluit of u aan die studie wil deelneem of nie. Indien u inwillig om aan die studie deel te neem, kan u te enige tyd onttrek sonder enige nadelige gevolge. U kan ook weier om op bepaalde vrae te antwoord, maar steeds aan die studie deelneem. Die ondersoeker kan u aan die studie onttrek indien omstandighede dit noodsaaklik maak.

## 8. IDENTIFIKASIE VAN ONDERSOEKERS

Indien u enige vrae of besorgdheid omtrent die navorsing het, staan dit u vry om in verbinding te tree met:

Mev. Erika Revington

e-pos:

tel:

Mev. Lynette Collair

e-pos:

tel:

## 9. REGTE VAN PROEFPERSONE

U kan te enige tyd u inwilliging terugtrek en u deelname beëindig, sonder enige nadelige gevolge vir u. Deur deel te neem aan die navorsing doen u geensins afstand van enige wetlike regte, eise of regsmiddel nie. Indien u vrae het oor u regte as proefpersoon by navorsing, skakel met Me Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] van die Afdeling Navorsingsontwikkeling van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch.

**VERKLARING DEUR DEELNEMER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, \_\_\_\_\_ , gegee en verduidelik deur Erika Revington in Afrikaans en ek is dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir my vertaal. Ek is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my vrae is tot my bevrediging beantwoord.

Ek willic hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie. 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van deelnemer of regsvertegenwoordiger**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan \_\_\_\_\_. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in Afrikaans gevoer en geen vertaler is gebruik nie.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

Goedgekeur Subkomitee A 25 Oktober 2004

## **ADDENDUM D**

### Interview Guide



## **Interview guide: The nature of Parental Involvement following the transition from primary to high school.**

### Four themes to explore:

- A. Background information
- B. Current experience/ nature of personal parental involvement (in high school)
- C. *Past experience/ nature of personal parental involvement (in primary school)*
- D. Experience of transition from primary to high school regarding personal parental involvement.

### What do I aim to get from exploring the above themes?

I would like to answer my research questions:

- 2.) What is the nature of parents' involvement at the beginning of high school?
- 3.) How do parents change their involvement over the transition phase (from primary to high school)?
  - 2.1) Can a pattern of change be identified as becoming more involved, less involved, or unchanged?

This will be done by identifying factors of PI linked to the parent's PI in primary school (theme C) and factors of PI linked to the parent's PI in high school (theme B). This should give me a good indication of how the transition phase perhaps influenced the nature of their PI (theme D).

The following factors are borrowed from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model of PI:

- Parental role construction
- Parental self-efficacy
- General school invitations
- Specific teacher invitations
- Specific child invitations
- Skills and knowledge
- Time and energy
- Socio-economic status
- Age of child

Additional factors that emerge through any of the data sources will be identified (via coding and qualitative content analysis), added and reported on.

## **Onderhoudsgids: Die aard van ouerbetrokkenheid na die oorgang van laer- na hoërskool.**

Baie dankie dat jy ingestem het om deel te neem aan my studie, asook vir die tyd wat jy afstaan vir die onderhoud.

### **A. Agtergrond inligting**

Kom ons begin deur te gesels oor jou, wie jy is, jou familie en werk.

1. Self
  - Ouderdom
  - Huwelikstatus
  - Kwalifikasies
  - Beroep (tipe, aard)
  - Woonbuurt woonagtig
2. Familie
  - Gade (beroep, kwalifikasies)
  - Kinders (ouderdom, kwalifikasies, verwantskap)

### **B. Huidige ondervinding/ ervaring van betrokkenheid (in hoërskool).**

Volgende, sal ek graag wil gesels oor jou ervaring tans oor jou betrokkenheid by jou graad 9 kind se opvoeding (in hoërskool). [verdere verduideliking kan gegee word indien nodig]

3. Jou motiverende oortuigings oor jou rol as ouer.
4. Jou persepsie van, of gevoel oor die aanvraag na betrokkenheid.
5. Jou siening van jou huidige lewenskonteks.
6. Jou betrokkenheid t.o.v. jou kind se ouderdom (±14 jaar).

### **C. Vorige ondervinding/ ervaring van betrokkenheid, tydens laerskool.**

Kom ons skuif die fokus nou na jou ondervinding en ervaring van jou betrokkenheid van te vore by jou kind tydens laerskool.

7. Jou motiverende oortuigings oor jou rol as ouer, op daardie stadium.
8. Jou persepsie van die aanvraag na betrokkenheid, toe.
9. Jou siening van jou lewenskonteks op daardie stadium.
10. Jou betrokkenheid t.o.v. jou kind se ouderdom, toe.

**D. Ervaring van die oorgang van laer- na hoërskool**

11. Vertel my ook meer oor hoe jy die oorgang van laer- na hoërskool ervaar het, t.o.v. jou ouerberoekkenheid.

**E. Ten slotte**

12. Is daar enige aspek wat jy voel ons nie gedek het of wat jy wil byvoeg?
13. Dankie vir jou tyd en insette tydens die onderhoud.
14. Indien nodig, mag ek jou skakel in die nabye toekoms met verdere vrae?

**Interview guide: The nature of Parental Involvement following the transition from primary to high school.**

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my study. I appreciate you taking the time to talk with me.

**A. Background information**

Let's start by talking about you, who you are, your family and work.

1. Self

- Age
- Marital status
- Qualifications
- Occupation (type, nature)
- Suburb residing

2. Family

- Spouse (occupation, qualifications)
- Children (age(s), qualifications, relation)

**B. Current experience/ nature of personal parental involvement (in high school)**

Next, I would like to talk about your current experience of your involvement in your child's education (in high school) [further prompting will be done if necessary]

3. Your motivational beliefs about your role as parent.
4. Your perception of invitations for involvement from others.
5. Your perceived life context.
6. Your involvement with regards to your child's age ( $\pm 14$  years)

**C. Past experience/ nature of personal parental involvement (in primary school).**

Let's shift the focus to your past experience of your involvement (in primary school).

7. Your motivational beliefs about your role as parent at that stage.

8. Your perception of invitations for involvement from others, then.
9. Your perceived life context, then.
10. Your involvement with regards to your child's age at that stage.

**D. Experience of transition from primary to high school**

11. Please tell me more about your experience of the transition from primary to high school, regarding your parental involvement.

**E. In conclusion**

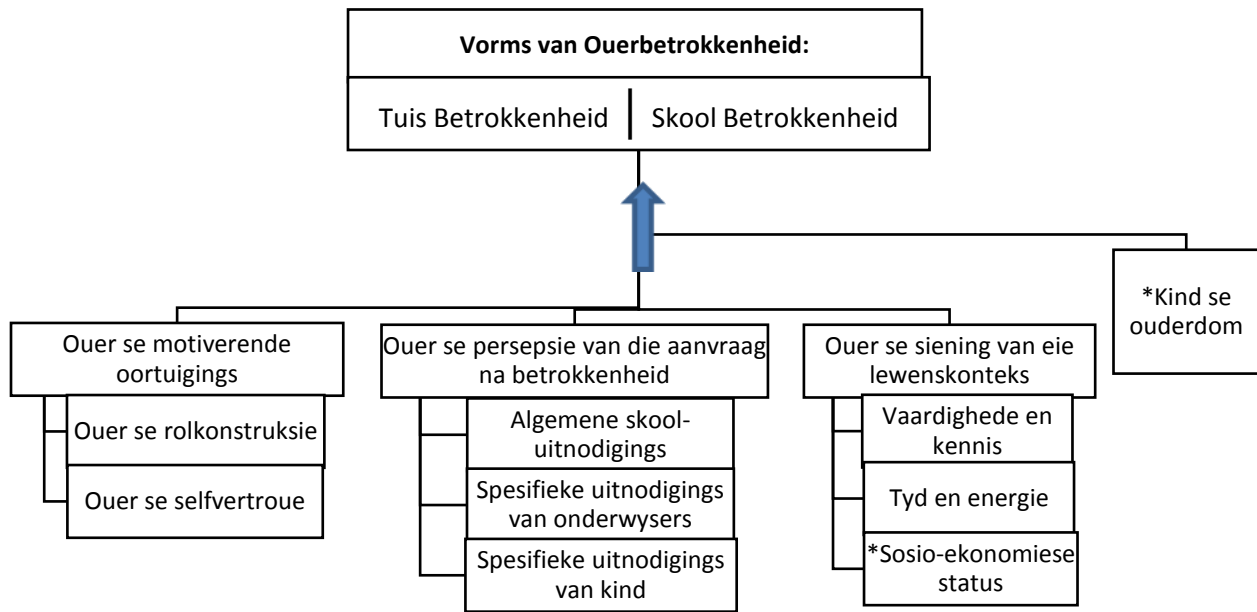
12. Is there anything that we missed or that you would like to add?
13. Thank you for your time and input during this interview.
14. If necessary, may I contact you in the near future with further questions?

## **ADDENDUM E**

Written Activity

**Narratiewe aktiwiteit**

Die onderstaande figuur is gebaseer op die eerste vlak van die Hoover-Dempsey en Sandler (2005) se hersiene teoretiese model van die ouerbetrokkenheidsproses (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005), met twee addisionele faktore\* (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2007). Die figuur verduidelik ouerbetrokkenheid ten opsigte van sekere faktore wat aanleiding gee daartoe. Neem 'n paar minute om jouself vertrouwd te maak met die uiteensetting. Daarna sal jy gevra word om te reflekteer op jou eie ervaring van ouerbetrokkenheid na die oorgang van laerskool na hoërskool.



**Beskrywings van faktore:**

Ouer se rolkonstruksie	Jou oortuigings oor wat jy as ouer moet doen t.o.v. jou kind se opvoeding.
Ouer se selfvertroue	Jou oortuigings dat jy kan of nie kan bydrae tot die gewenste uitkomst in jou kind se opvoeding.
Algemene skool-uitnodigings	'n Warm of koue skoolatmosfeer; en gebruike deur die skool om jou op datum hou van jou kind se vordering, skoolvereistes en gebeure.
Spesifieke uitnodigings van onderwysers	Versoeke van onderwysers vir ouerbetrokkenheid in spesifieke aktiwiteite.
Spesifieke uitnodigings van kind	Jou Graad 9 kind se behoeftes (fisies, emosioneel, sielkundig ens.) en versoek na jou betrokkenheid.
Vaardighede en kennis	Jou self-persepsie van vaardighede en kennis wat benodig word om betrokke te wees by jou kind se opvoeding.
Tyd en energie	Ander familie- en werkverantwoordelikhede wat jou tyd en energie vereis.
Sosio-ekonomiese status	Jou posisie in die samelewing, soos bepaal deur jou finansiële inkomste, beroep en sosiale klas.
Kind se ouderdom	Jou Graad 9 kind se ouderdoms-verwante eienskappe wat jou motiveer of verhoed om betrokke te wees.





## **ADDENDUM F**

### Reflective Field Notes

**Reflective Field Notes**

Participant:

Date:

To be completed by the researcher after each interview and written activity session with a parent participant:

Observational notes: documenting the researcher's thoughts about the meaning of observations during the interview.

- ➔ What have you observed?
- ➔ Why is it valuable to have observed the above?

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Methodological notes: documenting reflections on strategies and methods used during the interview and written activity.

- ➔ What happened during the interview?
- ➔ What happened during the written activity?

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Personal notes: notes about the researcher's own feelings and perceptions while in the field.

- ➔ How did I experience the session?

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**Reflektiewe veldnotas**

Deelnemer:

Datum:

Die onderstaande word voltooi deur die navorser na elke ontmoeting met 'n deelnemer.

Observasienotas: dokumenteer die navorser se gedagtes oor die betekenis van observasies gedurende die onderhoud en geskrewe aktiwiteit.

- ➔ Wat het ek geobserveer?
- ➔ Waarom is dit waardevol dat dit bg. observeer het?

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Prosesnotas: dokumenteer refleksies oor strategieë en metodes wat gebruik was gedurende die onderhoud en geskrewe aktiwiteit.

- ➔ Wat het gebeur tydens die onderhoud?
- ➔ Wat het gebeur tydens die geskrewe aktiwiteit?

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Persoonlike notas: dokumenteer die navorser se eie gevoelens en persepsies terwyl sy in die veld was.

- ➔ Hoe het ek die sessie ervaar?

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## **ADDENDUM G**

Transcription with Open Colour Coding

PORTION OF THE CODED TRANSCRIPTION FROM THE INTERVIEW WITH A PARENT

Line	Speaker	Transcription	Coding
47 48 49	Ouer	Ek mag byvoorbeeld sport geleenthede kom kyk en daai tipe goeters, maar ek mag ook nie te hard skree nie.	Age: Awkwardness [theme 1]
50	Ek	OK..	
51 52 53 54	Ouer	Maar ek dink dis omdat ekke het 'n baie harde stem, en dit dra, en ek dink dit maak hom skaam. (lag) Want ek het 'n bynaam vir hom, en hy's bang ek se sy bynaam (lag).	Age: Awkwardness [theme 1]
55	Ek	OK...(lag) ...dit maak sin.	
56	Ouer	Ja...(lag)	
57	Ek	So jy kon duidelik die verskil sien.	
58 59	Ouer	Ja. Baie duidelik. Daar was vir my groot transformasie daar.	Adjustment: Child [theme 2]
60 61 62	Ek	Sjoe, dis interessant. So ten opsigte van jou rol as ouer, hoe ervaar jy jou betrokkenheid tans in hoërskool tov jou verwagtinge van jou rol as ouer?	
63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70	Ouer	Daar word minder van my verwag. Hmmh, hoe kan ek dit stel, dat ek 'n bietjie dink... Uhm, die druk wat op ouers uitgevoer word in die laerskool is baie meer as wat dit in die hoërskool is. Dis vir my asof hy eweskielik besef het hy's groot en hy kan sy eie ding doen. Ek het nie...hy het nie nodig om vir mamma te vra om te help nie. So daar was vir my 'n,... hyt... absolute gedaanteverwisseling ondergaan.	Motivational beliefs: Role construction: Nature of involvement [theme 1]  Adjustment: Child: independence [theme 2]
71 72	Ek	Ja.. En as ek dit reg verstaan het jy eintlik jou rol daarby aangepas?	
73	Ouer	Ja.	
74	Ek	Is ek reg as ek dit so verstaan?	
75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83	Ouer	Ja, ek het self aangepas baie moeilik. Dit was vir my baie moeilik want ek is ongelooflik beskermend oor altwee van my kinders, maar, uhm, dit was 'n... veral in graad 8 was vir my 'n groot... dit was moeilik om nie te weet waar hy is die heelyd en hoekom is hy nou by die skool, wat doen hy daar, moet hy daar wees, wanneer moet hy daar wees – daai tipe van goed was vir my bietjie verwarrend, want ek is gewoon aan geweldige streng kommunikasie en daai tipe ding.	Feelings: Parent [theme 2]  Invitation for involvement: school: lack [theme 1]
84	Ek	Ja, so jou rol het definitief verander..	

85	Ouer	O, baie baie.	
86	Ek	Ook tov die aanvraag na betrokkenheid – en dis iets	
87		wat jy eintlik klaar half uitgelig het. Hoe voel jy is die	
88		aanvraag in hoërskool vir betrokkenheid?	
89	Ouer	Ek dink, wanneer dit, die onderwysers en die hoof en	<b>Invitation for involvement</b> : teachers [theme 1]
90		daai tipe ding, vra baie ondersteuning wat ons baie	
91		gee. Ek is baie betrokke met die rugby groepe en daai	<b>Motivational beliefs</b> : role construction: nature of
92		tipe... maar, amper agter die skerms. Nie heelyd voor	involvement [theme 1]
93		of reël heelyd iets nie. Jy's heelyd betrokke, maar	
94		nie heelyd daar nie. Soos in die laerskool nie. So dit's	
95		amper asof jy bietjie terugtree, die kind doen sy ding,	
96		en jy tree effens terug amper agter die skerms rond.	
97	Ek	Ja, so indirekte betrokkenheid basies?	
98	Ouer	Ja.	
99	Ek	OK. Uhm, ook tov jou siening van jou huidige	
100		lewenskonteks. Hoe dink jy beïnvloed jou	
101		lewenskonteks jou ouerbetrokkenheid tydens	
102		hoërskool?	
103	Ouer	Oh jinne..	
104	Ek	Lewenskonteks tov jou werk en jou sosio-ekonomiese	
105		status, en...	
106	Ouer	Weet jy, ek is baie kalmer. Ek was verlede jaar glad nie	<b>Feelings</b> : Parent [theme 2]
107		kalm nie, ek was heeltemal buite myself, ek het op 'n	
108		stadium gedink ek moet dalk begin medikasie gebruik.	
109		(lag) Want dit was vir my baie erg...	
110	Ek	Lag	
111	Ouer	...om amper jou kind te laat gaan, en te se ek hoef nie	<b>Feelings</b> : Parent [theme 2]
112		meer te help met die werk nie, ek hoef nie meer nie,	
113		hy doen dit self. Uhm, so dit was vir my in myself, dit	
114		was baie moeilik. Maar ek het meer vrye tyd. Nou het	<b>Life context</b> : Time and energy [theme 1]
115		ek meer vrye tyd. Nou beseft ek ek het meer vrye tyd.	
116		Tyd wat ek nie gehad het om aan myself te spandeer	
117		nie, het ek nou.	
118	Ek	En is daai tyd nou beskikbaar weens jou werk wat	
119		verander het of agv hom wat...	
120	Ouer	...agv hom wat meer onafhanklik is.	<b>Life context</b> : Time and energy [theme 1]
121	Ek	Ja, so dit verander dan ook jou lewenstyl.	
122	Ouer	Ja, absoluut. Definitief.	
123	Ek	Uhm, dan ook tov jou kind se ouderdom tans. Hoe	
124		dink jy beïnvloed sy ouderdom jou betrokkenheid?	
125	Ouer	Baie erg. (glimlag) Ek dink die, die uhm, puberteit	<b>Age</b> : Physical development: Hormones
126		speel 'n baie groot rol. En seuns dink ek is nogal baie	<b>Invitation for involvement</b> : child: gender [theme
127		erg, veral vir my want dis my eerste tiener. Vir my is	1] &
128		hierdie tienerfase 'n verskriklike aanpassing. Ek is glad	<b>Invitation for involvement</b> : child: older siblings
129		nie gewoond aan stywe nekkies nie, ek is nie gewoond	[theme 1]
130		aan hom wat vir my se "maar mamma jy weet nie	
131		waarvan jy praat nie". Gewoonlik was hy soos 'n spons	

132		wat suig, so vir my het dit baie verander. Ewe skielik	
133		moet ek terugtree en se “besluit nou maar self, jy	
134		gaan ‘n fout maak, maar ek kan niks daaraan doen	
135		nie.” Waar voorheen, sou ek hom probeer beskerm	
136		het, maar nou moet ek terugtree. Ek het nie ‘n keuse	
137		nie.	
138	Ek	Mmmh, sy ouderdom het ‘n rol...	
139	Ouer	O ja, nee, verseker. Dit het ‘n groot invloed en hulle	Age: Awkwardness [theme 1]
140		wil ‘cool’ wees. Dit is vir hulle baie belangrik om	
141		aanvaar te word deur hulle ‘peers’ of hul medemense	
142		en goeters, en hy moet cool wees. Dis vreeslik	
143		belangrik. Daai, “mamma moenie te veel ‘feature’	
144		nie.”	
145	Ek	Ja, en dit is ook anders as wat dit was in laerskool..	
146	Ouer	Absoluut. Ja nee, baie baie anders.	

## **ADDENDUM H**

### Codes Clustered According to Categories



## Theme (1): [Current experience] of PI in high school

Participant	Sub category	Coded responses	[Current experience] codes
1 Anne	Motivational beliefs	<p>Daar word minder van my verwag. (63)</p> <p>Ek is baie betrokke met die rugby groepe en daai tipe... maar, amper agter die skerms. Nie heeltyd voor of reël heeltyd iets nie. Jy's heeltyd betrokke, maar nie heeltyd daar nie. Soos in die laerskool nie. So dit's amper asof jy bietjie te rugtree, die kind doen sy ding, en jy tree effens terug amper agter die skerms rond. (91)</p>	<p>Role construction: nature of involvement. Role construction: nature of involvement.</p>
	Invitations for involvement	<p>Dit was moeilik om nie te weet waar hy is die heeltyd en hoekom is hy nou by die skool, wat doen hy daar, moet hy daar wees, wanneer moet hy daar wees – daai tipe van goed was vir my bietjie verwarrend, want ek is gewoon aan geweldige streng kommunikasie en daai tipe ding. (78)</p> <p>Ek dink, wanneer dit, die onderwyers en die hoof en daai tipe ding, vra baie ondersteuning wat ons baie gee. (89)</p> <p>En seuns dink ek is nogal baie erg, veral vir my want dis my eerste tiener. Vir my is hierdie tienerfase 'n verskriklike aanpassing. (126)</p> <p>Wat vir my baie moeilik was aan die begin, is die kommunikasie. Ek het nie geweet wanneer hy waar moes wees nie. Ek was gewoon ek kry 2 dae voor die tyd 'n briefie wat se jou kind moet daai tyd daar wees en dit en dit en dit. Toe ons in die hoërskool kom was daar niks nie. (292)</p> <p>So die kommunikasie was vir my bietjie verwarrend, maar as ek nou daaraan dink is dit seker die beste ding wat hulle kon doen. (301)</p> <p>Want dit het MY grootgemaak amper – sal ek maar so sê. (306)</p> <p>Toe hy hoërskool toe gaan het hy skielik baie gegroei (groei sprong) en was hy glad nie meer oorgewig nie, dit het baie bygedra tot sy selfvertroue en die feit dat hy van nuuts af kan vriende maak. [NAR]</p> <p>Faktore wat bygelas was waarvoor ek kan rapporteer is ADHD (leerprobleme), en die kind se fisiese voorkoms. [NOTES]</p>	<p>School: lack</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Child: gender &amp; older siblings</p> <p>School: lack</p> <p>School: lack</p> <p>School: unknown</p> <p>Child: emotional wellness</p> <p>Child: learning problems &amp; emotional wellness</p>

	<p><b>Life Context</b></p>	<p>Maar ek het meer vrye tyd. Nou het ek meer vrye tyd. Nou besef ek ek het meer vrye tyd. Tyd wat ek nie gehad het om aan myself te spandeer nie, het ek nou. agy hom wat meer onafhanklik is. (114)</p> <p>Vir my, op laerskool, toe hy op laerskool was, was ek baie betrokke. En toe hy op hoërskool kom het hy ewe skielik besluit "moenie skool toe kom nie, mamma, dit gaan nie cool... dis uncool vir mamma om hier te wees, so moenie. Jy kan goed..." Ek mag goed doen, maar dan moet dit... uhm.. wees deur 'n briefie of 'n skenking of 'n donasie, maar ek moet nie hiernatoe kom en iets reël nie. (38)</p> <p>Ek mag byvoorbeeld sport geleenthede kom kyk en daai tipe goeters, maar ek mag ook nie te hard skree nie. (47)</p> <p>Want ek het 'n bynaam vir hom, en hy's bang ek se sy bynaam (lag). (52)</p> <p>Ek dink die, die uhm, puberteit speel 'n baie groot rol. (125)</p> <p>Dit het 'n groot invloed en hulle wil 'cool' wees. Dit is vir hulle baie belangrik om aanvaar te word deur hulle 'peers' of hul medemensse en goeters, en hy moet cool wees. Dis vreeslik belangrik. Daai, "mamma moenie te veel 'feature' nie." (139)</p> <p>Dit is "uncool" as 'n ouer by die skool is die hele tyd, maar tog wil hy baie emosionele aandag tuis he, veral wat sy sosiale lewe betref. [NAR]</p> <p>Die invloed van meisies is ook 'n faktor wat 'n rol speel, want skielik is daar belangstelling in hulle wat daar nie in die laerskool was nie. [NAR]</p> <p>Die selfoon of sosiale netwerke het 'n invloed (in dat dit betrokkeheid bemoeilik). [NAR]</p>	<p>Time and energy</p> <p>Awkwardness</p> <p>Awkwardness</p> <p>Awkwardness</p> <p>Physical development: Hormones</p> <p>Awkwardness</p> <p>Physical development: Hormones</p> <p>Technology</p> <p>Challenging</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Dis 'n bietjie moeilik. (38)</p>		
<p><b>Feelings</b></p>			

Reference keys:

- (xx) - Transcription line numbers.
- [NAR] – Narrative text/ written activity
- [NOTES] – Reflective field notes

## **ADDENDUM I**

### Axial Coding

**THEME 1: CURRENT EXPERIENCE**

Category	Sub-categories	Cluster of codes	Participants								Participant references*								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Motivational Beliefs	Role Construction	Nature of involvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	91	34, 48	40, 42, 84, NAR	32, 34, 38, 44	30, 32, 38, NAR	30, 48, 58, 90	28, 34, 36, 40, 60	22, NAR		
			X		X		X		X			48, NOTES	64		24	54		50	
Invitations for Involvement	Parental self-efficacy		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		NAR	NAR	38	NAR, NOTES	54	NOTES			
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	78, 292, 31, 306	30, 70	44	42	24, 87, 80, NAR, NOTES	62, 64	38, 40, 74	30, 54, 68, 58	
	Teacher	Sport	X			X				89			26				NAR		
			X			X								32, 82		44, NOTES			
	Child	Interests	X																
			X								126							34	
	Life Context	Skills and knowledge	Time and energy	X															
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	114	34, 48	32, 34, 50, 68	10, 30, NAR	48	50, 72	48	50
		Socio-Economic Status	Physical development	Maturity	X														
					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		NAR	NOTES	12, NAR			66
Age		Awkwardness		X															
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	125, NAR			NAR	46	52		38
Feelings		Challenging	Dedication	X															
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	38, 47, 52, NAR	54	34, NAR	44	38		NAR, 28, 32	40
Content			X																
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	38	50	26, 38		90				
			X								38								

THEME 2: EXPERIENCE OF TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO HIGH SCHOOL

Category	Sub-categories	Cluster of codes	Participants								Participant references*							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Adjustment	Of parents' involvement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X									
			X	X	X	X			X	X								
	Experienced of child	X	X	X	X	X	X											
Feelings	Parent	Academic	X															
		The Blue School	X		X													
		Friends	X		X			X										
		Independence	X				X	X	X	X								
Expectations	Child		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
			X	X	X	X												
	About Child	Academic																
		Involvement		X														
		New identity					X											
		Seniors	X	X														
About School	School building	X	X					X	X								70	
	Friends	X					X										40, 68	
															78			68

\*Participant source references: numbers - transcription line numbers

NAR - Narrative text/ written activity

NOTES - Reflective field notes