Exploring parental support for disengaging primary school students

L. Witbooi

Supervisor: L. Collair

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DECLARATION

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DATE: December 2019

NAME: Lené Witbooi

ABSTRACT

Disengagement is multidimensional and has negative implications for academic success. Students that are disengaging may display behaviour that includes a lack of participation in class and school activities, not becoming cognitively involved in learning, not developing or maintaining a sense of school belonging, and/or exhibiting counterproductive behaviour (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). One of the most effective ways to enhance the educational achievement of students is to engage their parents in their education; this has been one of the strongest trends in education reform (Lemmer, 2007). The aim of this research was therefore to explore parental support for disengaging primary school students attending a primary school situated within a rural, low socio-economic area. To accomplish this, the researcher used a qualitative instrumental case study that is embedded within the interpretive paradigm. Participants were purposively selected and invited to participate in the study after which six parent participants willingly participated. Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary method of data collection. The researcher's reflexive notes, the literature review, analysis of artefacts and an inductive process of qualitative thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data. The results showed that for the parents, providing parental support for disengaging students within a low socio-economic background is not easy. They face contextual barriers caused by poverty such as limited skills and knowledge; socio-economic difficulties such as inadequate housing, limited resources, unemployment and alcohol and drug use, all of whichleads to low levels of self-efficacy. The parents understood support in terms of being emotionally present and engaging in encouraging conversations with their children. The parents are aware of the challenges their children face, and the possible causes of these challenges, but they entrusted 'professionals' to obtain support for their children or guide them in how they can utilise the support. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) should thus place more attention on how to support these parents, especially within low socio-economic backgrounds, that do not know how to utilise the resources around them.

OPSOMMING

Distansie teenoor die skool is multidimensioneel en het negatiewe implikasies vir akademiese sukses omdat leerders wat onbetrokke voorkom gedrag mag toon wat insluit `n gebrek aan klaskamer deelname en skool aktiwiteite, nie kognitief betrokke te raak by leer nie, nie `n gevoel van behoort ontwikkel teenoor die skool nie en om teenproduktiewe gedrag te hê (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Een van die mees effektiewe maniere om skolastiese sukses te bevorder is om ouers in die skool opvoeding van hul kinders te betrek, wat een van die sterkste tendense in onderwyshervorming is (Lemmer, 2007). Die doel van hierdie navorsing was dus om ouer ondersteuning vir hul laerskool kind wat gedistansieerd teenoor die skool voorkom, in a lae sosio-ekonomiese gebied, te ondersoek. Om dit te bereik, het die navorser gebruik gemaak van `n kwalitatiewe instrumentele gevallestudie, ingebed in `n interpretatiewe paradigma. Deelnemers was doelgerig geselekteer en uitgenooi om deel te neem aan die studie, waarvolgens ses ouer deelnemers vrymoediglik ingestem het om deel te neem aan die studie. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude was die primêre bron van data-insameling, tesame met die navorser se refleksiewe notas, die literatuuroorsig en ontleding van artefakte en `n induktiewe proses van kwalitatiewe tematiese inhoudsanalise. The resultate het getoon dat dit nie altyd maklik is vir die deelnemers met `n lae sosio-ekonomiese agtergrond om ouer ondersteuning vir hul gedistansieerde kinders te gee nie. As gevolg van armoede het hierdie ouers verskeie kontekstuele hindernisse soos beperkte vaardighede en kennis, sosio-ekonomiese uitdagings soos onvoldoende behuising, beperkte hulpbronne, werkloosheid en alkohol en dwelm gebruik, wat op sy beurt lei na lae vlakke van selfdoeltreffendheid. Die ouers het gevolglik ouer ondersteuning verstaan in terme van emosionele teenwoordigheid om bemoedigende gesprekke met hul kinders te voer. Die ouers was bewus van die uitdagings wat hul kinders het, maar het die 'professionele mense' toevertrou om ondersteuning vir die kinders te kry of om vir hulle te lei om hierdie ondersteuning vir hulle kinders te kan bekom. Die Wes-Kaapse Onderwys Departement (WKOD) moet dus meer fokus op hoe om ouers te ondersteun, veral in `n lae sosio-ekonomiese agtergrond, wat nie kennis dra oor hoe om verskillende ondersteuningsnetwerke te benader nie.

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ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FAS	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
HSSSE	High School Survey of Student Engagement
PPCT	Process-Person-Context-Time
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SASA	The South African School's act
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

> I have never liked school at all. Even in primary school I used to come home for lunch because I hated it that much. I was good at primary school, but I still hated it.
>
> It was boring. They teach you the same things every year but in a harder dose.
>
> I just won't come to school. I don't see the point.
>
> (Murray, Mitchell, Gale, Edwards, & Zyngier, 2004, p. 3)

As can be seen from the real-life comments from young people above, the issue of disengaging from school is not new (Murray et al., 2004). Many educators observe this in their classroom as many students are "disengaged from the academic and social aspects of school life" (Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008, p. 369) as they are "bored, unmotivated and uninvolved" (Appleton et al., 2008). Engagement therefore plays a critical role in learning and achievement (Appleton et al., 2008; Kahu, 2013; Sinatra, Heddy, & Lombardi, 2015; Leach, 2016), students need to be motivated and involved in schooling for learning to take place. Students that are engaged show long-term involvement in schooling, which can act as a protective factor against low achievement and dropping out of school (Sinatra, Heddy, & Lombardi, 2015).

Engagement is considered the theoretical model for understanding school dropout and it is therefore necessary for students to be engaged to complete school successfully. The reality, however, is that sufficient engagement does not occur for many students (Appleton et al., 2008). The National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination is an example of how school dropout is still a very pertinent topic to discuss in South Africa. Even though the pass rates may be considered high with the 2017 matric pass rate being 75,1 per cent and the 2018 pass rate increasing to 78,2 per cent (Shay, 2019), the concern lies in the dropout rate. Of the

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1 155 629 students that entered Grade 1 in 2006, only 34,7 per cent obtained a NSC at the end of 2017 (Carroll, 2018). Thus, given the troubling statistics and the effects of school dropout, facilitating effective school completion should be a concern for all researchers, administrators and teachers.

One of the most effective ways to enhance the educational achievement of students is to engage their parents in their education (Lemmer, 2007; Poole, 2017). This practice has been acknowledged in many countries, including South Africa, as one of the strongest trends in education reform (Lemmer, 2007). Various studies suggest that parental support has an influence on academic success (Ruholt et al., 2015; Singh, 2004; Benner, Boyle, & Sadler, 2016) as it "positively predicts academic wellbeing and engagement at all age levels" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 2). Parents' support is not, however, always so straight-forward as the support provided by many parents in South Africa is affected by contextual barriers such as poverty and disadvantageous contexts which, in turn, generate and maintain the cycle of poverty (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014).

As can be concluded from the discussion above, the success of students in school does not only depend on school-related aspects, but also on other factors within the students themselves (e.g. being engaged) and the community outside the school (e.g. parental support). The development of young students does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, much of the literature on childhood development focuses on the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) who described the 'nested' systems context which shape human development. The 'nested' systems have reciprocal relationships that affect the development of children. This study will focus on one important factor that influences a child's engagement - the support they receive from their parents. The purpose of this study is therefore to explore parental support for disengaging primary school students.

1.2 PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

As a young child growing up in a disadvantaged community and attending public schools within this community, I observed how the decisions made by parents had an effect on the child's emotional wellbeing and eventually also scholastic performance. I often wondered whether these parents were aware of the effect of

their behaviour on their children. This lived experience is what motivated me to become a psychologist and to have a particular interest in parental support.

Once I became a teacher and worked within the same community where I attended school I observed the large number of students that are disengaged from school. Teachers try their best to accommodate and support these students but because parents play a crucial role in the development and education of their children the teacher input only is not enough. Furthermore, upon investigation on the topic of disengagement the researcher discovered that much of the research focuses on the student's perspective while the voice of the parents is missing. This is troublesome as Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, which is part of the theoretical framework for this study, argues that all the different systems of which the child is a part should be considered when attempting to gain a holistic view of the child. Thus, instead of focusing on the perspective of the student, which has been investigated thoroughly, the focus of this study is on the parents' perspective.

Thus, the researcher's personal experience in school, her interest in education and her desire to improve the practice of education, led to the rationale for this research.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many educators observe that far too many students are "disengaged from the academic and social aspects of school life" (Appleton et al., 2008, p. 369) as they are "bored, unmotivated and uninvolved" (Appleton et al., 2008). Engagement is therefore relevant to predict or prevent school dropout as well academic success (Appleton et al., 2008). Disengagement is a gradual process that occurs over multiple years in which students disconnect from school and may eventually drop out from school (Appleton et al., 2008).

School dropout is a longstanding major concern in South Africa (Wegner, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard, & King, 2008). Back in 2003 the Department of Education (2003, in Wegner et al., 2008, p. 422) stated that as many as "60% of South African children who start school dropout before completing high school." These students face a greater risk of mental disorders, sexual and physical abuse,

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substance abuse and involvement in crime (Wegner et al., 2008; Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Disengagement and eventually dropping out of school is thus both an educational and a social problem as it has obvious "psychological, economical, and social ramifications" (Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997, p. 1161) for the student, his/her family, as well as for society in general (Henry, Knight, & Thornberry, 2012).

Much emphasis has been placed on understanding how to increase students' engagement in school as they become adolescents as well as what the early warning signs of disengagement and dropout are (Henry et al., 2012). There are also various studies thatsuggest parental involvement in children's learning may facilitate children's engagement as well as academic achievement (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Hevey, 2000; Gutman & Eccles, 1999; Reed, Jones, Walker, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2000; Walker et al., 2005). Much less research, however, has focused on parental support in the education of their disengaging child attending primary school. This is problematic because research suggests that support from parents to achieve academic success is very important (Stephens, 2008; Prinsloo & Gasa, 2016). Moreover, as mentioned above, most studies focus on disengagement amongst adolescents; however the researcher is of opinion that earlier support and intervention is very important to ensure later academic success. Disengagement amongst primary school students and the support received from parents is therefore an important topic to consider when exploring student disengagement. In light of the above, the focus of this study is on parental support in the education of their disengaging primary school child.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Appleton, Christenson, Kim, & Reschly (2006) view engagement as a multi-dimensional construct comprised of four sub-types: academic, behavioural, cognitive, and psychological. Academic engagement consists of variables such as "time on task, credits earned towards graduation, and homework completion" (Appleton et al., 2006, p. 429). Behavioural engagement include variables such as "attendance, suspensions, voluntary classroom participation and extra-curricular participation" (Appleton et al., 2006, p. 429). Cognitive and psychological engagement are not as observable as the other two because these are

moreintrinsic indicators such as "self-regulation, relevance of schoolwork to future endeavours, value of learning, and personal goals and autonomy" (Appleton et al., 2006, p. 429).

According to Moletsane (2004) one of the factors contributing to the learning and engagement of children is parent-child interaction.Parental support should thus be an essential part of any whole school strategy aimed at school improvement. According to Lemmer (2007, p. 218) when there is a partnership amongschool, family and community it leads to "improved academic student achievement, self-esteem, school attendance and social behaviour". The reality, however, is that even though parental support is linked to school success, schools often fail to establish strong links between home and school (Lemmer, 2007). This is problematic as one of the strongest trends in education reform in South Africa is to give parents an "increased role in governing schools" (Lemmer, 2007, p. 218) as stipulated in the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001).

Education is about the "growth and development of the whole child" (Donald et al., 1997, p. 250). According to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological approach, the home, peer group, community, and the school all have an influence on the growth and development of children (Donald et al., 1997). Thus, the best way to ensure optimal learning and growth is if all these parties "co-operate and work together" (Donald et al., 1997, p. 251). Furthermore, when children experience barriers to learning such as disengagement it becomes even more important to co-operate and to "invite parents to be active partners in the whole process of learning" (Donald et al., 1997, p. 251).

Many reforms have focused on making schools more "academically excellent by reforming the roles, skills, and outlooks of the adults who teach" (Balfanz et al., 2007, p. 223) and creating a caring and supportive learning environment (Hanna, 2014). Through research one could identify the contextual factors that have an influence on engagement. However, research that takes a qualitative approach to understanding parental support for primary school students that are disengaging is needed.

1.4.1 PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore parents' understanding of their educational support for their disengaging primary school child.

1.4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the parents' understandings about their educational support for their children?

1.1 What knowledge do they have regarding the educational needs of their child/ren?

1.2 How do they support their child/ren who are disengaged?

1.4.3 RESEARCH GOAL

With reference to the problem statement and research questions, the research goal was to explore parental support in the education of their child/ren within the intermediate phase who showed signs of disengagement. The aim was to identify how parents support their children, to empower parents by allowing them to gain a better understanding of their parental support for their children and to provide guidance to parents should they need it. Furthermore, the expected outcome is that the study will help other parents in the same situation reflect on their parental support for their disengaging child and help them, through parent guidance, explore further ways of supporting their child/ren.

The benefits of studying parental support for disengaging students are numerous. Parents can benefit by being made aware of their influence on the academic wellbeing of their child. Programs can be designed to help parents foster support "in order to improve the academic wellbeing of their child" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 6). These programs can also be used to inform educators about the importance of parental support and how they can assist the parents to be supportive of their children "in order to improve academic self-efficacy and self-esteem" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 6). By doing the above, disengagement can be prevented and therefore also school dropout.

1.5 RESEARCH PROCESS

1.5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research design which is often found in the field of education, and which was applied in this study, is a case study. A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). It is employed to "gain an in-depth understanding of the situations and meanings for those involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Parents' understanding of their educational support for their child (studied phenomenon) was explored with parents of children in Grades 4-6 in a public school situated in a rural area within the Western Cape.

After establishing that the research question will be best answered by using a qualitative case study and the case and its boundaries were identified, the researcher decided to conduct an instrumental case study. Stake (1995), cited in Baxter and Jack (2008, p. 549) defined an instrumental case study as the following:

> It is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest. The case may or may not be seen as typical of other cases.

The researcher decided to use an instrumental case study as the intent of the research is to gain insight and understanding of a particular situation or phenomenon. It thus uses a particular case to gain a broader appreciation of the phenomenon (Crowe et al., 2011). It assisted the researcher with gaining a clearer understanding and acquiring knowledge regarding parental support for disengaging primary school students. It also provided the researcher with multiple sources of information and facilitated the process of exploring and describing the phenomenon clearly.

The research design "serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution or implementation of research" (Durrheim, 2006, p. 34). It thus assists

with finding coherence between questions asked and how best to answer them by using specific methods. Four principles were taken into consideration in this study to ensure design coherence and validity of the study as suggested by Durrheim (1999). These principles are: the research paradigm, the purpose of the research, the context in which it takes place and the techniques used. Figure 1.1 illustrates these principles as applicable to this study as adapted from Durrheim (1999).

Paradigm
Interpretive

Purpose
To explore parents' understanding of their support for their disengaged child.

Context
Parents with children in Grades 4 to 6 in a rural Primary School in Western Cape

Research methods		
Purposive sampling	Data collection methods	Qualitative content analysis
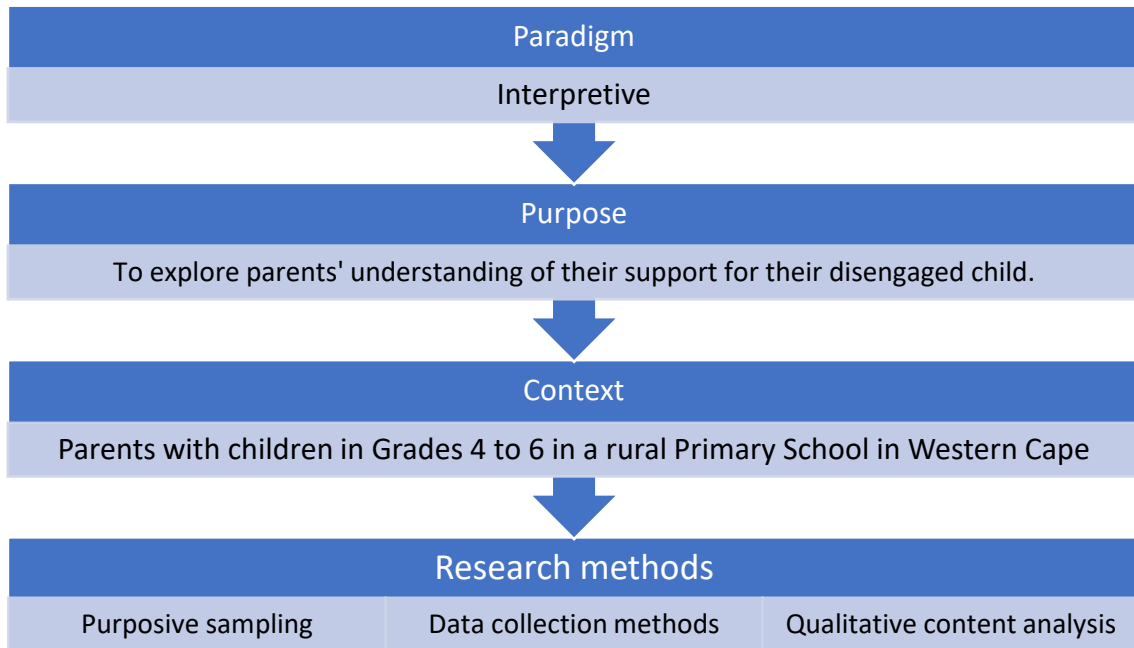
Figure 1. 1: Illustration of the research design.

A qualitative study was conducted as it is flexible and allows for interaction between researcher and the participants to be more natural. Qualitative research is interested in understanding how people "interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 6). This is suitable for the intended study as the research questions are about understanding the participants' perceptions and experiences.

1.5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The interpretive paradigm was used since the goal of this study was to gain a deep understanding of the experience of the participants by relying on their understanding. Thus, this study sought to produce descriptive analyses that emphasised deep, interpretive understanding of the social phenomena. The

interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology) (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The interpretive paradigm was most suitable because of the explanatory and interactive nature of the study. As will be discussed below, the semi-structured interview, literature review, analyses of artefacts and reflective reacher's noteswereused as theyallowed for rich information to emerge.

1.5.3 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND CONTEXT

The study was conducted by interviewing six parents of Grade 4 to 6 students who showed signs linked to the construct "disengagement" and who attend a state Primary School in the Western Cape within a rural and disadvantaged community.

The research participants were all female. Unemployment and lack of educational knowledge and skills, as a result of early school dropout, were common amongst the participants. Most of the participants had teenage pregnancies and as a result support their children alone, with the help of family members and neighbours. As a result of poverty, they also do not always have the necessary resources to provide sufficient support to their children.

The school in which the study took place caters for Grade R (ages 5-6) to 7 (age 13). It has a student population of 1294 with 35 educators. The school is situated within a disadvantaged community with most parents working on farms and most households being single-headed. Purposive selection of the school was influenced by an awareness of high numbers of students that are disengaged in the school, especially starting at Grade 4, as well as high numbers of student dropouts in the community.

The decision to focus on these grades was motivated by various reasons. This is the phase when students start to become disengaged and often drop out of school or repeat grades (Balfanz et al., 2007). It is especially difficult for those students startingthe intermediate phase (Balfanz et al., 2007). During the intermediate phase - Grades 4 to 6 - students must adapt to a variety of changes such as

"larger class sizes, different assessment, grading, testing, and reporting practices, and more challenging and complex instructional practices" (Balfanz et al., 2007, p. 224). Furthermore, students in these grades in high poverty communities face "greater dangers and temptations than when they were younger and are often recruited into roles that interfere with school attendance and involvement" (Balfanz et al., 2007, p. 225). The combination of the above together with living in high poverty communities can push students "off the path to high school graduation" (Balfanz et al., 2007, p. 225).

Figure 1.2 indicates how the students from the school where the study was conducted struggle to adapt to the new phase as 37 out of 186 students in Grade 4 repeated the grade and 28 progressed due to their years in the phase.
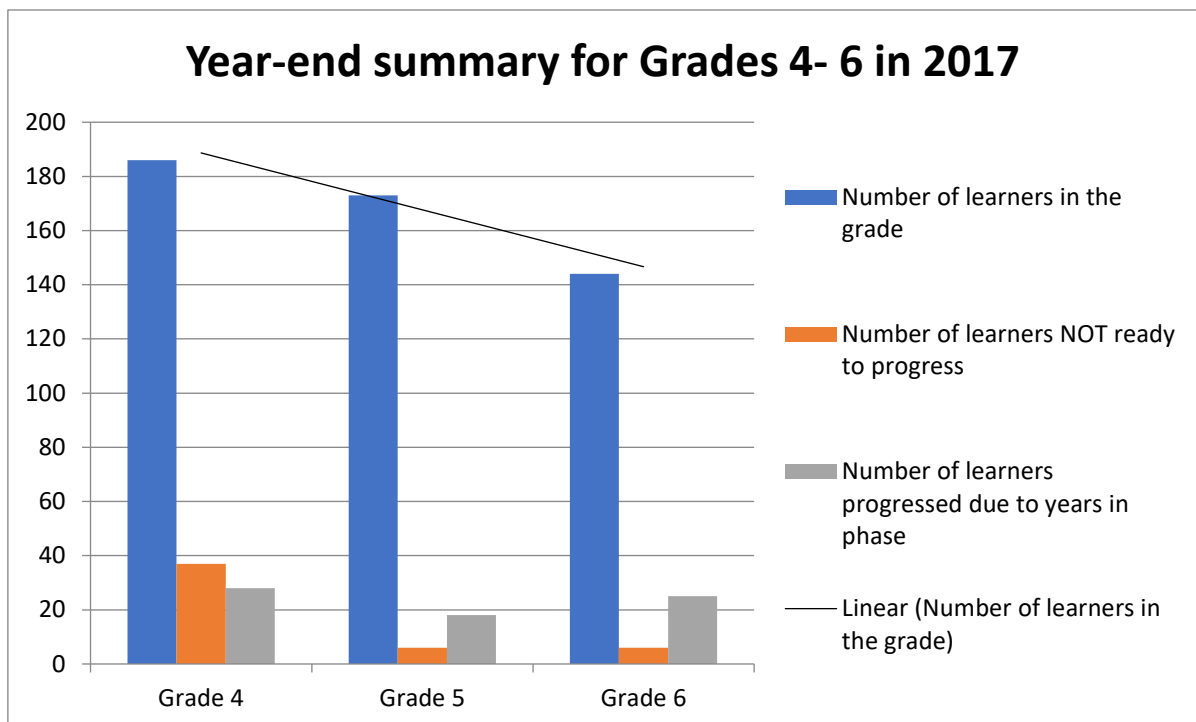
Figure 1. 2: Year-end summary of total number of students in Grades 4-6.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods were selected based on their coherence with the research design and research questions. The data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, a literature review, reflective fieldnotes, studying of artefacts, and qualitative content analysis. All of these methods will be briefly discussed

below as it is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. This section will however start with how the participants were sampled, which were purposive sampling.

1.6.1 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Participants (parents) were purposively sampled if their child displayed behaviour linked to the construct "disengagement". The researcher provided the Grade Heads of Grades 4-6 with a list of signs of disengagement in order for them to identify disengaging students in their classrooms. Signs of disengagement that the educators used to identify the students include not paying attention in class, not completing assignment and not partaking in extramural activities (academic disengagement); poor school attendance and lack of classroom participation (behavioural disengagement); not asking questions in class, not persisting with difficult tasks, not reading beyond required material (cognitive disengagement) and feelings that s/he does not belong in the school and does not have a good relationship with peers (psychological disengagement).

Parents of students who were identified as disengaged were purposively sampled and invited to participate in the study. The researcher chose purposive sampling as it is one of the most common forms of sampling used in qualitative research. It is based on the assumption that the "investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 2009, p. 77).

1.6.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review, as discussed in Chapter 2, helps to determine whether the topic is worth studying and what the needed area of inquiry is on which the researcher can focus (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is therefore usually one of the first steps when embarking on a study (Mouton, 2012). It is used as a "contextualization of your study to argue a case, identify a niche to be occupied by your own research" (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004, p. 27). The research enabled the researcher to develop a framework for understanding what is known about disengaging primary school students and the parental support they receive.

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1.6.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Individual semi-structured interviews were used. The interviews were "organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee/s" (Dicicco-bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). The individual interview was chosen because it allowed the interviewer to "delve deeply into social and personal matters" (Dicicco-bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the educators of the identified students. The purpose of the interviews with the educators was to gain a deeper understanding of the child and how s/he is disengaged and the type of support they have already received. Educators were thus key informants of the study as their position enabled them to provide deeper insight into what is occurring in the school setting (Marshall, 1996).

1.6.4 ARTEFACTS

The documents and artefacts that are part of the research setting, in this case the school that the students attend and where the interviews were conducted, are also sources of data in qualitative studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These include things that are naturally part of the research setting and it is thus a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used class attendance schedules and mark schedules, respectively. Addendum I is an example of a mark schedule.

1.6.5 REFLECTIVE FIELDNOTES

Reflective fieldnotes refer to observations captured by the researcher, either in written format or mechanically as soon as the observation took place. The researcher made written fieldnotes after every interview. It included observations done by the researcher, as well as the researcher's thoughts and feelings about the observations made. The researcher further deemed it appropriate, as a novice researcher, to make fieldnotes regarding the methodology used and reflected on the strategies used during the interviews. Addendum H is an example of the reflective fieldnotes.

1.6.6 QUALITATIVE THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

Qualitative thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data. The approach "identifies commonalities and differences in qualitative data, before focusing on relationships between different parts of the data, thereby seeking to draw descriptive and/or explanatory conclusions clustered around themes" (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013, p. 2). It generates full descriptions capable of "shedding light on the phenomenon under investigation" (Gale et al., 2013, p. 2)

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to the study, the researcher applied for ethical clearance with Stellenbosch University's Research Ethics Committee (REC). Thereafter, official government clearance was obtained to do the study at a Western Cape Education Department (WCED) school. The school principal was contacted in order to arrange a meeting. The principal was provided with all the necessary information regarding the study to make an informed decision of whether or not to allow the study to take place at the school. The principal gave permission to conduct the study at the school. Other aspects of ethical conduct will be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.8 KEY TERMS

1.8.1 DISENGAGEMENT

Disengagement is a multidimensional construct as students can be academically, behaviourally, cognitively and psychologically disengaged (Appleton et al., 2008). The researcher's preferred understanding of disengagement, for the purpose of this study, is that students who are disengaged are those who do not participate actively in class and school activities, do not become cognitively involved in learning, do not develop or maintain a sense of school belonging, and/or exhibit inappropriate or counterproductive behaviour" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Disengagement can therefore be seen as a risk factor as it is counterproductive and can lead to students not being successful in their schoolwork and eventually dropping out of school.

1.8.2 PARENT

According to the South African School's Act (1996) the term "parent" means:

a) The parent or guardian of a student

b) The person legally entitled to custody of a student, or

c) The person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) towards the student's education in school.

Furthermore, similar to the above definition, Goodall (2013) argues that the term parent is understood to mean the adult who is, primarily, responsible for the care of the child. It can therefore include parents, grandparents, godparents, members of the extended family, foster parents, and so forth. Thus, even though the term "parents" will be used throughout this study and used to represent a general category, it means different things to different people as it is a heterogeneous group.

1.8.3 PARENTAL SUPPORT

It is challenging to provide a definition of what parental support is, since it depends on the context in which it is used (Fan & Chem, 2001). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the definition provided by Ruholt, Gore and Dukes (2015, p. 2) where parental support is understood as "being emotionally present and consistently dependable for the child in times of need" as well as the application of parental support in educational settings which include helping the child with his or her homework, having an insight into the child's progress at school and engaging in decision-making with regards to the child's schooling.

1.8.4 PRIMARY SCHOOL

In South Africa, Primary School is presented by Grade R to Grade 7 (ages 5-13). The Foundation Phase is from Grades R to Grade 3 (ages 5-9). The remaining grades in Primary School, Grades 4-6 (ages 10-12), is called the Intermediate Phase and Grade 7 (13 year old) is part of the Senior Phase.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The layout of the research thesis is outlined below in Table 1.2 as suggested by Mouton (2012).

Table 1. 1: Outline of the study

Chapter	Description
Chapter 1: Introduction	Overview of the study; research problems; research questions; purpose; ethical considerations; concept definitions.
Chapter 2: Literature review and conceptual framework	Review of the literature on the research topic.
Chapter 3: Research methodology	The research process followed; details on research design and methodology followed in order to investigate the problem formulated above.
Chapter 4: Research results and discussion of findings	Presentation of data; analysis and discussion on the results and the findings; discussion of research findings in relation to relevant literature.

1.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 provided a general introduction to the study. It explained the personal motivation for the study which informed the research problem. Furthermore, it explained the research paradigm and methodology to answer the research questions. It provided definitions of certain concepts which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 will provide a literature review on existing literature on parental support for disengaging students, as well as discuss the conceptual framework for the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, the researcher introduced the study on parental support for disengaging primary school students. This chapter will focus on providing a synthesis of relevant literature to the study in order to investigate how scholars have previously investigated the research topic and to evaluate the existing body of knowledge on the topic in order to identify knowledge gaps and to attempt to inform future research (Kaniki, 2006; Mouton, 2012). The literature review is therefore an important part of a research report;it involves "identifying literature relevant to the topic of research, studying that literature, and actually writing the review" (Kaniki, 2006, p. 31). The following literature review will therefore be used to expand the argument that was briefly discussed in Chapter 1, whilst positioning this study within existing bodies of literature. Furthermore, it will assist with the interpretation of the data that were collected to add new knowledge to the topic.

This literature review is organised according to the key themes in the study which are disengagement and parental support.The literature review will start by broadly defining engagement which will be used to structure the remainder of the review and to narrow the scope to focus specifically on disengagement within primary school in South Africa and internationally. Thereafter, it will discuss the theoretical framework of the study. Before concluding, the importance of parental support on the academic achievement of children will be discussed.

2.2 ENGAGEMENT

Student engagement is defined by Skinner, Kindermann and Furrer (2009, in Dupont, Galand, Nils, & Hospel, 2014, p. 8) as "the quality of a student's connection or involvement with the endeavour of schooling and hence with the people, activities, goals, values and place that compose it". Engagement can thus be viewed as the way in which the student connects with the school and the

various aspects involved. It is therefore a key predictor of academic success (Fan & Williams, 2010; Dupont et al., 2014).

Being engaged means that students are actively involved in everyday tasks for learning to occur, such as "attending school and classes, following teachers' directions, completing in-class and out-of-class assignments, and holding positive attitudes about particular subject areas and about school in general" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 98). It can therefore also be viewed as the attention, effort and investment that students have towards their schoolwork.

Counter to engagement is disengagement. Disengagement can be viewed as the opposite of engagement where students do not engage as mentioned above. Instead, disengaged students are viewed as "those who do not participate actively in class and school activities, do not become cognitively involved in learning, do not develop or maintain a sense of school belonging, and/or exhibit inappropriate or counterproductive behaviour" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 99). Disengagement can therefore be seen as a risk factor as it is counterproductive and can lead to students not being successful in their schoolwork (Finn & Zimmer, 2012).

Based on the explanations above, one can conclude that engagement and disengagement can be viewed as being on a continuum. As illustrated below in Figure 2.1, an increased level of engagement leads to students being engaged, whereas a decreased level of engagement leads to disengagement.
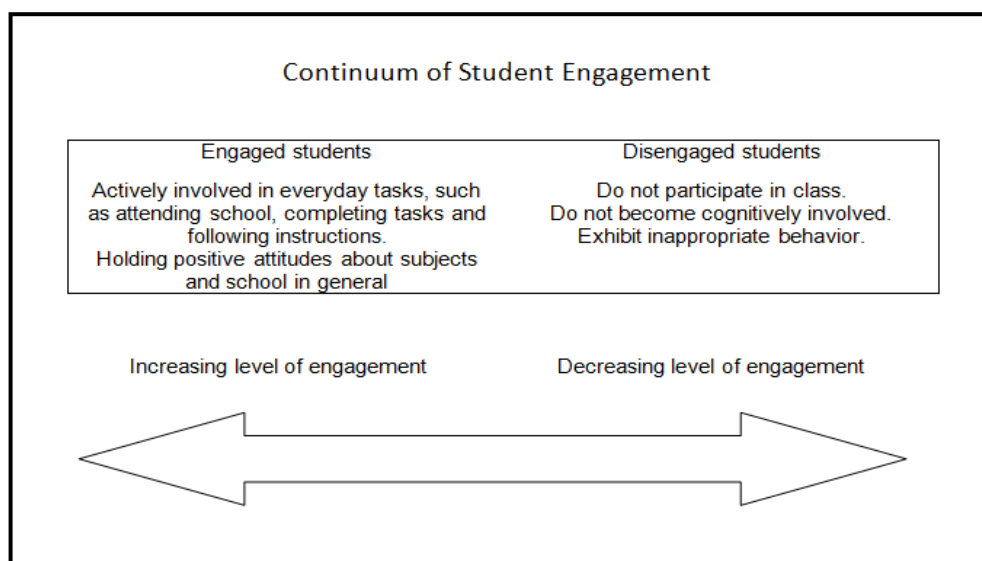
Figure 2. 1: Continuum of student engagement

2.2.1 MULTIDIMENSIONALITY OF ENGAGEMENT

Despite the inconsistencies amongst researchers about the conceptualisation of engagement (Appleton et al., 2008; Fan & Williams, 2010), what was common in the research was that engagement is complex and multidimensional (Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr, & Godber, 2001; Appleton et al., 2008; Fan & Williams, 2010; Dupont et al., 2014; Wang & Fredricks, 2014; Archambault, 2017). Studies differ in how engagement is multidimensional as some focus on three dimensions (Fan & Williams, 2010; Dupont et al., 2014; Wang & Fredricks, 2014) while others focus on four (Appleton et al., 2006; Appleton et al., 2008; Finn & Zimmer, 2012;Reeve, 2012). Despite these differences, all the research suggests that engagement is linked to school success (Appleton et al., 2008; Fan & Williams, 2010; Dupont et al., 2014; Wang & Fredricks, 2014; Archambault, 2017).

From the above, it is clear that engagement can be understood from different dimensions. There are four dimensions of engagement: academic, behavioral, cognitive, and psychological (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004; Appleton et al., 2008) as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Whereas the academic and behavioral dimensions are observable, the cognitive and psychological dimensions are less observable and more intrinsicto the student (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004).
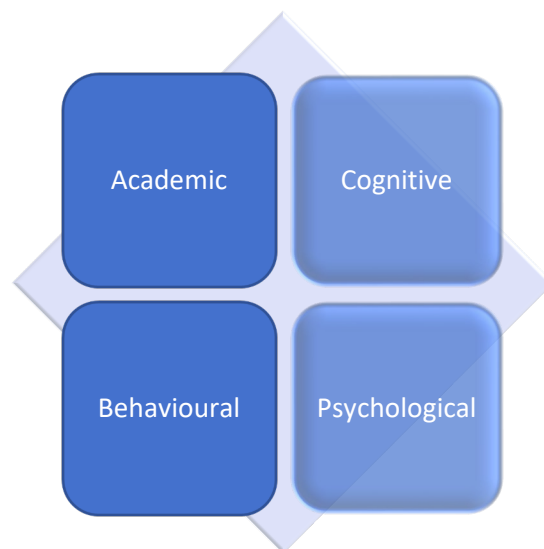
Figure 2. 2: Dimensions of engagement

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2.2.1.1 ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Academic engagement refers to the behavior that is "directly related to the learning process," (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 102) such as paying attention in class, completing assignments on time, engaging in extra-mural activities (Appleton et al., 2008; Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Academic engagement can therefore be easily observed by student participation in class. These "minimal threshold levels of academic engagement" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 102) are important for effective learning to occur and to accumulate marks (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004).

2.2.1.2 BEHAVIOURAL ENGAGEMENT

Behavioral engagement draws on the idea of participation and includes "attendance, suspension, voluntary classroom participation, and extracurricular participation" (Appleton et al., 2008). Furthermore, according to Finn and Zimmerman (2012, p. 104) behavioral engagement also includes the "extent to which a student follows written and unwritten classroom rules and behavior." Behavioral engagement can also be referred to as social engagement as Archambault, Janosz, Fallu and Pagani (2009, 653) state that social engagement is defined by behaviors such as "class attendance, rule compliance, and active participation in school-related activities." Behavioral engagement is considered crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes and preventing student dropout (Murray et al., 2004).

2.2.1.3 COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT

Cognitive engagement involves going beyond the minimal threshold engagement necessary for success. This type of engagement is the "expenditure of thoughtful energy needed to comprehend complex ideas in order to go beyond the minimal requirements" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 102). It can therefore be seen as the "thought processes needed to attain more than a minimal requirement of the course content" (Finn & Zimmer, 2012, p. 103). A child that is cognitively engaged will display behaviors such as asking questions in class to gain clarity about concepts, s/he will persist with tasks that are difficult, will read beyond what is required, will make time to review work previously completed, and will study material that is beyond what is required while using self-regulation to guide

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learning (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Thus, indicators of cognitive engagement include "self-regulation, relevance of school-work for future endeavors, value of learning, personal goals and autonomy" (Appleton et al., 2008, p. 372). Cognitive engagement thus draws on the idea of investment and incorporates thoughtfulness and willingness to exert effort to be able to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills (Murray et al., 2004).

2.2.1.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT

Indicators of psychological engagement include "feelings of identification or belonging, and relationships with teachers and peers" (Appleton et al., 2008, p. 37). Psychological engagement can therefore be seen as an emotional response where students has a sense of belonging and feelings of involvement towards the school and view school activities as worthy of pursuing (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Their school life becomes a significant part of their own lives as it provides them with a sense of belonging because they feel connected to the school community and recognize the value that school holds to help them accomplish their goals out of school. Psychological engagement therefore provides the students with motivation to engage academically, behaviourally, and cognitively. It is once they feel connected to the school community and feels a sense of belonging that they are encouraged or motivated to engage behaviourally and attempt to achieve academic success (Finn & Zimmer, 2012).

Table 2.1 summarises the multiple dimensions of engagement by giving a brief definition of each as well as its indicators. It is, however, not intended to provide a comprehensive list of every indicator of engagement.

Table 2. 1 Definition and indicators of different dimensions of engagement

	ACADEMIC	BEHAVIOURAL	COGNITIVE	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Definition	Observable behaviour that is directly related to learning outcomes.	Observable behaviour related to the extent to which a student follows classroom rules.	Thought processes to comprehend complex ideas in order to go beyond the minimal requirements for success.	Emotional response where the student has feelings of involvement and belonging towards the school.
Indicators	Paying attention in class Completing assignments Partaking in extramural activities	School attendance Voluntary classroom participation Extramural participation	Asking questions in class Persistent with difficult tasks Will read beyond required material	Feelings of identification and belonging Relationship with peers and family

One can conclude that all these dimensions of engagement are embedded within the individual and "provides a rich characterisation of how students act, feel, and think" (Wang & Fredricks, 2014, p. 722). Furthermore, worth mentioning is that the students differ and the way they engage or disengage will also differ. Thus, even though these dimensions were discussed separately, it is often times intercorrelated.

Even though the different domains of engagement were discussed individually, the researcher believes that engagement can be viewed on a continuum. It is difficult to differentiate the dimensions from each other. Cognitive engagement is often described in a way that intersects with behavioural engagement (Sinatra et al., 2015). Psychological engagement likely includes cognitive and behavioural elements. When a student displays one dimension of disengagement, it is likely that s/he will reflect some of the other dimensions as well. Thus, an overlap will likely exist between the different dimensions of engagement.

2.2.2 DISENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT DROP OUT IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

As mentioned previously, students that have decreasing levels of engagement eventually end up being disengaged. For the purpose of this study, the researcher worked from the definition of a 'disengaged student' as defined below by Finn and Zimmer (2012 in Hancock & Zubrick, 2015, p. 15).

> Disengaged students are those who do not participate actively in class and school activities, do not become cognitively involved in learning, do not fully develop or maintain a sense of school belonging, and/or exhibit inappropriate or counterproductive behaviour. All of these risk behaviours reduce the likelihood of school success. Disengaged students may have entered school without adequate cognitive or social skills, find it difficult to learn basic engagement behaviours, and fail to develop positive attitudes that perpetuate their participation in class, or they may have entered school with marginal or positive habits that become attenuated due to unaddressed academic difficulties, dysfunctional interactions with teachers or administrators, or strong ties to other disengaged students.

The researcher decided to work from this definition of disengagement as it includes all the dimensions of engagement as discussed above. Moreover, it also includes possible reasons intrinsic to students (e.g. inadequate cognitive and social skills, academic difficulties) and external to students (e.g. dysfunctional interactions with teachers and strong ties to other disengaged students) that could have led to them being disengaged. This definition thus takes contextual factors into account. It acknowledges that students do not exist in isolation but that there are various factors that could have contributedto them disengaging from school.

As can be seen from the definition above, disengaging from school does not occur instantaneously. Instead, it is a gradual process that occurs over many years and could eventually lead to dropping out of school (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). The process of disengagement therefore starts from early in a child's school career whereby the child experiences increasing feelings of "alienation or lack of participation and identification in the school setting" (Christenson et al., 2001, p. 472). The mid-primary school years are considered a common point of

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disengagement from school and also a time when academic difficulties first become evident (Mundy et al., 2017). According to Murray et al. (2004) indicators of disengagement in primary school includes not paying attention, not completing schoolwork, disruptive behaviour, withdrawal, underachievement, truancy, and school refusal. These are the earliest signs thatstudents are disengagingfrom school. Knowing and recognizing these signs make it possible to intervene as soon as the earliest sign of disengagement is observed so as to promote school completion and prevent eventualdropping out of school. By focusing on primary school students they can be identified and supported earlier rather than later.

Focusing on student disengagement in primary school is especially important in South Africa because dropping out of school is a national crisis (Weybright, Caldwell, Xie, Wegner, & Smith, 2017). As part of educational reform, the government abolished tuition fees for basic education (primary and secondary schools). The introduction of free basic education after 1994 resulted in high numbers of student enrolments. Primary school enrolment in the developing world reached 89% by 2008 (Brander et al., 2012). Countries are therefore becoming more successful in ensuring that all children enrol in primary school. The improvement in primary school enrolment can be seen as a result of the push by the Millennium Development Goals which had access to primary school as one of its goals to foster global development by 2015 (Brander et al., 2012). Despite enrolment rates being high, school dropout before completion of primary school is still a significant issue in most developing countries (No, Taniguchi, & Hirakawa, 2016). The next step should thus be to ensure that children stay in the school.

In South Africa, despite enrolment rates remaining consistent across the provinces at approximately 75% between 2002 and 2018 (Statistics South Africa, 2018), approximately 60% of first graders will dropout before completing Grade 12 (Weybright et al., 2017). Most research in South Africa focuses on student disengagement and dropout in secondary schools. As a result the researcher could not find recent studies on student disengagement and dropout in primary schools.

Increased enrolment rates, but high rates of dropout in primary school is evident in various other developing countries, such as Malawi (Mzuza, Yudong, & Kapute,

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2014), Botswana (Mokibelo, 2014), Mexico (Gibbs & Heaton, 2014), Kenya (Zuilkowski, Jukes, & Dubeck, 2016), and Pakistan (Latif, Choudhare, & Hammayun, 2015). Below are some of the findings of studies done in the above-mentioned countries.

In Kenya, nearly all children enter first grade since the abolition of school fees in 2003 (Zuilkowski et al., 2016). However, despite this, one significant challenge in Kenya is to ensure that all children successfully complete their primary school education. The children drop out of school before acquiring basic literacy and other skills, which might make the investment in education in Kenya and other countries for naught. In most countries, including Kenya, increasing age of students is a risk factor for dropping out of school.

In Kenya, many students are well into adolescence before completing primary school as a result of grade repetition and late school entry. This trend puts social and economic pressure on them to leave the school for paid work and marriage (Zuilkowski et al., 2016). Dropping out of school is even more prevalent amongst Kenyan girls as they have heavy household responsibilities such as caring for their siblings, cleaning and cooking, which might interferewith their completion of homework or school attendance (Zuilkowski et al., 2016). Early marriage is another barrier to finishing school as 1 in 5 rural Kenyan girls are married between the agesof 15-19 (UNICEF, 2005 cited in Zuilkowski et al., 2016). Finally, like in many developing countries, schools in Kenya might be an unsafe place for girls due to abuse or harassment (Zuilkowski et al., 2016).

A study done in Mexico by Gibbs and Heaton (2014) tracked 5-11 year olds from the 2002 to 2006 to determine how many students dropped out of school. Their analysis included a total of 3791 students who enrolled in 2002 of which 120 or 3.2 % dropped out by 2006. They found that the most important factors influencing student dropout are parental education and father's employment. Also, students that have already repeated a grade and struggle to keep up with the rest of the class are also more likely to dropout of school. Grade repetition especially has an influence on primary school students because they are sensitive to teachers. Fifty-eight percent of student dropouts gave this response. The researchers argued that the response is plausible as the students had a prior history of inconsistent school

attendance, uneducated parents and a father who is employed without needing education for the type of work he does. All of these factors could contribute to the students becoming disengaged from school.

In Malawi, despite the high enrolment rate, many girls drop out before reaching their final year. A study done by Mzuza et al.(2014) focused on 402 girls who are repeating the last year of primary school to determine poor examination passing rates and high dropout among primary school girls in Malawi. The results showed that the majority reported lack of interest as their reason for not performing well; most girls do not perform well in their primary school examinations because they have no interest in pursuing academics. Other reasons included poverty, lack of learning and teaching material, and lack of parental care as both parents are dead or are uneducated and thus do not encourage and supporteducation. Finally, peer pressure also contributed to girls dropping out of school (Mzuza et al., 2014). All of these reasons for not performing well can eventually lead to them dropping out of school.

The benefit of free basic education is that children from vulnerable families that would otherwise be excluded from the education system can now attend school. The consequent challenge of student heterogeneity has increased the challenge to retain students in school and to support them to optimally complete their schooling. To retain students in school it is important for policy makers, parents and teachers to recognise that every student is unique. There are complex and varied social forces influencing student disengagement and consequently student dropout. From a bioecological perspective there are multi-level influences that contribute towards student disengagement. These influences are found intrinsic to the student (e.g. gender, race, substance use, repeating a grade) family (family composition), and social (e.g. poverty) (Weybright et al., 2017).

In general, most of the studies discussed above found that family influences such as parental education and employment of parents have an influence on students' motivation towards schooling. Furthermore, Gibbs and Heaton (2014) argue that in the U.S. family influences are an essential part of students' first experiences in education and have a lasting effect on student dropout. The roots of dropout are in the earliest experiences of school and early setbacks such as retention and school

absenteeism which are also signs of student disengagement (Gibbs & Heaton, 2014).

As can be concluded from the above, there is a complex interplay of factors that impacts the engagement of students and, ultimately, dropout. One of the most prominent topics discussed in research that makes students more vulnerable to disengagement is growing up poor (Archambault et al., 2009; Kainuwa, Binti, & Yusuf, 2013; Gibbs & Heaton, 2014; Zuilkowski, Jukes, & Dubeck, 2016; Latif, Choudhare, & Hammayun, 2015). Linked to this study, growing up in a low socio-economic background influences the parental support that students receive.

Education is widely promoted as a means of improving economic security and social wellbeing (Gibbs & Heaton, 2014; Latif et al., 2015). The researcher agrees with Gibbs and Heaton (2014) who argue that most research focuses on dropout in secondary school and less attention has been placed on student dropout in primary schools. One cannot stress enough the importance of intervening in the primary school years so as to promote school completion and foster a sense of motivation in the students to achieve academically and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories of disengagement are usually rooted in an ecological framework (Wang & Fredricks, 2014). These theories assume that engagement evolves over time as a result of interaction between individual factors and school pathways (Wang & Fredricks, 2014). Disengagement and school dropout can therefore not be understood in isolation and separate from contextual factors that might influence the student (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). Instead, early school disengagement can be seen as a result of a complex interaction among student, school, family, and community variables (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). The researcher thus decided on the Bioecological Theory of Bronfenbrenner as the theoretical framework for this study. This theoretical framework was used to provide a lens through which to view the world and frame the study (Henning et al., 2004). The theoretical framework, as well as the rationale for using it, will be discussed below.

2.3.1 BIOECOLOGICAL THEORY

An important assumption of the Bioecological Theory is that "human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interactions between an active, evolving bio-psychological human and persons, objects and symbols in its immediate environment" (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 572). The theory therefore serves as a reminder that difficulties within school cannot be separated from contextual issues that might be a barrier to learning. To understand how students become disengaged, one needs to understandthe complex, dynamic interactions between systems and how this influences the development of engagement. Thus, the bioecological model has much relevance in emphasising the relationship between parental support and academic success of a child as the model can be used to identify how a system in an individual's context can hinder or promote academic success. Thus, it offers insight that "can enhance our understanding of families" (Fan & Williams, 2010, p. 371). Furthermore, it can be used to empower families "through understanding their strengths and needs" (Fan & Williams, 2010, p. 371).

Bronfenbrenner (1979, p.3) described his ecological theory as a "set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls". These nested systems include the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. It is these systems that both directly and indirectly "affect the course of development" (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 12). These systems, referred to as the levels of contexts, was the initial version of the ecological model which was developed in the 1970s (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). Bronfenbrenner later added the chronosystem to elicit the importance of development through time. He also added the term bio to ecological as he believed that "person characteristics are biologically based" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). He therefore emphasised that there are biological and personality differences amongst individuals.The bioecological model is visually depicted in Figure 2.3 (Adapted from Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).
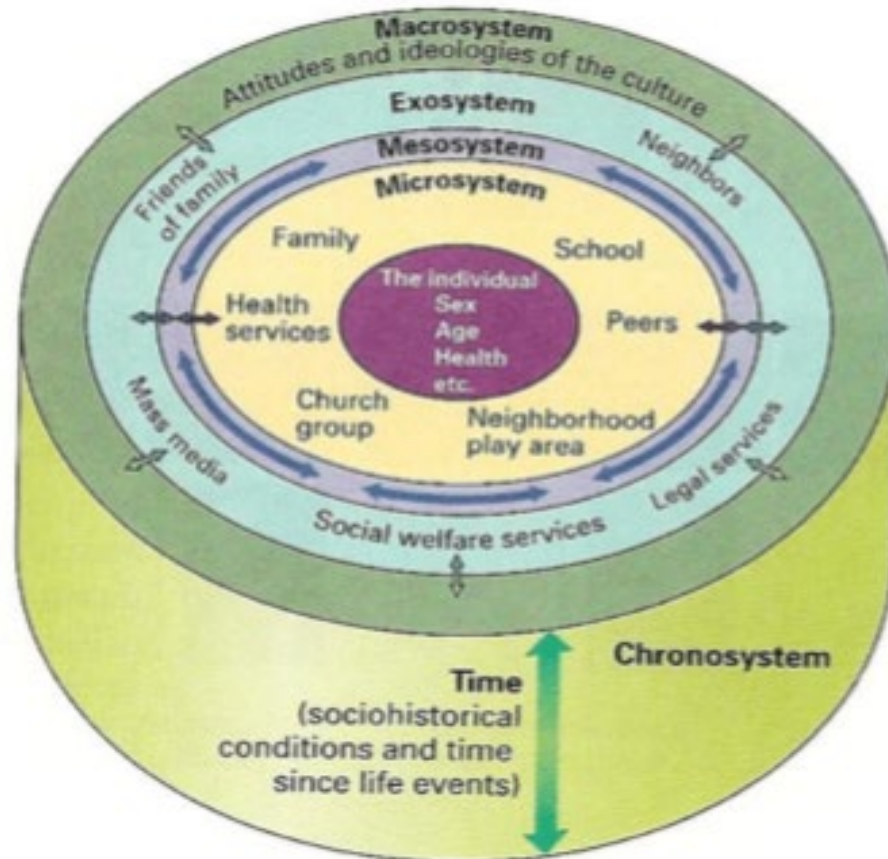
Figure 2. 3: Bioecological model

Based on the above, one can conclude that the bioecological model by Bronfenbrenner is a multidimensional and contextual model of human development (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). What happens in one systems affects and is affected by the other systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). The child is therefore part of complex relationships which affect him/her and that s/he affects. The development of each individual is thus a product of a network of interaction and does not occur in isolation. In order to achieve success within one's classroom, one should understand the complexity of the interactions between the individual student and multiple other systems that are connected to the studentso as to be able to gain a holistic understanding of situations and behaviour in order to provide individualised support (Swart & Pettipher, 2016).

According to the Bioecological Theory, when students and their educational needs are analysed, it is important to take into account the four interactive dimensions that are central to Bronfenbrenner's theory. These dimensions are proximal

processes, person characteristics, systems or context and time (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). These dimensions are also known as the "process-person-context-time" (PPCT) model. Each of these four dimensions will be discussed below.

2.3.1.1 PROXIMAL PROCESSES

Proximal processes "operate over time and are posited as the primary mechanisms producing human development" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 795). These interactions should be face-to-face and direct interactions should take place on a daily basis. These interactions can influence development but in order "to be effective, they must occur on a regular basis and over extended periods of time" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 12).

The proximal processes of the students include their parent/guardian and child activities, their peer and peer activities, their group or solidarity play and their activities with their classroom teacher. The parent-child relationship is what is particularly important for this study. The role of proximal processes is therefore crucial in understanding parental support for their disengaging child. School engagement can be seen as a proximal process between "social context and learning" (Wang & Fredricks, 2014, p. 723). It is therefore the "direct pathway to cumulative learning, educational achievement, and eventually long-term success" (Wang & Fredricks, 2014, p. 723).

2.3.1.2 PERSON CHARACTERISTICS

Person characteristics have the ability to influence future development by affecting the direction and power of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Bronfenbrenner divided these person characteristics into three types which are demand, resource, and force (Swart & Pettipher, 2016).

Demand characteristics

Demand characteristics are those characteristics that are an immediate stimulus to other people which might "promote or discourage reactions from the social environment that either foster or disrupt psychological processes of growth" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 12). It is therefore an immediate stimulus to another person

such as age, race, gender, skin colour and physical appearance(Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009).

Resource characteristics

Resource characteristics are not an immediate stimuli; instead they are rather bio-psychological "assets and liabilities that influence the capacity of the person to engage effectively in proximal processes" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13). Developmental resources include "abilities, knowledge, skills and experience" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13), while social and material resources include "housing, a caring family, food, health services and educational opportunities"(Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13). By contrast, liabilities include "genetic deficits, low birth weight, physical impairments or damage to brain function" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13). One can therefore conclude by noting that these are the characteristics that relate, at least in part to "mental and emotional resources" (Tudge et al., 2009, p. 200).

Force characteristics

The last type of characteristic is *force characteristics* which can "mobilise proximal processes and sustain their operation, or conversely interfere with, limit or even prevent their occurrence" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13). Examples of force characteristics include differences of temperament, motivation, persistence, curiosity and responsiveness (Tudge et al., 2009; Swart & Pettipher, 2016). Force characteristics can also include "developmentally disruptive dispositions including impulsiveness, distractability, aggression and violence, feelings of insecurity, shyness and unresponsiveness" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 13).

2.3.1.3 CONTEXT

As mentioned previously, Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 3) argued that it is useful to view the environment as "a set of nested structures, each contained inside the next like a set of Russian dolls". These nested systems include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem which all interact with the chronosystem as illustrated in Figure 2.3 above. All of these systems will be discussed below.

2.3.1.3.1 THE MICROSYSTEM

The *microsystem* involves a "pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations experienced between individuals and the system in which they actively participate" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 14). It is thus the immediate environment of the individual; proximal processes are therefore played out in the microsystem. It is characterized by individuals and events that are close to the individual and by interactions that happen face-to-face and on a daily basis (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). The microsystem is therefore the environment in which the individual spends most of their time engaging in interactions and activities. This system should offer the child support and act as a protective factor (Swart & Pettipher, 2016).

2.3.1.3.2 THE MESOSYSTEM

The *mesosystem* is the interrelation among more than one microsystem that occurs at a point in time (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). The mesosystem can therefore be seen as "a system of microsystems" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 15). Thus, the different microsystems such as the family and school interact with each other. Thus, students that do not receive parental support at home might be at risk of becoming disengaged at school. In other words, the experience at home might be a risk factor. The microsystems can, however, also be used to identify assets within the child's immediate environment such as supportive parents that can serve as a protective factor, especially in South Africa where it is particularly important to identify assets.

2.3.1.3.3 THE EXOSYSTEM

The *exosystem* refers to one or more settings in which the child that is undergoing development is not a direct participant, but which has an influence on the child and which the child can influence, such as their parent's place of work or the education system (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). For example, parents might have work- related stress which might not influence the student directly, but influences the quality of the parent-child relationship (Swart & Pettipher, 2016). However, certain environments can also be empowering to the student such as a quality

inclusion education system which improves the education of all (Swart & Pettipher, 2016).

2.3.1.3.4 THE MACROSYSTEM

The *macrosystem* "refers to consistencies in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, exosystems)" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26). These are called "patterns of differentiation" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26) and refer to the "dominant social and economic structures and the attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies inherent in the systems of a particular society and culture" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 15). The macrosystem therefore refers to the broader cultural world surrounding students and the underlying belief systems and includes government policies, political ideology, cultural customs and beliefs, historical events and economic systems (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). Macrosystem changes that influence the developing student as well as their parents include the development of new government policies such as the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001). This policy acknowledges the important role that parents play in supporting their children to overcome barriers to learning and therefore influences the quality of education of many students.

2.3.1.3.5 THE CHRONOSYSTEM

The final system, the *chronosystem* "encapsulates the dimension of time and how it relates specifically to the interactions between these systems and their influences on individual development" (Swart & Pettipher, 2016, p. 15-16). Developmental processes are therefore likely to vary "according to the specific historical events that are occurring as the developing individual is at one age or another" (Tudge et al., 2009, p. 201). In terms of the chronosystem, the human development timeframe for most of these students is middle childhood which ranges from 6 to12 years of age (Ntshangase, 2008). This is an important period in terms of "cognitive, social and emotional development" (Ntshangase, 2008, p. 75). This is the period when children go to school and expand their environments beyond their homes. The developmental tasks are to be more independent and self-sufficient, to be able to express your emotions, and form friendships as the child is in early stage of school.

Although the focus of this study was to explore parental support for disengaging primary school students, one should take into consideration that there are various other factors that have a direct and indirect influence on engagement. The researcher deemed the bioecological theory relevant for this study as she agrees with Donald et al. (2014) that social context, which includes socio-economic conditions, values, ways of life, practices and cultural beliefs, influence how children develop. As applied to this study, it can be argued that the social context will influence how parents view their support for their children and the practices they engage in to support their children as influenced by the meaning they attach to the needs of children and the purpose of education.

2.4 PARENTAL SUPPORT

The term 'parent' is understood to mean the adult who provides primary care for a child (Goodall, 2013). It can therefore include parents, grandparents, members of the extended family, foster parents, and so forth. Even though the term 'parents' will be used throughout this study and used to represent a general category, it means different things to different people as it is a heterogeneous group.

The South African School's act of 1996 (SASA) provides formal power to parents to become involved in their child's education (Rebublic of South Africa, 1996). SASA creates the "expectation for parents to be meaningful partners in school governance" (Singh, 2004, p. 301). The Department of Education envisioned parents collaborating with educators to ensure quality education. The important role of parents in the education of their children is further emphasised in government policies such as the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001). It could be that these policies were informed by the large amount of research that has documented the importance of parental support for academic wellbeing.

Parental support is defined by Ruholt, Gore and Dukes (2015, p. 2) as "being emotionally present and consistently dependable for the child in times of need". Parental support therefore focuses on the emotional role that parents play within the lives of their children. Examples of parental support include "encouragement and emotional warmth to their child" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 3). Thus, parents that

provide support focus on how their child feels and helps their child by listening to him/her. In terms of parental support in the education of the child, parental support can be seen as doing activities such as helping the child with his or her homework, and helping the child develop a positive attitude and behaviour towards school" (Ökten, 2016).

Studies view parents as a very influential group within society that can help with the development and growth of their children (Bitew & Ferguson, 2010; Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Finn and Zimmer, 2012; Ruholt et al., 2015). Parents therefore have an important influence on how well children do academically throughout their lives (Fan & Williams, 2010; Ruholt et al., 2015). Academic wellbeing is very important in a child's life as it "governs how successful one could be later in life" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 1). Thus, because parents can influence how children pursue their academic work, they "shape the way that children regard their academic works" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 1) by either being motivators for their children to succeed or by pushing their children "away from high academic attainment by a lack of concern for academics" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 1).

Various studies suggest that parental support has an influence on academic success (Ruholt et al., 2015; Singh, 2004; Benner, Boyle, & Sadler, 2016) as it "positively predicts academic wellbeing and engagement at all age levels" (Ruholt et al., 2015, p. 2). Due to the importance of parental support on the academic wellbeing of children, the purpose of this study was to explore how parents provide educational support to disengaging children so as to be able to gain a better understanding of what parents view as support, and to use this study to help other parents reflect on the support they provide to their disengaging child.

2.4.1 THE EFFECT OF POVERTY ON PARENTAL SUPPORT

A large proportion of South African parents are "unemployed or earning below the breadline" (Poole, 2017, p. 22). Thus, there are many parents with lowsocio-economic backgrounds. These parents wish to be more supportive in the education of their children (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014) but due to circumstances find it very difficult to do. Despite these difficulties these parents still

"have a strong desire to be involved in their children's learning and education" (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014, p. 400).

Low socio-economic status can thus be considered a risk factor that could lead to disengagement and therefore also dropout, as dropout rates are higher for students from low-income households (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004; Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Some of the reasons for this might be that the parents of students with low socioeconomic backgrounds do not have the required literacy levels for participation in their child's schooling (Singh, 2004). Furthermore, most of the parents living in low socio-economic conditions are unemployed, thus "reducing their role in negotiating from a point of strength" (Singh, 2004, p. 301). Parental support is therefore influenced by the socio-economic status of parents (Singh, 2004; Wilson, 2014; Poole, 2017).

The researcher is of the opinion that an important barrier to providing the necessary parental support is the poverty amongst a lot of South African parents. This argument is supported by Ward, Makusha and Bray (2015) who argue that poverty is one of the barriers South African parents face in fulfilling their task of parenting.

2.4.1.1 CYCLE OF POVERTY

Donald, Lazarus and Moolla (2014, p. 182) focus on poverty, together with "unequal and inadequate access to educational and other social services" as barriers to learning. This is due to the fact that poverty is very widespread in South Africa. Statistics indicate that 85, 3 % of the South African population experienced at least one poverty spell between 2008 and 2017, while 36,1 % remained consistently below the poverty line (Statistics South Africa, 2019). The widespread poverty is intensified by the loss of productive members of society due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Donald et al., 2014). Furthermore, 4.6 million people and their families are affected by unemployment as the unemployment rate in South Africa has been estimated at 26.5 per cent (Statistics South Africa, 2005, p. 149). Living under these conditions often generates a negative cycle of poverty (Donald et al., 2014) as shown in Figure 2.4 below.
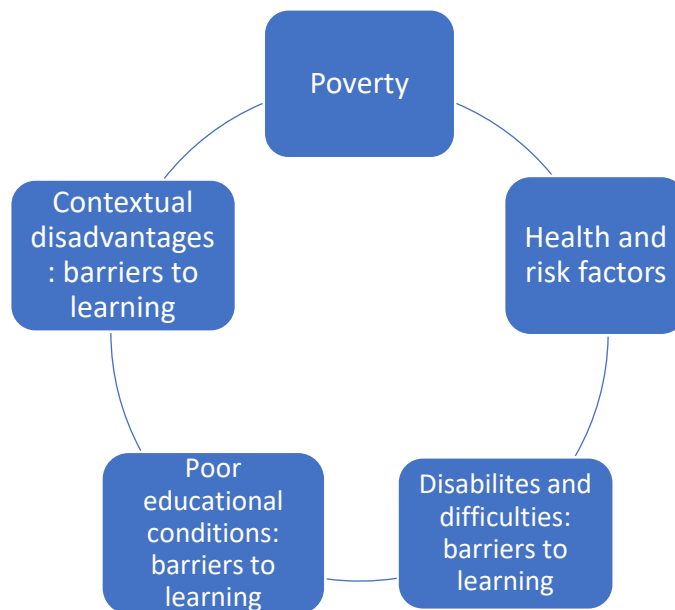
Figure 2. 4: Cycle of poverty

As can be seen in Figure 2.4, poverty causes a range of barriers to learning. The most important one for this study is the direct and indirect effect of poverty on parenting. Poverty is often associated with inadequate facilities and resources which include "inadequate overcrowded housing, with poor water supply, sanitation, and hygiene facilities" (Donald et al., 2014, p. 184). Other difficulties include insufficient food resources and people dying as a result of illnesses such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, thus increasing poverty (Donald et al., 2014). It is very difficult for parents to keep their children healthy under such conditions. In addition, parents often have poor education and "inadequate information about health and child development" (Donald et al., 2014, p. 184) which makes it less likely for them to be able to provide educational support to their children (Ward et al., 2015). As a result of all of these factors, children often suffer physical, sensory, neurological, and cognitive developmental risks (Donald et al., 2014).

Providing support under such conditions can cause much stress for parents as they may become physically and emotionally exhausted. Furthermore, the feeling of not coping could lead to feelings of depression. As a result of this, parents might "stop responding to the physical and psychological needs of the children" (Donald et al., 2014, p. 185) or it might lead to "emotionally distant, harsh and inconsistent parenting" (Ward et al., 2015). All of this is often aggravated by

alcohol and drug abuse and family violence that includes sexual abuse often by family members (Donald et al., 2014).

The impact of poverty is not a uniquely South African phenomenon. International studies also confirm poverty is indeed a barrier for parents to provide the necessary parental support. The study done by Cooper, Crosnoe, Suizzo and Pituch (2010) states that 17 per cent of American children live in families that have an annual income that is below the poverty line of $20,614 for a family of four. Even though poverty cuts across racial lines, racial-minority children are more likely to grow up in impoverished families (Cooper et al., 2010). These children are then at risk for "physical, cognitive, and socioeconomic problems" which leads to achievement disparities from the start of schooling (Cooper et al., 2010, p. 861) which then puts an achievement disparity between poor and non-poor children.

Furthermore, similar to the study done in South Africa, from the study done by Cooper et al. (2010, p. 862) it can be concluded that poverty may reduce parental support in the education of their children because of "time constraints, life stresses, and subtle or overt discrimination and discouragement." Furthermore, because of financial difficulties, parents that struggle with poverty often have to work long hours, hold multiple jobs and have fewer means of transportation which could constrain their involvement with their children (Cooper et al., 2010). Moreover, poor parents might have less confidence in the educational success of their children and might believe that their involvement is not as important for their children's success compared to more affluent parents' involvement (Cooper et al., 2010).

It is clear from the above discussion that poverty undermines parenting and therefore also decreases the life chances of children often resulting in poverty tracking from one generation to the next. However, this is not always the case as parents can withstand the stresses of poverty and provide the necessary support to their children if they have a strong support network (Donald et al., 2014). In such a case the support can come from, among others, neighbours, relatives, and community organisations – all of whom can help parents to be caring and supportive despite living in poverty (Donald et al., 2014).

It is important to note that parental support is imperative regardless of the socio-economic backgrounds of parents. It does not matter which socio-economic background the student belongs to, the role of their parents in their education is still crucial (Singh, 2004). It is therefore important to better understand how parents living in poverty conceptualise support for the learning of their children. This will be further discussed below.

2.4.1.2 INTERSECTIONALITY OF POVERTY AND FACTORS RELATED TO PARENTAL SUPPORT

According to Proctor, Williams, Scherr, and Li (2017) the term *intersectionality* has been coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in relation to how antidiscrimination laws did not protect black women as those laws viewed race and gender as two separate categories of experience and analysis. Crenshaw (1989) challenged the use of a single axis framework, as she argued that for black women disadvantage does not occur on a single categorical axis, instead they are "multiply-burdened" (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality thus refers to "simultaneous experiences of social categories such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation and the way these categories interact to create systems of oppression, domination and discrimination" (Crenshaw, 1989 cited in Proctor et al., 2017).

A lot of the parents living in poverty in South Africa and in other countries are disadvantaged and marginalized on many levels, including financial deprivation, poor health, lack of access to resources and social stigmatization (Saatcioglu & Corus, 2014). These disadvantages are often co-constitutive and inter-correlated. Being disadvantaged in one domain often intersects with other disadvantages, contributing to an overall vulnerability (Saatcioglu & Corus, 2014).

It was important for the researcher to keep intersectionality in mind when doing the research and interacting with the participants. She realised that within one participant there is an interplay of all these difficulties discussed above which puts him/her at a disadvantage within society. The researcher realised that if she doesn't consider all of the challenges that the participants simlutaneously, she would not fully understand the situation of the participant. For example, it was important to consider that the participants have multiple impacting factors that

come together and can influence parental support. These include the history of Apartheid, economic disadvantage, lack of resources within the house, teengage pregnancy, low levels of employment and are they single parents. All of these things interact and influence the type and amount of support parents are able to provide. Intervention and support for these parents should thus take into consideration all of these overlapping challenges that puts parents living in poverty at a disadvantage for providing support for their children.

2.4.2 BENEFITS OF STUDYING PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR DISENGAGING STUDENTS

As mentioned by Appleton et al. (2008) there are two instruments to measure engagement. The one is the Student Engagement Instrument by Check and Connect (an intervention used with students who show warning signs of disengagement and who are at risk of dropping out of school) and the High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) (Yazzie-Mintz, 2006). Both of these measures focus on the perspective of the student (Appleton et al., 2008). The purpose of this study is to understand how parents themselves view parental support, their knowledge of the barriers their child experiences in school and how they support their child. This study therefore contributes to the literature by deliberately bringing into sharper focus the perspectives of parents and not simply focusing on the perspectives of students as has already been done in other studies (Bitew & Ferguson, 2010).

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the bio-ecological model was used to provide insight into understanding the influence of parental support on student engagement, as well as to emphasise the importance of context in shaping these processes. Studies have primarily focused on the perspectives of students that are disengaged instead of the perspective of parents. Thus, the voices of parents are often lost despite it being well-known amongst researchers that parental support is crucial to facilitate engagement and therefore also academic success. Due to the importance of parental support on the academic wellbeing of children, the purpose of this study was to explore how parents provide educational support to

disengaging children to be able to gain a better understanding of what parents view as support and to use the findings of this study to help other parents reflect on the support they provide to their disengaging child.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the previous two chapters, the purpose of this study was to understand parental support for their primary school child that show signs of disengagement. The study is therefore located within a qualitative research framework in order to better understand, describe, and interpret the parents' perspective surrounding their support.

The research design was customised to answer the following questions:

1.   What are the parents' understandings about their educational support for their children?

2.   What knowledge do they have regarding the educational needs of their child?

3.   How do parents support their child/ren who are disengaging?

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2014, p. 6) paradigms are "all-encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their enquiry along three dimensions: ontology, epistemology, and methodology". *Ontology* specifies the nature of reality to be studied and what can be known about it. *Epistemology* specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known. *Methodology* refers to how researchers will inquire into /study what they believe can be known (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2014). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) therefore view a paradigm as the net that contains the researcher's ontological, epistemological, and methodological premises. Thus, the paradigm chosen will guide the researcher's actions throughout the entire study as it commits the researcher to certain methods of data collection, observation, and interpretation (Durrheim, 2014).

When deciding upon a paradigm researchers are encouraged to reflect on how they view reality, the purpose of doing research, and the type of knowledge to be produced (Merriam, 1998).These views and beliefs influence how the researcher sees the world and how it should be studied. After reflecting on these aspects and taking the research questions into consideration, the researcher placed the study within an interpretive paradigm which focuses on understanding the subjective experience of the external world (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2014).

The aim of the interpretive paradigm is to explain the "subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2014, p. 7). It offers a perspective of a situation and a way to analyse the situation so as to be able to give insight into the way participants make sense of their situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). It therefore provides great richness and depth of descriptions. It involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology) (Terre Blanche, Kelly, & Durrheim, 2014). The researcher therefore becomes the instrument through which data is collected and analysed.

The interpretive paradigm is often associated with qualitative research where the goal is to gain a deep understanding of the underlying motivations that influence people to do certain things (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2006). The interpretive paradigm was used because the purpose of this study was to gain a deep understanding of the experience of the participants by relying on their own understanding. The researcher purposively selected participants that would provide a rich description of the phenomenon being studied, which in this study is parental support for disengaging students. In order to accomplish this the researcher made use of semi-structured interviews because they rely on the "subjective relationship between researcher and subject" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2014, p. 7). The qualitative research design will be discussed below.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a strategic framework for "action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research" (Durrheim, 2014, p. 34). It assists with finding coherence between questions asked and how best to answer them by using specific methods. In this study, four principles were taken into consideration to ensure design coherence and validity of the study as suggested by Durrheim (2014). These principles are the research paradigm, the purpose of the research, the context in which it takes place and the techniques used. Table 3.1, below, is a visual illustration of these principles as applicable to this study.

Table 3. 1: The research design of the current study

Research design			
Paradigm	**Purpose**	**Context**	**Methodology**
Interpretive paradigm	Gaining insight into parental support for disengaging primary school students.	Parents with children that show signs of disengagement in Grades 4-6 attending a WCED school within a disadvantaged community	Purposive sampling Semi-structured interviewing Researcher's notes Literature review Artefacts

Qualitative research can be defined as an "umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (Merriam, 1998, p. 5). Qualitative research is based on the view that individuals construct their own reality as they interact with the social worlds (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning people have constructed and how they "make sense of their worlds" and is therefore concerned with the individual's own experiences as it is "lived or felt or undergone" (Sherman & Webb, 1998, as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 6). By focusing on the experiences of individuals, researchers can "reveal how all the parts work together

to form a whole" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). This is explained below by Patton (1985, as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 6):

> [Qualitative research] is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting- what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting- and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting… the analysis strives for depth for understanding.

A central characteristic of all qualitative research is that individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Constructivism underlies basic qualitative research as qualitative researchers want to understand phenomena from the research participant's perspective as meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers are therefore interested in how individuals interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The overall purpose of qualitative research is therefore to gain a deep understanding of how individuals make sense of their lives and experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

3.3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016) there are four characteristics that are common to all qualitative research. First, an important concern of qualitative research is to understand the investigated phenomenon from the perspective of the participant, which is called insider perspective (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Henn et al. (2006, p. 176) agrees with this characteristic and further states that the aim of the insider perspective is to 'take detailed descriptions of people's behaviour and thoughts to illuminate their social meanings." The researcher wanted to gain an understanding of the phenomenon from the

perspective of the participants and not her own (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). She achieved this by showing empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard, and developed a close relationship with the participants. Also, because the researcher grew up and still lives in the community, she had an insider's perspective before starting with the study. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Second, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 1998, Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Data is therefore collected by the researcher, rather than through an inanimate inventory (Merriam, 1998). This means of collecting data is especially important because qualitative data focuses on meaning in context and therefore needs a data collection instrument that is "sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 2)– something that humans are best suited to do.

The researcher, being the primary instrument of data collection, was able to adapt her research questions based on her observations of non-verbal behaviour and the different circumstances of the participants. When analysing the data she could take the entire context into consideration. Furthermore, she was able to process, clarify, and summarise data immediately while exploring anomalous responses. The researcher could therefore dig for a clearer meaning to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon. These were the benefits of being the primary instrument of data collection and analysis.

The third characteristic that is common to qualitative resarch is that this kind of research usually uses an inductive research strategy that builds "abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories" (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). Qualitative research builds toward theory from observations and intuitive understandings from being in the field (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher used information from interviews, researcher's notes, a literature review, and artefacts to create larger themes as the researcher worked from the particular to the general (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Thus, findings derived from qualitative data are usually in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, even theory (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Finally, the fourth common charateristic is that the product of qualitative research is richly descriptive (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Thus, the researcher has descriptions of the context, observations, participants involved, and so forth. The researcher can make use of the data in the form of the participant's own words by using direct quotations to supplement his/her findings. The researcher made use of observations of the participants, description of their contexts by focusing on their living conditions, socio-economic conditions and social interactions with others to get a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the studied phenomenon. The researcher thus used a thick description to provide cultural context and meaning that the participants attach to their actions and words (Geertz, 1973). Information on the context and participants can be found under Research Methodology in the next section of this chapter. Chapter 4 has direct quotations of the participant's responses to supplement the researcher's findings.

In conclusion, qualitative research was conducted because the researcher wanted to glean the participant's own insight and understanding (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, qualitative research promises to make significant "contributions to the knowledge base and practice of education" (Merriam, 1998, p. 1). Guided by these definitions and principles, as discussed above, as well as the interpretive paradigm, the researcher decided upon a case study design, specifically an instrumental case study design, as discussed below.

3.3.2 THE CASE STUDY

A qualitative research design which is often found in the field of education, and which has been applied in this study, is a case study. Case studies are employed to "gain an in-depth understanding of the situations and meanings for those involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Case studies are intensive descriptions of a single unit or bounded system (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). A case is bound by time and activity, and data is collected using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A case study is thus an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, parents' understanding of their educational support for their child (studied phenomena) was explored from parents with children in Grades 4-6 in a public primary school, situated in a rural area

within the Western Cape (bounded system). . For this study, the researcher decided to use the instrumental case study – which will be discussed below.

3.4.2.1 INSTRUMENTAL CASE STUDIES

An instrumental case study provides insight into an issue or is used to refine theory (Baškarada, 2014; Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). The case is selected to advance understanding of the object of interest (Hyett et al., 2014). To gain a better understanding of the issue by examining a certain pattern of behavior, the researcher selects a small group of subjects (Zainal, 2007). In this study, six parents with children that show signs of disengagement were selected to develop a better understanding of parental support for disengaging primary school students. The researcher thus used an instrumental case study because she wanted to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon, namely parental support for disengaging primary school students. An instrumental case study thus provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon using a particular case, which with more repetition (i.e different participants) could yield more generalizable findings. This is one advantage of instrumental case studies - that they allow for generalization of findings to bigger populations (Zainal, 2007).

As mentioned before the researcher used an interpretive paradigm as she wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the experience of the participants instead of relying on her own understanding. The case study suited the paradigm well as it allowed the researcher to engage in an interactive manner with the participants. By using a qualitative case study design the researcher could focus on understanding the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. She focused on how they make meaning of parental support, how they interpret their experiences, how their context might have influenced their understanding of parental support, and consequently how to provide support in a certain way, as shaped by their context. The case study thus allowed the researcher to gain a deep, holistic view of the phenomenon and facilitated in describing, understanding, and explaining it (Baškarada, 2014).

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As mentioned previously, a research design is a strategic framework for "action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research" (Durrheim, 2014, p. 34). Thus, the research methods used were specifically selected because of their coherence with the research design and research questions. These methods, as indicated Table 3.1 on page 43, included purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews, researcher's notes, a literature review, and analysis of artefacts.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the researcher was motivated to do this study due to personal experience of being a student herself in a school with high levels of disengagement as well as being an educator at a school with high levels of disengagement. This research was thus motivated by personal knowledge and experience, which according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011) is a normal place for a starting point. Furthermore, Silverman (2005) also advises that researchers start from a familiar territory. Due to this familiar territory the researcher was able to select a research context as well as participants that would provide rich data for the study.

3.5.1 CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY

Providing context to the study was important for the researcher. Because this is a qualitative research study, it was important to conduct the research within the natural environment of the participants as she attempted to make sense of and interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings the participants brought to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It therefore involved the researcher going to the participants'familiar spaces to be able to observe their living conditions. The researcher had to become intimately familiar with the phenomenon that was being studied.

Moreover, as the researcher used the Bioecological Theory as the theoretical framework for this research, it is important to take into consideration the theory's emphasis on the interaction of the unit of study with its context. As the researcher wanted a thickly described case study, she took multiple perspectives into account and attempted to understand the influences of multilevel social systems on the

participants' perspectives and behaviour. Taking the above into consideration, the following section will focus on access to the research population, the research schooland community, and the selection of the participants.

3.5.2 ACCESS TO THE RESEARCH POPULATION

First, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the University of Stellenbosch. The permission letter from the REC can be found under Addendum A. Permission was obtained from the WCED as well as the school principal to conduct the study at the school. The permission letter from the WCED can be found under Addendum B. The decision to focus on this particular school was motivated by the researcher's awareness of a high number of disengaged students at the school as she is also an educator at the school. After the necessary permissions were received the researcher approached the Grade Heads of Grades 4 to 6 to inform them about the purpose of the study and to ask them if they were willing to participate in the research. All three Grade Heads were willing to participate. Before conducting the interviews with the educators the researcher explained the construct of 'disengagement' and how to identify a child that show signs of disengagement, their role in the study (key informants), anonymity and confidentiality. After getting permission to conduct the interviews, the researcher asked the educators to identify disengaged students in their grades by using the indicators of disengagement that were given to them, in order for her to conduct interviews with these students' parents. The Grade Heads identified 33 students that are disengaged.

A letter was sent out to the parents of Grade 4, 5 and 6 students that show signs linked to the construct "disengagement" as identified by the educators. The potential participants were sent a letter informing them about the study and that the researcher would want to discuss it with them as they are viewed as potential participants. The researcher worked on a first-come-first-serve basis and conducted the interviews with the first six parents who responded to the letter. All the identified potential participants met with the researcher at different times that suited them best. During the initial meeting the researcher explained to the parents that their involvement would be voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the interview at any moment without any consequences. She also

explained to them that they had the right to not answer certain questions should they choose to. They were also assured of anonymity and that all the information obtained during the study will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Thereafter, the parents chose dates that suited them best for an interview.

3.5.3 THE RESEARCH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

The study took place within a disadvantaged community where many of the community members are farm workers who engage in seasonal work. From the researchers' own experience of living and working in the community, she has observed how poverty is a prominent issue in the community as households often have several family members depending on a meagre income or government funds. As a result, some students come to school not properly dressed or fed which impacts on their learning in school and their engagement with fellow classmates. In addition, there is also a lot of physical and sexual violence and alcohol and drug abuse in the community.

The researcher gave the participants the option of having the interviews at the school or their homes as she wanted the participants to feel comfortable as she explored the participant's feelings, experiences and beliefs regarding the topic within their "naturally-occurring settings" (Draper, 2004, p. 644). Most of the interviews were conducted at the school. The context of the school was explained in Chapter 1. Only one participant wanted the interview to be conducted at her home. It was evident upon arrival at their home that unemployment is more common than the researcher was aware of as a huge number of adults and youth were in the street during working hours. The research participant lived in a shack at the back of someone's yard, with just the basic essentials to survive.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the research school is a public primary school situated in the Western Cape within a disadvantaged rural area. The school is classified by the Department of Basic Education as a quintile 4 school which means that the students are exempted from paying school fees. The school caters for Grade R (5-6 years old) to Grade 7 (13 years old) and has a student population of 1294. The school's student population mainly comes from the town itself, while some students come from surrounding farms and are transported by bus every day. The

students attending the school struggle with various learning barriers such as specific learning disorders and there are also a lot of students with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) disorder. As a result, the school has a learning support unit on its premises. Many parents do not have fixed incomes and as a result some of the students do not have a school uniform or proper clothing. Some students also do not have food to eat and the school has applied for the feeding scheme where the children get porridge in the morning and a plate of food later during the day. Many students are also exposed to family violence and abuse as well as alcohol and drug abuse. The school has had a few pregnancies of Grade 7 students. Given the harsh conditions the students come from the school is a very safe space for them.

Purposive selection of the school was influenced by an awareness of high numbers of students that are disengaged in the school, especially starting in Grade 4, as well as high numbers of student dropouts in the community.

3.5.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

According to Durrheim (2014, p. 49), the selection of research participants is called sampling and it involves selecting participants from an "entire population, and involves decisions about which people, settings, parents, behaviours, and/or social processes to observe". Because this research is focused on in-depth and detailed understanding of the phenomenon, qualitative and interpretive research was conducted. Thus, purposeful sampling, with the use of criterion-based selection was used as the researcher wanted to select a few information-rich cases. The site and participants were selected as they best helped the researcher understand the research question (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The participants in the study had to meet the following criteria for selection:

1. They had to be parents of primary school children in Grades 4-6 that show signs of disengagement.

The research sample consisted of six parents with children in Grades 4-6 that showed signs of disengagement. As mentioned previously, the researcher provided the educators with indicators of disengagement. The educators suggested several students that showed signs of disengagement, and the

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researcher invited the parents of these childen to participate. The first six parents that gave permission to participate in the studywere included in the sample. The educators were key informants as they had detailed information regarding the students.Their experience of working with the students was used to provide depth and context to the study.

3.5.5 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Silverman (2013) and Henn et al. (2006) argue that most qualitative research involves asking participants questions (in-depth interviews) or making observations in the field (participant observation). Merriam & Tisdell (2016), however, cite Patton (2015, p. 105) who argues that qualitative data consists of "direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge" as obtained through interviews; as well as "detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviours, actions" as observed by the researcher and "excerpts, quotations, or entire passages" extracted from various documents. Data is therefore collected through "interviews, observations and document analysis" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 24). The researcher made use of the following data collections methods.

3.5.5.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

In addition to selecting a qualitative research design, the researcher also needed to review the literature about the research topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The literature review, as discussed in Chapter 2, helps to determine whether the topic is worth studying and what the needed area of inquiry is on which the researcher can focus (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is therefore usually one of the first steps when embarking on a study (Mouton, 2012); it is used as a contextualization of your study to argue a case, identify a niche to be occupied by your own research(Henning et al., 2004).

To review the relevant literature the researcher made use of Stellenbosch University's library databases that included SunSearch, EBSCOhost, Sabinet and Sage, as well as Google Scholar. Search terms included *engagement, disengagement, student disengagement, primary school students, parental*

support, parental support for disengaging students, and *parental support from parents with low socio-economic backgrounds.*

This literature review enabled the researcher to develop a framework for understanding what is known about disengaging primary school students and the parental support they receive.

3.5.5.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

There are three fundamental types of research interviews: the structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). The primary method of data collection for this study was the individual face-to-face semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews consist of "several key questions that help to define the areas to explore, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail" (Gill et al., 2008, p. 291).

The researcher deemed a semi-structured interview appropriate for the study as qualitative inquiries focus on "meaning in context" (Merriam, 1998, p. 1) and thus requires a "data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (Merriam, 1998, p. 1). The aim of the interviews was to bring to the surface what the participants think, feel, do, and what they say which according to Henning et al. (2004) is the main aim of the interview.

The researcher used the interview as a "metaphorical friendship" as she engaged empathically with the participants and was "active" throughout the entire research by being present and not viewing the interview as a "neutral exchange of asking questions" but instead viewed the participants as persons with their own motives, feelings, desires and biases (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p 696).

The research questions and literature review informed the interview guide. The literature informed the researcher's understanding that parents' perception of their support for their disengaging children is not very well researched as most studies focus on the student's perception of disengagement.The objective was therefore to give voice to the parents and to explore how they – themselves - view parental support. This led to certain themes to explore during the interview.

During the planning phase, the researcher conducted a pilot interview as she wanted to ensure that she would get rich descriptions and therefore needed ensure she asked good questions. The pilot interview provided the opportunity to try out the interview questions. The researcher conducted the pilot interview with a concerned parent of a Grade 6 student that is disengaged. Through this pilot interview the researcher got an idea of the questions that generated rich data and which questions were confusing to the participants. The researcher also became aware of questions that did not generate any data and could be removed, and which questions, as suggested by the participants, should be included (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Thus, the pilot interview was useful as it guided the researcher to make necessary changes to produce a more robust interview guide and to improve the quality of data generated from the interviews. Moreover, it allowed the researcher to practice probing to get more information that would assist in answering the questions. Finally, the pilot interview provided the researcher with an opportunity to test the recording equipment. The interview guide can be found under Addendum E.

The researcher found that she needed to be able to be flexible, nimble, and make decisions on the spot about the sequence and content of the interview as she often could not follow the sequence as it was laid out.

3.5.5.3 REFLECTIVE FIELDNOTES

Fieldnotes refer to observations captured by the researcher that are either in written format or audio-recorded while the observation took place and then used as a source of raw data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher made written fieldnotes directly after each interview. The fieldnotes included observations done by the researcher as well as the researcher's thoughts about observations during the interview session. The researcher also made notes on the methodology used as she reflected on the strategies used during the interview. Addendum H is an example of the reflective fieldnotes the researcher made about the methodology. Furthermore, the researcher also used her private journal to make personal notesduring the research process about her own feelings and perceptions. Chapter 4 includes thee personal reflections the researcher made throughout the research process.

3.5.5.4 ARTEFACTS

The documents and artefacts that are part of the research setting, in this case the school that the students attend and where the interviews were conducted, are also sources of data in qualitative studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These include things that are naturally part of the research setting and it is thus a "ready-made source of data easily accessible" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 162) to the researcher. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used class attendance registers and mark schedules, respectively. The class attendance registers were used as they provided an indication of school attendance, which, in turn, is an indicator of behavioural engagement. The mark schedules were used as they provided an indication of scholastic performance, which, in turn, is an indicator of academic and cognitive engagement. The artefacts were used to verify student disengagement as identified by the educators as well as to generate limited data.

3.5.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The previous section discussed the data collection methods. This section focuses on how the researcher analysed the data collected. Due to the fact that it is a qualitative study, the data analysis started during the data collection phase and became more intense once all the data had been collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Flick (2014) in Merriam and Tisdell (2016, p. 195) describes the process of data collection as "the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it." It is a process of meaning-making through consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what the participants have said and what the researcher saw and read (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It therefore involves going back and forth between "data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between descriptions and interpretation" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 202). These interpretations and meanings made by the researcher constituted the findings of the study.

The following steps of data analysis as suggested by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2014) were used. Even though it is presented in steps, it was not used as a fixed recipe but instead to "unpack some of the processes involved in immersing

oneself in and reflecting on the data" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 322). It was a useful starting point for the researcher to use as it provided helpful guidelines.
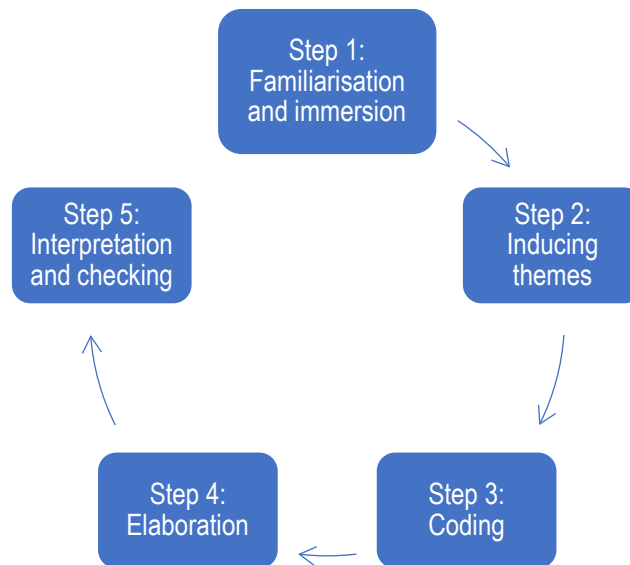
Figure 3. 1: Steps in data analysis

Step 1: Familiarisation and immersion

According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2014) once the data collection is finished the researcher should have already started with data analysis. This iterative nature to data analysis needs to exist because the researcher is using interpretive research which involves "development of ideas and theories about the phenomenon being studied as the researcher makes contact with gatekeepers and sets up interviews" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 322). The researcher should therefore have a preliminary understanding of the meaning of data before data analysis starts. What this stage further entails is to emerse yourself with the data, not lived reality, but the actual fieldnotes and interview transcripts. The researcher should read the text many times while making notes, drawing diagrams and brain storming.

The researcher transcribed the interviews in order to stay close to it and immerse herself in the data. After transcribing each interview, the researcher read through it carefully several times. Thereafter she made side notes while linking the research questions and conceptual framework to the data.

Step 2: Inducing themes

The second step involves "inferring general rules or classes from specific instances" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 323). It is suggested by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2014) that researchers should use the language of the respondents to label their categories. Furthermore, they suggest that researchers should refrain from summarising content but rather think in terms of "processes, functions, tensions, and contradictions" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 323).

It worked better for the researcher to pay particular attention to the research question and sub-questions throughout, while searching for similarities and differences between the different transcriptions to be able to give a rich description of the phenomenon. The researcher was able to identify themes and sub-themes after immersing herself in the data. Clear themes and sub-themes did emerge that were constantly reconsidered as the researcher engaged with the data throughout the entire research process.

Step 3: Coding

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2014) suggest that while researchers develop themes, they should also code the data. Coding is defined by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) as "assigning some sort of shorthand description to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of data." It entails marking different sections of the data as being "instances of, or relevant to, one or more theme" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 324). The researcher can code phrases, a line, a sentence or a paragraph as they pertain to the different themes. It therefore involves taking huge bodies of data and breaking it into meaningful pieces that are labelled with the purpose of later putting it into different clusters and in relation to other clusters (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest that researchers adopt a system to code their data and that coding starts as early as possible. The researcher coded the data on the same day the interview was conducted in order to not forget identifying information. It was coded according to the research questions and conceptual

framework that guided the study. The researcher made use of a table as suggested by (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Nieuwenhuis (2007) suggest using a table for coding where there is a space for the researchers' notes, the transcript and coding. The researcher used copies of these tables to make notes on it. She highlighted the units of meaning to stand out and coded these units of meaning to arrive at certain themes. The table again provided the researcher with a space to reflect. Reflection was thus an important part of the research process. An example of how the researcher used the table to code can be found under Addendum F and Addendum G.

Step 4: Elaboration

This fourth step involves exploring themes more closely (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014). The purpose is to "capture the finer nuances of meaning not captured by your original, possibly quite crude, coding system" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014, p. 326). Furthermore, Terre Blanche, Durrheim, et al. (2014) suggests that it is best to keep on coding, elaborating and recording until no further significant new insights emerge.

Step 5: Interpretation and checking

The final step involves putting together your interpretation. This is a written account of the phenomenon that was being studied by using thematic categories from your analysis as sub-categories. Chapter 4 of this thesis is the final written account of the findings and interpretations of this study. During this stage it is also important that the researcher reflects on her role in collecting the data and creating the interpretation, and to give an indication of how her personal involvement may have affected the way data was collected and analysed (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2014).

3.5.7 DATA VERIFICATION STRATEGIES

All research is concerned with "producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 238). This is especially important for researchers within the applied fields as they intervene in people's lives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Reliability involves the "accuracy of your research methods and techniques" (Mason, 2002, p. 39). It generally refers to obtaining the same results

and to the replicability of the study. Whereas validity involves "observing, identifying or 'measuring' what you say you are [measuring]" (Mason, 2002, p. 39). It therefore involves the researcher checking for the accuracy of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Validity and reliability in qualitative research is much more concerned with producing information that is trustworthy and less concerned on the degree to which findings are replicable and accurate (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest eight strategies to promote validity and reliability. These include triangulation, member checks, adequate engagement in data collection, reflexivity, peer review/examination, audit trail, rich/thick descriptions, and maximum variation. The strategies relevant to the study that helped ensure the trustworthiness are discussed below.

3.5.7.1 TRIANGULATION

To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, qualitative researchers make use of triangulation (Stake, 2005). Triangulation entails "collecting material in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible" (Kelly, 2014, p. 287). It therefore involves using multiple methods of data collection and collecting multiple perceptions to clarify meaning in order to verify the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Mason, 2002; Stake, 2005; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Triangulation helped to clarify meaning by identifying different ways in which the case can be seen (Stake, 2005, p. 454). This approach allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon as she could 'hone in' on it from different angles and get an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The researcher explored the experiences of the parents through interviews and the researcher's fieldnotes that were based on observation, prolonged engagement with data as well as interviews with the educators.

3.5.7.2 MEMBER CHECKS

In order to rule out the misinterpretation of what the participants said and did, and identify the researcher's own biases of what she observed, the researcher made use of the strategy called *member checks* or *respond validation.* Member checking

involves "soliciting feedback on preliminary or emerging findings from some of the people you are interviewing" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 246). Through this strategy the researcher emphasized that the participants are the primary source of information. She continuously reflected on what the participants said and through this provided the participants with an opportunity to provide more information and/or rectify incorrect interpretations of what was said (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

3.5.7.3 REFLEXIVITY

As researchers, our social and political locations affect our research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). The entire research process: the research purpose, research questions, research methodology, and so forth, all says something about who we are as it is governed by our values (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). It is therefore important that researchers are reflexive throughout the entire research process.

Reflexivity is explained by Merriam and Tisdell (2016, p. 64) as an "awareness of the influence the researcher has on what is being studied and, simultaneously, of how the research process affects the researcher." Reflexivity therefore implies that qualitative research is a dialectical process as it has an influence on/can change the researcher as well as the participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher therefore had to constantly reflect on her actions and her role in the research process and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of her data" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

It was important for the researcher to engage in reflexive practices throughout the study in order to acknowledge her own experience and context as it might have an impact on the process and outcome of the inquiry. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to become aware of how her own thoughts and feelings influenced the way in which she interacted with the participants.

3.5.7.4 PEER EXAMINATION

Peer examination involves asking "peers" knowledgeable on the research topic and methodology to "scan the raw data and assess whether the findings are plausible" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 250). This also ensures that the research study will resonate with people other than the researcher (Creswell & Creswell,

2018). Peer examination was therefore utilized as the researcher's supervisor provided guidance throughout the entire research process.

3.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A case study design was utilized for this research. A limitation of a case study design is that the findings cannot be generalised as the number of participants is too small. However, the researcher did not consider this as a major limitation as qualitative research often focuses on providing an in-depth understanding and thick description of the phenomenon being studied (Henning et al., 2004)

The aim of this research was to provide a rich description of the participants' experiences and perspective and not to generalize the findings of the study to the wider society. Despite the small sample, the researcher believes that the unique experiences of the participants will add to the gap in the literature on parental support for disengaging students. Furthermore, however few, the researcher hopes that the research study will offer valuable insights into parental support for disengaging students which will hopefully encourage parents to provide support to their disengaging child.

The researcher acknowledged the potential bias due to her prior involvement with the school and participants but soon realized that the 'insider perspective' allowed her to gain the trust of the participants and acquire unique information that might have not been otherwise available to other researchers (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The researcher found that being an 'insider' allowed her to better explore the participants' and the students' 'real worlds' or 'natural setting' as there was not a disruption in the normal daily lives of these participants by the researcher's presence - she was already a natural part of the participant's context. This enabled the researcher to have a better understanding of the participant's feelings, experiences, social situations, or phenomena as they occur in the real world (Kelly, 2014). Furthermore, the researcher approached the participants with the necessary care and engaged with them in an open and empathic manner. This approach ensured that there were minimal disturbances to the natural setting of the participants which is valued by qualitative researchers as it allows for data to be collected without it being 'disturbed' by the researcher's presence (Kelly, 2014).

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Case study research often has an intense focus on the personal views and circumstances of the participants (Stake, 2005). These participants then often risk exposure and embarrassment. It is therefore necessary that the researcher take the necessary steps to minimize possible risks. The researcher therefore decided to use the seven-point checklist, compiled by Patton (2002, in Merriam, 2009, p. 233) in order to ensure that all the ethical considerations of ethical conduct are made. These ethical considerations are discussed below.

Prior to conducting the study, the researcher applied for ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC), Stellenbosch University. Clearance was granted with registration number: EPSY-2019-8173

Subsequent to obtaining ethical clearance, the seven-point checklist, compiled by Patton (2002, in Merriam, 2009, p. 233) guided the researcher to conduct research in an ethical manner in the following ways:

First, the researcher should explain the purpose of the inquiry and methods to be used. The parent participants were first contacted via a letter which briefly informed them about the purpose of the study as well as the participation process involved. After agreeing to meet with the researcher, participants were given a full verbal explanation (in their home language) of what the study involves and what their roles would be. Thereafter, the consent form was explained and completed. The participants were therefore well informed and knew what to expect when they participated in the study.

Second, the researcher should abide by promises and reciprocity by doing what the researcher promises to do and giving feedback about the research. The researcher accomplished this by using the consent form to explain the researcher's and the participant's roles, expectations, rights and responsibilities. The researcher also informed the participants about the opportunity that will be given, upon completion of the study, to discuss the findings and provide them with feedback with regards to the study.

Third, to carefully conduct a risk assessment that determines and explains the level of risk the research poses to the participants. Risk assessment was done

through the ethical application process. The researcher did not identify any risks involved in the study but did make provision for possible risks by arranging for an educational psychologist to provide support if needed.

Fourth, to ensure confidentiality at all times. Pseudonyms were used when referring to participants, their children, family members, and the school. For the purpose of completing the thesis, only the researcher and her supervisor had access to the data. The audio recordings were saved on a password-protected laptop. All the information collected during the course of data collection were removed after the completion of the study

Fifth, obtain informed consent by being clear about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of it. The researcher obtained written as well as verbal consent from the participants. The researcher gave a thorough verbal explanation of the purpose of the study, the role of the participants, the absence of any risks but that there is support available for them if needed. Thereafter the researcher explained the possible benefits of participation for the participants and the wider society; that there would be no compensation given; that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Finally, the researcher gave participants her contact details as well as her supervisor and explained that they are the only people that would have access to the data. This was explained to each participant in their home language and the researcher ensured that they understood each point. The researcher provided the participants with an opportunity to ask questions and thereafter the consentform – which included all the points discussed above -was signed. Addendum C is the consent form that the parent participants signed and Addendum D is the consent form that the educators signed.

Sixth, the researcher took ownership of data access by ensuring that all of the data collected is safely protected. Only the researcher and her supervisor had access to the data. As mentioned above, the researcher explained this to the participants when she explained the consent form. The researcher also provided the participants with the full identification and contact details of herself and her supervisor in the consent form.

Lastly, the researcher sought advice throughout the entire research process. The researcher had regular supervision sessions with her supervisor Mrs. L. Collair from the Department of Educational Psychology of Stellenbosch University who is an experienced educational psychologist.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed discussion on the research paradigm and methodology. This was followed by a discussion on the research design and how the research questions were answered. Chapter 4 will discuss the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the research process and methodology that guided this study. The course of data analysis discussed in Chapter 3, as suggested byTerre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2014) was used to arrive at this point of presenting and discussing the findings and consequently making certain recommendations.

4.2 EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE IDENTIFIED DISENGAGED STUDENTS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, interviews were conducted with the educators of the students whose parents gave permission to participate in the study. The researcher spoke with two educators in Grade 6 as four parents of Grade 6 students were interviewed.One educator in Grade 5 and one in Grade 4 were interview as only one parent in Grade 5 and one in Grade 4 were interviewed according to first-come-first-serve basis, which means that the participants who reached out to me first to participate in the study were selected. Certain themes around disengagement and perceived parental support were identified during the interviews with the educators. These themes are illustrated in Table 4.1 and discussed briefly below as it is only meant to provide depth and context to the study and not to address the research question.

The researcher decided to start this chapter by firstly discussing the findings from the educator interviews, as she wants to provide more context to the study; by discussing the educator interviews the reader can gain a better understanding of disengagement of the students, the struggles of the educators, their relationship with the parents, and their views on the parent support that these six parents provide to their children. The researcher argues that all of this is important as it might influence the actual support that the parents provide to their children.

Table 4. 1: Themes identified in the data from the educator interviews.

Themes
Theme one: Disengagement on all levels of engagement
Theme two: Educators' perception of a lack of parental support

4.2.1 THEME ONE: DISENGAGEMENT ON ALL LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

It appeared as if most of the students in the study were disengaged on all the levels of engagement, namely: academic, behavioral, cognitive and psychological. It seems as if one form of disengagement leads to the other, like a domino effect. Examples of the different forms of disengagement as expressed by the educators are presented below under the different sub-headings to illustrate how the different dimensions of disengagement is prevalent for the students, and to illustrate how they are intercorrelated.

4.2.1.1 ACADEMIC DISENGAGEMENT

The educators all reported academic disengagement; it is a very prominent issue for these students. The educators reported that the students do not submit assignments and if they do, the assignments are empty or most answers are incorrect. This appeared to be the educators' biggest problem with the students. As a result, the students do not earn enough marks throughout the entire year to pass to the following grade without much-needed support. One educator (Educator 1) further expressed her frustration by saying that in additional to Lyle* not doing his work in the classroom, he also often engages in truancy, which makes teaching for her more difficult. This is expressed below:

> *[Hy] doen basies niks in die klas nie, sy aandagspan is baie kort en meeste van die tyd is hy mos maar nou nie in die klas nie, so ja en buitemuurs doen hy niks nie.*

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[He does basically nothing in the classroom, his concentration span is very short and for most of the time he isn't in the classroom, so yes, extramurally he does nothing].[Educator 1, Interview 1]

Another example of this is expressed by Educator 2 below:

hy handig nie take in nie… hy is nie betrokke tydens klas nie…hy gee geen aandag nie.

[He doesn't hand in assignments… he isn't involved during class…he pays no attention]. [Educator 2, Interview 3]

4.2.1.2 BEHAVIORAL DISENGAGEMENT

As can be seen from above, behavioural disengagement, such as truancy, often accompanies academic disengagement. Behavioural disengagement that all the educators expressed was the students' lack of involvement in extra-mural activities and causing disciplinary problems within the classroom. As a consequence these students would be suspended or given letters to their parents to come visit the school. It is only Lyla* - who was the only female student that was part of the study - that did not engage in truancy or cause disciplinary problems, but she also showed a lack of interest in extra-mural activities. Examples of behavioural disengagement of truancy of Lyle* and Ricardo* is expressed below.

Hy kom skool toe, meeste van die tyd, maar dan is hy nie altyd in die klas nie, so hy dwaal maar rond op die skool. Hy is weinig in die klas… daar is tye wat hy uit die klas uit hardloop en dan is hy nie daar nie, so hy doen nie wat `n mens van hom verwag of vra nie.

[He comes to school, most of the time, but then he isn't in the class all the time but would wander around the school. He is seldom in the class...and there are times when he runs out of the classroom so then he isn't in the classroom, so he doesn't do what a person expects from him]. [Educator 1, Interview 1]

Another educator also expressed her concerns:

…dan sal hy die ander kinders hinder, so hy is `n steurnis vir die ander rondom hom.

[…then he would rather disturb the other children, so he is a disturbance for the rest around him] [Educator 2, Interview 3]

4.2.1.3 COGNITIVE DISENGAGEMENT

As mentioned under the sub-heading of academic disengagement, the students do not complete and hand in assignments. As a result, the educators were of the opinion that the students do not engage in thought processes needed to comprehend the subject matter. The educators all mentioned that the students do not engage in classroom discussions or ask questions when they are uncertain about a difficult tasks or concept; instead they will leave it out or engage in other behaviours such as trying to gain the attention of other students that are busy working and thus causing disciplinary problems. The cognitive disengagement of students as expressed by the educators is shared below:

Hy sal nie eers begin nie of hy stel nie belang in wat daar staan nie, so as hy dit nie kan lees nie, sal hy nie vra nie. Vir hom is dit maar net `n papier.

[He wouldn't even start or he isn't interested in what's standing there, so if he cannot read it, he wouldn't ask. For him it is just a piece of paper.] [Educator 1, Interview 1]

Another educator said that Max* does not answer questions in the assignments, but rather rewrites the question in the space for the answer. There is, therefore, hardly any thought processes occuring that are necessary to understand and answer the question. This is expressed below:

Hy wil nie probeer nie…sy takies sal miskien wees vragies wat klaar gevra was wat hy oor skryf. Hy antwoord nie vir jou nie, so hy weet nie.

[He doesn't want to try…his assignments will be the questions that were asked written over. He doesn't answer you, so he doesn't know] [Educator 4, Interview 6]

4.2.1.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL DISENGAGEMENT

Most of the educators were of the opinion that the students do not have an emotional connection to the school, their classroom or even their educators. They thus argued that the students do not feel a sense of belonging towards the school.

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They argued that the students' behaviour of disengaging is an indicator that the student does not recognise the value of schooling and is not motivated or encouraged to engage behaviourally and attempt to achieve academic success. This is expressed below:

> *Ek twyfel want as hy nooit in die klas wil wees nie of hy dwaal net hier rond dan twyfel ek of hy deel van die skoolgemeenskap voel of deel wil wees.*

> *[I doubt it because if he doesn't want to be in the class or if he wanders around then I doubt that he feels part of the school community].* [Educator 1, Interview 1]

Another example of psychological disengagement is expressed below by Educator 4:

> *…sy is teruggetrokke. Sy is net vir ek moet skooltoe kom, ek moet hier wees. Ma of pa het seker gesê, "Jy moet in die skool wees"*

> *[…she is withdrawn. She is just for I must go to school, I must be here. Mom or Dad probably said, "You must be in school"]*[Educator 4, Interview 5]

Only Educator 3 thought that Ishaan* feels a sense of emotional belonging to the school. This is expressed below:

> ...ja ek dink hy voel deel van die skool, want hy is lief vir skool gaan en hy kom gereeld skool toe en hy kom goed oor die weg met sy maatjies...

> *[...yes I think he feels part of the school, because he loves coming to school... he is in school regularly and gets along well with his friends...]* [Educator 3, Interview 4]

According to the educators, as a result of this severe form of disengagement, most of the students were in the school but did not do anything or engage with the work or classroom discussions at all. It appeared that the students attend school just because they should but not because they want to or see the value of it. Examples of comments related to this expressed by the educators are presented below.

> *Hy sal nie eers begin nie of hy stel nie belang in wat daar staan nie, so as hy dit nie kan lees nie, sal hy nie vra nie. Vir hom is dit maar net `n papier.*

[He wouldn't even start or show an interest in what written there and if he cannot read he won't ask. For him it's just paper. [Educator1, Interview 1]

Another educator had the following to say:

Uhm [dink] hy is... hy kan basies niks doen nie. Hy is, soos ek sê, hy sit maar net in die klas.

[Uhm [think] he is... he can basically do nothing. He is, like I said, he just sits in the class]. [Educator 3, Interview 4]

The educators also expressed that despite giving the students various opportunities to complete tasks or to ask for assistance, they simply refused and according to them did not show any interest in improving their knowledge and marks. Below are comments related to this:

[Hy] sal in die klas sit dan sal hulle kanse kry, in die klas sal hy sit, dan kry hy die tweede kans as hy in kom sal sterker maatjie kom help. Hy stel nie belang nie.

[He would sit in die class and get chances, but he would just sit, then he would get a second chance when he comes in to sit next to a stronger classmate to help him. He is not interested.] [Educator 4, Interview 6]

Educator 2 mentioned that she provides extra support for students that do not understand the content of assignments and need extra time. These students need to come to the front and ask her for extra support. She then makes use of scaffolding to help the students obtain better marks. However, after asking Ricardo* to come to the front when he needs help, he never asked her to help him. This is expressed below:

Ongelukkig was hy nou nie een van hulle nie, wat vorentoe gekom het en gevra het juffrou help gou vir my nie. So hy sal daar sit, hy "worry" nie.

[Unfortunately he wasn't one of them that came to the front and asked teacher help me quickly. He will sit there and not worry.] [Educator 2, Interview 3]

4.2.2 THEME TWO: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF A LACK OF PARENTAL SUPPORT

By mentioning parental support to the educators, the researcher could observe their sense of disappointment in the parents for not providing the support that they think the children need. It was expressed by all the educators that they do not think the students get the support they need. Their reasons for saying this were that the parents never visit the school and that they do not know them. This is despite the fact that they send letters inviting them to visit the school to talk about their children's behaviour and academic progress. One of the educator participants made the following claim regarding her views on parental support for Lyla*:

> *Ek dink nie so nie... Ek kan nie sê met sekerheid nie, maar ek dink nie so nie, want `n kind wat ouer ondersteuning kry, die ouer sal nou al by ons almal gewees het en sou vergaderings bygewoon het en vrae gevra het, bietjie uitvra oor hoe is die skool en haar gedrag, soos die ander maar nou kom. So ek dink nie so nie.*

> *[I don't think so... I can't say with certainty, but I don't think so because if a child gets parental support then his/her parent would have visited us already and would have attended meetings and asks questions about the school or about her behaviour, like the others [parents] do. So I don't think so]* [Educator4, Interview 5]

She also had the following to say about parental support for Max* that was discussed in the interview with her:

> *Nee... ek het ook nog nie sy ouers ontmoet nie en hy was al `n paar keer betrokke by dissiplinêre sakies, maar [bly stil] ek wonder partykeer of sy ouers weet hy gedra hom so. Ons stuur briewe, maar "they're not coming," hulle was dan nie eers by die ouervergadering nie.*

> *[No… I have not met his parents yet and he was involved in disciplinary issues, but [keep quiet] I sometimes wonder if his parents are aware of his behaviour. We send letters, but they're not coming, they weren't even at the parent meeting]* [Educator4, Interview 6]

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As can be seen from above, the educators were of the opinion that the parents do not provide the necessary parental support for the students to make a success of their schooling. It was an important discovery as the educators' perceptions, regardless of accuracy, may contribute to the quality of relationships among educators, parents and the children (Stormont, Herman, Reinke, David, & Goel, 2013). For example, educators might "interact differently with parents whom they perceive as committed and interested in their child's education compared with parents whom they perceive as less involved" (Stormont et al., 2013, p. 196).

After concluding the interviews with the educators the researcher reflected the following in her journal:

I just finished my interviews with the educators and I really feel weighed down with sadness and concern since hearing about how the students struggle. It is really concerning that all of the educators think that the students do not receive parental support and that they have never met their parents. I am now, more than ever, concerned about the future of these students. What will happen to them? Will they finish school? Do they really not receive support from their parents? [Personal reflections, 6 June 2019]

4.3 PARENT PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

As mentioned above, six parents willingly participated in the study; they therefore defined the bounded system. During the interviews with the parents the researcher asked them about their age, marital status, and employment/occupation, source of income, highest grade passed, and how many people were living in the house with the student. The information is summarised in Table 4.2, on the following page.

Table 4. 2: Demographic information on the participants

Student's pseudonym (not their real names)	Participants (parents)	Relationship to student	Age	Marital status	Employment/ occupation	Highest grade passed	Living conditions
Max	Participant 1	Biological grandmother	52	Married	Unemployed	Grade 8	Lives in a house with Max, his mother, his sister and his uncle.
Lyla	Participant 2	Biological sister	34	Married	Casual worker in butchery	Grade 9 and later completed ABET matric	Living in someone's backyard. Lives with her own two children, husband and Lyla.
Kyle	Participant 3	Biological grandmother	60	widow	unemployed	Grade 6	Lives in a house Kyle and his mother, sister, her boyfriend and their child live in a shack in her backyard.
Ishaan	Participant 4	Biological mother	31	Unmarried	Farm worker	Grade 10	Lives on the farm. Ishaan, his sister and her boyfriend live together.
Lyle	Participant 5	Biological mother	32	Unmarried	Unemployed	Grade 10	Living in a shack in someone's backyard
Ricardo	Participant 6	Biological mother	31	Unmarried	Unemployed	Grade 10	Lives in a shack. Three families living together.

As can be seen from the information above, the researcher had only female participants. There were no fathers that indicated they wanted to participate in the study. Most of the participants were unemployed and depending on other people they knew or partners that they lived with to support them. The highest grade passed was Grade 10 except for one participant who later completed Grade 12 throughAdult Basic Education and Training (ABET) school.

4.4 PRESENTATION OF THEMES

The research problem: *parents' understanding about their educational support for their disengaging child*, guided the analysis of the transcripts and fieldnotes.

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During the qualitative content analysis, several themes and sub-themes were identified as presented in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4. 3: Themes and sub-themes identified in the data

Themes	Sub- themes
Parents' understanding of parental support	Encouraging respect and discipline
	Providing materialistically for their children
	Being emotionally present and encouraging open communication
Nature of parental support	Low level of parental self-efficacy
	Lack of educational knowledge
	Influence of socio-economic background
	Parental motivation and encouragement for their children
	Absenteeism of fathers
Knowledge of educational needs	Uncertainty around educational needs
	Knowledge of influences on disengagement
	Belief in academic ability of child

4.4.1 THEME ONE: PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTAL SUPPORT

This theme addresses the main research question: *What are the parents' understandings about their educational support for their children?* The sub-themes of this theme include: *Encouraging respect and discipline, providing materialistically for their children, and being emotionally present and encouraging open communication.* These sub-themes are discussed below.

How parents understand their support for their children to be reflects their expectations and beliefs about what they should do in relation to their children's education and educational progress. It is shaped by parents' beliefs and understanding about how their children develop, how parents should raise their children, and what they should be doing at home to help their child learn and be

academically successful – all of which is shaped by their context and will thus differ among contexts or communities.

The way they understand their parental support to be is also influenced by their own prior experience. Most of the participants did not complete their schooling and some verbally said that they do not understand the work and therefore cannot provide the necessary support that they wish they could. They therefore have certain ideas about their own and the school's responsibilities on how to support the child, where the educators' focus is on academic support and theirs is on behaviors and attitude towards school, which they will talk about with the child at home.

4.4.1.1 ENCOURAGING RESPECT AND DISCIPLINE

It was evident that the parents viewed their support in terms of encouraging respect and discipline; they thus believe that the child must show them respect and listen to them. This could be that this is the parents' belief about the role of a child as they appeared very adamant about this; it appeared to be something non-negotiable. Speaking to the child about his/her attitude towards school, homework or low scores on report cards was also considered among all the participants as part of their way of supporting the child, and it was expected that the students listen to them. It thus caused frustration and tension in the household when the child did not listen to them, as it was viewed as a sign of disrespect.

> *Hy moet net luister as na ons… as ons praat met hom juffrou, maar hy is een… jy kan maar nou vir hom so sê… net nou dan het hy alweer vergeet*
>
> *[He must just listen to us… when we talk to him, but he is one that… you can talk to him now… in a while he forgets]* [Interview, Participant 1]

A lot of the participants challenged some of their family member's idea of support as punishing a child for bad behavior by giving the child a hiding. This is expressed below by Participant 4 that confronted her partner on numerous times on the way he wanted to raise their son; she later decided to leave him and move away due to the way he believed Ishaan* should be raised, as this was the way his father raised him.

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Hy [Ishaan* se pa] het groot geraak in so `n huis… waar sy pa altyd met hulle…onbeskof gewees het, hy was hard op hulle. Nou hy wil vir Ishaan* so grootmaak soos hy groot geraak het, hy moet pak kry en so en toe sê ek vir hom maar dis nie reg nie.

[*He (Ishaan's* father) grew up in a home…* where his father would be… rude to him, he was very hard on them. Now he wants to raise Ishaan* like he was raised, he must get a hiding and so and then I told him that it is not right]. [Interview, Participant 4]

4.4.1.2 PROVIDING MATERIALISTICALLY FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Parents also described their support in terms of providing financially for their children and being able to purchase material things that the child wants - even if it is not a necessity, but something that would make the child happy. It appeared as if the parents viewed their inability to provide financially and purchase all the products the child needs as a sign of their inability to support their children. However, out of all the interviews with the participants they all expressed their concern about providing financially but also shared stories of how they eventually could buy their children the stuff they wanted even when they thought they would not be able to. This is expressed by Participant 1, below:

… ons het vir hom alles gegee wat ons kan.

[*… we gave him everything we can*] [Interview, Participant 1]

Participant 4 also expressed how often she buys Ishaan* things he wants despite being a farm worker and having other responsibilities. She could not understand why he still behaves like he does, because she gives him everything he wants.

…ek gee vir hom klere as hy dit wil hê, hy het van alles…hy het `n foon gehad… Ek het nou vir krismis toe koop ek vir hom klere. Hy wil `n paar Jordyns [tekkies] gehad het, ek het dit vir hom gekoop.

[*…I give him clothes if he wants, he has everything…he had a phone…I bought him clothes for Christmas. Hy wanted a pair of Jordyns, I bought it for him*] [Interview, Participant 4]

4.4.1.3 BEING EMOTIONALLY PRESENT AND ENCOURAGING OPEN COMMUNICATION

Most of the participants described their support in terms of providing the child with the necessary love and attention and being there for their child in times of need. This appeared to be something inevitable and what most of the participants first mentioned when asked about their parental support for their children. This caused the participants frustration as they could not understand why their children are disengaging and consequently participating in behavior that leads to disciplinary action by the school because, as they argued, their children get what they need at home – namely, love and attention. It was thus implied that the child who does not receive love and attention might engage in such behavior.

> *By ons het hy altyd aandag en liefde gekry...*
>
> *[We always gave him love and attention, educator…]* [Interview, Participant 1]

Another example of this as expressed by Participant 4:

> *... ek gee vir hom sy liefde…ek gee vir hom sy aandag*
>
> *[I give him love…I give him attention]* [Interview, Participant 4]

The participants also mentioned that their children do not communicate openly with them and that was a huge cause of concern for them. They said that they encourage their children to talk with them about what was bothering them, but most of the children did not. Lyla's* mother therefore decided to book an appointment with the psychologist at the clinic in order for Lyla* to get the opportunity to speak about what was bothering her as she could see that there was something bothering her. Another participant also said that she encouraged her partner to talk to Ishaan* instead of giving him a hiding, and to show him that he cares and that he loves him.

> *…gee vir hom die liefde* [Interview, Participant 4]
>
> *[…give him love]* [Interview, Participant 4]

The participants' understanding of parental support influences their interaction with their children's schooling as well as their interaction with their children's

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educators. As can be seen from the discussion above, the range of activities that the parents construe as important and necessary for their own actions for the children include being emotionally present for the child, encouraging respect and discipline, communicating regularly with the child and being able to provide financially for the child to take care of his/her basic needs. This is often in contrast to what the educators expect parental support to be.

The way in which the parents describe their support for their children links with Ruholt et al.'s (2015, p. 2) understanding of parental support as being "emotionally present and consistently dependable for the child in times of need." The support that they provide is thus emotional as they are concerned about how the child feels; they listen and talk to them in order to make them feel better. It can thus be argued that the parents do provide support to their children, just not academic support such as helping with their homework and having insight into the child's progress at school. Possible reasons for this are discussed below in theme two.

I just finished the first three interviews with the parents and I have a huge amount of admiration for them. My level of respect has increased significantly. My biased views of the parents were changed immediately. Being a teacher at the school, I always viewed the parents as unsupportive as one seldom see them at parent conference meetings and they seldom contact the school about concerns regarding their children. I realised today that for these parents, that isn't support, support for them is being at home when the child gets back from school to give them a plate of food, to care for them and work hard in order to give them what they need. I realised that one of the reasons the parents do not get involved in the education of their children is because they themselves have not completed school and do not understand the curriculum. I do believe that in order to better support the children one should start by equipping the parents with the necessary skills and knowledge to support them at home [Personal reflections, interviews 1-3, 29 April 2019]

4.4.2 THEME TWO: NATURE OF PARENTAL SUPPORT

Theme two focuses on the nature of parental support and includes the following sub-themes: *low level of parental self-efficacy, lack of educational knowledge, influence of socio-economic backgrounds, parental motivation and encouragement for their children*, and lastly *absenteeism of fathers*. It therefore answers the question: *How do parents support their children that are disengaged?*

4.4.2.1 LOW LEVELS OF PARENTAL SELF-EFFICACY

Parental self-efficacy is based on Bandura's (1982) theory of self-efficacy and refers to parents' belief about their own ability to make a difference in their child's educational outcomes through their involvement (Green et al., 2007). Self-efficacy can influence how parents behave, whether they attempt a task or not, how much effort they will put into a task, and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles or adverse circumstances (Bandura, 1982,2006). Parental self-efficacy is important as it is associated with better student outcomes (Wittkowski, Garrett, Calam, & Weisberg, 2017) as parents with a higher self-efficacy is more likely to be involved in the education of their child.

It appeared as if the participants had low levels of self-efficacy as they all reported feelings of inadequacy to be able to provide sufficient educational support for their children. Their perceived lack of knowledge and skills significantly influenced their self-efficacy and, as a consequence, their actions to provide adequate support for their children. They would rather prefer someone else, whether a professional such as an educator or a psychologist to assist the child, instead of them trying to assist their child with his/her challenges. It appeared as though the participants felt that they cannot do what other professionals can do. This is expressed by Participant 2:

> *Lyla* het regtig iemand nodig om vir hom [haar] te help… dis hoekom ek so excited was oor hulle moet… toe hulle sê daar sal onderwysers wees wat kan help.*

> *[Lyla* really needs someone that can help him [her]… that is why I was so excited about…when they said there will be educators that can help].* [Interview, Participant 2]

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It appears as if the participants judge themselves to be inefficient in coping with the demands of providing educational support for their children and so dwell on their own personal limitations. Furthermore, because they have low self-efficacy it influences the amount of effort they will put into providing educational support and how long they will persist when faced with a challenging task. Thus, the parents do not have the confidence in their abilities to help their children succeed academically and therefore do not provide educational support such as helping with homework, reading to the child, and so forth, as they view the educator as more equipped to do these tasks - which ties to the next sub-theme.

4.4.2.2 LACK OF EDUCATIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

The parents' knowledge and skills were frequently reported by the participants as barriers to and affecting the level of support they are able to provide to their children. As can be seen from Table 4.2 on page 73, most of the participants did not complete their schooling, only one participant completed Grade 12 through ABET classes. This significantly influences the support they perceived they are able to provide to their children.

One participant said that the content of the schoolwork is not the same compared to when she attended school and that is why it is difficult for her to assist with homework.

> *Soos van die goed verstaan ek mos nou nie…*
>
> *[Like some of the stuff I don't understand…]* [Interview, Participant 2]

Another participant also said she really wants to help her child with homework but that it is difficult for her because she doesn't understand the work inside the "red books" which are the prescribed books by the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

> *Ek wil baie graag vir hom help… die rooi boeke wat die kinders het, daar is party boeke wat ek nie regtig ook nie verstaan nie.*
>
> *[I really want to help…the red books that the children use; there are some books that I really don't understand]* [Interview, Participant 6]

It appeared as if the parents' level of education made them feel less able to assist their children with their homework. It could be that parents' educational attainment influences their skills and knowledge of the educational system which, in turn, influences their educational practices at home and the skills children have to model as well as their ability to intervene in the educational system on behalf of their children (Eccles, 2005).

4.4.2.3 INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The socio-economic conditions within which a family lives may powerfully influence parenting through its effects on parental mental health and differential access to resources (Roubinov & Boyce, 2017). As can be seen from Table 4.2 on page 73, the living conditions of the participants are very poor, with some of them living in shacks shared with other family members, some not even having electricity and flooring. The participants' level of education is also very low, with only one participant having the highest qualification of Grade 12 which leads to unemployment or seasonal work as they are not properly qualified to apply for jobs that might be more permanent and bring in a steady income.

It can thus be said that most of the parents that participated in this study live in poverty if compared to the following definition of poverty by Shonkoff, Gardner and the Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health (2012 cited in Leseman & Slot, 2014):

> Poverty is an overarching concept, referring to constellations of risks such as an unfavorable income-to-needs ratio (insufficient income to satisfy basic needs), low quality housing, unsafe and polluted neighborhoods, reduced access to public health services and good quality education, and several associated psychological problems at the family level, in particular family stress.

Poverty has direct and indirect effects on parenting (Donald et al., 2014). The direct effect of poverty on the parents in this study's ability to provide adequate support for their children include inadequate housing, poor parental education, and inadequate information about child development. All the participants expressed poor education as a barrier to support, as discussed above under the

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sub-theme: skills and knowledge. Participant 6 explicitly expressed her concern about inadequate housing as a barrier to providing support:

> *Daai vloere is nie gelyk soos die vloere nou is nie… daar is nie cement nie, want ons kan nie, as ons nou vloer gooi dan moet ons alweer uit… en waantoe gaan ons? Sien dis hoekom, sodra ons `n plek wil reg maak dan kom die mense, nee julle moet nou uit en so en dis nie lekker nie*

> *[Our floors aren't as even as it is here… there isn't even cement, because we can't, if we throw a floor now then we must be out again… and where can we go? See, that's why, as soon as we fix a place then the people come and say we must leave and that isn't nice]* [Interview, Participant 6]

She continued:

> *Dan kom hy die aand en ons gebruik kers vir lig en hoe kan ek dan nou vir hom help in die donkerte, maar as daar lig gewees het toe wil hy nie…*

> *[Then he arrives at night and we use candles for light and how can I then help him with his schoolwork, but when it was still light he didn't want to…]* [Interview, Participant 6]

Indirect effects of poverty on their ability to provide support include single parenthood, teenage pregnancy, and unemployment. Because these are psychosocial in nature, they are more relative in their effect. All the participants indicated that they had to leave school due to pregnancy and then had to work.

> *Die ma het nogal goed gevaar op die skool, maar toe is dit mos nou, die ma het die teleurstelling met die 'baby'*

> *[The mother actually did well on school, but then it was, the mother had the disappointment with the baby]* [Interview, Participant 3]

Only one participant said that her daughter, Max's* mother, completed Grade 12 and went to university, but decided to leave due to pregnancy:

> *Sy ma het matriek klaar, hy [sy] was op universiteit ook gewees… en toe net uitgesak ook, toe swanger met Max**

> *[His mother completed matric, he [she] attended university… and then just dropped out, she was pregnant with Max*]*[Interview, Participant 1]

Thus, it is clear that there is a cycle of poverty (Donald et al., 2014) or poverty trap Terre Blanche (2008) where poverty persists through several generations with only the occasional exceptional individual finding a way out. It was evident from the interviews that intergenerational poverty indeed occurs in this particular community. All of the participants and some of their older children did not complete school, except the one participant that later completed ABET school. Furthermore, all of the participants' reason for school dropout was teenage pregnancy.

Poverty can cause a huge amount of stress, especially when the parents do not have any support networks available. Under such stress the parent might become "physically and emotionally exhausted, feel that she is not coping, and become more and more demoralized and depressed" (Donald et al., 2014, p. 185). This can, in turn, lead to parents neglecting the children and not responding to the physical and psychological needs of the child.

The participants reported that these circumstances are often aggravated by family violence and drug and alcohol abuse, including physical violence by stepdads, which according to Donald et al. (2014) often happens. Participant 4 discussed the family violence that occurred in her house towards her son by his biological father. She then decided to move away from him in order to protect her son.

> *As ek vir die kind kos gee, nou sê ek vir hom dis die kind se kos maak alles klaar dan sal hy die kind se sakgeld, miskien die R1.00 of R2.00 wat ek vir hom sal gee sal hy vat, hy sal die kind se kos uit sy sak uit haal hy sal dit eet*
>
> *[When I give food to the child, then I'll say this is the child's food and finish everything then he would take the child's pocket money, he will take the R1.00 or R2.00 I'll maybe give him, he'll take the child's food out of his bag and he'll eat it].* [Interview, Participant 4]

She continued by saying:

> *Op `n dag toe slaan hy vir Ishaan**
>
> *[One day he hit him].* [Interview, Participant 4]

Participant 6 discussed the physical violence that occurred between her and her partner, which would often occur in front of the children, and would cause them a huge amount of distress. She mentioned that the violence between them would often occur when they were under the influence of alcohol:

> *Ek en sy pa het sommer baie lelik baklei, waar ek moet hospital toe gaan en dan raak die kinders net mal. Hulle hou nie van hulle pa wat aan my raak nie, so… en soos ek gesê het daai tyd toe ek so gedrink het en so… en ek dink hy het ook iets… hoe kan ek sê… daar het hy al so begin swak raak, want dit het vir hom geraak en ek het dit toe gesien en dis hoekom ek af gekom het van die drinkery*

> *[His father and I use to have very ugly fights, where I was taken to hospital and then the children would get mad. They don't like it when their dad hurts me, so…and like I said during that time when I still drank and so…I think he also have something… how can I say… he started to do poorer, because it touched him and I saw it and that is why I don't drink anymore]* [Interview, Participant 6]

Alcohol and drug abuse were also very prominent. Participant 4 also reported the use of alcohol and drugs by Ishaan's* father. She then decided due his physical abuse towards Ishaan* and his continued use of drugs that it was in Ishaan's* best interest to move away.

> *Op `n dag toe kom vang ek hom tik in die huis.*

> [One day I caught him 'tik' inside the house][Interview, Participant 4]

She continued:

> *Seker so `n jaar na daai (sy vir hom gekry het besig met dwelm gebruik) toe trek ons uit na daai huis uit en in `n ander huis in. En toe moes ek my werk opgee want ek kan nie cope nie. Sy (Ishaan se pa) frustrasies in die huis en hy raak moeilik en al daai dinge*

> *[About a year after that (after finding him in the cause busy using drugs) I moved out of the house and into another house. Then I had to get myself a*

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work because I couldn't cope. His (Ishaan's* dad) frustrations in the house and he would get difficult and all those things] [Interview, Participant 4]

It also became apparent that the children themselves would also start to experiment with alcohol and drug use.

Sy pa… drink nie… baie nie. Ons sal so vier biere `n naweek drink, maar sy pa vat weer `n…uhm…dagga… Nou Ricardo het ons op `n tyd gekry rook ook dagga

[His dad… doesn't drink…a lot. We will drink four beers a weekend, but his dad does take a…uhm…marijuana…Now we caught Ricardo* one time also smoking marijuana] [Interview, Participant 6]

Furthermore, some even reported the use of alcohol during pregnancy:

Ek het nie… gedrink soos in gedrink nie toe ek swanger was nie. My pa het altyd gesê ek kan… hoe is die goed se naam… die swart bier…

[I didn't drink like drink when I was pregnant. My father used to say that I can… how is it called… the black beer] [Interview, Participant 6]

Another participant mentioned that she thinks her sister Lyla* is a bit "slower" due to alcohol consumption during pregnancy as her mother would drink a lot. This eventually led to Lyla* being placed in the care of someone else.

Ek weet Lyla* se vordering is bietjie stadig, my ma het mos nou baie gedrink ook met Lyla*

[I know Lyla*s progress is a bit slower, my mother used to drink a lot with Lyla*] [Interview, Participant 2]

She explained that once Lyla* was placed in the care of someone else, she heard rumors about the person not looking after Lyla* so she then decided to go there and talk to the person. Once she arrived she saw that Lyla* was neglected and the person who was supposed to be looking after her was drunk.

Toe ek daar kom toe speel die kind stoksiel alleen in die jaard en die aunty lê en tiep in die huis en daars geen mens nie.

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> *[When I arrived there she was playing alone in the yard and the aunty was lying drunk in the house and there was no one around* [Interview, Participant 2]

From that day she took care of Lyla*. Lyla* now lives with her and her family.

As can be seen from above, these parents have to face many obstacles when attempting to be more supportive in the schooling of their children, which is often found in research as well (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parental support is lower for parents with lower socio-economic backgrounds and educational attainment (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). However, it should be kept in mind that parenting in these conditions is not necessarily inadequate (Donald et al., 2014).

The parents in this study all reported a strong support network which is an important protective factor as it balances and contains the stressors described above. Ross (1995 cited in Donald et al. 2014) argues that parents are able to withstand the stresses produced by poverty if they have a strong support network. The support for the participants came from relatives.

> *I only had one parent that wanted me to come to her home. When I arrived there today I felt a bit uneasy as they live in the 'rougher' part of town. There were a lot of people on the yard, but they live at the back in a one room shack. She invited me in to do the interview inside. They only have the necessities, but it was very clean and she really takes pride in it being clean as she said that all though they don't have much they are neat. Going to their home really gave me the opportunity to see firsthand how the parents might struggle to help their children with homework as there isn't really a space to sit and work and also how the children themselves might struggle to focus and do their work or study because the space is so limited and they don't have their own room where they can work quietly. I am wondering if they even have stationary. [Personal reflection, interview 5, 20 May 2019]*

4.4.2.4 PARENTAL MOTIVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THEIR CHILDREN

The participants frequently reported parental encouragement for their children as a means of parental support. The most frequent form of encouragement the participants engaged in was asking their children if their homework is done and encouraging them to do their work in school. This is expressed by a participant, below:

> *…Toe vra ek ook, het jy nie huiswerk nie, nog gevra... nee Ma ek het nie, ek het nie huiswerk...*

> *[Then I also asked, don't you have homework, I asked… no Ma I don't have any, I don't have homework]* [Interview, Participant 3]

She also continued to say that her daughter, Kyle's* mother, often takes him with her to help her at her work. She said that she spoke to Kyle* and tried to encourage him to not go with her but instead go to school as that is more important.

> *Kyle* daai is belangrik, jy moet vir jou... sê vir jou ma, mammie ek wil in die skool wees, ek wil in die skool wees. Sy moet vir jou slaan om saam te neem, maar jy sê ek wil in die skool wees,*

> *[Kyle* that is very important, you must tell your mom… tell your mom, mommy I want to be in the school, I want to be in the school. She must give you a hiding to go with her, but you must tell her that you want to be in the school].* [Interview, Participant 3]

4.4.2.5 ABSENTEEISM OF FATHERS

One theme that was consistent among the interviews is that the mothers or mother figure are the primary source of support for the children. According to the participants, the fathers are absent, which means that they do not participate actively in terms of emotional, social, financial and protective contributions. The participants expressed that they do not expect any support from the fathers, some didnot even want financial support, as they feel confident that they provide the children with the support they need. This is expressed by Participant 4:

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Ek het geen kontak met hom [Ishaan* se pa] nie en nie dat dit my pla nie, ek 'worry' ook nie om geld te vra nie, ek werk maar vir hulle twee [Ishaan* en sy suster]. Ek werk vir hulle twee.

[I don't have any contact with him [Ishaan's dad] and it doesn't bother me, and I don't care to ask for money, I work for the two of them (Ishaan and his sister). I work for the two of them][Interview, Participant 4]

Despite not expecting the fathers to provide support and to be actively involved in the lives of the children, some parents did mention that they do think that the lack of relationship between fathers and children might have an influence on the children. This is expressed by Participant 1:

Hy stel nie eers belang aan die kind nie, hy sê vir die kind sommer moenie vir my sê pa, ek is by my meisie... nou ek sê dit is ook goeters wat vir hom afdruk want jy is dan nou my pa hoekom mag ek nie vir jou eer nie

[He's not interested in the child, he tells the child to not call him dad in front of his girlfriend…now I say that, that are also things that puts him down because you are my dad why can't I honour you][Interview, Participant 1]

Another participant also mentioned the impact of the lack of support and involvement from the father on the child:

Die slegste van alles is die pa het hom [haar] teleurgestel en die pa, ons was nou [dink] die eerste Maart by die hof, ja en toe het die pa hom die son en die maan belowe, maar ook niks want Lyla* sien uit nou hy gaan daai tyd kom of ek gaan vir jou die of daai, maar hy stel nie belang nie se ek sommer

[The worst part of it all is that the dad disappointed him [her], we were [think] in court on the first of March, yes and then the dad promised him [her] the sun and the moon, but nothing, because Lyla* is excited that he will come visit at that time and I will this or that, but I say that he is not interested] [Interview, Participant 2]

There has been growing research on the topic of absentee fathers; the literature states that low participation in the lives of their children is a societal malice

confronting South Africa as a nation (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000, Salami & Okeke, 2018).

Children are often negatively affected by the absenteeism of or lack of support from their fathers (Langa, 2010,Hosegood, Richter, & Clarke, 2016; Sikweyiya, Shai, Gibbs, Mahlangu, & Jewkes, 2017,Salami & Okeke, 2018). It has been shown that children whose fathers are not physically present and involved in the processes of their development can develop poorer physical health, mental health, social competence and later Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and other learning outcomes compared to children whose fathers are in their lives (Salami & Okeke, 2018).

From the discussion above it can be concluded that the mother figures do not get any support from the fathers in raising the child and providing support for the child. The child therefore only receives support from their mothers and extended family members.

4.4.3 THEME THREE: PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The last theme identified is about the parents' knowledge of the educational needs of their children. It therefore addresses the sub-question: *What knowledge do they have regarding the educational needs of their child/ children?*

Parents could not say what their children's educational needs are as they seldom engage in conversations with educators or work with the children through activities, do homework with them, and so forth. They could, however, say with certainty what could have had or what is currently influencing the child to perform poorly. This is discussed below.

4.4.3.1 PARENTS' UNCERTAINTY AROUND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The participants all expressed uncertainty around the specific educational needs of their children. They know that their children's academic progress is not good, but do not know exactly what causes the child to fare poorly.

> *Ek weet regtig nie wat daar… maar soos ek kan sê hy is middelmatig*
>
> *[I really don't know what… but all I can say is he is average.]* [Interview, Participant 5]

Another participant also expressed her uncertainty:

> *Ek weet regtig nie hoe om dit te noem nie, maar… [sug] soos…ek kan nou nie presies sê nie…watter vakke alles nie, maar is vier vakke wat hy baie swak gedoen het.*

> *[I don't know exactly how to say... [sigh] like… I can't say exactly… which subjects…but I know its four subjects that he fared poorly in]* [Interview, Participant 6]

Only some participants indicated that they do know that reading and writing is a problem for their children, but that is all they know. The participant's uncertainty could be linked to the fact that they expect the educators to know more and to be able to provide the educational support to their children as they perceive themselves unable to provide to specific support. This highlights the fact that the parents do not communicate with the educators about their concerns and thus indicates why the educators think that the parents are not supportive.

4.4.3.2 KNOWLEDGE OF INFLUENCES ON DISENGAGEMENT

Despite the fact that the participants could not say with certainty what educational difficulties their children are struggling, they all had their own ideas of what could have caused their children to disengage.Two sub-themes that emerged were behavioral changes and traumatic experiences.

4.4.3.2.1 BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

The participants all reported certain behavioural changes that they observed which they argue lead to scholastic difficulties. Some of them first observed the behavioural changes before they became aware of the child's poor academic performance. Below are some of the comments related to behavioural changes observed by the parents.

Participant 4 argued that her child's behaviour around himself is what causes poor academic performance, because he will decide when he wants to work and when not. She therefore argued that if he has the right attitude, he can do well.

> *Kyk... sy gedrag rondom homself. Ek dink dis daar waar die probleem is. Kyk... die dag as hy ... hy het net te veel dinge...*

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[Look… his behaviour around himself. I think that is where the problem is… Look… the day when he… he just have too much things] [Interview, Participant 5]

Participant 6 appeared to be lacking motivation when expressing her concerns about her child's behaviour as she constantly hears from his fellow classmates about his behaviour in class. She could not say when the scholastic difficulties started, but she said that she was aware of the behaviour changes first.

Ek kan nie sê want elke keer moet ek... dan, dan is daar mense, kinders wat vir my kom sê Ricardo* was vandag... het hy die juffrou se klas gebank en so en dan het iemand anders, dan sê iemand anders weer vir my, nee Ricardo* speel hier, hier agter by die hoërskool... so, so ek kan nie sê wannneer het dit begin nie.

[I can't say because every time… there are people, children that come and tell me that today Ricardo* was… he skipped (truancy) the educator's class and so and then someone else will tell me that Ricardo* played at the High School… so, so I can't say when it started] [Interview, Participant 6]

Furthermore, the behaviour of the one female student, was different from that of the male students. Her parental figure mentioned that the behaviour she observed when Lyla* is struggling is when she is quiet and on her own.

Ek sal sommer gou oplet wanneer daar fout is, want dan is sy eenkant toe of sy gaan net op die kooi lê

[I will notice quickly when there is something wrong, because then she will be on her own and would lay on the bed] [Interview, Participant 2]

4.4.3.2.2 TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

The second sub-theme that emerged with regards to possible influences on academic performance as indicated by the parents was traumatic experiences. The participants reported these experiences and argued that it could have an impact on the child's scholastic performance.

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Participant 6 discussed her child's exposure to severe physical violence between her and his father. The physical violence would be so severe that she'd have to go to the hospital:

> *…van daai tyd af het hulle pa vir my so verneuk, maar ek het so aangegaan, so aan en af, aan en af en vandag is ons weer bymekaar en ons het baie baklei ook en hulle sien die goed. Nou weet ek nie, miskien is dit dit wat hom agterhou.*

> *[…from that time their father cheated on me, but I continued like that so on and off and today we are back together and we fought a lot and they see these things. Now I don't know, maybe it is this that keeps him behind]* [Interview, Participant 6]

Participant 5 discussed the death of her mother as a traumatic experience her son, Lyle*, went through. He had a very close relationship with his grandmother and even looked after her when she was sick. He was also the one that discovered her body the day she died. This was a very traumatic experience for him, as expressed below:

> *Ek neem aan hy neem sy ouma se dood baie erg. Hy neem dit baie en omdat hy ook nog op haar lyk af gekom het.*

> *[I assume he took his grandmother's death really bad. He takes it badly and because he found her body]* [Interview, Participant 5].

They also mentioned that the children did not get any support in dealing with these experiences but that they do think the children need support. Some mentioned that they already made appointments with the psychologist at the local clinic and others said they want their children to see a psychologist. It appeared as if the participants know that the students need outside support, but that they did not know how to access the support - the processes they need to follow to access the available resources.

4.4.3.3 PARENTS' BELIEF IN ACADEMIC ABILITY OF CHILD

Another theme that was prominent when discussing the students' academic achievement was the parents' belief in the academic ability of the child despite the

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child having repeated grades and still performing very poorly. Below are the results the students obtained in the first term (interviews were conducted in the second term).

Table 4. 4: Scholastic performance of the students in Term One.

Student (Pseudonyms)	% Home Language	% FAL	% Mathematics	% Natural Science and Technology	% History	% Geography	% Life skills
Max	23	22	30	21	5	18	53
Lyla	45	49	7	67	28	25	38
Kyle	33	23	30	41	35	48	45
Ishaan	30	30	35	24	40	43	65
Lyle	19	23	13	27	5	5	40
Ricardo	21	15	50	49	3	8	57

Despite obtaining these marks, it appeared as if the parents believed that if the students just changed their behaviour they would be able to perform better.

> *Ek weet hy kan, maar hy wil nie en dis ook nie dat hy nie wil nie… maar hy is baie handig en so en help graag, maar as hy ook die dag besluit hy wil nie dan wil hy nie*
>
> *[I know he can, but he doesn't want to and it isn't that he doesn't want to…he is very handy and he likes to help, but if he decides he doesn't want to then he won't]* [Interview, Participant 5]

Another parent said:

> *Hy moet net sy samewerking gee juffrou…dan sal alles uitwerk*
>
> *[He must just participate… then everything will work out]* [Interview, Participant 1]

Another parent also mentioned that:

> *Ek weet nie of hy sukkel nie, hy… lyk my hy is lui om `n ding te doen. Hy is lui om te dink, want by die huis moet ons vir hom dink.*

> *[I don't know if he is struggling… looks like he is lazy to do something. He is too lazy to think, because I have to think for him at home]* [Interview, Participant 6]

On the one hand it could be argued that because the parents lack the knowledge related to educational processes they might believe the above. On the other hand it could indicate they are in denial about the educational difficulties their children face and therefore attribute poor scholastic performance to laziness and playfulness.

4.5 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The theoretical framework of this study was Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 1986) Bioecological Theory. According to his theory, the family (especially the parents) is the primary source of influence on the child's development. Proximal processes between the child and parent are enduring and occur on a daily basis. The frequent interaction with the child allowed the parents in the study to easily observe behavioural changes associated with disengagement from school and to be aware of the negative influences of it on the child's life. They were also very aware of contextual influences that could have had an impact on the child's disengagement.

Bronfenbrenner argues that the relationship within a family is reciprocal, which means that the child is not only influenced by the parent, but the parent is influenced by the child as well. The family which forms part of the child's microsystem appears to be reciprocally influenced by the disengagement of the child and the challenges it poses. The parents' level of motivation was low and they felt tired of trying to support their children without any observable success as they also have to face multiple other challenges within their lives as well.

The data suggests that the participants are disadvantaged on many levels, including unemployment, poor housing, low educational attainment, lack of skills and resources, and being a single parent. These difficulties faced by the parents are interconnected. Being disadvantaged in one domain often intersects with other challenges leading to an overall vulnerability. The multiple disadvantages associated with poverty thus also influenced parents' ability to provide adequate

support. The environment that the participants live in also influence their ability to provide support to their children due to fewer economic opportunities, the social use of alcohol and drugs, and the exposure to physical violence. From the above it can be concluded from above discussion that poverty has multiple disadvantages.

As discussed, the participants experience multiple vulnerabilities at a micro-level. The effects of poverty on proximal processes in the microsystem of the family are severe. The participants are exposed to daily stressors such as income loss and struggling to meet daily needs. This can cause psychological distress and it can be particularly stressful for these participants as it threatens their ability to adequately fulfil their family role obligations. It is also argued by Eamon (2001) that consistent economic hardship can also lead to depression. The parents thus have to make daily accommodations in order to provide for their families.

Thereare also the characteristics of the children that make it even more difficult for the participants to provide them with the necessary support. The temperament and behavioural characteristics of the students affect the quality of proximal processes that operate in the microsystem. The participants all reported that they want to have a better relationship with their children and that they wish they opened up more, but that the children were not willing.

The experience of the parent-child interaction at home also influences the practices educators observe at school (mesosystem). The participants all mentioned that they are not actively supportive in their childrens' schooling due to personal limitations. They also do not visit the educators as they view their role to be that of supporting the child at home. This influences the educators' perspectives about the parents and about the child, which may influence their interactions with them. Moreover, the educators viewed the parents as unsupportive due to the fact that they do not know the parents as they never attend school meetings or visit the school with regards to the students' scholastic performance. Due to a lack of skilful maternal support at home, the educators also observe very low academic progress.

As can be seen from the above, parents have to face many challenges. In addition, due to financial constraints, they are unsure if their basic needs will be met on a daily basis and on top of that they still care and support their children.

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Life can therefore be very stressful for them. This is related to Maslow's (1970) Theory of Motivation. Maslow envisaged a hierarchy of needs. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation. According to the theory humans have an inherent need to actualise themselves. Regardless of who we are, even a parent, we all have the need to realise our highest potential and to feel satisfied with ourselves. A number of other needs must, however, be met first in order to get there. People living in poverty, like the participants in this study, are often deprived of basic needs and they are therefore motivated to fulfil these needs before progressing to meet higher needs. Thus, the participants have numerous needs that must be met first before they can provide sufficient support to the students and focus on their schooling. Figure 4.1, below, is a visual illustration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
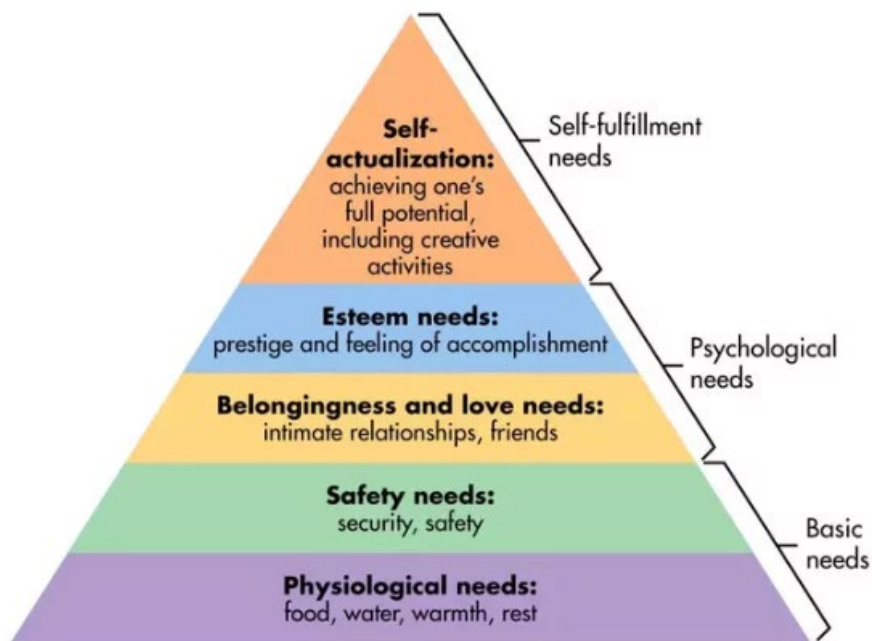
Figure 4. 1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

According to Van Deventer and Mojapelo-Batka (2013) physiological needs include the needs for water, food, sleep and rest. The next layer of needs consists of our need for a safe and secure environment, which was also very prominent in the study. Thereafter is our need for love and belonging which includes obtaining and giving affection and to feel that we contribute to the groups of society to which we belong. Self-esteem and self-actualisation forms the last two layers of the

hierarchy. The needs lower down must be satisfied first before an individual can attend to the needs higher up.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can thus be used to understand the participant's motivation to provide parental support. The participants all described the importance of the first three needs: physiological, safety, and love and belonging. The participants understood parental support in terms of these three needs and the type of support they provide to their children revolve around these needs as well. Taking Maslow's theory into account it makes sense that this is how parents understand support to be as they are faced with many challenges and they have to work hard to ensure that these basic needs are met, not only for themselves, but for their children as well.

The data suggests that the parents are aware that their children's academic performances are poor. However, they do not know exactly what they are struggling with. This is not surprising because for parents, support is fulfilling the basic needs of the child first - that is ensuring s/he has food to eat, clothes to wear, they live in a safe house and that they get the love and attention they need. As illustrated, it was more important for the parents to be in tune with their children's emotional needs and to be able to communicate with them about this. This is important as Simpson et al. (2017) argue that listening to children that live in poverty can help build resilience and helps to establish respectful relationships. Thus, the parent's socio-economic background makes it difficult for them to engage in home-based support where they can engage children in intellectual activities such as reading books with them or taking them to a museum (Pomerantz et al., 2007). Moreover, despite having a strong support network their children still experience barriers to learning because they are not stimulated intellectually.

On a macrosystemic level, the participants were aware of support services from the Department of Education, as well as the Department of Health that is available to the students. Although they had knowledge of free of charge support available, only one participant acted on this knowledge and had a consultation arranged with the psychologist through the local clinic. It seemed as if the rest of the participants relied on the educators to take the initiative to contact outside support services.

Meanwhile the educators waited for the parents to approach them in order to discuss support for the students. It can thus be argued that the nature of communication between the parents and educators needs to be improved.

Despite all of the adversity the parents face, they still remain hopeful for the future of their children, as some parents mentioned that they do believe that if their children just do their best and work in school that they will be able to do well in school. Working from an intersectional perspective helps to explore multiple ways of how the participants are coping (Saatcioglu & Corus, 2014). Despite being faced with multiple challenges, the participants still attended the interviews and shared their story to try and make a change. Participants used a variety of coping behaviours to prevent and contain the impact of emotional distress caused by different daily challenges. One common coping tactic found among the participants was their available support networks; Participant 5 explicitly notes that her mother was a strong support system for Lyle* until her passing, or Participant 2, who said that she asks a neighbour to help Lyla* with her homework or Participant 4 who said that Ishaan's* grandmother used to take care of him while she worked. The strong social ties they have to neighbours and family members serve as a protective factor as these are the people that will often support them financially as well as emotionally. It provides them with a way of coping with the structural disadvantages they face on a daily basis.

Participants also wanted to get out of undesirable housing conditions, whether it was to move away from an abusive partner or to get more adequate housing to ensure the wellbeing of their children. They engaged in critical thinking to employ the best possible solution in order to achieve their goal. Thus, when looking at the participants' actions through a positive psychology lens it could be argued that despite being faced with multiple challenges on a daily basis, the participants still remain resilient.

Based on the above discussion, the researcher is of the opinion that these parents are desperately in need of assistance from professionals in order for them to better support their children. The parents feel overwhelmed with all the challenges they have to face and do not know how to utilise the professional resources that are around them in order for their children to get the support they know they need.

It could be argued that the school system, educators, district-based educational psychologists and social workers have failed these parents, as they could have given the parents better guidance.

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) should thus place more attention on how to support these parents, especially within disadvantaged communities, that do not know how to utilise the resources around them. Also, it was evident from this study that in order for academic success to occur, one should not focus on academic performance, but instead on the whole person- that is emotionally, intellectually, psychologically and behaviourally, as all of these aspects of the individual interact and lead to academic success or failure. The recommendations are discussed below.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to recognise that the findings from a qualitative study are unique to the particular research context. The knowledge provided by this study could, however, help guide parents and educators in their endeavour to enhance parental support for disengaging primary school children in low socio-economic schools. The recommendations focus on how parents and other professionals can provide support to disengaging primary school students in order to enhance their engagement in school and thus also improve their academic achievement.

Upon enquiring about how the parents feel the school can help them in supporting their children, the parents could not give an answer. They do not know. This further highlights the importance of having professionals to provide guidance and support to the parents. The researcher thus believes that an asset-based approach situated within a positive psychology theory is the best way to intervene and make recommendations. The following recommendations will therefore not only focus on what the parents can do, but also on how other professionals within and outside the community can support these parents.

4.6.1 UTILISING RESOURCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Parents and other professionals working with these students should make use of an asset-based approach. In order to effectively support the student, within this low socio-economic community, it is important to utilise the resources available.

These resources include the local social worker from the Department of Social Development in order to address their housing issues and provide psychosocial support; the district-based educational psychologist for scholastic assessment and support and educator and parental guidance on how to support these students; the clinical psychologist visiting the local clinic from the Department of Health for trauma counselling, and the learning support teacher for additional learning support during the school day. These resources are available (free of charge) for the community; parents just need to know how to gain access to them which is how the educators can help by having regular information sessions or contacting parents individually and providing him/her with the necessary guidelines on how to access the services.

4.6.2 EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

Failure to acknowledge the prevalence of disengagement in schools will lead to increased levels of student dropout. One way of identifying disengaged students is to use the Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) by Check and Connect. This instrument would make identification of students that show signs of disengagement much easier, and could lead to earlier interventions taking place. Thus, the resources and knowledge that are currently in place around disengagement should be used optimally. This can be used together with the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) Strategy, which forms the basis of inclusive education. The SEI instrument can thus be used to identify disengaged students and once these students are identified the SIAS strategy can be implemented. The SIAS strategy involves providing: guidelines regarding the early identification of a student's strengths and weaknesses; correct assessment strategies of the nature of learning barriers experienced by the student, and effective design and implementation of individualised support plans for the students (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). This is especially relevant within the context of the study as the SIAS policy was developed to respond to the needs of all the students in the country, but especially those who are vulnerable and most likely to be marginalised and excluded (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

4.6.3 REGULAR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

It was discovered during the study that there is a lack of communication between parents and educators. As a consequence, the parents did not know what was expected of them and what their children's specific educational needs are. One important recommendation is frequent communication between the parents and educators to obtain a better understanding of the specific educational needs of their children to be able to better support them. What the researcher identified as a possible means to be able to meet regularly with the parents is to have Sunday parent meetings as it is not always easy for parents to attend meetings after hours or during school hours during the week as they work or take care of their other children. Parents are more likely to be able to meet with the educator on a Sunday as there will be other family members around to take care of their other children for the time they are at the meeting.

4.6.4 PARENTAL SUPPORT GUIDED BY CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

When engaging with their disengaging child, the parents should draw on their children's strengths and make use of these. They can also give positive feedback by praising their efforts regardless of how small it might be. This approach is also supported by Donald et al.(2014) who state that even though student's efforts are unsuccessful in the task at hand, it is better to praise what they can do, rather than to criticize what they have attempted. The parents can engage in positive constructive criticism when giving feedback to their children when they are attempting a task.

4.6.5 PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE BASED ON CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM AND SCAFFOLDING

Educators can also draw on the strengths of the students. However, because they are more engaged in the academic support of these children they can engage in constructive criticism by pointing out the student's errors, then showing or scaffolding how the student should solve the particular problem (Donald et al. 2014). Educators should never ignore students as it might lead to them becoming more disengaged; instead they should engage in constructive criticism as it can constitute a significant healing experience for students (Donald et al., 2014). This

is what is required of educators to promote inclusive education. The Education White Paper 6 by the Department of Education (2001) clearly states that education systems and learning methodologies should meet the needs of all learners and should maximise the participation of all learners in the culture, curriculum and the environment (Department of Education, 2001). Given this statement, this is what the educator's should already be doing.

4.6.6 PARENT INFORMATION WORKSHOPS OR MEETINGS

Regular parent-teacher meetings where they specifically focus on equipping parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to better support their children should be scheduled. During these meetings educators can also inform the parents about other support needed, such as therapy and the steps they can take to obtain the outside support. During these meetings they should make the parents feel comfortable and ensure them that whatever support they provide will make a difference.

4.6.7 PARENTAL SUPPORT GROUPS

As already noted, parents benefitted from the interview by talking about their concerns. Given this observation, the researcher is of the opinion that parental support groups for parents whose children are disengaged are needed. These support groups can be facilitated by the school-based psychologist. This is important as the researcher believes that the parents are only truly able to best support their children when they themselves are healthy, optimistic, enthusiastic and believe that their support will make a difference. The support sessions with the parents can thus focus on providing the parents with an opportunity to express their concerns, the challenges they face, and give them the rare chance to debrief and work through their own emotions to be more available and present for their children - which parents themselves viewed as important.

4.6.8 COMMUNITY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

Another recommendation is that the school takes the initiative to start a community-based programme where disengaging students can gather and other young members of the community who escaped the poverty cycle, who are

educated and who are obtaining steady income can become mentors to these students. The students (mentees) would be able to relate to their mentors and understand their context which will, in turn, make it easier for the mentors to guide the students (mentees) in realising the value and importance of education, support them academically, and instil a sense of motivation within the students that might lead to them connecting emotionally with the school and feeling a sense of belonging. This is important as it might be that the students are not exposed to role models and this programme can give them exposure to good role models and could empower the students to escape their circumstance and try and make a success of their schooling - just as their mentors did. Community members of other social structures such as churches could also utilise this session and engage in motivational talks with the students.

4.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

An important limitation of the study was that it is a mini-dissertation and the researcher thus had to narrow down the scope of the study. She thus decided to make the parents of disengaging students her participants and use the educators as key informants to provide more context to the study. Future research can focus on other professionals that might also interact with the students or have knowledge on disengagement in schools, such as learning support educators, educational psychologist and members of the school based support team that often engage in discussion about students with learning barriers. Moreover, the researcher selected a culturally and linguistically homogeneous sample as the participants were all from a rural area. Future research can focus on urban areas as well in order to get their perspectives on parental support for disengaging students. As the goal of qualitative research is not to generalise findings, the study only focused on one school within the Western Cape that is situated in a disadvantaged community. Future research can focus on more schools within the Western Cape area that is also situated within disadvantage communities in order to generate findings that might inform the Department of Education about the socio-economic conditions of these parents and how this becomes a barrier to providing support, in order for the Department of Education to realise the needs of the parents.

4.8 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

The study gained an in-depth perspective on six parents' support for their disengaging primary school child within a low socio-economic school. By using a qualitative case study, it allowed the research to gather rich descriptions about their support for their children from the parents themselves. The insider perspective further benefited the study, as the participants were very comfortable with the researcher and shared personal information that the researcher believes they would not have shared with someone that does not understand their context and does not have deep empathy for their circumstances. The richness of information received from the participants further broadened the researcher's understanding about parental support within the specific community and how their circumstances might be a barrier to providing the necessary support their children need. This insight is important because the research can be used to provide valuable information to the parents as well as the educators on how parental support for disengaging students can be enhanced. It can also be used to give the educators a better understanding of the circumstances that the parents experience in order for them to have empathy for and a better understanding of their situation. The researcher also believes that through participating in the study, the parents had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences of supporting a child that is disengaging from school. They could talk about their frustrations, sadness, anger and concerns without being judged and in a safe environment which the researcher could see is something that they really appreciated. The study capacitated the participants with the knowledge of how they can best support their disengaging child.

4.9 PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

As suggested by Mason (2002) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016), it is important that researchers engage in personal reflections during their research.The researcher thus engaged in personal reflections throughout the entire research process. These personal reflections included descriptive notes on behaviour observed, thoughts of the researcher, feelings experienced by the researcher and actions taken by the researcher, which the researcher included in this Chapter as part of her personal reflections as they link to different themes. The researcher's

thoughts, feelings and experiences were therefore an acknowledged part of the research process.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, it was important for the researcher to engage in reflexive practices throughout the study in order to acknowledge her own experience as it might have an impact on the process and outcome of the inquiry. Reflexive practices were also used to prevent bias which is still a very prominent issue in qualitative research (Ortlipp, 2008). The discussion below outlines the reflections the researcher made during the research process.

From the onset of the interviews, the researcher was pleasantly surprised and energized by how willing and enthusiastic the participants were to participate in the study. Some openly said that they were extremely glad to participate in the study and were very grateful that someone was interested in their children. Being an educator, the researcher had biased views about parental support and did not expect the participants to be so eager to participate in the study.

The participants all shared very personal information despite the fact that they just met the researcher. It was therefore important for the researcher to conduct the research by keeping the ethical principles in mind. She had to engage with the participants by: respecting their humanity; holding them in a high esteem, and not imposing her own values on them (Allan, 2016). She therefore conducted the interviews in a non-judgmental manner and showed unconditional positive regard. The researcher believes that conducting the interview in an ethical manner, displaying unconditional positive regard and being non-judgmental, as well as being from the same community as the participants, led to the research participants trusting her and feeling comfortable to share very sensitive information with her. Insider perspective is often debated in literature, but for this case study, the researcher is of opinion that it allowed her to gain the trust of the participants and acquire unique information that might have not been otherwise available to other researchers.

It also appeared to the researcher that this was the participants' first time being able to fully talk about their concerns, not just about their children, but about their own life as well. Even though the research was not intended to be therapeutic, the researcher does believe that it had a positive effect on the parents as it allowed for

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self-exploration and reflection. It was therefore important for the researcher to guide the interview to also remain as close as possible to the interview guide.

With regards to the participant pool, the researcher noticed that there were no male participants. This highlighted the role that the mother plays versus that of the father. During the interviews, the female participants referred to the fathers as being absent and not having a relationship with the child. They also mentioned that the lack of concern of fathers might have an impact on the behavior and consequently disengagement and low scholastic performance by the children. It therefore appeared to the researcher that,in this case study, fathers seemed less supportive than mothers. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to reflect on the issue and possibly explore it as a separate project in the future as it is not part of the scope of this study.

4.10 CONCLUSION

From the above discussion one can conclude that parental support does play an important role in a child's academic success. Parental support is therefore a rich resource for schools as they seek academic success for their students. It is thus, as mentioned before, a very relevant topic to discuss especially in South Africa which has high national dropout rates. Given the importance of parental support, the researcher was pleasantly surprised with the willingness and enthusiasm of the parents to participate in the study. Conducting the study and engaging in communication with the parents challenged the researcher's biased views of parental support as lacking amongst parents within this specific context in which the study was conducted. The researcher was heartened by the amount of empathy and compassion that the parents had for their children and the constant encouragement and motivation they provide to their children despite various academic setbacks and challenges their childen face. Through this study the researcher was reminded of the important role that parents play in the development of children. It is therefore important to support parents in order for them to provide their children with the necessary support they need.

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Addendum A   Ethical clearance from the REC

APPROVED WITH STIPULATIONS
REC Humanities New Application Form

8 April 2019

Project number: EPSY-2019-8173

Project title: Exploring parental support for disengaging primary school learners.

Dear Mrs Lene Witbooi

Your REC Humanities New Application Form submitted on 6 February 2019 was reviewed by the REC: Humanities and approved with stipulations.

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
8 April 2019	7 April 2022

REC STIPULATIONS:

The researcher may proceed with the envisaged research provided that the following stipulations, relevant to the approval of the project are adhered to or addressed:

The researcher is reminded to obtain prior permission from the WCED. The researcher is also reminded to obtained permission from the school principal to access learners, documentation and access to parents via the school. [ACTION REQUIRED]

HOW TO RESPOND:

Some of these stipulations may require your response. Where a response is required, you must respond to the REC within six (6) months of the date of this letter. Your approval would expire automatically should your response not be received by the REC within 6 months of the date of this letter.

Your response (and all changes requested) must be done directly on the electronic application form on the Infonetica system: https://applyethics.sun.ac.za/Project/Index/11203

Where revision to supporting documents is required, please ensure that you replace all outdated documents on your application form with the revised versions. Please respond to the stipulations in a separate cover letter titled "Response to REC stipulations" and attach the cover letter in the section **Additional Information and Documents**.

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

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (8173) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

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.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

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

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Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version

Investigator Responsibilities
Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. Conducting the Research. You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with the research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.

2. Participant Enrollment. You may not recruit or enrol participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

3. Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using only the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.

4. Continuing Review. The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is no grace period. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is your responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.

5. Amendments and Changes. If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You may not initiate any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The only exception is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events. Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouche within five (5) days of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instance of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.

7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC.

8. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

9. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.

10. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

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Addendum B   Letter of permission from the WCED

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@wsalemcape.gov.za

☏ +27 021 467 9272

Fax: 0869002082
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20180912–6306
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Lené Witbooi
PO Box 197
~~Saron~~
6812

Dear Mrs Lené Witbooi

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: EXPLORING PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR DISENGAGING PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

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 **17 September 2018 till 31 August 2019**
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: 13 September 2018

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Addendum C   Informed consent form- Parents

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UNIVERSITEIT STELLENBOSCH

INWILLIGING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSING

OUERS SE PERSEPSIE OOR HUL ONDERSTEUNING IN DIE SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN HUL LAERSKOOL KIND WAT GEDISTANSIEERD TEENOOR DIE SKOOL VOORKOM.

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie wat uitgevoer word deur my,Lené Witbooi (BA Geesteswetenskappe; NOS senior fase (Cum Laude); B.Ed Hons (Cum Laude), van die Departement Opvoedkundige Sielkunde aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch.Die resultate sal deel word van `n navorsingstesis om sodoende my meestersgraad in Opvoedkundige Sielkunde suksesvol te kan voltooi. U, as ouer van `n leerder in die intermediêre fase (Graad 4 tot 6) is geïdentifiseer as moontlike deelnemer aan die studie omdat u kind geïdentifiseer is as `n leerder wat gedistansieerd teenoor die skool voorkom en wat moontlik uitdagings ervaar by die skool.

1. **DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE**

Alhoewel die belangrikheid van ouer ondersteuning wel bekend is beoog ek om met hierdie navorsing `n dieper begrip te kry van ouers se eie persepsie oor hul ondersteuning by die skoolopvoeding van hul kind. Die navorsing sal ook fokus op die verhouding tussen die ouers se persepsie oor hul ondersteuning in hul kind se skoolopvoeding en ook die van die opvoeders oor die spesifieke ouers se ondersteuning in hul kind se opvoeding.

2. **PROSEDURES**

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

- Deelname aan `n agtergrond onderhoud van ongeveer 45-60 minute lank. Tydens hierdie onderhoud sal die navorser die studie aan die ouers verduidelik en aan hulle die geleentheid gee om vrae te vra oor die studie.
- `n Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud van ongeveer 60 minute lank met my, die navorser, en as u instem, sal opnames geneem word.
- Moontlike opvolg vrae wat telefonies kan geskied of tydens `n geskikte tyd vir die deelnemers.
- Toestemming om toegang tot u kind se rapporte, skoolprofiel en skryfboeke.

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

Daar is geen verwagte risiko's of ongemaklikhede geïdentifiseer wat tydens deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie kan geskied nie. Deelnemers sal ten alle tye met groot respek behandel word en inligting verkry tydens hierdie navorsingstudie sal met uiterse konfidensialiteit behandel word.

4. **MOONTLIKE VOORDELE VIR DEELNEMERS**

Die verwagtinge is dat hierdie studie ander ouers en leerders, wat in dieselfde situasie is, sal help reflekteer oor hul ondersteuning vir hul kinders en sodoende ander maniere te ondersoek om hul kinders te ondersteun om `n sukses te maak van hul skoolloopbaan.

5. **VERGOEDING VIR DEELNAME**

Deelnemers sal geen vergoeding ontvang vir hul deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Daar sal wel `n geleentheid geskep word waar die bevindige van die navorsingstudie aan die deelnemers bekend gemaak sal word. Dit sal plaasvind na die navorsingstudie voltooid 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 gebruik van skuilname wanneer daar na u, ander deelnemers, die leerders en die skool verwys word. Alle inligting verkry tydens die navorsingstudie sal veilig bewaar word en slegs ek, die navorser, en my studieleier, Me. L. Collair, sal toegang daartoe hê.

Ek sal slegs data verkry tydens die onderhoude met my studieleier deel indien dit noodsaaklik is vir studiedoeleindes soos wanneer ek leiding benodig t.o.v transkribering, kodering en ander soortgelyke navorsingstappe. Indien u instem, sal alle onderhoude opgeneem word op audio-bande, maar opgeneemde inligting sal verwyder word sodra die navorsingstudie voltooid is.

Indien die navorsing gepubliseer word, sal die inligting met dieselfde vertroulikheid gehandhaaf word.

7. **DEELNAME EN ONTTREKKING**

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 eniger tyd u daaraan 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:

Me.	L. Witbooi	Me. L. Collair
E-pos:	lenejafta@gmail.com	lyncol@sun.ac.za
Tel:	023 2400 016	021 808 2304

9. **REGTE VAN DEELNEMER**

U kan te eniger 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.

VERKLARING DEUR DEELNEMER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, _____, gegee en verduidelik deur Me. Lené Witbooiin Afrikaans en ek is dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir my vertaal. Ekis die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my vrae is tot my bevrediging beantwoord.

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

_____   _____

Naam van deelnemer   Datum

_____   _____

Handtekening van deelnemer   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

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Addendum D   Informed consent form-Educators

UNIVERSITEIT STELLENBOSCH

INWILLIGING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSING

OUERS SE PERSEPSIE OOR HUL ONDERSTEUNING IN DIE SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN HUL LAERSKOOL KIND WAT GEDISTANSIEERD TEENOOR DIE SKOOL VOORKOM.

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie wat uitgevoer word deur my,Lené Witbooi (BA Geesteswetenskappe; NOS senior fase (Cum Laude); B.Ed Hons (Cum Laude), van die Departement Opvoedkundige Sielkunde aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch.Die resultate sal deel word van `n navorsingstesis om sodoende my meestersgraad in Opvoedkundige Sielkunde suksesvol te kan voltooi. U, as opvoeder van `n leerder in die intermediêre fase (Graad 4 tot 6) is geïdentifiseer as moontlike deelnemer aan die studie omdat u `n leerder geïdentifiseer het wat gedistansieerd teenoor die skool voorkom en wat moontlik uitdagings ervaar by die skool.

10. DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE

Alhoewel die belangrikheid van ouer ondersteuning wel bekend is beoog ek om met hierdie navorsing `n dieper begrip te kry van ouers se eie persepsie oor hul ondersteuning by die skoolopvoeding van hul kind. Die navorsing sal ook fokus op die verhouding tussen die ouers se persepsie oor hul ondersteuning in hul kind se skoolopvoeding en ook die van die opvoeders oor die spesifieke ouers se ondersteuning in hul kind se opvoeding.

11. PROSEDURES

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

- Deelname aan `n agtergrond onderhoud van ongeveer 45-60 minute lank. Tydens hierdie onderhoud sal die navorser die studie aan die ouers verduidelik en aan hulle die geleentheid gee om vrae te vra oor die studie.
- `n Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud van ongeveer 60 minute lank met my, die navorser, en as u instem, sal opnames geneem word.
- Moontlike opvolg vrae wat telefonies kan geskied of tydens `n geskikte tyd vir die deelnemers.
- Toestemming om toegang tot die leerder(s) se rapporte, skoolprofiele en skryfboeke.

12. MOONTLIKE RISIKO'S EN ONGEMAKLIKHEID

Daar is geen verwagte risiko's of ongemaklikhede geïdentifiseer wat tydens deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie kan geskied nie. Deelnemers sal ten alle tye met groot respek behandel word en inligting verkry tydens hierdie navorsingstudie sal met uiterse konfidensialiteit behandel word.

13. MOONTLIKE VOORDELE VIR DEELNEMERS

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Die verwagtinge is dat hierdie studie ander ouers en leerders, wat in dieselfde situasie is, sal help reflekteer oor hul ondersteuning vir hul kinders en sodoende ander maniere te ondersoek om hul kinders te ondersteun om `n sukses te maak van hul skoolloopbaan.

14. VERGOEDING VIR DEELNAME

Deelnemers sal geen vergoeding ontvang vir hul deelname aan hierdie navorsingstudie nie. Daar sal wel `n geleentheid geskep word waar die bevindige van die navorsingstudie aan die deelnemers bekend gemaak sal word. Dit sal plaasvind na die navorsingstudie voltooid is.

15. VERTROULIKHEID

Enige inligting wat deur middel van die navorsing verkry word en wat met die leerder in verband gebring kan word, sal vertroulik bly en slegs met die ouers se toestemming bekend gemaak word of soos deur die wet vereis. Vertroulikheid sal gehandhaaf word deur middel van die gebruik van skuilname wanneer daar na u, ander deelnemers, die leerders en die skool verwys word. Alle inligting verkry tydens die navorsingstudie sal veilig bewaar word en slegs ek, die navorser, en my studieleier, Me. L. Collair, sal toegang daartoe hê.

Ek sal slegs data verkry tydens die onderhoude met my studieleier deel indien dit noodsaaklik is vir studiedoeleindes soos wanneer ek leiding benodig t.o.v transkribering, kodering en ander soortgelyke navorsingstappe. Indien u instem, sal alle onderhoude opgeneem word op audio-bande, maar opgeneemde inligting sal verwyder word sodra die navorsingstudie voltooid is.

Indien die navorsing gepubliseer word, sal die inligting met dieselfde vertroulikheid gehandhaaf word.

16. DEELNAME EN ONTTREKKING

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 eniger tyd u daaraan 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.

17. IDENTIFIKASIE VAN ONDERSOEKERS

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

Me.   L. Witbooi   Me. L. Collair

E-pos: lenejafta@gmail.com   lyncol@sun.ac.za

Tel: 023 2400 016   021 808 2304

18. REGTE VAN DEELNEMER

U kan te eniger 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.

VERKLARING DEUR DEELNEMER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, _____, gegee en verduidelik deur Me. Lené Witbooiin Afrikaans en ek is dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir my vertaal. Ekis die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my vrae is tot my bevrediging beantwoord.

Ek willig 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   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

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Addendum E   Interview guide

ONDERHOUSGIDS: OUERS

OUER ONDERSTEUNING IN DIE SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN HUL LAERSKOOL KIND WAT GEDISTANSIEERD VOORKOM.

Onderhoudsgids vir semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud met ouers

Eerstens wil ek vir u baie dankie sê dat u gewillig was om deel te neem aan hierdie studie en u tyd opgeoffer het om saam met my te kom praat.

A. INLEIDING

Ek wil begin deur eers vir u agtergrond inligting te gee oor myself en oor hierdie navorsingstudie.

1. Stel myself bekend aan deelnemer.
2. Verduidelik die doel van die navorsingstudie.
3. Bespreek konfidelsialiteit
4. Bespreek die formaat van die onderhoud.
5. Vra toestemming om audio-bande te gebruik.
6. Bespreek enige vrae en onsekerhede.
7. Verkry ingeligte geskrewe toestemming.

B. AGTERGROND INLIGTING

Kom ons gesels oor u, wie u is, wie u familie is en waar u werk.

8. Ouderdom
9. Huwelikstatus
10. Kwalifikasies
11. Beroep
12. Woonbuurt woonagtig
13. Gade (beroep, kwalifikasies)
14. Kinders (Ouderdomme, kwalifikasies en verwantskap)

C. HUIDIGE OUER ONDERSTEUNING IN DIE SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN KIND

Volgende wil ek graag gesels oor u ondersteuning in die opvoeding van u kind. Mag ek voortgaan met die volgende vrae?

15. U persepsie oor u kind se hindernisse.
16. U persepsie of gevoel oor u ondersteuning in die skoolopvoeding van u kind.

D. OUERS SE EIE ERVARING OOR OUER ONDERSTEUNING IN HUL EIE SKOOLOPVOEDING TYDENS HUL SKOOLJARE

U het nou met my gepraat oor u ondersteuning in u kind se skoolopvoeding. Nou wil ek graag praat oor die ondersteuning wat u ontvang het as skoolkind en hoe betrokke u ouers was. Is u reg om voort te gaan?

17. U eie skool ervaring.

18. Die ondersteuning wat u ontvang het.

E. TEN SLOTTE

19. Is daar enigiets anders wat u wil byvoeg?

20. Het u enige vrae of onsekerhede?

21. Baie dankie vir u tyd.

22. Indien nodig, mag ek u kontak vir verdere vrae of onsekerhede?

ONDERHOUSGIDS: OPVOEDERS

OUER ONDERSTEUNING IN DIE SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN HUL LAERSKOOL KIND WAT GEDISTANSIEERD VOORKOM.

Onderhoudsgids vir semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud met opvoeders

Eerstens wil ek vir u baie dankie sê dat u gewillig was om deel te neem aan hierdie studie en u tyd opgeoffer het om saam met my te kom praat.

A. INLEIDING

Ek wil begin deur eers vir u agtergrond inligting te gee oor myself en oor hierdie navorsingstudie.

1. Stel myself bekend aan deelnemer.
2. Verduidelik die doel van die navorsingstudie.
3. Bespreek konfidelsialiteit
4. Bespreek die formaat van die onderhoud.
5. Vra toestemming om audio-bande te gebruik.
6. Bespreek enige vrae en onsekerhede.
7. Verkry ingeligte geskrewe toestemming.

B. AGTERGROND INLIGTING

Kom ons gesels oor u en u werk.

8. Ouderdom
9. Kwalifikasies

C. OUER ONDERSTEUNING IN SKOOLOPVOEDING VAN LEERDER

10. Ouer ondersteuning in die leerder se skoolopvoeding.

D. TEN SLOTTE

11. Is daar enigiets anders wat u wil byvoeg?
12. Het u enige vrae of onsekerhede?
13. Baie dankie vir u tyd.
14. Indien nodig, mag ek u kontak vir verdere vrae of onsekerhede?

Addendum F   Portion of transcript- Parent interview

Transkripsie Die uitgeligte dele dui eenhede van betekenis aan.	Kodering	Reflektiewe veldnotas en observasies
Navorser Wat is u ouderdom? **Deelnemer 5** Myne... 32 **Navorser** 32... en die huwelikstatus? **Deelnemer 5** [blystil] **Navorser** Is u getroud of ongetroud? **Deelnemer 5** Nee, ek is ongetroud **Navorser** Ongetroud, en dan wat is u hoogste graad voltooi op die skool? **Deelnemer 5** Graad 10 **Navorser** En wat doen u vir `n inkomste nou huidiglik?  **Deelnemer 5**  Ek is nou by die huis, ek kyk maar na seuntjie... dis al wat ek nou nog doen  **Navorser**  Is hier iemand anders in die huis wat ook `n geldjie in bring?	2C 2C 2B 2C	By hulle eie woning. Hulle het net die basiese behoeftes om te oorleef. Bly in `n hok op iemand se agterplaas. Hulle woning is baie netjies en dit blyk asof sy baie trots is daarop.

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Deelnemer 5 Ja, my kinders se pa	2C	
Navorser Bly hy ook by julle?		
Deelnemer 5 Ja... en my stiefpa ook	2C	
Navorser En wat is hulle hoogste grade wat hulle het?		
Deelnemer 5 Daai tyd het my stiefpa nie skool gegaan nie en my kinders se pa is standerd 5 uit die skooluit.	2B	
Navorser Okay en wat doen hy vir `n inkomste?		
Deelnemer 5 Hy werk op die plaas	2C	
Navorser En nou beweeg ons oor na *Lyle toe. Hoe sou u sy vordering op die skool beskryf?		
Deelnemer 5 Kyk... ek weet hy kan maar hy wil nie, en is ook nie dat hy nie wil nie... ek sal nie sê hy is te dom om nie dit te kan doen nie, maar hy is baie handig en so en help graag maar as hy ook die dag besluit hy wil nie dan wil hy nie, maar ek weet regtig nie wat daar... sien juffrou nou... maar soos ek kan se hy is middelmatig	3C 3A	
Navorser So u sal se sy vordering is goed of is dit nie goed nie?		
Deelnemer 5 Dis nie goed nie.	3A	

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Addendum G   Portion of transcript- Educator interview

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Transkripsie	Kodering	Reflektiewe veldnotas en observasies
Opvoeder 2 Uhm, hy is fisies `n baie stil seun in die klas, maar hy handig nie take in nie. Hy is nie betrokke tydens klas nie, soos nou klasbesprekings ensovoorts. Hy gee geen aandag nie. Hy sal sit daar [wys na bank] as hulle in kom dan sit en lag hy daar. Ek het tweede kwartaal my kinders geskuif, `n swak kind en `n sterk leerder. Nou sit Simone* nou langs hom en dan, toe ons nou begin skuif het, toe is dit nou sommer, toe wil hy nou vir Simone*, so die meisie en outjie goed nou. So sy aandag is daar, dis nie by die skoolwerk nie. Die aandag is by, ek dink hy moet nou al Graad 8 of 7 gewees het, ek is nie seker nie. Maar nou hulle, as hulle mos nou Graad 7 is dan is hulle mos nou al geneig by meisies en outjies en so aan. **Navorser** So dit is waar meeste van sy aandag is? **Opvoeder 2** Sy aandag is daar. Soos ek nou gesê het, hy handig nie take in nie, want hy gee nie aandag fisies in die klas nie, om op te let om dit te voltooi nie. Hy sal ook nie werk nie. As ons kom dan sit hy net daar en dan sal hy die ander kinders hinder, so hy is `n steurnis vir die ander rondom hom. Maar fisies, hy is `n stil leerder, hy neem nie deel aan sport nie.	**1A** **1A** **1A** **1A** 1A 1A 1A 1A	Dit blyk asof die opvoeder "lag in die klas"beskou as `n steurnis vir die res van die klas. Volgens die opvoeder, wil dit voorkom asof die leerder geen moeite maak om akademies te vorder nie.

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Addendum H   Reflective fieldnotes

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Reflektiewe veldnotas

Deelnemer _____

Datum en plek   29 April. 2019 , Skool

1. Observasienotas: reflekteer oor enige betekenisvolle observasies tydens die onderhoud.

Wat het ek geobserveer?

Ek het geobserveer dat die deelnemer baie
bekommerd is oor die leerder en baie dinge doen
(al is te klein) om vir hom aan te meedy om
belangstelling te toon in sy skoolwerk.

Waarom is hierdie observasie betekenisvol?

Dit dui aan dat sy graag vir hom wil
ondersteun, maar nie weet hoe nie. Dit dui
ook aan dat sy bereid is om leiding te neem
van ander om hom beter te kan ondersteun

2. Prosesnotas: reflekteer oor strategieë en metodes wat gebruik was tydens die
onderhoud.

Wat het tydens die onderhoud gebeur?

Ek moes heeltyd die deelnemer se aandag
terug bring na die vraag. Dit voor by die middel
ander sy ervaring soke gepraat het en ek
haar nie weer onderbreek nie.

3. Persoonlike notas: reflekteer oor eie gevoelens en persepsie tydens die onderhoud.

Wat was my ervaring tydens die sessie?

Ek was baie dankbaar dat die leerder iemand in sy
lewe het wat vir hom omgee en bekommerd is
oor hom. Ek voel jammer vir die deelnemer, want ek
kan sien dat sy wil help vir die leerder, maar agv van haar
eie opvoeding word nie voltooi is nie, kan sy nie vir
die leerder help soos sy graag wil nie.

Addendum I   Example of an artefact

E / VAN	DAE	YEARS in PHASE / JARE in FASE	TERMS / KWARTALE	HOME LANG 1 / HUISTAAL 1		1st ADD LANGUAGE 1 / 1e ADD TAAL		MATHEMATICS / WISKUNDE		NATURAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY / NATUURWETENSKAPPE EN TEGNOLOGIE		HISTORY / GESKIEDENIS		GEOGRAPHY / GEOGRAFIE		COMBINED SOCIAL SCIENCES / SOSIALE WETENSKAPPE GEKOMBINEER		LIFE SKILLS / LEWENSVAARDIGHEID		NEED SUPPORT	KLASSIFIKASIE		the dropdown list if the progression status of a learner needs to be changed (Only Term 4) Indien die status van die leerder gewysig moet word kies asseblief die toepaslike opsie in die aftreklys (Slegs kwartaal 4)
LE VOORNAME (Gender) (Geslag)	DAYS ABSENT/ AFWESIG			%	Code	%	Code	%	Code	%	Code	%	Code	%	Code	%	Code	%	Code		GRADE / VORIGE	GRADE/ HUIDIGE	
	0		1	50	4	48	3	56	4	56	4	55	4	63	5	59	4	55	4	N			
	0	3	2	60	5	56	4	67	5	68	5	85	7	88	7	86	7	64	5	N	5	6	
			3																				
0			Final % and CODE																				
	3		1	40	3	20	1	26	1	36	2	15	1	18	1	16	1	46	3	Y/J			Benodig ondersteuning in alle vakke
	3	3	2	43	3	26	1	45	3	25	1	20	1	40	3	30	2	42	3	Y/J	5	6	Benodig ondersteuning in FAL,NWT en SW
			3																				
6			Final % and CODE																				
	0		1	51	4	31	2	43	3	71	6	43	3	58	4	50	4	59	4	Y/J			Benodig ondersteuning in FAL
	1	3	2	60	5	40	3	50	4	41	3	25	1	55	4	40	3	40	3	N	5	6	Benodig ondersteuning in Gesk
			3																				
1			Final % and CODE																				
	1		1	41	3	22	1	54	4	49	3	13	1	45	3	29	1	54	4	Y/J			Benodig ondersteuning in HT,FAL,Gesk
	6	4	2	45	3	40	3	41	3	26	1	8	1	43	3	25	1	50	4	Y/J	6	6	Benodig ondersteuning in HT,NWT en Gesk
			3																				
7			Final % and CODE																				
	3		1	23	1	22	1	30	2	21	1	5	1	18	1	11	1	53	4	Y/J			Benodig ondersteuning in alle vakke
	4	4	2	27	1	8	1	7	1	23	1	10	1	25	1	18	1	48	3	Y/J	5	6	Benodig ondersteuning in alle vakke
			3																				
7			Final % and CODE																				
	1		1	51	4	28	1	62	5	36	2	13	1	38	2	25	1	50	4	Y/J			Benodig ondersteuning in FAL,Wisk,NWT,SW
	1	3	2	51	4	44	3	40	3	34	2	35	2	60	5	48	3	60	5	N	5	6	Benodig ondersteuning in NWT en Gesk
			3																				

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